Full, Conscious, and Active Participation in the Liturgy in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* as Pastoral Response to the Universal Call to Holiness in *Lumen Gentium*

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Among the things emphasized strongly by the Second Vatican Council were liturgical renewal as espoused by the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (*SC*) and the universal call to holiness as outlined in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* (*LG*).[1] This paper will seek to make the connection between renewed liturgical participation and the universal call to holiness.

This paper will consist of three major sections. The first will tackle the universal call to holiness as the ultimate Christian vocation in the world. The second section will present renewed liturgical participation as one of the basic yet powerful means of responding to the universal call to holiness. This section will have two subsections: (1) the Liturgy of the Word, and (2) the Liturgy of the Eucharist. These subsections will present the two as didactic/pedagogical in living a holy life. The third section will present liturgical spirituality as a means of fostering sanctity. It will establish the link between the universal call to holiness and renewed liturgical participation.

1 All quotations of Vatican II documents are taken from James H. Kroeger, ed., *Documents of Vatican Council II* (Pasay: Paulines Publishing House, 2011).

The Universal Call to Holiness: The Christian Way of Life

Ruggieri writes that in the deliberations on the Schema on the Church, many of its critics highlighted the necessity for an inspiring central idea, the dimension of mystery in the internal life of the Church. For example, there is Msgr. D'Avack of Camerino, Italy, who "insisted that the inner life of the Church be made central…"[2] Perhaps, this sheds light as to why in the final document, *Lumen Gentium*, the whole Chapter V is dedicated to the universal call to holiness, a chapter which Haring considers to be an important tool to better understand Vatican II as a "Council of spiritual renewal."[3] The chapter is composed of four articles, 39-42. The gist of the four articles will be presented below.

Chapter V begins in Article 39. It declares that "The Church, whose mystery is being set forth by this Sacred Synod, is believed to be indefectibly holy." Wulf explains in his commentary that the opening line "the Church is indefectibly holy" points to the reality that "the holiness of the individual is always a mere participation in the holiness of the Church, proclaiming to the world, as it must, the holiness of the Church." However, he clarifies that this holiness is none other than God's holiness. "Christ alone is holy, and not simply because he is God; as man too, he is *essentially* holy because he is one with the divine Person. Christ's human holiness, given to him by the Father and effected by the Holy Ghost, is also based on the essential holiness which he, as the

2 Giuseppe Ruggieri, "Beyond an Ecclesiology of Polemics: The Debate on the Church," in *History of Vatican II: The Formation of the Council's Identity* vol. 2, eds. Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph Komonchak (Maryknoll/Leuven: Orbis/Peeters, 1997), 332-33.

3 Bernard Haring, "Holiness in the Church," in *Vatican II: An Interfaith Appraisal*, ed. John H. Miller (Notre Dame/New York: University of Notre Dame Press/Association Press, 1966), 250.

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divine *Logos*, directly bestows on his humanity." He explains that the Church's holiness "is a share in the holiness of Christ in the Holy Ghost."[4] *LG* no. 39 further states that holiness can be viewed from the perspective of the gifts of the Spirit which enables her to participate in Christ's mission and life. In a similar way, Melloni observes that in the deliberations on the People of God, there was "a strong emphasis on the equality of the members of the Church by reason of their ultimate vocation, their participation in the gift of salvation, and their call to holiness."[5]

Article 40 states that Christ preached holiness of life in every condition. The article ends by stating that for the faithful to attain the holiness to which they are called by Christ, "They must use their strength accordingly as they have received it, as a gift from Christ. They must follow in His footsteps and conform themselves to His image seeking the will of the Father in all things…" To seek the Father's will entails surrender to the Divine. Wulf comments that "the more completely man surrenders to God's love in Christ, the more whole-heartedly he ventures into it, the holier he becomes."[6] Surrender in this sense, can mean an entrusting and offering of one's entire being – life and everything in it – to God.

Article 41 stipulates that although the states and duties in life of each member of the faithful may vary, they are all called to one holiness as moved by the Spirit and in obedience and worship to the Father. *LG* no. 41 exhorts the laity that in "their

4 Friedrich Wulf, "Chapter V," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* vol. 1, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), 263. Italics in the original text.

5 Alberto Melloni, "The Beginning of the Second Period: The Great Debate on the Church," in *History of Vatican II: The Mature Council* vol. 3, eds. Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph Komonchak (Maryknoll/Leuven: Orbis/Peeters, 2000), 80.

6 Wulf, "Chapter V," 266.

daily work they should climb to heights of holiness and apostolic activity." It recapitulates, "All Christ's faithful, whatever be the conditions, duties, and circumstances of their lives – and indeed through all these, will daily increase in holiness…" Wulf sees this phrase as one important point made in Chapter V, implying that holiness is "not a road running parallel to the road of one's ordinary life and work, but is a thing achieved in and through the concrete circumstances and events of one's existence."[7] Quoting Pope John XXIII, "No one should make the mistake of supposing that his own spiritual perfection," that is, holiness, "is inconsistent with the tasks of this present life. The two are perfectly consistent."[8] One attains holiness in and through one's context provided that this ultimately "means following the poor and humble Christ as he carries the Cross."[9] The arena of holiness therefore is daily life, as the Vatican II Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (*AA*) paragraph 2 grounds, "Since the laity… live in the midst of the world and its concerns… are called by God to exercise their apostolate in the world like leaven, with the ardor of the Spirit of Christ."

Chapter V ends with Article 42. It enumerates the "means" through which sanctity can be fostered in souls: "Indeed, in order that love, as good seed may grow and bring forth fruit in the soul… the faithful must willingly hear the Word of God and accept His Will, and must complete what God has begun by their own actions with the help of God's grace." *LG* no. 42 specifies that "These actions consist in the use of the sacraments and in a special way the Eucharist, frequent participation in the sacred action of the liturgy, application of

7 Ibid., 268.
8 *Mater et Magistra* 254 (*AAS* 53 [1961], 460) as quoted in Wulf, "Introductory Remarks on Chapters V and VI," 258.
9 Wulf, "Chapter V," 268.

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oneself to prayer…" Wulf expounds this provision of *LG* no. 42 by stressing that to grow in holiness,

> the first thing that man must do is gladly *listen* to God's word, in order to understand it more profoundly, to accept it, to be steeped in it (… done most explicitly through prayer… the sacraments especially the Eucharist, and taking part in the liturgy), and sustained by its strength, to give it flesh and blood…[10]

Wulf notes further that *LG* no. 42 reiterates the fact that "growth in Christian holiness is a joint effect of divine grace and man's response to grace."[11] For the Christian, grace is excellently mediated through the sacraments and the internal life of the Church.

What primarily grounds the sanctity of the Church is God's holiness. The Church is called by the Holy One of Israel to share in His holiness. Holiness therefore must be understood as God's gratuitous gift to humanity, a call ultimately to share in God's love.[12] Cunningham writes that the Church intrinsically has formal holiness since she possesses Sacred Scriptures and the sacraments.[13] In the final analysis, Haring posits that "The holiness of the whole Church and of every individual Christian has to be understood in the light of the sacraments… finally in the light of the paschal mystery."[14] The next section will deepen the reflection on holiness as fostered by renewed and active participation in the sacred liturgy.

10 Wulf, "Chapter V," 270. Italics in original text.
11 Ibid.
12 Haring, "Holiness in the Church," 251.
13 Lawrence Cunningham, "Holiness," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, ed. Michael Downey (Collegeville: Liturgical Press/Michael Glazier, 1993), 482.
14 Haring, "Holiness in the Church," 252.

The Liturgy: Source and Summit of Christian Life

Sacrosanctum Concilium[15] 10 declares that

> The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed… it is the font from which all her power flows. For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of His Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's supper.

It must be strongly stressed that the liturgy is the center upon which Christian living revolves. *SC* no. 7 teaches that,

> Christ indeed associates the Church with Himself in this great work wherein God is perfectly glorified and men are sanctified… The liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification of man is signified… the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members… every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy…

Jungmann comments that the Liturgy must be understood not merely as an exterior act of worship but precisely as embracing the priestly function of Christ which "forms its backbone and animates it and is its visible sign."[16] Liturgical participation, then, is "sanctifying par excellence" for it is a sharing in the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

15 Henceforth referred to as SC.

16 Josef Jungmann, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* vol. 1, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), 14.

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Since the liturgy is the sacred action surpassing all others, *SC* no. 14 declares that,

> Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the Liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as… 'a royal priesthood'… is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.

Lamberigts notes a presentation during the Council by Ferdinando Antonelli in which Antonelli "outlined five fundamental principles [as] the necessary guidelines for implementing the renewal…," the last of which is "promoting the active participation of the faithful out of respect for the hierarchical and communal character of the liturgy and its dynamics."[17] For Jungmann, *SC* no. 14 affirms that "the entire body of the faithful has been summoned to participation in it as the priestly people of God… 'by reason of their baptism.'"[18] Hence, *SC* 14 asserts that "Full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian Spirit." Renewed liturgical participation is thus a powerful means of nurturing Christian life and fostering sanctity.

Full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgy requires that involvement of the whole person. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (*GIRM*)[19] expounds this point

17 Mathijs Lamberigts, "The Liturgy Debate," in *History of Vatican II: The Formation of the Council's Identity* vol. 2, eds. Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph Komonchak (Maryknoll/Leuven: Orbis/Peeters, 1997), 109-10.

18 Jungmann, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," 17.

19 All quotes are from the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal: Including Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy*

by describing "a conscious, active, and full participation of the faithful, namely in body and mind, a participation fervent with faith, hope and charity…" as that "which is desired by the Church and which is required by the very nature of the celebration…"[20] It therefore involves the senses and lifts them up to transcendence. For Jungmann, the active participation called for is "above all an interior participation, that is, a conscious participation elevating heart and soul…"[21] *GIRM* no. 35 explicitates that "The acclamations and responses of the people constitute the level of active participation that is to be made by the assembled faithful…" Pointing to *SC* 48, Jungmann deepens the reflection by saying that the faithful "should participate more fully in thanking God in the accomplishment of the Eucharist… and offer the Holy Sacrifice together with the priest." He further emphasizes that the laity's active participation is "indeed to offer the sacrifice with the priest and not merely 'through him;'"[22] thereby highlighting the laity's exercise of the "common priesthood."

The succeeding subsections will expound this full, active, and conscious participation as "dialogical" (Word proclaimed – response) in the Liturgy of the Word and as "participation in Christ's priesthood" (offering sacrifice) in the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Communion Under both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America and Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the General Roman Calendar Vol. 14 (Washington, D.C: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011). Henceforth will be referred to as *GIRM*.

20 *GIRM*, no. 18.

21 Jungmann, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," 35.

22 Ibid., 34.

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The Liturgy of the Word

Rocha calls attention to the fact that in the *GIRM* and in the *Order of Mass*, there is an explicit mention of "the assembled people of God." He explains that "This people is not assembled simply through their own initiative, but is there because God has called and gathered it together…"[23] The congregation is the community gathered by God to render Him praise and worship, and in effect, are sanctified by the celebration. This "gathered" community is holy, as Cunningham explains, for the basic sense of the word denotes the Jewish mindset of being the people chosen and loved by God.[24] Goffredo Boselli writes that this gathered assembly is "called by God, to hear God's word on the day God has made holy."[25]

GIRM no. 29 states that in the proclamation of the Word, "God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his word, proclaims the Gospel." Hence, the biblical readings are to be "listened to reverently by everyone, for they are the element of greatest importance in the Liturgy."[26] Jungmann speaks of the proclamation of the Word as basis for worship; in it is begun the sanctification of humanity.[27] Boselli in turn believes that the liturgy is didactic in prayer and sanctity primarily because it puts emphasis on the centrality of hearing God's Word.[28]

23 Pedro Romano Rocha, "The Principal Manifestation of the Church (SC 41)," in *Vatican II: Assessment and Perspectives Twenty-Five Years After (1962-1987)* vol. 2, ed. Rene Latourelle (New York/ Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1989), 13-14.
24 Cunningham, "Holiness," 481.
25 Goffredo Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy: School of Prayer, Source of Life*, trans. Barry Hudock (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2014), 53-54.
26 Cf. *SC* nos. 7 and 33.
27 Jungmann, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," 14.
28 Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 107.

Kaczynski prolifically expresses the beautiful dialogical dynamics in the proclamation of the Word. He reflects that God's Word speaks in the readings and the human response is expressed in the psalm and Alleluia acclamation; God's Word speaks in the Gospel and homily and the human answer is expressed in the *Credo* and intercessions.[29] *GIRM* no. 55 aptly summarizes this movement: "By means of silence [brief moments after each reading] and by singing [the responsorial psalm and Alleluia], the people make this divine word their own, and affirm their adherence to it by means of the Profession of Faith."[30]

Full, conscious, and active participation in the Liturgy of the Word thus entails careful listening to Scriptures, responding to it through chants and responses, and ultimately interiorizing God's word as lived out in daily life. The Word of God as listened to and responded to in obedience and faith by the gathered congregation, molds the faithful in sanctity.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1368 teaches that,

> The Eucharist is the sacrifice of the Church. The Church which is the Body of Christ participates in the offering of her Head. With Him, she herself is offered whole and entire… In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value…[31]

29 Reiner Kaczynski, "Toward the Reform of the Liturgy," in *History of Vatican II: The Mature Council* vol. 3, eds. Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph Komonchak (Maryknoll/Leuven: Orbis/Peeters, 2000), 225 fn. 149.

30 Words in brackets are added by the writer for emphasis.

31 CBCP-ECCE, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Definitive Edition Based on the Latin *Editio Typica* (Manila: ECCCE and Word & Life

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The language of offering and sacrifice, which necessitates priesthood, is very apparent in this paragraph. Hence, we can take it to imply that renewed liturgical participation means an "active" sharing in the priesthood of Christ.

LG no. 10 declares that "Christ the Lord, High Priest taken from among men… made the new people 'a kingdom and priests' to God the Father… The Baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are consecrated… as a holy priesthood, in order that… they may offer spiritual sacrifices…" *LG* no. 10 likewise teaches that the royal priesthood of the laity and the ministerial priesthood, although different in essence and in degree, are related since both of them participate in the one priesthood of Christ, each in its own manner. Meanwhile, the laity's common priesthood, Orsy opines, "come to life and best operates when it is harmoniously blended with the hierarchy." The hierarchical priesthood and the common priesthood of the laity do not oppose one another. In fact, "they are meant to support and balance each other. They exist and work for a common purpose."[32] *LG* no. 10 ends by explaining that "the faithful, in virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist. They likewise exercise that priesthood in receiving the sacraments, in prayer and thanksgiving, in the witness of a holy life…"

LG no. 11 also teaches that "Taking part in the Eucharistic sacrifice, which is the font and apex of the whole Christian life, [the faithful] offer the Divine Victim to God, and offer themselves along with it." The notion of offering is central. In this vein, *GIRM* no. 73 explains that the offering of the bread and wine by representatives of the faithful is a praiseworthy

Publications, 1994), 383. Henceforth referred to as *CCC*.

32 Ladislas Orsy, *Receiving the Council: Theological and Canonical Insights and Debates* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2009), 35.

practice for this gesture "still keeps its spiritual efficacy and significance." Irwin opines that offering gifts of bread and wine on the altar, the fruits of human labor, signifies that what is being offered for the Eucharistic sacrifice comes from the daily sacrifices of those who offer the very gifts.[33] It is therefore this act of "offering the Sacrifice" with the priest by virtue of their royal priesthood that sanctifies the laity and strengthens them to live holy lives.

Full, conscious, and active participation in the Liturgy of the Eucharist ultimately means participation in Christ's priesthood. Pope Paul VI in *Mysterium Fidei*[34] declares that,

> In dealing with the restoration of the scared liturgy, the Fathers of the Council were led by their pastoral concern for the whole Church to regard it as a matter of highest importance to urge the faithful to participate actively, with undivided devotion, in the celebration of this Most Holy Mystery, to offer it to God along with the priest as a sacrifice for their own salvation and that of the whole world, and to use it as spiritual nourishment.[35]

Active participation, Levering avers, ultimately "calls for an interior union of the laity with the priest during the Eucharistic prayer. The goal here is that 'during the sacrifice of the Mass, we pray to the Lord, to receive the offering of the spiritual victim, and then raise our very selves to their perfection in becoming an eternal gift for himself (cf. *SC* no. 12).'"[36]

33 Kevin Irwin, *Models of the Eucharist* (New York/Mahwah NJ: Paulist, 2005), 236.

34 Paul VI, "Encyclical Letter *Mysterium Fidei*", September 3 1965, Vatican Archives, http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_03091965_mysterium.html (accessed November 6, 2018). Henceforth referred to as MF.

35 *M*F, 1.

36 Matthew Levering, *An Introduction to Vatican II as an Ongoing Theological Event* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America

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The next section will tackle the link between renewed liturgical participation and the universal call to holiness. It will show how the living out of a sound liturgical spirituality fosters growth in sanctity.

Liturgical Spirituality: Towards Living a Life of Holiness

The Liturgy is the primary space where sanctity is fostered since it is the sacred action *par excellence*. *GIRM* no. 28 reiterates the Council's teaching on the liturgy as the "one single act of worship" where the "table both of God's Word and the Body of Christ" are spread for the faithful for their instruction and nourishment.[37] In describing the spirituality of the laity, *AA* 4 states that, their "life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is nourished by spiritual aids… especially active participation in the sacred liturgy… they do not separate Christ from their life but rather performing their work according to God's will they grow in that union. In this way, the laity… make progress in holiness…" Renewed liturgical participation therefore leads the faithful towards living out a liturgical spirituality.

SC no. 48 expresses the meaning of liturgical spirituality. It states,

> The Church 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… they should take part in this sacred action conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration. They should be instructed by God's word and be

Press, 2017), 76.

37 Cf. *SC* nos. 56, 48, and 51 and *Dei Verbum* no. 21.

> nourished at the table of the Lord's body… by offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn to offer themselves…

There are two things that need to be stressed here vis-à-vis liturgical spirituality. The first is "instructed by God's word" and the second is "offering of sacrifice and being offered themselves with it." In the final analysis, Liturgical spirituality is once again an exercise of sharing in the priesthood of Christ, thereby sanctifying the faithful.

Liturgical spirituality educates a believer in God's word. The Mass, especially the Liturgy of the Word, is a living and dynamic encounter with Christ who is present in the proclaimed word. Irwin believes that in the proclamation of the Word, the biblical paradigm becomes alive, that is, what God says to His people is not a once and for all event. It continues to happen in the "here and now;" the dynamo of the proclaimed Word "causes" something to happen in the hearer.[38] Boselli likewise posits that true hearing of the proclaimed Word makes the biblical text an interior reality in the hearer.[39] The Word thus becomes a reality for the Christian "here and now" precisely through one's response to it. This response, initially expressed in chants and responsories, is ultimately lived out by standing up to the challenge posed by the Word in one's life and world. To be instructed in God's word ultimately leads to proclaiming it in and through one's life. To proclaim the Word through the witness of one's life thus shapes a person in sanctity.

Liturgical spirituality nourishes one at the table of the Lord's body by offering the sacrifice and being offered

38 Irwin, *Models of the Eucharist*, 99.
39 Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 110.

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along with it. It means an "active" sharing in the priesthood of Christ. Boselli finds it essential to understand liturgy as a school of prayer since it is the core essence of Christian worship. "The worship of Christians is essentially different from both the Jewish and pagan sacrificial economies… because the sacrifice it calls for is not ritual but existential. It is realized in the offering of oneself, of one's entire life."[40] Ratzinger notes that the liturgy allows one to share in the sacrificial self-offering of Christ so that in the liturgy, "the difference between the *actio Christi* and our own action is done away with. There is only *one* action, which is at the same time his and ours – ours because we have become one body and one spirit with him."[41] Liturgical spirituality therefore implies being "priestly." In laying out the foundations of the lay apostolate, *AA* no. 3 states that the lay "are consecrated for the royal priesthood and the holy people… not only that they may offer spiritual sacrifices in everything they do but also that they may witness to Christ throughout the world."

According to Beauduin, "for *all the faithful of the Church without exception*, the greatest possible active and frequent participation in the priestly life of the visible hierarchy, according to the manner prescribed in the liturgical canons, is the *normal and infallible path* to a solid piety…" He goes on to aver that "this is the primary law of the sanctity of souls."[42] Similarly, *LG* no. 34 teaches that Christ "also gives them a share in His priestly function of offering spiritual worship for

40 Ibid., 104.

41 Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 174 as quoted in Levering, *An Introduction to Vatican II as an Ongoing Theological Event*, 79. Italics in quoted text.

42 Lambert Beauduin, *Liturgy: The Life of the Church*, trans. Virgil Michel (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1926), 4. Italics contained in the original text.

the glory of God and the salvation of men… Together with the offering of the Lord's body, they are most fittingly offered in the celebration of the Eucharist. Thus… the laity consecrate the world itself to God." Likewise, Levering declares that "offering spiritual worship" may mean the fidelity shown in fulfilling their tasks and concerns in daily life, that when ultimately brought to the celebration of the Eucharist, consecrates the laity and the world to God.[43] Boselli also emphasizes that "Prayer becomes sacrifice when words of praise, thanksgiving, and blessing that are spoken express and contain the truth in the person's offering of her whole life to God."[44] Cunningham sees in here "a thread in the NT that transposes the cultic notion of the holiness of worship into a spiritual reality by which the followers of Jesus are 'set apart' for God… 'Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship' (Rom 12:1)."[45] Thus, in the its fullest sense, one's spiritual worship is one's offering of life and everything in it.

In line with this, McPartlan echoes the deep desire of Paul VI that the teaching of the laity offering the sacrifice with the priest by virtue of their royal priesthood as well as their offering of themselves together with it, is "the most effective means… of extolling the dignity of all the faithful, and of spurring them on to reach the heights of sanctity." (*MF* no. 31). According to him, Paul VI wanted to emphasize that "the Eucharistic Christ, who is both priest and victim, draws the whole Church to himself such that she too and all her members become priest and victim along with him."[46] He therefore

43 Levering, *An Introduction to Vatican II as an Ongoing Theological Event*, 121.
44 Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 105.
45 Cunningham, "Holiness," 481.
46 Paul McPartlan, "The Mystery of Faith: When We Eat This Bread and

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makes explicit what Paul VI alluded to in his encyclical (*MF* no. 31, note 24), quoting St. Augustine who writes in *The City of God* that,

> The whole of that redeemed city… is offered as a universal sacrifice to God through the High Priest who… offered himself in his passion for us that we might be the body of so glorious a head… This is the sacrifice… which the Church continues to celebrate in the sacrament of the altar, in which it is clear to the Church that she herself is offered in the very offering she makes to God.[47]

Holiness as envisioned by Vatican II is fostered by a liturgical spirituality. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Levering proposes, "grounds us in the central liturgical desideratum: that all Christians, united liturgically in Christ's Pasch, interiorly offer 'our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is [our] spiritual worship' (Rom 12:1)."[48] In the ruminations of Denysenko, "The Council envisioned a significant body of Christians participating in Christ's eternal liturgy offered to God; having partaken of God by hearing the proclamation of the Word and receiving Holy Communion, Christians return to the world to bear Christ and contribute to society's transformation and transfiguration into an icon of God's kingdom."[49]

Drink This Cup," *Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions Newsletter* 42, no. 6 (December 2015): 13-14.

47 *City of God,* X, 6; PL 42.284 as quoted in McPartlan, "The Mystery of Faith," 14.

48 Levering, *An Introduction to Vatican II as an Ongoing Theological Event*, 80.

49 Nicolas E. Denysenko, *Liturgical Reform After Vatican* II (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 37 as quoted in Levering, *An Introduction to Vatican II as an Ongoing Theological Event*, 19.

Conclusion

There is a strong link between full, conscious, and active liturgical participation (*SC* no. 14) as being warranted by the faithful's sharing a common dignity in Christ (*LG* no.32) and the universal call to sanctity (*LG* nos. 39-42). McPartlan synthesizes, "The faithful, 'by virtue of their royal priesthood, participates in the offering of the Eucharist' (*LG* no.10). Indeed, 'they offer the divine victim to God and themselves with it' (*LG* no. 11). They join the sacrifice of their lives and of all their activity in the world to that one sacrifice of Christ… the laity consecrates the world itself to God' (*LG* no. 34)."[50] Paul VI beautifully integrates holiness and liturgical participation, by "indicating that the universal way to holiness is actually by priestly sacrifice: 'the heights of sanctity are reached by the total and generous offering of oneself to the service of the Divine Majesty' (*MF* no. 31)."[51]

Thus, the Liturgy can be considered as a school of holiness and liturgical spirituality as a potent means of fostering sanctity. As Boselli says, "The liturgy as a school of prayer is not optional but essential. The liturgy is the decisive place in which the Christian learns to pray,"[52] and by extension, the central place wherein sanctity is fostered. The liturgy is didactic: it forms the Christian to pray and to be holy. In the liturgy, the Church acts pedagogically, "like a mother teaching her children to pray"[53] and thereby forming them to be holy as God is holy.

50 McPartlan, "The Mystery of Faith," 14.
51 Ibid.
52 Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy*, 105.
53 Ibid.

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