

The concelebration of the Pontifical Mass on Holy Thursday in Lyon, a vestige of the ancient Roman concelebrations

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It is often stated as a matter of fact that concelebration, which was introduced into the Roman rite in 1965, does not require the pontifical presidency of the bishop, brings together sometimes considerable numbers of celebrants, and has become a universal mode of celebration, was the ancient customary manner of celebration for the pope and his collaborators. This is not the case. Roman concelebration, which died out in the 12th century, was rare, at least for the period documented, and eminently hierarchical: it consisted of the assistance given by a few cardinal priests to the Roman pontiff during the sacrifice on the most important feast days. It so happens that this ancient concelebration persisted on Holy Thursday in certain cathedrals in France during the Ancien Régime, and even until Paul VI's reform in the cathedral of Lyon, which allows us to better understand it and measure the gulf that separates it from modern concelebration.

Before Paul VI's reform, the Roman rite (of which the Romano-Lyonnais rite was a part) recognised only three types of Eucharistic concelebration: the concelebration of the principal consecrator and the bishop or bishops consecrated during an episcopal consecration; the concelebration of the ordaining bishop and the priests ordained during a priestly ordination; and the concelebration of the archbishop and six priests who assisted him during the pontifical Mass on Holy Thursday in Lyon, during which the holy oils were consecrated.² The latter, which was in use until 1965, when it was replaced in the primatial church of Lyon by the new ritual of concelebration, was unique in that it was the only one of its kind to have survived among the similar concelebrations on Holy Thursday by the bishop and a few canon priests, which had existed in some cathedrals in France (Chartres, Blois, Sens, Paris, Lyon, Toul, Bourges and perhaps Reims) under the Ancien Régime.

The concelebration in Lyon on Holy Thursday was the last and only remaining example of the few Roman concelebrations of the Pope and cardinal priests, which took place on major feast days until the 12th or early 13th century. It also bears witness to the existence of a host of special customs cultivated in cathedrals and collegiate churches.

¹ Lecture given at the 13th CIEL colloquium, Rome 2024.

² Pierre Martin, "Une survivance de la concélébration dans l'Église occidentale : la messe pontificale lyonnaise du jeudi saint" (A survival of concelebration in the Western Church: the Pontifical Mass of Holy Thursday in Lyon), in *La Maison-Dieu* 35 (1953), pp. 72-74.

1. The papal Mass, model of the Roman episcopal Mass

It is important to note that, in the Roman liturgical area, the pontifical liturgy of diocesan bishops is historically modelled on the solemn liturgy of the Pope.

a. The ritual of papal Masses became the model for episcopal Masses in Gaul

Even before the Carolingian era, in the Frankish and Italian worlds, liturgical books circulated between bishoprics and abbeys, and in Gaul, the Roman liturgy was already mingling with the Gallican liturgy. But this phenomenon of hybridisation, already evident in the 7th century, became considerably more pronounced under Pepin the Short and Charlemagne, becoming the norm at court.

The gradual Romanisation of the liturgy was achieved by providing Frankish bishops and priests with models of Roman customs, through the importation of copies of books from the papal court. This Romanisation, combined with local contributions, is evidenced by the sacramentaries – liturgical books for use by the celebrant – of the Gregorian and Gelasian types between 750 and 850, including the famous *Gregorian Sacramentary*, sent by Pope Adrian I to Charlemagne.

In addition to the sacramentaries for the texts, the vectors of this hybridisation were a number of *Ordines romani* – books describing ceremonies – composed between the 6th and 12th centuries. The leading specialist in this field was Mgr Michel Andrieu, professor at the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the University of Strasbourg, who published *Les Ordines romani du Haut Moyen Âge*³ : "In order to give a Frankish clergyman a true understanding of the Roman Mass, it was necessary to provide him, along with a Roman sacramentary, with a description of all the ritual details of the Eucharistic liturgy as it was celebrated in the basilicas of Rome. This need was met by the *Ordo romanus primus*⁴ ."

The *Ordines Romani* of the Early Middle Ages are "Roman" because they originate from what has been known since Dom Mabillon in the 17th century as *the Ordo I* (the same applies to Michel Andrieu). This *Ordo primus*, which left Rome around 750 at the latest for the states of Pepin the Short, where it received additions, describes the Pope's Mass at Saint Mary Major on Easter morning. The Frankish bishop who had to draw inspiration from it had to interpret it if necessary (for example, because he did not celebrate *versus populum* like the Pope in the Roman basilicas).

b. The Tridentine ceremonial of the bishops, modelled on the ceremonial of the Pope

This imitation of the Pope by the bishop became a principle. We see this when we consider the history of the formation of the *Cæremoniale Episcoporum* = Tridentine of 1600 (Clement VIII), the last typical edition of which dates from 1886. It is in fact largely inspired by the book *Ceremonies of Cardinals and Bishops in their Dioceses*, composed by Paride de Grassi, pontifical master of

³Louvain, Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 4 volumes published between 1931 and 1961. Reprinted in 1971.

⁴Michel Andrieu, *Les Ordines romani du Haut Moyen Âge*, vol. 1, "Les textes" (Paris, 1931), p. 468.

ceremonies, in 1564, drawing inspiration from the *Cæremoniale Sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ*, by his predecessors Patrizi and Burckard, known as the "Ceremonial of Leo X". In other words, the ceremonial of the bishops of 1600 is an adaptation for the use of diocesan bishops of the ceremonial of papal Masses.⁵

On the subject at hand, it should be noted that the pontifical ceremonies of the diocesan bishop, surrounded by the crown of his clergy, especially his *senate*, the cathedral chapter, imitate the liturgical assistance that the Roman clergy, and especially the pope's *senate*, the Sacred College of Cardinals, lend to the Supreme Pontiff. The pope's senate and the diocesan bishop's senate are divided into several orders. The Sacred College comprises three orders: cardinal deacons, who hold a Roman diaconate; cardinal priests, who hold a Roman parish; and cardinal bishops, each of whom heads a suburbicarian diocese (around Rome). Similarly, the cathedral chapter normally comprises four orders: subdeacon canons, deacon canons, priest canons and dignitaries. This division gives rise to corresponding liturgical distinctions: during the most solemn papal chapels, the cardinals adorn themselves with the vestments of their order, the cope for cardinal bishops, the chasuble for cardinal priests, and the dalmatic for cardinal deacons; Similarly, during pontifical ceremonies of the diocesan bishop, his canons adorn themselves with the vestments of their order: a cope for dignitaries, a chasuble for priests, a dalmatic for deacons, and a tunic for subdeacons. All remain in their stalls or intervene at the pontiff's throne.

Thus, the basis for the concelebration of canon priests with the bishop or cardinal priests with the Pope is this *assisted pontifical celebration*, which is the pontifical Mass of the Pope or bishop assisted by his clerics in full regalia (in France, they were called *induts* (*from indutum*, the garment that covers, the *induti*, those who are covered). At a pinch, one could argue that the traditional pontifical Mass of the Pope and the diocesan bishop, assisted, according to their respective orders, by their principal clerics dressed in the vestments of those orders, was in fact the form of *concelebration* of the Roman rite, a rite that was more monarchical and hierarchical than the Eastern rites insofar as it featured the Pope or his imitator, the bishop, in his cathedral.

2. The concelebration of the pontifical Mass on Holy Thursday in Lyon

To learn about the rites of the pontifical Mass as it was celebrated in Lyon until the reform of Paul VI, there is no ceremonial book for bishops specific to the Archdiocese of Lyon. However, the Romano-Lyonnais missal, the last typical edition of which dates from 1956 under Cardinal Gerlier, contains a *Ritus servandus in celebratione missæ* which has the particularity of containing a very complete *Ritus in missa pontificalis servandus*. This *ritus servandus* is based on the one contained

⁵The *Cæremonial Epsicoporum* is available in Latin and French in *Le Cérémonial des Evêques*, Institut du Christ-Roi/ Hora Decima, 2006, and the papal ceremonial "of Leo X" in: Pierre Joseph Rinaldi-Bucci, *Cæremoniale missæ quæ a Summo Pontifice Ecclesiæ Universalis ritu solemnè celebratur* (Regensburg, 1889). There is a description in Italian: [RERUM LITURGICARUM: \(5\) La Messa Pontificale. Tipologie - Caratteristiche - Peculiarità. \(Messa Pontificale dei Papa a San Pietro\)](#).

in the 1904 edition for Cardinal Coullié, which is that of *the Proprium Lugdunense*, approved by Pius IX for Cardinal de Bonald in 1866.⁶

It seems that the canons of Lyon in the 19th century resisted much more vigorously than those of other cathedral chapters in France to maintain their ancient customs, in a climate where the clergy of Lyon rediscovered, in opposition to Paris, that it was the capital of Gaul.⁷ . Contrary to what is often said, the Neo-Gallican books adopted in the 18th century, which were missals and breviaries, modified the calendar and a number of texts from the temporal and sanctoral Masses, but in principle did not affect pontifical customs in any way. It was not until the adoption of the Roman books in the 19th century, from 1839 (Langres) to 1875 (Orléans), that all the Roman books, including the ceremonial of the bishops, were adopted in France. In very concrete terms, the canons of Lyon fought to prevent the Roman bishops' ceremonial from being imposed on the primatial church.

Cardinal de Bonald, Archbishop of Lyon from 1839 to 1870, was a determined ultramontane, but also a great diplomat. He pushed through certain reforms (he provided the primatial church with an organ, even though local custom rejected this), but he preserved most of the particularities in use in the primatial church and in the churches that conformed to it (specific prayers of confession, numerous proses, specific offertory prayers, *Venite populi* as the song of fraction).

Above all, he preserved the customs of the pontifical Mass.⁸ This included the most significant Gallican custom, the pontifical blessing given before the *Pax Domini*, which precedes communion and not at the end of Mass. According to the Oratorian Pierre Lebrun (1661-1729), the most prominent figure among French historians of the classical period, the Church of Lyon, which had been the most faithful to the Romanisation desired by Charlemagne, had abandoned this practice and only resumed it after several centuries. It had also been re-established in Orléans by Cardinal de Coislin, and it remained in Paris, Sens, Auxerre, Troyes, etc.⁹ Also noteworthy in the Lyon pontifical Mass was the rite of *administration*, the solemn preparation of bread and wine in a side chapel, reminiscent of the preparation of the oblates in the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom on the altar of prosthesis.

There were 36 officiants for the pontifical Mass in Lyon: seven acolytes in albs, the cross-bearer and the crosier-bearer, six subdeacons, the canon subdeacon carrying the archiepiscopal

⁶ *Missale Romano-Lugdunense, sive missale Romanum in quo ritus Lugdunenses ultimi tridui ante Pascha, ordinis missae et vigiliae Pentecostes auctoritate Sanctae Sedis Apostolicae iisdem ritibus romanis proprio loco substituuntur*, 1866.

⁷ Echoes of this liturgical battle can be found in *Défense de la liturgie de Lyon. Réponse à M. de Conny par M. l'abbé C.* (Lyon/Paris, 1859).

⁸ *The Pontifical Mass of Lyon*, (Lyon, 1920), reproduced by *Cérémoniaire*, [Pontifical Mass of Lyon - 1 \(ceremoniaire.net\)](http://ceremoniaire.net); Dom Denys Bvenner, *The Ancient Roman Liturgy. The Lyon Rite* (Vitte, 1934).

⁹ Pierre Lebrun, *Explication littérale historique et dogmatique des prières et des cérémonies de la Messe, suivant les anciens auteurs et les monumens de toutes les Églises du monde chrétien*: volume I published in 1716, volumes II to IV in 1726. We refer here to the Périsse Frères edition, Lyon/Paris, 1860, 4 vols. – vol. 2, 4thme dissertation, art. 4, pp. 228-232.

cross, six deacons, the canon deacon carrying the crosier, six priests in chasubles, the archbishop and his two assistants, and finally the four insignia bearers (book, candlestick, mitre, maniple). This was an impressive array of ministers, but one that was common in many cathedrals and collegiate churches under the Ancien Régime. At the collegiate church of Saint-Martin in Tours, for example, the celebrant of the solemn Mass was surrounded by seven candle bearers in tunics, two thurifers in copes, seven acolytes in tunics, two subdeacons and two deacons.¹⁰

During the pontifical Mass in Lyon, there were six priests in vestments, wearing chasubles, who, unlike the other canons, remained in their stalls except when they came to 'circle' around the bishop, and were part of the ceremony itself, in the same way that, in the pontifical Mass according to the Roman rite, the assistant priest canon in a cope and two assistant deacon canons in dalmatics, who surround the bishop.

Before the Revolution, the six induted priests also gathered when the archbishop celebrated pontifically at the collegiate church of Saint-Paul in Lyon.¹¹ At Saint-Etienne Cathedral in Sens, thirteen parish priests, called "cardinal priests", assisted the bishop at solemn Mass. In Troyes and Angers, cardinal priests also took part. They were called *cardinals* because they stood at the corners of the altar, *ad cardines altaris*, in fact on the short sides of the altar.¹²

In Lyon, these six priests, who participated directly in the pontifical Mass, made their confessions (prayers at the foot of the altar) with the pontiff, ascended with him to the altar, and then sat down on the stools that had been prepared for them. They kissed the book of the Gospels after the pontiff (as did the other priests in the choir). They brought the pontiff the small hosts that he was to consecrate. They returned to the altar at the end of the Offertory and took their places, three on the right and three on the left. They remained thus around the pontiff for the duration of the Canon and Communion. They then took part in the procession that returned the Blessed Sacrament to the altar of the Blessed Sacrament. But they did not concelebrate.

Except on Holy Thursday, when they participated with the archbishop in the consecration of the holy chrism and the oil of catechumens (in the Roman rite, twelve priests participate in the consecration of the holy oils). In addition to this co-consecration, they also concelebrated Mass with the archbishop. This Lyonese concelebration of six dressed-up canon priests, unique in the year, therefore changed very little in appearance, since the rites of the pontifical Mass required them to stand to the right and left of the altar.¹³

¹⁰ *Liturgical Journeys in France or Research Conducted in Various Cities of the Kingdom: Containing Several Details Concerning the Rites and Customs of the Churches, with Discoveries on Ecclesiastical and Pagan Antiquity*, by Sieur de Moléon [Jean-Baptiste Le Brun des Marettes], Chez Florentin Delaulne, Paris, 1718, p. 216.

¹¹ *Liturgical Journeys in France*, op. cit., p. 73.

¹² *Liturgical Journeys in France*, op. cit., p. 170.

¹³ In addition to Pierre Martin, "Une survivance de la concélébration dans l'Église occidentale : la messe pontificale lyonnaise du jeudi saint" (A survival of concelebration in the Western Church: the Pontifical Mass of Holy Thursday in Lyon), cited above, see Aimé-Georges Martimort, "Le rituel de la concélébration eucharistique" (The ritual of Eucharistic concelebration), lecture given at the international session in Munich in August 1960, published in *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 77 (1963), pp. 147-168, and Dom Denys Bvenner, *L'ancienne liturgie romaine. The Lyon Rite*, already cited, photos, pp. 315-320.

The six concelebrating canons read and said in a low voice everything that the archbishop said in a slightly louder voice, as in the ordination, but did not repeat his gestures, except for genuflecting at the three elevations. They received Communion kneeling on the altar steps and under one species, like the priests in the ordination Mass, then purified their mouths with a little wine presented to them by the senior subdeacon.¹⁴

Although this Lyon concelebration on Holy Thursday was the only one to persist after the adoption of the Roman Missal in all cathedrals in the 19th century, it was also practised previously, as mentioned above, in Chartres and Blois (the diocese of Blois was a division of that of Chartres), Sens, Paris, Toul, Bourges and perhaps Reims.

In Chartres, the concelebration on Holy Thursday, attested to in the 13th century, continued until 1846 or 1847.¹⁵ It was performed by six archdeacons in full vestments, who also consecrated the holy oils. The six priests and the bishop stood in a single line.¹⁶ According to Father Lebrun, there were only two of them, but they recited, blessed and sang like the bishop.¹⁷ This is more or less confirmed by Dom de Vert, for whom the concelebrants "turn together towards the people and say *Dominus vobiscum* together, each have a missal in front of them on the altar, and give blessings like the bishop¹⁸".

In Reims, the concelebration on Holy Thursday, already described in a 13th-century Pontifical, was still practised at the beginning of the 18th century. However, the accounts do not agree perfectly: all the canons dressed in their vestments in Reims, or six of them, or only two, surrounded the bishop at the altar at the moment of sacrifice, that is, for the Offertory and the Canon, and they said what the celebrant pronounced¹⁹; but according to Pierre Lebrun, quoted above, they did not consecrate or receive Communion.

In Sens, concelebration was already described in a 14th-century pontifical. The concelebrants turned with the archbishop for the greetings, made the same signs of the cross as him, but did not raise the Body of Christ.²⁰ There were only two concelebrants²¹, as in Paris and Blois.

¹⁴The purification of the mouth with a little wine is normal practice, at least for clerics, during pontifical Mass (*Cær. Ep.*, 12, c 29, 3-4).

¹⁵Y. Delaporte, *L'Ordinaire chartrain du XIII^e siècle*, Chartres, 1953 (Société archéologique d'Eure-et-Loir, Mémoires, vol. 19, pp. 47, 108, 261-264, quoted by A.-G. Martimort, "Le rituel de la concélébration eucharistique," quoted above.

¹⁶*Voyages liturgiques de France*, op. cit., p. 231.

¹⁷Pierre Lebrun, *Explication littérale historique et dogmatique des prières et des cérémonies de la Messe*, already cited, vol. 4, 15^{ème} dissertation, art. 8, note a, p. 476.

¹⁸Dom Claude de Vert, Vicar General of Cluny, *Simple, Literal and Historical Explanation of Church Ceremonies for New Converts*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1709-1713), p. 362.

¹⁹Claude de Vert, *Simple, literal and historical explanation of the ceremonies of the Church*, already cited, vol. 1 p. 339.

²⁰E. Martène, *De antiquis eccl. Ritibus*, Lib. 4, cap. 22, § 3, ordo 6, ed. Venice, vol. 3, pp. 92-93, cited by A.-G. Martimort, "Le rituel de la concélébration eucharistique" cited above.

²¹. *Voyages liturgiques de France*, ed. cit., p. 172.

The cathedral of Orléans had also seen a concelebration of six canons in vestments, as had Vienne, which still existed in the 16th century²², but this was no longer the case in the 18th century.²³

3. Ancient Roman concelebrations

²⁴ The practice of concelebration in Rome can only be traced back to the Carolingian period, when it was rare and reserved for a few priests close to the pontiff. There is no reason to believe that it was more frequent or more widely practised before that time. The first evidence of it is found in *the Ordo III*, from the 7th century, a supplement to *the Ordo I* (7th-8th century), the part of which concerning concelebration seems to bear witness to the ancient Roman rite.²⁵

According to *Ordo III*, the pope concelebrated with cardinal priests on four solemnities: Easter, Pentecost, Saint Peter's Day, and Christmas. Each of the cardinals surrounding the pontiff held his three loaves in his hand (or on his individual corporal). They recited the canon together, the pontiff in a louder voice, and consecrated the Body and Blood of the Lord together, but only the pontiff made the signs of the cross.²⁶ The rite is indeed the one that was later found in French liturgies.

The Ordo IV, a collection of *ordines* transcribed in the 9th century, draws on *the Ordo III* in this regard, but with a few modifications: concelebration takes place eight times a year instead of four (Easter, Pentecost, Saint Peter's Day, Christmas, Epiphany, Holy Saturday, Easter Monday, Ascension Day); the co-recitation of the canon by the concelebrants, who are no longer referred to as cardinals, is not clearly marked; bishops may have been among these concelebrants; each concelebrant held two loaves of bread in his hands.²⁷

Roman concelebration is attested in the 12th century (*Liber politicus* by Canon Benedict²⁸, according to which seven cardinal priests approached the altar to celebrate around the pope at the offertory, three on one side and four on the other). These concelebrations may have continued to exist at the beginning of the 13th century. Indeed, Lothaire de Segni, who would become Innocent III,

²²*Voyages liturgiques de France*, op. cit., p. 17.

²³*Voyages liturgiques de France*, op. cit., pp. 181 and 196.

²⁴See: Dom Pierre de Puniet, "Concélébration liturgique" (Liturgical Concelebration), *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie chrétienne et de Liturgie* (Dictionary of Christian Archaeology and Liturgy), Letouzey, vol. 3 (1914), col. 2470-2488; Paul Tihon, "De la concélébration eucharistique" (On Eucharistic Concelebration), *Nouvelle Revue théologique* 86/6 (1964), pp. 579-607.

²⁵*Ordo III* is a composite set of six supplements to *Ordo I*, the first of which describes concelebration and is considered by Michel Andrieu to be Roman (*Les Ordines romani du Haut Moyen Âge*, vol. 2 (Louvain 1932–1956), pp. 124, 127.

²⁶*Les Ordines Romani du haut moyen âge*, ed. cit., vol. 2, p. 131.

²⁷*Les Ordines Romani du Haut Moyen Âge*, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 140, 163.

²⁸On this subject, see: Aimé-Georges Martimort, "Le rituel de la concélébration eucharistique" (The ritual of Eucharistic concelebration), lecture given at the international conference in Munich in August 1960, published in *Ephemerides Liturgicæ* 77 (1963), pp. 147-168, and also in: Mens concordet voci, for Mgr A.G. Martimort on the occasion of his forty years of teaching and the twentieth anniversary of the Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium, (Paris, 1983), pp. 279-298.

alluded to this in his treatise *De missarum mysteriis*, composed at the beginning of the 13th century²⁹ : "The cardinal priests were accustomed to surround the Roman pontiff, to celebrate together with him and, each time the sacrifice was accomplished, to receive communion from his hand. They signified that the apostles who were seated at table with the Lord received the consecrated Eucharist from his hand. When they concelebrated, they signified the moment when the apostles learned from the Lord the rite of his sacrifice.³⁰ It is generally said that this mention is the last historical mention of Roman concelebration. But it can be noted that Lothair uses the perfect tense (*consueverunt autem presbyteri cardinales*) and could be referring to a practice that had already disappeared in his time, although this grammatical element should not be overemphasised.

The explanation for the disappearance of Roman concelebrations could be the spread of private Mass, which became one of the main features of Roman liturgy, in the context of an intensely lived doctrinal deepening concerning the fruits of the sacrifice of the Mass, whose applications were to be multiplied by multiplying its celebration. Private Masses often became a daily occurrence for each priest during the long period from Gregory the Great to Gregory VII, from the 7th to the 11th century, that is, during the period when the Roman-Frankish liturgical hybridisation took place. "The 'private celebration'," writes Canon Gilles Guitard, "underwent considerable quantitative development and geographical expansion during these five centuries, especially during the Carolingian reform and in monastic circles. Vogel was right to write that 'from the 9th century onwards, the private Mass was in universal use'.³¹ Private Masses are attested to in particular by the *Regula vitæ communis*, or *Regula canonicorum*, a rule composed for his canons by Chrodegand, Bishop of Metz in the 8th century, who was close to Pepin the Short. But it was especially in the 9th century that the practice spread of celebrating daily, and even several times a day, for the dead, for the sovereign, to ask for the cessation of rain (or the opposite), the end of an epidemic, and also for penitents who commuted the heavy penance sometimes imposed on them by celebrating Masses. In the 11th century, they appeared officially in monastic constitutions as part of the daily exercises of religious orders.

In the 12th century, most priests therefore celebrated Mass frequently, even daily, without solemnity. This may be why the concelebration of cardinal priests during pontifical Masses on

²⁹*Les mystères des messes*, Latin text and French translation, presentation, critical edition and translation by Olivier Hanne (Rhin & Danube, 2022), vol. 2, pp. 760-761.

³⁰It should be noted that Pierre Lebrun believed that new priests did not truly concelebrate during their ordination Mass, but rather learned how to say Mass: "The recitation aloud [by the bishop] at the ordination Mass [...] is a practice that was introduced several centuries ago to serve as a form of instruction for new priests " (*Explication littérale historique et dogmatique des prières et des cérémonies de la Messe*, ed. cit., vol. 4, 15^{ème} dissertation, p. 476). It should be noted, however, that Lebrun mainly criticises the argument that the pontiff's recitation of the canon aloud on that day is an argument against the silence of the canon.

³¹Gilles Guitard, *La « célébration privée » de la messe dans le rit romain : des origines au XIII^e siècle*, licentiate thesis, University of the Holy Cross, Rome, 2019, p. 61, quoting Cyrille Vogel, "Une mutation culturelle inexplicée : le passage de l'eucharistie communautaire à la messe privée," *Revue des Sciences religieuses*, (1980), 54-3, pp. 231-250, p. 238.

major feast days disappeared as a practice that had become inexplicable: why should they assist the Pope by saying Mass with him when, like all priests, they usually celebrated in a personal manner?

But it is also possible that the disappearance of ancient Roman concelebrations, like their previous rarity, can be explained by the very marked "monarchism" of the Roman liturgy, imitated by the liturgy of the bishops in their cathedrals. Concelebration is more in keeping with Eastern synodality than with the Roman principality.

Conclusion

The fact remains that, if the French concelebrations on Holy Thursday followed the ritual of the ancient Roman concelebrations with their very solemn and also very hierarchical aspect, involving only a few priests dressed in their vestments surrounding the pontiff and consecrating with him, the transition from one to the other leaves one point undecided: since there is no text referring to concelebration for the Mass of Holy Thursday in Rome, how did we move from Roman concelebration at Easter, Pentecost, St Peter's Day, etc., to concelebration only on Holy Thursday in Gaul?

Only Amalarius of Metz (775-850), one of the great Carolingian bishops, witness and participant in the importation of Roman books into the Frankish lands, could mention a concelebration on Holy Thursday in Rome in his *Liber officialis* or *De ecclesiasticis officiis*. But the passage is difficult to interpret: "Mos est Romanae ecclesiae uti in consecratione corporis et sanguinis domini assint presbiteri et simul cum pontifice verbis et manibus conficiant. Oportet ut simili modo simul cum episcopo oleum presbiteri conficiant"³². "It is the custom of the Roman Church that priests assist at the consecration of the Body and Blood of the Lord and that they do so with the pontiff, with their words and their hands. It is necessary that, in the same way, priests prepare the oil [the oil of the sick, the holy chrism and the oil of catechumens being consecrated after communion] with the bishop." Amalarius therefore links the consecration of the holy species and the holy oils. Knowing that he is speaking to Frankish users, this may mean that he is having the Frankish bishops, who were unfamiliar with concelebration, adopt a Roman practice for Christmas, Easter, etc., during the Mass on Holy Thursday. Or perhaps he is applying to Gaul a Roman practice for Holy Thursday, of which he is the first and only one to speak.

The adoption and relative persistence of this concelebration on Holy Thursday in Gaul can be explained in several ways: priests did not say private Masses during the *Triduum*, on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday; on Holy Thursday, the cooperation of some of them in the consecration of the oils naturally called for their cooperation in the Eucharist; finally, the significance of the concelebration, which refers to the Last Supper, as Lothaire de Segni said, makes it more appropriate.

³²*Amalarii episcopi opera liturgica omnia*, ed. I.M. Hanssens, 3 vols. (Città del Vaticano, 1948-1950), *Liber officialis*, lib. 1, c. 12, vol. 2, p. 75.

It is precisely this connection that Saint Thomas refers to towards the end of the 13th century. Addressing the question of concelebration in the *Summa Theologica*, IIIa q 82 a 2, he reasons on the basis of the concelebration of new priests during their ordination Mass, which he specifies was only "the custom of certain Churches". His reasoning, which follows Lothair of Segni/Innocent III, is based on the implicit assertion that concelebration reproduces the pattern of the Last Supper, with parity in participation in the priesthood received from the Lord. The body of the article bases the concelebration of ordination on the fact that the ordained person is established in the priestly rank of the apostles who received the power to consecrate at the Last Supper: "Sicut apostoli concenaverunt Christo cenanti, ita novi ordinati concelebrant episcopo ordinanti", "Just as the apostles shared the meal of Christ at the Last Supper, so the newly ordained concelebrate with the bishop ordaining them." He thus establishes an equivalence not of action (the apostles did not consecrate at the Last Supper) but of meaning between the concelebration of ordination, where priests have just received their power from the bishop, and the meal of the Last Supper, where the apostles received this same power from Christ.

This is consistent with the ritual of the ancient Roman concelebration, which was highly hierarchical and of which the concelebration on Holy Thursday in Lyon was the last vestige: the pontiff, celebrating with the assistance of his entire "senate", was joined by some of the priests of the senate who, like the Apostles *gathered* around Christ, *concelebrated* around the pontiff.