THE HISTORY OF THE *ADORATIO CRUCIS* IN THE ROMAN RITE

Michael George M. Villasis

Origins of the *Adoratio Crucis*

The Annual Commemoration of Easter and the Paschal Fast

There was, in the first centuries of Christianity, originally no separate celebration of the Passion and Death of the Lord on Good Friday. The earliest evidence of an annual commemoration, in the second and third centuries, is that of a period of fasting, followed by an all-night vigil and the celebration of the Eucharist at dawn.[1] This vigil, which consisted in psalms, readings, and prayers, not only focused on Easter and the Lord's Resurrection, but encompassed the entirety of the mystery of Christ, including his Passion and Death, towards joyful anticipation of his coming again.[2] As such, the commemoration of Easter was eschatological and not just historical.[3] It is in this way that the celebration of Baptism was intimately linked to the celebration of the Vigil; the Christian through this sacrament enters the Lord's Passion and Resurrection.[4]

There was a tendency, in Rome and elsewhere, to extend the fast before the Paschal Vigil in preparation for Baptism,

1. See Philip J. Goddard, *Festa Paschalia: A History of the Holy Week Liturgy in the Roman Rite* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2011), 4-5.

2. See ibid., 5-6. The Vigil was popularly believed to be the time when Christ would come again.

3. See ibid., 21

4. See ibid., 12.

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observed both by catechumens and some of the baptized faithful.[5] This would begin to take shape as the period of fasting now known to us as Lent. In Rome itself, though the original length of fasting is unclear, Lent eventually assumed a span of six weeks, beginning on a Sunday, and which incorporated a total of thirty-six fast days. To make up the total of forty days, four more fast days were added by the seventh century, and Lent now began on the preceding Wednesday, according to the Old Gelasian Sacramentary.[6] This has become the Lenten observance in the West until the present—a six-week period beginning on Ash Wednesday.

The Origins of Good Friday in Rome

The services on Lenten weekdays in Rome in ancient times consisted of a non-Eucharistic service known as the *synaxis*, celebrated on Wednesdays and Fridays.[7] Good Friday was no exception to this—as evidenced by the eighth-century Lectionary of Würzburg,[8] the readings given for the Roman synaxis on that day are from the Prophet Hosea and the Book of Exodus.[9] Both are chosen in view of the coming Vigil rather than the commemoration of the crucifixion and death of the Lord. The synaxis on Good Friday had originally no separate

5. See ibid., 15.

6. See ibid., 15-16. The Old Gelasian Sacramentary represented the Roman "presbyteral" tradition, for use in the Roman *tituli*, or parish churches, in contrast to the Gregorian Sacramentary, which represented the "papal" tradition. See Cassian Folsom, "The Liturgical Books of the Roman Rite," in *Handbook for Liturgical Studies* vol. I, 248-249, and Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 49-50.

7. See ibid., 17.

8. *Comes Romanus Wirziburgensis* is the earliest extant Roman lectionary. For a description of the manuscript, see "Comes Romanus Wirziburgensis," *Virtuelle Bibliothek Würzburg*, http://vb.uni-wuerzburg.de/ub /mpthf62/ueber .html

9. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 168.

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Cross-rite which made it different from the other synaxes of the weekdays of Lent; as with the other days, after the readings, the homily and the solemn intercessions or prayer of the faithful follow.[10]

Fourth Century Origins: Egeria and the Adoratio Crucis in Jerusalem

As noted above, the earliest celebration of Good Friday in Rome was the *synaxis*, which contained no separate rite of the *adoratio crucis*. The earliest account of the *adoratio* locates the rite not in Rome, but Jerusalem. This account, from the diary of a fourth-century consecrated woman from Galicia named Egeria (or Aetheria)[11], describes her journeys to Jerusalem, and the celebration of the liturgies of Holy Week.[12] This diary, the *Peregrinatio Egeriae*, thus gives a unique look into the early practice of the *adoratio crucis* in the East.

The Adoration of the Cross on Good Friday should be seen in view of the "representational nature" of the Jerusalem liturgy; the interplay of "historical and liturgical space" had given rise to the celebration of rites that commemorate history, and feasts that were originally "expressions of theological truths" and not of specific episodes of salvation history were gradually emphasized as historical commemorations.[13] Thus, the adoration itself is part of a series of such representational ceremonies on Good Friday, all connected to the Passion and Death of the

10. See ibid., 178.

11. See George E. Gingras, "Introduction to Egeria: Diary of a Pilgrimage," trans. George E. Gingras, *Ancient Christian Writers: The Work of the Fathers in Translation*, no. 38 (New York: Newman Press, 1970), 8-11.

12. See ibid., 23-43.

13. See ibid., 32-33.

Lord in Jerusalem.[14] This historical commemoration included, quite decisively, also the instrument of the Passion itself: the cross-relic:

> [T]he liturgy of the church in fourth-century Jerusalem embraced not only the event (Christ's death upon the cross and resurrection from the dead) but also, and especially, the object at the heart of that event (the cross itself), prizing that sacred wood both as relic and as symbolic synecdoche for (and therefore sacrament of) that happening at the center of the earth.[15]

According to Egeria, the *adoratio crucis* was celebrated from the second hour until noon, after the celebration of rites, first at Gethsemani at cockcrow (commemorating the agony and the arrest of Jesus), and then at the Cross at Golgotha, (commemorating his trial).[16] The bishop comforts the people for their labors and, urging them not to be weary, tells them to rest for a while and return for the *adoratio crucis*: "Around the second hour of the day let everyone be on hand here, so that from that hour until the sixth hour you may see the holy wood of the cross, and thus believe that it was offered for the salvation of each and every one of us."[17]

At the second hour, the people gather at the place of the Crucifixion. Behind the Cross (the *Post Crucem,* which is a chapel), the bishop sits on his throne, while a table is placed before him, on which is placed the "gilded silver casket" containing the wood of the Cross and the inscription on the Cross. Then the bishop, still seated, grips the wood of the Cross,

14. See ibid., 38.

15. Cody C. Unterseher, "The Holy Cross in the Liturgy of Jerusalem: The Happening at the Center of the Earth," in *Worship* 85, no. 4 (July 2011): 332.

16. See Gingras, "Egeria: Diary of a Pilgrimage," 110.

17. Ibid.

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while deacons stand guard, while the faithful enter the Post Crucem to venerate the Cross.[18] The veneration proceeds as follows: "All of them bow down, touching the cross and the inscription, first with their foreheads, then with their eyes; and after kissing the cross, they move on. No one, however, puts out his hand to touch the cross."[19] After this, the faithful also venerate "the ring of Solomon and the phial with which the kings were anointed."[20]

The veneration goes on until the sixth hour, when all go "before the Cross" (the *Ante Crucem*, a courtyard[21]) and readings appropriate for Good Friday are proclaimed,[22] amid the weeping and groaning of many. At the ninth hour, the account of the Lord's Death from St. John is read, after which the people are dismissed. The day ends with the *synaxis* at the *Martyrium*, and the commemoration of the burial at the *Anastasis*.[23]

There are several things to note in the *adoratio crucis* in Jerusalem. First is the time and place of the celebration – it takes place before noon, and outside of the liturgical synaxis, which follows from the sixth to the ninth hour. Egeria notes no readings, psalms, or hymns recited or sung during the adoration.[24] Second, and connected with the first, is the presence of the bishop and clergy during the rite for security rather than liturgical presidency.[25] Third, the presence of relics other than

18. See ibid., 110-111. This is a practical arrangement, as Egeria recounts that parts of the true cross have already been stolen.

19. Ibid., 111.

20. Ibid.

21. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 32-33.

22. See Gingras, "Egeria, Diary of a Pilgrimage," 112.

23. See ibid. 111-113.

24. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 36.

25. See Donald G. LaSalle Jr., "Devotion Searching for a Place in Liturgy," in *Worship* 88, no. 2 (March 2014), 98.

the wood of the Cross makes the veneration markedly different from the *adoratio crucis* as it appears in the West, where the relic of the Cross is primarily venerated alone.

All these point to an emphasis on personal devotion within the context of the Paschal celebration. Amid the many liturgical observances of Holy Week, where Word and Eucharist are the focus, in the *adoratio crucis* the faithful are given time to personally show devotion to the Cross by venerating its relic. This emphasis is strengthened by the fact that other relics are also venerated, and that the Cross-relic itself is prepared for veneration very simply, without accompanying rites.[26] This does not imply, however, a strict delineation between private devotion or popular piety on the one hand, and public worship on the other—this act of personal devotion for the faithful still takes place within the greater context of the Holy Week liturgies of Jerusalem.[27]

The *Adoratio Crucis* in the Roman Liturgy

Adaptation in the West

The earliest description available of the rite of adoration in the Roman Rite is found in the eighth century. How it entered the Roman liturgy is not known, but Philip Goddard speculates that popes of Eastern origin in the seventh and eighth centuries may have imported it.[28] Donald LaSalle observes one salient point in its adaptation: from the act of personal devotion afforded to the faithful in the midst of the Good Friday

26. See ibid., 99-100.

27. See ibid., 100.

28. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 178.

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rites, the adoration is given a place within the liturgy itself. This was done in varying ways, as shall be seen.[29]

The Ordines Romani and the Old Gelasian Sacramentary

The earliest attestations of the adaptation of the rite from the east are found in the *Ordines Romani* and the *Liber sacramentorum Romanae Ecclesiae* (the so-called Old Gelasian Sacramentary). The *ordines Romani* (sing. *ordo*) are descriptions of a liturgical rite, meant for the good ordering of the liturgy. Michel Andrieu had compiled fifty such *ordines*; several of these describe the liturgies of the Triduum, and as such give insight to the various ways the *adoratio* was incorporated into the liturgy of Rome.[30]

Ordo XXIII

Ordo XXIII, written around the year 700-750, was the work of a Frankish monk who witnessed the Triduum liturgies in Rome.[31] As the earliest extant description of the *adoratio crucis* in the West, it is a valuable witness to its early adaptation in public worship, and still shows Eastern influences, such as the proclamation of the readings while the adoration is on-going. That this was written during a period of Eastern influence in the city may show the primary reason for the adaptation of the *adoratio* in Rome.[32] Anne-Madeleine Plum contends that the

29. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 101.

30. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 53-56.

31. See ibid., 53.

32. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 102.

Eastern influence is shown most clearly during the procession, where the Pope carries the censer rather than the relic.[33]

The Ordo situates the *adoratio* in the Basilica of *Santa Croce in Gerusalemme*, the stational Church on Good Friday.[34] At the eighth hour, the Pope, walking barefoot and holding a censer, processes with the other ministers from the Lateran to *Santa Croce* while the psalm *Beati inmaculati* is sung. Immediately behind him is a deacon who carries the wood of the Cross in a jeweled and gilded reliquary. Once they enter *Santa Croce,* the deacon places the reliquary on the altar, and the Pope opens it. After they prostrate themselves in prayer, the Pope rises, goes to the altar and kisses the relic. The relic is then venerated by the faithful with a kiss; it is placed at the entrance of the sanctuary for the men, and then brought by ministers to the women, who are not allowed to enter the sanctuary.[35] While the veneration is ongoing, Scripture is proclaimed, the last of which is the Passion according to St. John.[36]

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33. See Anne-Madeleine Plum, "*Adoratio Crucis* in Ritus und Gesang: Die Verehrung des Kreuzes in liturgischer Feier und in zehn exemplarischen Passionslieder," (PhD diss., Katholisch-Theologische Fakultät, Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz, 2004), 39.

34. See Ordo XXIII, in *Les Ordines Romani Du Haut Moyen Age*, vol. III, ed. Michel Andrieu (Louvain: Spiciliegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1974), 270. LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 101.

35. See Ordo XXIII, 270-272. The Ordo describes the relic as being brought from the *altar super arcellam ad rugas*, the *ruga* being the movable fence delineating the sanctuary and the nave. Louis van Tongeren, "*Crux mihi certa salus*. The Cult and the Veneration of the Cross in Early Medieval Europe," in *Territorio, Sociedad y Poder*, no. 2 (2009): 361. Then, it is brought by the *oblationarii* and other subdeacons to the women for their veneration. See Ordo XXIII, 272.

36. See Ordo XXIII, 271. The readings are as follows: from Hosea, read by the subdeacon; the tract *Domine adiuvi* and its verses, sung by the cantor; then from Deuteronomy, and then the tract *Qui habitat*, and finally, the Passion according to St. John, read by the deacon.

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After the veneration, the Pope leads the faithful in the solemn intercessions, after which he and the ministers proceed back to the Lateran. There is no communion in this Papal rite; those who wish to communicate do so with the reserved Sacrament, or in the other churches of Rome.[37] At which point this optional communion is given is not specified; the ordo states only the two abovementioned options. In any case, this clear separation between *Adoratio a*nd Communion represented the "suburbicarian" tradition in Rome; in contrast, the "Gelasian" tradition representative of the titular churches (*tituli*) would closely connect Communion and adoration, as will be seen below.[38]

Its Eastern influences notwithstanding, the rite differs from the rite in Jerusalem in different ways. First, the *adoratio crucis* begins at the eighth hour instead of before noon, and within the context of the liturgy itself. Second is the different role of the clergy—instead of serving as custodians of the relic of the cross, they are the first to venerate it, followed by the faithful. Third, the relic alone is venerated, and is placed on the altar, and then moved for the veneration of the people. Fourth, the *adoratio crucis* takes place simultaneously with the reading of Scripture. LaSalle contends that though the veneration has been inserted into the liturgy, the rite of Ordo XXIII maintains the *adoratio crucis* as an expression of devotion by the faithful. The participation of the faithful remains an important element in the rite, though the pontiff and his clergy have been given a more prominent role.[39]

37. See ibid., 271-272.

38. See Plum, "*Adoratio Crucis*," 40. This would suggest that the *adoratio* in the *tituli* takes place during or after the *adoratio in Santa Croce*.

39. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in Liturgy," 102.

Ordo XXIV

Ordo XXIV was written in the latter half of the eighth century by a Frankish monk, describing the rites in Rome for Holy Wednesday to Saturday. [40] Andrieu, citing the absence of the pope, the clergy of the Roman basilicas, and the papal entourage in the *ordo*, surmises that the celebrant described is a bishop, officiating in an unnamed church, and accompanied by an indeterminate number of priests, deacons, sub-deacons, and acolytes.[41]

Unlike Ordo XXIII, the *adoratio crucis* takes place in the afternoon or early evening,[42] and is preceded by a morning service in a church, presided by the bishop.[43] The *synaxis* begins at the third hour with a procession towards the altar, in front of which the celebrant prostrates himself and prays silently. He then rises, goes to his chair, and sits for the readings, psalms, and the Passion according to St. John.[44] After the solemn orations, the altar is stripped and all go out in silence. This synaxis is repeated in the same order by the presbyters in their own churches.[45]

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40. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 54.

41. Ordo XXIV, in Les Ordines Romani Du Haut Moyen Age, vol. III, ed. Michel Andrieu (Louvain: Spiciliegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1974), 280.

42 "*Ad vesperam*." See ibid.

Ph.ilip Goddard interprets this as an evening service, although Donald LaSalle contends that this is done in the afternoon. In any case, this is to be done after the solemn orations ("post orationes"). See Goddard, Festa Paschalia, 179, and LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 103.

43. "*[I]n ecclesia statua infra urbem, non tamen in maiore ecclesia*." Ibid., 292.

44. See ibid., 291-292. Like Ordo XXIII, there are two readings and two psalms/tracts, *Domine audivi* and *Quo habitat* or *Eripe me*.

45. The only change mentioned is that they substitute the name of the bishop in place of the Holy Father. Ordo XXIV, 293.

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The *adoratio crucis* itself is celebrated in both the church of the morning service, and in the other churches. After the solemn orations, the cross is placed some distance before the altar, supported by two acolytes. A kneeler (prie-dieu) is set up before it, and the celebrant comes to adore the cross with a kiss. He is followed by other bishops, priests, deacons, subdeacons, other ministers, and finally by the faithful. Unlike Ordo XXIII, the readings are now separate from the *adoratio crucis*; in their place, the following is sung: "*Ecce lignum crucis, in quo salus mundi pependit. Venite adoremus*," [46] along with Psalm 118, *Beati inmaculati*, which had been sung in procession in Ordo XXIII.[47] When the veneration has been completed, the reserved Sacrament is brought out by presbyters and communion follows.[48]

Ordo XXIV, much like Ordo XXIII, retains the simplicity of the rite of veneration, though it deviates in some ways. Gian Paolo Ropa contends that this ordo reflects the "early Roman model" of veneration, which is distinctly Roman in its simplicity and austerity.[49] The cross itself is placed without ceremony in front of the altar for the veneration, and the rite occurs in a simple manner.

There are some things to be noted in the development of the *adoratio crucis* from Ordo XXIII. First, the *adoratio* is separated from the reading of Scripture, which had previously taken

46. The English translation of the *Editio Typica Tertia* is as follows: "Behold the wood of the cross on which hung the Salvation of the world. Come let us adore." "The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord," in *The Roman Missal, For Use in the Dioceses of the Philippines*, 3rd Typical Edition (Manila: Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 2010), no. 15.

47. See ibid., 294.

48. See ibid.

49. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 104.

place simultaneously. In its place, chants are now sung during the rite. The *Ecce lignum crucis*, still found in the liturgy today, is first mentioned in this *Ordo*, (though not sung thrice as the cross is lifted, as in later developments, but instead during the individual veneration of the Cross). For Donald LaSalle, this chant serves to highlight the connection between the liturgical action of Good Friday and the "salvific action of Jesus' death."[50] Second, the cross itself is not moved from altar to sanctuary but remains in front for veneration by all. Third, the rite is done before Communion, which immediately follows it, though once more, in a simple and austere manner (it is to be recalled that in Ordo XXIII, there is no communion by the faithful, and the pope immediately proceeds back to the Lateran palace). Lastly, and most importantly, there seems to have been a change from the veneration of the *relic* of the True Cross to the veneration of an *ordinary (wooden) cross*. The parish churches in which the Good Friday liturgy would take place would probably not have a relic of the True Cross. This points to a change of emphasis of the *adoratio crucis*: from the veneration of a relic, the wood of the Cross it is now the veneration of the Cross as "embodying the salvific event of Christ's death."[51]

It is to be noted that Ordo XXIV gives a definite structure to the Good Friday liturgy and the *adoratio crucis*, a structure that, with some modifications and development, will remain and continue in the *Missale Romanum* of 1570 (the "Tridentine" Missal). This structure, in which the elements pertaining to the *adoratio crucis* are now joined, and the rite itself clearly distinct from the other parts of the Good Friday liturgy (that is, separate from the readings, in contrast to Ordo XXIII above, and separate from communion, in contrast to the Gelasian

50. Ibid., 105.

51. Ibid., 103

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Sacramentary below), is as follows: Liturgy of the Word, solemn orations, *adoratio crucis*, and communion.[52]

The Old Gelasian Sacramentary

Unlike Ordo XXIII, which described the papal Triduum liturgies, the *Liber sacramentorum Romanae Ecclesiae* (the so-called Old Gelasian Sacramentary) pertained to the Roman presbyteral tradition, and consequently, was a book intended for use in the titular churches (*tituli*) of Rome. While the book is undoubtedly of Roman origin with Frankish additions, its Roman origin is not of a unified structure, but a compilation of different Roman "*libelli*" of different periods. In any case, in terms of the liturgies of the Triduum, it shows exclusively the practice of the presbyteral tradition in the *tituli*.[53]

While the Old Gelasian also incorporates the *adoratio crucis* in the liturgy of Good Friday (called *Feria VI, Passione Domini* in the Sacramentary), it does so in a different way. The service in the Old Gelasian Sacramentary started at the ninth hour, where all proceed into the Church; the Cross is placed on the altar during this time. After this, the presbyter proceeds from the sacristy in silence, and, coming to the altar, says the first collect. This is followed by a reading and responsory, after which the sequence of collect-reading-responsory is again repeated.[54] The Gospel of the Passion is then proclaimed, followed by the solemn orations.[55]

52. See Plum, "*Adoratio Crucis*," 44.

53. See ibid., 41.

54. Before each collect is the priest's invitation to prayer (*oremus*), followed by the deacon's command to kneel (*flectamus genua*) for a short while and then to rise (*levate*). This will be repeated in the solemn orations but is not mentioned in the veneration. See The Old Gelasian Sacramentary: Liber sacramentorum Romanae Ecclesiae, ed. H.A. Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894), 74-75.

55. See *The Old Gelasian Sacramentary*, 75-77.

The *adoratio crucis* itself is found within the context of Holy Communion. After the solemn orations, the deacons enter the sacristy and process with the Body and Blood which had been reserved from the previous day. After they had placed it on the altar, the priest venerates the cross on the altar by kissing it, says the *Pater noster* and the *Libera nos*, and all receive Communion under both kinds after making their own veneration towards the Cross.[56] This simple rite, as with the rite of Ordo XXIV, soon spread outside Rome as attested to by its reproduction in Gelasian Sacramentaries of the Eighth Century, used in Gaul.[57]

In contrast to the Papal liturgies as found in Ordo XXIII, the Old Gelasian does not contain a procession with the Cross; it is simply placed on the altar before the silent entrance of the presider. Furthermore, the *adoratio* is celebrated after the solemn orations, at the end of the Liturgy of the Word, and within the context of communion, which is given to all and under both kinds. This "Gelasian" tradition integrates the act of adoration with communion, unlike the "suburbicarian" tradition of no one communicating within the rite. The "parallelism" between the *adoratio* and readings are avoided; in its place adoration and communion are joined together in a single rite.[58] Another detail to be noted is the placement of the *adoratio* of the presider before the *Pater noster*, and those of the clergy and faithful after it. In this change of placement of the *adoratio* to the end of the service, the change of the object of veneration can be gleaned—if at first, the *adoratio* began due to the importance and meaning of the relic, the reversal of the order of the *adoratio* may point to the

56. See ibid, 77. The Order of Good Friday ends here ("adorant omnes sanctam crucem at communicant"), and there is no order of veneration mentioned, nor any rite after the veneration and communion.

57. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 179. For the description of the Gelasians of the Eighth Century, see Folsom, "Liturgical Books of the Roman Rite," 249-250.

58. See Plum, "*Adoratio Crucis*," 41-42.

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absence of such a relic. In its place, a plain Cross ("*ein schlichtes Kreuz*," according to Anne-Madeleine Plum) is venerated.[59]

Ordo XXXI

Ordo XXXI, dated to the later part of the ninth century, was written in northern France and described the liturgies of Holy Week and the Easter octave.[60] Andrieu notes its use of the Roman tradition, while at the same time exhibiting Gallican influences, showing how the redactor has not only copied the liturgies but adapted and edited it using different sources.[61] With respect to the Good Friday liturgy, it represents a development of the general outline of the entire celebration and the *adoratio crucis* found in Ordo XXIV.[62]

The morning service mentioned in Ordo XXIV is moved to the afternoon in Ordo XXXI, but proceeds in much the same way, with the double collects, readings, and psalms, the Passion according to St. John, and the solemn orations or prayers of the faithful.[63] After this, the reserved Sacrament is placed on the altar by two presbyters for communion,[64] and the pontiff alone adores the relic of the true Cross, which is set on the altar. Having said the *Pater noster* until the *Pax domini*, he alone receives communion.[65]

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59. See ibid.

60. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 55.

61. See Ordo XXXI, in *Les Ordines Romani Du Haut Moyen Age*, vol. III, ed. Michel Andrieu (Louvain: Spiciliegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1974), 481–487.

62. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy", 105.

63. See Ordo XXXI, 496–497.

64. One presbyter carries the Sacrament, the other a chalice with unconsecrated wine; these will be mixed for Communion. See ibid., 497–498.

65. Ibid.

The ordo is the first to mention a covered cross and a procession in three successive stages. The covered cross, placed behind the altar, is supported on either side by an acolyte, while two cantors bow before it, singing the *Trisagion* in Greek: *Hagios ho Theos*, with the choir responding in Latin: *Sanctus Deus*.[66] This *Trisagion* is an antiphon in which God is praised thrice, followed by a plea for mercy, sung in both Greek and Latin.[67] The cross is then brought nearer to the altar, and the cantors and choir chant the *Trisagion* for a second time. It is then brought all the way to the altar, and the *Trisagion* is sung for the third time. After this, the pontiff immediately uncovers the cross and begins *Ecce lignum crucis*, with the clergy finishing the antiphon: *in quo salus mundi pependit. Venite adoremus*, and all genuflect before the cross. The cantors then carry the cross to an appropriate place for veneration.[68] During the veneration, Psalm 118 is sung, just as in Ordo XXIV. Once the veneration has finished, the rite of communion begins, during which the antiphon *Crux fidelis* and the hymn *Pange lingua* are sung.[69]

In the change of the shape of the rite from its origins in the East and the earlier *ordines*, several important points could be gleaned. First, the *adoratio* has been joined to the rite of Holy

66. This is the first time the *Trisagion*, part of the liturgy of the Eastern Churches, has been mentioned in conjunction with the adoration of the cross. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 106.

67. See Louis van Tongeren, "The Cult of the Cross in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: A Concise Study of Its Origins and Development," in *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana*, Band 38 (2007/2008): 66.

The entire antiphon is as follows: "*Hagios ho theos, hagios ischurros, hagios athanathos, eleison himas; Sanctus Deus, sanctus fortis, sanctus inmortalis, miserere nobis*." Ibid.

68. See Ordo XXXI, 498.

69. See ibid. The Pange lingua is not the one sung on Maundy Thursday, but the *Pange lingua gloriosi lauream certaminis*, which is reproduced in the Romano-German Pontifical below. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 181

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Communion; the Sacrament is brought out before the *adoratio crucis*, and the people receive the Eucharist immediately after adoring the cross.[70] From a rite separate from the *synaxis* (and the reception of communion), it has now become an integral part of the rite, and indeed has a "symbolic significance" in being joined with Communion: "After kissing the cross, which is highlighted as the instrument of salvation, one approaches to receive the eucharistic Body of the crucified one."[71] Second, a crucifix has now probably replaced the wooden cross for veneration; its covering and ceremonial unveiling point to this.[72] Third, by means of the procession and the unveiling of the cross, the communal dimension of what has previously been an act of individual adoration within the liturgy has now been reinforced. The chant, procession, and unveiling do not simply serve as a "prelude" and preparation, intensifying through drama the devotion of individual believers before they come before the cross to venerate it. Rather, these are already part of the entire rite of the *adoratio crucis* and are means by which the entire community is united in an act of communal devotion and veneration.[73] The *Ecce lignum crucis*, now part of the unveiling of the cross, strongly suggests this communal dimension – all are invited to adore the cross together.[74]

Ordo XXXI thus has a significant impact on the history of the *adoratio crucis*. As mentioned above, it represents a confluence

70. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 106.

71. Ibid. This joining of the rite to Communion is representative of the "Gelasian" form of the liturgy. As will be noted, the structure of Ordo XXIV which clearly separates Adoratio and Communion, in contrast to this, will remain in the Missale Romanum. See Plum, "Adoratio Crucis," 46.

72. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 181.

73. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 106-108.

74. See ibid., 108. Previously, in Ordo XXIV, it was sung during individual adoration; at that time, the Cross was not yet unveiled.

of Roman and Gallican practices and shows the adaptation and spread of the liturgy; the simpler Roman manner of veneration has been changed to a more dramatic procession and the unveiling of the Cross.[75] This rite, though adapted and changed in some ways, will remain essentially as the form of the *adoratio crucis* in the West until the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council.[76]

Later Adaptation: The *Adoratio Crucis* in the Pontificals of the Middle Ages

The Romano-German Pontifical

The Romano-German Pontifical (*PRG – Pontificale Romano-Germanicum*),[77] which has its origins in St. Alban's monastery in Mainz, is of decisive importance in the liturgy of the Roman Rite. The liturgies contained in this pontifical illustrate the "cross-fertilization" of the Roman Rite (transplanted into Frankish lands) with Frankish and Gallican traditions. The result of this centuries-long process eventually found itself in Rome through the same pontifical; in the tenth century it was brought into the city and used in its churches, replacing the liturgical traditions celebrated previously.[78] The liturgy of Good Friday and the *adoratio crucis* found in this pontifical portrays this confluence of traditions.

In the *PRG*, Good Friday contains a double service: in the morning, and in the evening (the latter with the *adoratio crucis*), just as in Ordo XXIV, and so represents a development

75. See ibid., 106.

76. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 181.

77. The Pontifical is a liturgical book used by a bishop, containing all the prayers and rubrics needed for different sacraments and rites. For a brief description of the development of the Pontifical, see Folsom, "The Liturgical Books of the Roman Rite," 296-300.

78. See ibid., 56-57.

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of the said Ordo. In the morning, clergy and faithful gather in a church other than the "major church" where it is customary to venerate the cross.[79] The bishop, or his delegate, proceeds with the ministers to the altar in silence.[80] They all prostrate before the altar, after which the bishop, rising, goes to his seat. A reading from the prophet Hosea, and the tract *Domine audivi* follows, at which point the bishop says the Collect, *Deus a quo et Iudas*, et al. The second reading, from Exodus, follows, and then the tract *Qui habitat* or *Eripe me, Domine*. The Passion according to St. John is then proclaimed.[81] The solemn orations then follow, after which the service ends. This service is repeated by the presbyters in their own churches in the evening. [82]

In the evening, both in the church of the morning liturgy and in the other churches, after the solemn orations, the cross is placed before the altar, supported by two acolytes and a prie-dieu is placed in front of it.[83] During the veneration the *Trisagion* is sung with the *Improperia*, the *Ecce lignum* with the psalm *Beati immaculati*, as well as other antiphons.[84] The pontiff is the first to venerate the cross with a kiss, then the bishops, priests, deacons, other ministers, and the faithful. Evidently,

79. "*In ecclesia statute infra urbem, non tamen in maiore ecclesia ubi mos est salutiferam salutare crucem*." Cyrille Vogel, *Le Pontifical Romano-Germaine du dixieme siècle* II (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1963), 86.

80. All wear Lenten vestments, namely dark (black) chasubles. "*Vestibus quadragesimalibus induti, scilicet planetis fuscis*." Ibid.

81. In a dramatic gesture, after the Gospel is read, two deacons snatch the altar cloth away ("*in modo furantis*"). Or, in some cases, two cloths from the altar are snatched away when the verse *Partiti sunt vestimenta mea sibi* is said. See ibid, 87.

82. See ibid., 86-87.

83. See ibid., 90. These are quoted verbatim from Ordo XXIV. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 181.

84. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 181. Some of the other songs to be sung, *Crux fidelis*, *Pange lingua*, *Crucem tuam adoramus*, are also still found in the *Missale Romanum*.

the cross is approached with three genuflections, as in some manuscripts, three prayers, one for each genuflection, are prescribed. After all have venerated, the reserved Sacrament is brought out in a paten, mixed with simple wine in a chalice, and all receive Communion in silence. The service ends with this; there are no prayers mentioned after Communion.[85] In its basic structure, the *adoratio crucis* in the *PRG* is that of Ordo XXIV, which has the double celebration; the *adoratio* is done during the evening service.[86] What is added to the basic structure includes the threefold genuflection before the cross, a "typically Frankish" element[87], as well as the place of the Trisagion—it is sung during the veneration itself, and not, as in Ordo XXIV, during the procession with the cross.

The pontifical contains a series of prayers recommended to be recited, most probably individually, while genuflecting before the cross. These prayers reveal the pervading Germanic religious culture in which the Romano-German Pontifical was created. They speak of the image of the cross as protection and implored its strong help against evil forces; this reflected both a warrior culture, and belief in the strength of images and symbols in mediating power.[88] The Pontifical thus not only shows a development in the shape of the ritual through its employment of different cultures and traditions, but also in its meaning—for salvation, for protection, for aid in warfare against diabolical forces.

85. See Vogel, *Le Pontifical Romano-Germaine du dixieme siècle II*, 91-93.

86. See Plum, "*Adoratio Crucis,*" 50.

87. See ibid., 49.

88. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 109-111.

https://publications.lst.edu/

The Pontifical of Durandus

In the Pontifical of Durandus (*PGD – Pontificale Guillelmi Durandi*), the service of Good Friday begins at the sixth hour. The pontiff, barefoot, goes in procession[89] with his ministers from the sacristy, and makes the prostration in front of the altar. He says the collect silently, and the readings and the solemn orations proceed as in the manner of the *PRG*. The *adoratio crucis* itself is done in three successive stages, as in Ordo XXXI. The pontiff removes his chasuble, and, proceeding to the rear right corner of the altar, receives the veiled cross there. Facing the choir, he uncovers the cross a little from the top and intones the *Ecce lignum crucis*. The ministers and choir take up the chant, and all genuflect after the *Venite adoremus* is sung. Then, the pontiff goes to the front right of the altar, uncovers the arm of the cross, elevates it, and once more intones the *Ecce lignum crucis*; all respond and genuflect as in the first stage. Lastly, the pontiff goes to the middle of the altar and, uncovering the whole of the cross, elevates it, chanting once more the same antiphon. As with the first two stations, all genuflect.[90]

After this, the pontiff puts the cross in a prepared place before the altar. He is the first to venerate it, immediately followed by the ministers in this way: they genuflect three times and then kiss the cross. The clergy and people venerate and kiss the cross in a similar manner. While the adoration is going, songs are sung, notably the *Improperia* or *Populе meus*. After the veneration, the cross is placed on the altar which is now covered with a cloth. The Blessed Sacrament is brought

89. The procession is simple, done without solemnity; only the Gospel Book is carried. See Michel Andrieu, *Le Pontifical de Guillame Durand, III*, *Le Pontifical Romain au Moyen-Age*, *Studi e Testi* 88 (Vatican City: Biblica Apostolica Vaticana, 1950), 582.

90. See ibid., 582-584.

to it, and Communion follows. After the service and evening prayer, the cross is taken away and the altar is stripped.[91]

The confluence of different sources could be seen in the *PGD* - the threefold uncovering of the cross from Ordo XXXI, the threefold genuflection during individual veneration from the *PRG*.[92] The unveiling of the cross and its corresponding genuflections emphasized the communal dimension of the rite, but it could be argued that the displacement of the *Trisagion*, which had been sung in procession in Ordo XXXI, has toned down the dramatic embellishment of the rite.[93] What is now more central is that all adore together as the cross is uncovered, even before it is adored individually.

The *Adoratio Crucis* in the *Missale Romanum*

The Missale Romanum of 1474

The *Missale Romanum* of 1474 (*MR 1474*) was the first printed Missal and formed the basis for the liturgical reform of Trent and the *Missale* promulgated by Pope St. Pius V in 1570.[94] Drawing on earlier sources, it maintained the general shape of the *adoratio crucis*.[95] The service still begins at the sixth hour, and once more, with the simple entrance by the ministers and prostration before the altar in prayer.[96] The arrangement of readings, psalms, and the collect follow the order in the

91. See ibid., 584-587.

92. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 181-182.

93. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy", 112-113.

94. See Folsom, "The Liturgical Books of the Roman Rite," 265-267.

95. For a description of the compilation of MR 1474, see Anthony J. Chadwick, "The Roman Missal of the Council of Trent," in *T&T Clark Companion to Liturgy*, ed. Alcuin Reid (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 108-109.

96. See Missale Romanum Mediolani 1474, ed. Robert Lippe (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1899), 161-162. Hereafter MR 1474.

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Romano-German Pontifical.[97] The *adoratio* itself follows the order from the Pontifical of Durandus, with the three-fold uncovering of the cross, the chanting of the Ecce lignum, and the three genuflections. The cross is placed over or on the altar after the veneration, which is followed by the communion rite, in which only the celebrant communicates.[98] This last point, the abstention from communion by the people, seems to have been the case since the twelfth century, though communion by the people would survive in some places.[99]

The Missale Romanum of 1570

The *Missale Romanum* of 1570 (*MR 1570*), the Missal of the Council of Trent, was based on the *Missale Romanum* of 1474; [100] and as such, represented the development of older forms of the *adoratio* in Franco-Germanic and Roman sources. It is thus no wonder that the *adoratio crucis*, enhanced and embellished from its simple Roman manner, is that which had survived until the postconciliar reform of the liturgy. In the Tridentine Missal, one could see that the general shape of the rite had remained.

One important change over the course of the centuries however was that even though the earlier Pontificals and *MR 1474* prescribed that the liturgy start in the sixth hour, in the intervening centuries, it became the custom to celebrate the Good Friday liturgy (and the rest of Triduum) in the morning.[101] It proceeded in a manner similar to *MR 1474*: simple procession,

97. See Vogel, *Le Pontifical Romano-Germaine du dixieme siècle II*, 92.

98. See MR 1474, 170-174

99. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 188-189.

100. See Chadwick, "The Roman Missal of the Council of Trent," 118-119.

101. See ibid., 173..

prostration before the altar, first reading, psalm/tract, collect, second reading, psalm/tract, Gospel, solemn intercessions.[102]

The *adoratio crucis* proceeded similarly from *MR 1474*. The priest, taking off his chasuble, receives the cross from a deacon at the Epistle side of the altar.[103] The unveiling takes place in three stages. First, at the rear right corner of the Epistle, he uncovers the upper part of the cross, at the front right corner, the right side of the crucifix, and then finally, at the middle of the altar, he uncovers the entire crucifix. Each time, the celebrant lifts the cross and intones the *Ecce lignum*, which is taken up by the ministers and choir; at this point, all except him genuflect. The cross is then taken to its place before the altar.

The celebrant, removing his shoes, is the first to venerate the cross, genuflecting three times before it and then kissing it. The ministers follow, then the clergy and faithful. As the *adoratio* goes on, the celebrant, deacon, and subdeacon chant the *Improperia,* the *Crucem Tuam*, and the *Crux Fidelis*.[104] After the veneration ends, the cross is brought back to the altar and placed there. A procession then forms, led by a processional cross between two candles, and goes to the place where the Sacrament is reposed, which is then brought to the altar. The communion rite follows; the celebrant alone receives Communion.[105]

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102. See Adrian Fortescue, *Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described* (London: Burns, Oates, and Washbourne, 1920), 303-304.

103. See ibid., 301-302.

104. See. *Missale Romanum* 1570, 222-226.

105. See Ibid. 226-228. The Communion service which follows the adoratio crucis had been elaborated with the addition of the solemn procession, incensation, and insertion of texts; it was commonly known as the Mass of the Presanctified, referring to the absence of the consecration of the elements. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 184-189 and Fortescue, *Ceremonies of the Roman Rite*, 309-311.

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In the codification of the *adoratio crucis* in the liturgical books following the reform of the Council of Trent, this act of individual and popular devotion in fourth-century Jerusalem had now become a "normative liturgical act for the Roman Rite."[106] From a myriad of forms by which this individual act of devotion was inserted in the Roman liturgy in the *Ordines* and the Pontificals, it is now given a stable order in the Missal of Trent, operative until the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. The Tridentine liturgy of Good Friday represented not only a movement from individual devotion to public worship, but also a development and incorporation from myriad cultures and sources:[107]

> The rite of veneration that found its way into the *Missale Romanum* of Pius V bears the imprint of several cultures and pieties. An Antiochene Christological piety linked to the holy places of Jerusalem, a Gallican dramatic sensibility, a Germanic approach to the cross as a protective talisman in the battle against hostile diabolical forces, and, finally, Roman sobriety all played a role in the development of this ritual.[108]

The *Adoratio Crucis* in the 1955 Restored Order of Holy Week

One of the decisive moments in the history of the Roman Rite was the reform of the Holy Week liturgy initiated by Pius XII. Because of what had occurred in the intervening centuries, which included the decreasing attendance and participation of the faithful, as well as the celebration of the Triduum liturgies not at their proper hours but in the morning, measures were taken to restore the celebration of the Paschal feasts. The first measure was the reform of the Easter Vigil in 1951, now

106. LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 113.

107. See ibid.

108. Ibid, 117.

celebrated in the evening. Following positive response to this, the entire order of the liturgy of Holy Week was revised, and the *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus*, the Restored Order of Holy Week (*OHSI*), was published in 1955, taking effect the following year.[109]

In *Maxima Redemptionis*, the decree publishing the *OHSI*, the "unique commemoration" of the Lord's Paschal Mystery in Holy Week is emphasized. It talks of the dignity of the rites and their power and efficacy in nourishing the spiritual lives of the faithful, which consequently, could not be simply replaced by devotional practices. The *OHSI*, created after study by experts, pastors, and bishops, would address the problems mentioned earlier by the restoration of the liturgies to their proper times, and the promotion of fruitful participation by the faithful.[110] For Good Friday in particular (now called the Friday of the Passion and Death of the Lord[111]), Holy Communion, which had been generally reserved to the celebrant, would now be given to those disposed and wishing to receive, as was the custom in past centuries.[112] As for the *adoratio crucis*, the decree reiterates its place within the liturgy, calling the cross the "trophy of our redemption," which the entire Christian family is called to venerate with utmost devotion.[113]

In the *OHSI*, the celebration of Good Friday started at around the ninth hour, recalling the death of the Lord. The entrance

109. See Goddard, Festa Paschalia, 264-266.

110. See Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Maxima Redemptionis, General Decree to Restore the Liturgical Order of Holy Week*, Catholic Culture Website, accessed Aug. 20, 2023, https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=1113.

111. *Feria VI in Passione et Morte Domini*; previously it had been called Feria VI in Parasceve. See ibid.

112. See ibid.

113. "*...a familia christiana, clero et populo, sancta Crux, nostrae redemptionis trophaeum, devotissime adoratur.*" Ibid.

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proceeded in the same silent manner, but now the prostration is before an altar that is completely bare. The readings and oration proceeded at a similar manner, but with two collects, as had been the practice before the Tridentine Missal: two sets of collects, readings, tracts, then the Gospel of the Passion.[114] The Second Part of the liturgy followed, now called the Solemn Intercessions or the Prayer of the Faithful (*Oratio Fidelium*).[115] The *adoratio crucis* is the Third Part of the Liturgical Action, now called the Solemn Adoration of the Holy Cross.

The showing of the cross proceeded in this way. The cross, veiled in violet, is now brought from the sacristy in procession instead of being received at the Epistle side of the altar. The priest, deacon, and subdeacon remove their outer vestments (the cope, dalmatic, and tunicle, which they had worn for the solemn intercessions). Flanked by two acolytes with candles, the deacon bearing the cross proceeds in procession towards the middle of the altar, where it is received by the celebrant. The celebrant proceeds to the foot of the altar (*in plano*) by the Epistle side and uncovers the cross a little from the top. He intones the *Ecce lignum*, and after the response, all except him kneel. This is repeated as he ascends to the Epistle side of the altar, and then again, in the middle, where the entire cross is unveiled.[116]

Individual adoration now follows in this manner. The cross is brought to front of the altar, where, it is supported

114. *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus*, *Editio Juxta Typicam* (Manila: Catholic Trade School, 1956), 80. One difference it had with the MR 1570: the priest, deacon, and subdeacon did not wear the chasuble, dalmatic, and tunicle respectively. They will wear outer vestments (the priest substituting the cope for the chasuble) during the Solemn Intercessions and will remove these again for the *adoratio crucis*. See ibid., 77-92. Hereafter OHSI.

115. See ibid., 84.

116. See ibid., 92-93.

by two acolytes. Two other acolytes, place a candle on either side of the cross and kneel facing it all throughout the rite. The manner of veneration—the triple genuflection and the kiss—and the order are the same. After the clergy venerate, the cross is now carried by the acolytes to the entrance of the sanctuary for veneration by the people. The chants remain the same: the *Improperia*, the *Crucem tuam*, and the *Crux fidelis*. The cross, preceded by two candle-bearers, is then brought in procession to the altar and placed there such a way that it could be viewed by the faithful. The communion rite, which is greatly simplified, follows.[117]

Despite the widespread changes introduced by the restored Ordo of 1955, one may note that the basic shape of the *adoratio crucis* has remained the same, barring a few details. Among the changes is the introduction of the procession of the cross and candles—this was "without apparent precedent, introduced to 'increase the solemnity of the rite'."[118] Here one can note again the emphasis of *Maxima Redemptionis*—the fruitful participation of the faithful in the great mysteries of our salvation. The rite is once more embellished to point to the communal adoration of the cross by the faithful, and to direct them to the cross as the symbol of our salvation. The rubric directing the cross to be placed at the altar in sight of the faithful also points to this emphasis; the pre-1955 rite had no such directive.[119]

117. See ibid., 93-100. There is no more incensation; after the Sacrament is brought to the altar, the Communion rite begins with the Lord's prayer.

118. Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 276.

119. See *OHSI*, 97.

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The *Adoratio Crucis* in the Postconciliar *Missale Romanum*

The changes to the liturgy brought about by the reforms following the Second Vatican Council meant that the Paschal celebrations would again be changed. For the Good Friday celebration (now called *Feria VI in Passione Domini*), this meant further reworking, aside from its restoration to the ninth hour and the opening of communion to the faithful. The rite names the three distinct parts which make up the celebration: the Liturgy of the Word, the Adoration of the Holy Cross, and Holy Communion. The first part now reflects the structure of the Liturgy of the Word of the reformed liturgy—entrance, collect, readings.[120] The readings themselves have been changed but the Passion according to St. John had been retained. The solemn intercessions follow the basic structure of the previous Missals. Furthermore, the color also had been changed, from black and violet, to red.[121]

There are now two options regarding the showing of the cross, drawing from elements found in the earlier liturgical books; the form more appropriate to pastoral requirements is to be chosen.[122] The first form reflects the 1955 rite, with the cross coming from the sacristy, preceded by two ministers carrying

120. Previously, there were two collects, two readings, and two psalms, and then the Gospel or, as in the Missale before the Pian reform, reading, tract, collect, reading, tract, Gospel.

121. The change to red would be explained as emphasizing the shift from the emphasis of the celebration to the triumph of the cross, and as signifying martyrdom as well as the Holy Spirit, "through whom Christ offered himself" to the Father. See Paul Turner, *Glory in the Cross: Holy Week in the Third Edition of the Roman Missal* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011), 80.

122. See *Celebratio Passionis Domini*, no. 14., in *Missale Romanum ex decreto sacrosancto oecumenici concilii vaticanii instauratum, auctoritate Paulus PP VI promulgatum, Ioannnis Pauli PP II cura recognitum, Editio Typica Tertia* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2008).

candles. The cross is received by the celebrant before the altar; he remains there throughout instead of gradually ascending to the middle of the altar. The three-fold uncovering and the *Ecce lignum* remain. In the second form, the celebrant himself or the deacon (or another minister) carries the uncovered cross from the entrance of the church to the altar, stopping three times (at the door, in the middle, and in the sanctuary) and chanting the *Ecce lignum* each time. The cross, after having been shown to the people, is now placed at the entrance of the sanctuary or held by ministers for the veneration. The celebrant after having removed his chasuble and shoes, if possible, is the first to venerate with a simple genuflection, or another appropriate sign, for example, a kiss. He is followed by the ministers and the faithful.[123] The hymns remain the same, which are sung by the choir as the adoration is ongoing.[124]

There is only one cross to be venerated; if the large number of the faithful precludes individual adoration, general adoration may follow the showing of the cross. In this case, after the cross is adored by the celebrant and some of the clergy and faithful, the celebrant says a few words of invitation and holds the cross up for all the faithful, who adore it silently.[125] After all have venerated, whether individually or generally, the cross and two candles are now placed on or near the altar. Communion follows, which again has been simplified; the liturgy ends with the Postcommunion, the Prayer over the People, and the recessional, during which the ministers genuflect towards the cross once more.[126]

123. See ibid., no. 14-18.

124. See ibid. no. 20. These are the *Improperia*, the *Crucem tuam*, and the *Crux fidelis*.

125. See ibid., no. 19

126. Ibid., nos. 21-24.

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While the postconciliar reform has greatly simplified the celebration of the liturgy, it is noteworthy that the *adoratio crucis* itself has retained much of its ancient and medieval elements. In some instances, it has even been enhanced, as with the procession and the general adoration given as legitimate options. What is then highlighted is the pastoral and communal dimension of the *adoratio crucis* and the fruitful participation in it by the faithful – pastoral sensibilities and requirements play a role in the celebration of the rite, and these options are designed so as all may be able to see and venerate the cross on Good Friday. Indeed, the reformers of the liturgy were aware that though the theological importance of the Liturgy of the Word was greater, "in the soul of the people the adoration of the cross was psychologically of greater importance."[127] Its place in the liturgy is once again established and concretized in the *Missale Romanum* of Vatican II –the devotion of the people, from Egeria to Vatican II, is given centrality in the liturgy of Good Friday.

Some Comments on the History of the *Adoratio Crucis*

East and West

The history of the *adoratio crucis* shows that it has been conditioned by many influences. It does not represent a Roman rite that is "pure" and unmixed with other rites and customs from other countries. Rather, it shows a rich development, from its simple origins in the East, to the embellishment and enhancement of its liturgical celebration in the West. It shows not only its Eastern influences, but the variety of the rites in the West–the simplicity and sobriety of Rome (as in

127. Quoted in Turner, *Glory in the Cross*, 93.

Ordo XXIV), the dramatic emphasis of the Frankish lands (as in Ordo XXXI), and the warrior culture of the Germans (as in the Romano-German Pontifical). It therefore shows not a one-sided transplantation of the Roman rite, but its "mutual fertilization" with cultures which have also had an impact on Rome—elements of such local adaptations have found their place in the Roman Missal and have persisted until today.[128]

Eschatological Celebration and Historical Representation

As stated earlier, Easter was in the earliest centuries of Christianity a unitary celebration. There was no separate commemoration of the Passion; in Easter was celebrated the entire mystery of salvation—the Lord's life, passion, death, and resurrection. Furthermore, the Easter celebrations had an eschatological accent—the commemoration of the Paschal mystery was the hopeful anticipation of Christ's joyful and triumphant coming again. What the *adoratio crucis* represents is part of the gradual separation of the days before Easter into distinct commemorations of the Lord's Passion—his Supper on Thursday, his death on Friday, his laying on the tomb on Saturday, and his rising on Sunday, and hence the Triduum as has come down to us today.

Added to this is the influence of the Jerusalem liturgy, which were representational in nature—the Church in Jerusalem commemorated not just the theological significance of various feasts but their history—hence the importance of venerating the relic and of the true cross and the entire celebration of Good Friday in the place of the Lord's passion and burial. What has then developed in the rite of adoration is a re-emphasis

128. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 113.

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on the suffering of the Lord on that day, as represented and symbolized by the cross. This is even made clearer in the post-conciliar liturgy, as Philip Goddard writes. The readings, which previously had spoken of the Resurrection and the Passover, are now turned to the suffering of the righteous one (Isaiah 53:11), the high priest who suffers in solidarity with humanity (Hebrews 2:17).[129] One must not forget, however, the dimension of Good Friday as intimately connected with the joy of the Resurrection, though it is a joy that is muted. The celebration speaks not only of suffering but of the joy that has come to the world through the Death and Resurrection of the Lord.[130]

History and Symbolism

In the history of the rite, the relic of the True Cross was gradually replaced with a wooden cross, and then a crucifix. This did not have only practical significance (in that not all churches have such a relic) but also contained a symbolic meaning. From the celebration and veneration of what is historical, the rite turns to the veneration of the cross as a symbol of the universal and cosmic salvation of Jesus. Though it is not the cross on which the Savior *actually* died, nevertheless, the faithful adore Christ the savior represented by the cross before them, and as Amalarius of Metz remarks, the power of the Cross is not lacking in these simple crosses.[131] From a "localized devotion" the rite has then moved to a "general devotion" towards the mystery of salvation:

> The words 'adoration' and 'veneration' continue to be used to describe the ritual action long after the relic of the true cross is replaced by the altar cross or some other

129. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 300.

130. See *Celebratio Passionis Domini*, no. 20.

131. See Goddard, *Festa Paschalia*, 179.

> cross. It is clear from the context that it is no longer the physical material of the cross presented to the assembly that is the object of adoration but rather the salvific event of the crucifixion.[132]

Paul Turner points to a change of the object of veneration—it is no longer the wood of the Cross that is venerated or adored, but Christ himself and his saving action, and not only Christ as the suffering, dying one, but the resurrected, glorious Christ, symbolized by his saving cross—once more the point about the connection of the *adoratio crucis* to the Resurrection is made.[133]

Individual Devotion and Public Worship

From its origins as a devotional practice by individuals within the many observances of Holy Week in Jerusalem, the *adoratio crucis* found its way into the West not as a separate observance for the faithful, but as part of official public worship. Its transition was not uniform; attempts were made in the *ordines Romani* and the *Gelasian Sacramentary* to incorporate it in different ways. Finally, in its codification in the *Missale Romanum* of 1474, of Trent, and of the 1955 and 1970 reforms, by way of the earlier Pontificals, the rite has now been given a relatively stable shape and order in the Roman rite. With this, the individual dimension of this popular devotion has been given a dramatic and communal counterpoint—the cross is venerated not only individually, but as a community, as the "family of God," according to the 1955 reform.[134]

In the adaptation of the rite, there has been a tendency towards clericalization; once the cross occupied a central

132. LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 114-115.

133. See Turner, *Glory in the Cross*, 95.

134. See Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Maxima Redemptionis*.

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point in the sanctuary as well as the celebration, the role of the clergy became more prominent, coming first in the order of procession before the people. Still, there have been attempts to bridge the gap between clergy and people, for instance, in physically bringing the cross over to the faithful for their own adoration.[135] The 1955 and 1970 reforms furthermore emphasized the importance of pastoral sensibility in carrying out the rite, as well as its impact on the fruitful participation by the faithful. As the decree of the 1955 reform says, the Paschal rites "contain a particular sacramental power and efficacy for nourishing the Christian life."[136]

135. See LaSalle, "Devotion Searching for a Place in the Liturgy," 116.

136. Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Maxima Redemptionis*.