

Dom Guéranger's liturgical movement on the eve the Second Vatican Council

† *Professor Wolfgang Waldstein*¹

"... nolite conformari huic saeculo, sed reformamini in novitate sensus vestri: ut probetis quae sit voluntas Dei bona et beneplacens, et perfecta" (Rom 12:2). These words of the Apostle Paul came involuntarily to my mind when I read what the secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Council (1959-1962), who later became secretary of *the Consilium* (1964-1969) and finally secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship (1969-1975), Monsignor Annibale Bugnini, in his book *La Réforme liturgique 1948-1975* (The Liturgical Reform 1948-1975).²

First, I must point out that I am not a specialist in the history of liturgy. I simply lived intensely, from my youth onwards, the liturgical movement during and after the war. I discovered Maria Laach Abbey in 1950 and was deeply moved by the liturgy celebrated there. It inspired in me a sincere desire to give myself entirely to God at any cost. There I experienced very intimately what a liturgy celebrated with dignity could awaken in the soul: true adoration of God. This liturgy draws us immediately to God and brings us the graces necessary to obey the exhortation of the Apostle Saint Paul: "... to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created according to God in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Eph 4:23). It awakens the desire for true penance and conversion (cf. Acts 3:19), for a "transformation in Christ," for a true love of God, in order to thus arrive at a true love of men.

What Monsignor Bugnini says about Dom Guéranger begins promisingly, when he characterises the "reform movement" as follows: "A path aimed at associating the rite with its content was opening up thanks to a liturgical movement that had set itself the goal of restoring the liturgy to its full expressive and sanctifying power, as well as leading the faithful to participate fully in the sacred ceremony and to understand it completely." Further on, he adds: "This process was introduced by the abbot of Solesmes, Dom Prosper Guéranger OSB (died in 1875), who spread his love of the liturgy in the Benedictine monasteries he had founded,

¹ Lecture given at the 1st CIEL colloquium, Notre-Dame-du-Laus, 1995.

² Annibale Bugnini, *Die Liturgiereform 1948-1975*, Zeugnis und Testament, German edition, Herder, 1988 (abbreviated here as *Liturgical Reform*. In the absence of a French translation, this translation was made based on this German edition

while his publications disseminated the spirit of the liturgy among Christians who showed an interest in and understanding of it."³

Monsignor Bugnini then briefly mentions Saint Pius X, "who saw in the active participation of the faithful in the liturgy the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit and, therefore, the internal renewal of the Church."⁴ He cites the abbeys of Keizersberg in Belgium and Maria-Laach in Germany as examples of monasteries that adopted these intentions and the movement that resulted from them. He then adds: "Finally, the Holy See took hold of this movement; it began by supporting and encouraging it and, ultimately, took it under its wing." In this context, he says: "Thus, on 22 November 1947, Pius XII conferred with his encyclical *Mediator Dei* the seal of his supreme authority on the liturgical movement, which in the meantime had spread throughout the Church." He draws the surprising conclusion, which was probably also decisive for the general evolution that was to follow: "The liturgy had taken its *definitive* path, that is, a pastoral orientation, thus returning to the ideals of its origin."⁵

For anyone who has ever read the encyclical *Mediator Dei*, it will undoubtedly seem strange that it should be described as merely a "pastoral guideline". But what is even more important is to know what this "pastoral orientation" actually means. As Monsignor Bugnini himself shows in his account of the developments that followed, opinions differed widely on this subject, and completely opposing views emerged. This can only be clarified in what follows with the help of a few examples. In this regard, a text from Dom Guéranger's *Liturgical Institutions* is particularly revealing, a text that I will first comment on; secondly, I would like to briefly study the encyclical *Mediator Dei*, the apostolic constitution *Veterum sapientia* and the encyclical *Mysterium fidei*; thirdly, I will compare what this document says with what Monsignor Bugnini says about the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Constitution on the Liturgy of Vatican II; and fourthly, I will compare Monsignor Bugnini's statements with the criticisms made of the first version of *the Institutio generalis*. Only this *Institutio generalis* allows us to clearly understand what was meant by "pastoral orientation".

1. A text by Dom Guéranger

The *Liturgical Institutions* include a chapter on "The anti-liturgical component of Protestantism considered in its consequences for the liturgy," a German translation of which

³ *Liturgical Reform*, p. 25 et seq. 3. Ibid., p. 26.

⁴ Ibid., p. 26

⁵ Ibid.

appeared in *Una Voce-Korrespondenz* in 1978.⁶ This text is particularly revealing with regard to the question we are dealing with, because it shows that Dom Guéranger highlighted, on the one hand, the false paths of a "pastoral orientation" and, on the other hand, what true pastoral care should be.

It is not surprising, of course, that Dom Guéranger gives as the "first characteristic of anti-liturgical heresy" the "hatred of Tradition in the formulas of divine worship". This hatred is directed against the formulas established by the Church "as a public expression of her faith", in which Luther felt "too keenly the force of Tradition". To tolerate them "would have meant for him that his new dogmas would have been condemned by thousands of mouths." But from this first principle flows a second: "Replacing ecclesiastical formulas with readings from Holy Scripture." This gave the anti-liturgical heresy two advantages: "first, that of silencing the voice of Tradition, which it always feared; second, a means of propagating and supporting its dogmas by way of negation or affirmation: by means of negation, by skilfully omitting texts that express the doctrine opposed to the errors one wishes to prevail; by means of affirmation, by highlighting truncated passages which, showing only one side of the truth, hide the other from the eyes of the common people."⁷ If I may take a leap to the "pastoral orientation" of the new liturgy, I would like to mention as one of the most striking examples of a similar process the reading for Holy Thursday, in which the important passage from 1 Corinthians 11:27-32 concerning the indiscriminate reception of the body and blood of the Lord and its consequences has been omitted. As I have recently observed, the same is true of the votive Mass of the Blessed Sacrament and Corpus Christi, and even of the *lectio currens* of the First Letter to the Corinthians. The consequences of this 'pastoral orientation' became particularly evident during the discussions on access to Communion for remarried divorcees. Large sections of the formerly Catholic population no longer understand the "hardness" of the Church in refusing to give them Communion. They no longer know what criteria they should examine themselves against in order not to be guilty towards the body and blood of the Lord and thus receive their own "judgement".

It would be important to read the rest of Dom Guéranger's presentation in its entirety to realise how much what was written over a hundred years ago corresponds, even in detail, to what has actually happened in the name of "pastoral orientation". This is particularly true of the passages stating that "everything that did not seem purely rational" to the Protestant reformers was "branded" by them as "superstition and idolatry". This is why "they found themselves led to remove from worship all formulas that express the mysteries." In this

⁶ Dom Prosper Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, 2nd ed. 1878, chap. XIV, pp. 388-407, here, pp. 397-404. A German translation appeared in *Una Voce Korrespondenz* 8 (1978), pp. 308-313.

⁷ *Liturgical Institutions*, p. 397.

regard, I would like to reproduce here verbatim a longer paragraph, because it concerns "pastoral orientation" in an eminent way.

Dom Guéranger says this:

Since one of the main aims of the liturgical reform was to abolish mystical acts and formulas, it necessarily followed that its authors had to demand the use of the vernacular in divine service. This is therefore one of the most important points in the eyes of the sectarians. Worship is not a secret thing, they say. The people must understand what they are singing. Hatred of the Latin language is innate in the hearts of all enemies of Rome. They see in it the good of Catholics throughout the universe, the arsenal of orthodoxy, the most powerful weapon of the papacy. The spirit of rebellion that drives them to entrust universal prayer to the dialects of each people, each province, each century is already bearing fruit. And the Reformed are able to observe daily that Catholic peoples, despite their Latin prayers, fulfil the obligations of worship with more pleasure and ardour than Protestants... While the Reformed church struggles to bring together purist Christians once a week, the Papist Church sees its many altars constantly besieged by its pious children; every day, they tear themselves away from their work to come and hear these mysterious words that must come from God, for they nourish the faith and soften the pains. Let us admit it, it was a masterstroke on the part of Protestantism to have declared war on the sacred language; if it had succeeded in destroying it, its triumph would have been even more powerful. Exposed to profane eyes, like a dishonoured virgin, the liturgy lost its sacred character from that moment on, and the people soon found that it was not worth abandoning their work or entertainment to hear people speaking as they do in the public square... By removing from the liturgy the mystery that lowers reason, Protestantism was careful not to forget the practical consequence, namely the liberation from the fatigue and discomfort imposed on the body by the practices of papist liturgy. First of all, no more fasting, no more abstinence, no more genuflection in prayer... This is one of the main forms of the great Protestant emancipation: reducing the number of private and public prayers. Evolution soon showed that faith and charity, which are nourished by prayer, had died out in the Reformation, while among Catholics they continue to continue to nourish all acts of devotion to God and man, enriched by the ineffable resources of liturgical prayer performed by the secular and regular clergy, to which the community of the faithful is united.⁸

⁸ Ibid., pp. 403-404 (with some omissions).

A detailed assessment of Dom Guéranger's work, from which all this is clearly evident, was published in 1984 by Cuthbert Johnson OSB.⁹ It should also be noted that Dom Guéranger had the great merit of reviving Gregorian chant, about which the Constitution on the Liturgy says: "The Church recognises Gregorian chant as the chant proper to the Roman liturgy; it is therefore this chant which, all other things being equal, should occupy the first place in liturgical celebrations" (SC116). Dom Guéranger created the conditions necessary for the revival of Gregorian chant by establishing the appropriate editions of *the Liber usualis* and the Monastic Antiphonary. The monks of Solesmes occupy a permanent place of honour on the title page of these works, which are indispensable for the practice of Gregorian chant. The Council also gave new impetus to the work undertaken by Dom Guéranger and continued "since the reform of St. Pius X", and expressly declared: "The typical edition of the books of Gregorian chant will be completed; moreover, a more critical edition of the books already published after the restoration of St. Pius X will be provided" (SC 117).

2. *Mediator Dei, Veterum sapientia and Mysterium fidei*

If Monsignor Bugnini notes, as we have already pointed out, that "Pius XII, with his encyclical *Mediator Dei*, conferred the seal of his supreme authority on the liturgical movement which, in the meantime, had spread throughout the Church"¹⁰, we can also consider that this encyclical constitutes a summary of the essential elements of this movement. Pius XII affirms its fruits

The ceremonies of the Mass have become better known, understood and appreciated; participation in the sacraments has become more widespread and frequent; the beauty of the liturgical prayers has been more appreciated, and the worship of the Holy Eucharist has been rightly regarded as the source and origin of true Christian piety. Moreover, more than in the past, the faithful have been made aware that they all together form one body, very closely united, of which Christ is the head, and that the Christian people have a duty to participate, in their proper place, in the liturgical rites.¹¹

⁹ Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875), *A Liturgical Theologian. An Introduction to his Liturgical Writings and Work*, Analecta liturgica 9 (Studia Anselminiana 89), Rome, 1984. I must thank Father Franck Quoex not only for bringing this work to my attention, but also for sending it to me. On the 150th anniversary of the "restoration of Gregorian chant at Solesmes," Dom Claire described the process of restoring and reviving this chant; cf. *Letter to the Friends of Solesmes*, 1988, no. 4, pp. 9-27.

¹⁰ See note 5.

¹¹ AAS, LIV, 1962, p. 132. The present French text is reproduced from *La Liturgie. Présentation et tables par les moines de Solesmes* I (Paris, 1961).

It is clear here that the "pastoral orientation" is not unilaterally centred on the "active participation of the faithful", but that it must be centred first and foremost on God himself, from whom comes "every good gift and every perfect gift, which comes from above and descends from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change or shadow of variation" (James 1:17).

That is why this encyclical, like all previous Church doctrine, places the worship of God first. The liturgy is first and foremost "public worship of God". Pius XII said on this subject: "The fundamental duty of man is certainly to direct his person and his life towards God". He added:

Now, man normally turns to God when he recognises His supreme majesty and sovereign authority, when he submissively accepts the truths divinely revealed, when he religiously observes His commandments, when he directs all his activity towards Him, in short, when he renders to Him, through the virtue of religion, the worship and homage due to the one true God (no. 10).

Pius XII had already pointed out that he had noticed "not without concern and fear" that in the liturgical movement,

...some are too eager for novelty and stray from the paths of sound doctrine and prudence. For in wanting and desiring to renew the sacred liturgy, they often introduce principles which, in theory or in practice, compromise this holy cause, and sometimes even sully it with errors that affect the Catholic faith and ascetic doctrine. The purity of faith and morals must be the principal rule of this sacred science, which must in every respect conform to the wisest teachings of the Church. It is therefore our duty to praise and approve all that is good, and to restrain or condemn all that deviates from the true and right path (no. 7).

Among the "reckless innovations," Pius XII cites, among other things, the fact that there are those who "in the celebration of the august Eucharistic Sacrifice, use the vernacular" (no. 46). He then says, very much in the spirit of Dom Guéranger: "The use of the Latin language, in use in a large part of the Church, is a manifest and striking sign of unity and an effective protection against any corruption of the original doctrine." However, he adds: "In many rites, however, the use of the vernacular can be very beneficial to the people, but it is for the Apostolic See alone to grant this concession" (no. 47). The context shows that this in no way meant that those in charge were given *carte blanche* to completely eliminate the Latin language from the liturgy, with the authorisation of the Apostolic See.

Moreover, it was the pope who opened the council, John XXIII, who opposed this approach with all the weight of an apostolic constitution. One must read the entire apostolic constitution *Veterum sapientia* to understand its true meaning for the Church. I can only select

a few important passages here: "Unfortunately, many are excessively captivated by the extraordinary progress of science and want to reject or reduce the study of Latin and other such subjects. It is precisely the pressure of this necessity that makes us think that we must follow the opposite path."¹² And he had already said before:

It is for these reasons that the Apostolic See has always been jealous in preserving Latin, and has always considered that "this splendid garment of heavenly doctrine and holy laws" (Pius XI) was worthy of use in the exercise of its magisterium, and should also be used by its ministers. Indeed, thanks to Latin, clergy of any nationality can easily learn about what comes from the Holy See and communicate with it or with each other.

This language is united with the life of the Church and, "its knowledge, acquired through study and use, is of interest to the humanities and literature, but even more so to religion," to quote the words of our predecessor of immortal memory, Pius XI, who pointed out, giving supporting arguments, three qualities that make this language particularly suited to the nature of the Church: "Indeed, the Church, which brings together all nations and is destined to live until the end of time, needs by its very nature a universal language, definitively fixed, which is not a vernacular language."¹³

This is what Pope John XXIII, often described as "ultra-pastoral", said.

However, Pius XII condemns other serious abuses. After emphasising that "going back to the origins is of considerable use in penetrating more deeply and carefully into the meaning of feast days, the meaning of the formulas in use and sacred ceremonies", he adds:

...but it is neither wise nor commendable to bring everything back to Antiquity in every way. So, for example, it would be straying from the right path to want to restore the altar to its original form as a table, to want to radically remove black from the liturgical colours, to exclude holy images and statues from churches, to represent the divine Redeemer on the Cross in such a way that the acute suffering he endured

¹² Ibid., pp. 130 ff. "Pro dolor, sunt sat multi, qui mira progressionem artium abnormiter capti, Latinitatis studia et alias id genus disciplinas repellere vel coercere sibi sumant...Hac ipsa impellente necessitate, contrarium prosequendum iter esse putatus".

¹³ "His de causis Apostolica Sedes nullo non tempore linguam Latinam studiose asservendam curavit eamque dignam existimavit, 'qua tamquam magnifica caelestis doctrinae sanctissimarumque legum veste' (Pius XI) uteretur ipsa in sui exercitatione magisterii, eademque uterentur sacrorum administrum. Eam igitur, adeo cum vita ecclesiae conexam, 'scientia et usu habere perceptam, non tam humanitatis et litterarum, quam religionis interest', quemadmodum Decessor Noster imm. mem. Pius XI monuit, qui rem ratione et via persecutus, tres demonstravit huius linguae dotes, cum Ecclesiae natura mire congruentes: "For the Church, which embraces all nations and will remain until the end of time... requires by its very nature a universal, immutable, and not a vulgar language."

does not appear, and finally to repudiate and reject polyphonic (multi-voice) songs, even if they conform to the norms given by the Apostolic See (no. 49).

Further on, he states that he cannot "but deplore the exaggerations and excesses that are not in accordance with the true teachings of the Church" (no. 72). As an example, he cites:

Some, in fact, completely disapprove of Masses offered in private and without assistance, as being far removed from the ancient way of celebrating the Sacrifice; some even assert that priests cannot offer the divine host on several altars at the same time, because by doing so they divide the community and jeopardise its unity; some even go so far as to say that the people must confirm and approve the Sacrifice in order for it to obtain its value and efficacy (no. 73).

I wondered whether the removal of the genuflection after the Consecration and before the Elevation was not associated with the idea that it is only after the Elevation and confirmation by the people that Christ becomes present under the appearances of bread and wine.

But it is the statements concerning the "Eucharistic worship" itself that are of decisive importance. I can only retain here the definition of its nature as "the true re-actualisation of the Sacrifice of the Cross". Pius XII says on this subject: "The holy sacrifice of the altar is therefore not a mere commemoration of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, but a true sacrifice in the proper sense, in which, through a bloodless immolation, the High Priest does what he did on the Cross, offering himself to the eternal Father as a most pleasing sacrifice" (no. 55). Only in this way can we understand that this redemptive act of Christ, perpetually renewed, is indeed, as Pius XII says, "the high point and centre of the Christian religion" (no. 53). He then emphasises that, through "the transubstantiation of bread into the body and wine into the blood of Christ", the offering of the sacrifice is the same as that of Calvary, "in other words, the divine Redeemer according to his human nature and in the reality of his body and blood" (no. 57). The ends of the sacrifice are designated as: the glorification of the Father, thanksgiving, expiation, supplication, "so that we may be filled with every blessing and every grace" (no. 58).

With regard to the "participation of the faithful in the Eucharistic sacrifice", I can only recall here one of the most important statements. This participation must consist above all in "uniting them closely to the High Priest, according to the words of the Apostle: 'Have in you the same attitude that was in Christ Jesus'" (no. 63). Then the Pope declares:

The words of the Apostle, "Have in you the same attitude that was in Christ Jesus," therefore require all Christians to reproduce, as far as humanly possible, the sentiments that animated the divine Redeemer when he offered the Sacrifice of

himself, that is, that they reproduce his humble submission of spirit, that they adore, honour, praise and thank the sovereign Majesty of God. It also asks them to take on, in a sense, the condition of a victim, to renounce themselves according to the precepts of the Gospel, to devote themselves spontaneously and willingly to penance, and for each one to detest and atone for his or her faults. Finally, he asks that we all die mystically with Christ on the Cross, so that we may make our own the thought of St Paul: "I am sacrificed with Christ" (no. 64).

Pius XII then turns to the "errors formerly condemned," according to which "the people enjoy a true priestly power and (that) the priest acts only as a delegated official" (no. 65). Here, one cannot help but think of the terminology of *the Institutio generalis*, the first version of which stated in Article 7: "Cena dominica sive Missa est sacra synaxis seu congregatio populi Dei in unum convenientis sacerdote praeside, ad memoriale Domini celebrandum." In the official English translation, this sentence reads: "The Lord's Supper, or Mass, is a sacred synaxis, that is, the gathering of the people of God, presided over by the priest, to celebrate the memorial of the Lord." It is clear that this definition of the Mass suggests that the priest acts as president of the assembly of the people and therefore as their delegate. Even in the revised version, which still reads as follows: "In Missa seu Cena dominica populus Dei in unum vocatur, sacerdote praeside personamque Christi gerente." ("at Mass or the Lord's Supper, the people of God are called together and gathered under the leadership of the priest, who represents the person of Christ"), this conception is not excluded, especially since in the German translation, as in the French, instead of "leadership of the priest" there is "under the presidency of the priest". If we compare this definition with what Pius XII says about the "holy sacrifice of the altar" and the "participation of the faithful in the Eucharistic Sacrifice", and with what the Council itself expressly took up, it is clear that these definitions diverge from the spirit of the pre-conciliar liturgical movement.¹⁴

It is particularly noteworthy, however, that after the constitution on the liturgy, dated 4 December 1963, promulgated by Pope Paul VI, the same pope, barely two years later, published the encyclical *Mysterium fidei* on 20 September 1965, which has since fallen into almost total oblivion. In which he expressly recommended the important statements of *Mediator Dei*, supplementing them. He must have realised, even at that time, that the implementation of the liturgical reform had begun to take paths other than those cleared by

¹⁴ See also SC, no. 47: "Our Saviour, at the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages, until he comes again, and to entrust to the Church, his beloved spouse, the memorial of his death and resurrection: sacrament of love, sign of unity, bond of charity, paschal banquet in which Christ is eaten, the soul is filled with grace, and the pledge of future glory is given to us." In art. 49, there is then explicit mention of the "sacrifice of the Mass" (*sacrificium missae*).

the liturgical movement after Dom Guéranger and traced by the Magisterium with the Council. Two years later, on 26 October 1967, the result of this work was submitted to the Synod of Bishops for discussion. What is little known is that, according to the results of the vote communicated by Monsignor Bugnini, the "normative Mass" did not obtain the majority necessary for its adoption.¹⁵

3. Monsignor Bugnini's account of the work of the preparatory commission for the Council

If we now analyse Monsignor Bugnini's approach by comparing it with what the liturgical movement had been calling for since Dom Guéranger and with the statements of the Magisterium, it quickly becomes clear that the direction of the work was different. Clearly, the term "pastoral orientation" was understood at the time, quite unilaterally, to mean an "anthropocentric" orientation instead of the "theocentric" orientation desired by Pius XII, in accordance with all previous tradition (no. 24). This is why the members of the commission who expressed reluctance towards these ideas or even rejected them were often considered adversaries.

Of the many details reported by Secretary Monsignor Bugnini that support this view, only a few can be retained here. The presentation of the problem of the Latin language seems to me particularly revealing. The apostolic constitution *Veterum sapientia* is described as a "gesture by Pope John XXIII" intended to "save Latin". Monsignor Bugnini then adds:

The preparatory liturgy commission had been presented to the Curia as the number one enemy of the Latin language. Musicians were further fuelling the growing unease. The commission's secretariat had already been questioned on this issue and had had to defend the commission against this obvious slander.¹⁶

He then reproduces a defence memorandum that appears to contradict the accusation. However, the subsequent developments in the case show that the representations in the memorandum could only have been intended as a means of calming tempers. Given "the growing opposition that could have had a negative impact on the entire work of the commission" (as Monsignor Bugnini later put it),

the secretariat saw fit to remove the "language" issue from the agenda. They did not even want to hear the arguments presented. However, some specialists and members disagreed with this decision and demanded a public debate in the usual manner. Someone addressed the president and accused the secretariat of favouring the

¹⁵ Cf. *Liturgical Reform*, pp. 378 and 8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

vernacular. Cardinal Cicognani decided that the issue would be discussed at a meeting and prepared to intervene personally.¹⁷

And here are the facts: "On the appointed day, the specialists, one from each nation, pleaded for more than two hours, sometimes with heart-rending insistence, (...) that the door be opened to mother tongues. It was an evening marked by passion. Everyone was moved and touched by all that they had said and heard." It was then that Cardinal Cicognani's intervention is reported. In Monsignor Bugnini's account, it appears as a ridiculous counterpart to the moving interventions that preceded it. He said:

He (Cardinal Cicognani) had noted in his notebook all the passages from Leviticus describing the Ark of the Covenant, the temple, and liturgical service, to show the beauty of the liturgy and the need to remain faithful to tradition. His presentation was delivered in a rather unusual mixture of Latin, Italian, and Spanish. It was the most eloquent demonstration in favour of the mother tongue defended by the commission.¹⁸

The concrete arguments of the entire earlier liturgical movement and the documents of the Magisterium, including John XXIII's apostolic constitution, described as a mere "gesture," were definitively nullified by Cardinal Cicognani's "faux pas." It was then simply noted that "the problem has been resolved in such a way as to reconcile, during the celebration of Mass with the assistance of the people, the rights of Latin with the necessity of the vernacular."¹⁹ We know today what became of the "rights of Latin."

In the person of Cardinal Arcadio M. Larraona, Cardinal Cicognani's successor as Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and President of the Preparatory Commission, the secretary sees a personal adversary. Monsignor Bugnini comments:

The text of the constitution, as signed by Cardinal Cicognani, did not please the new president. He convened a small secret commission tasked with revising it... Thus, two "secretariats" worked on the constitution without either knowing about the other: one, the legitimate one, worked on making the corrections requested by the central commission...; and then there was the secret secretariat tasked with completely rewriting the constitution in accordance with the new president's views. The latter manoeuvred between the two secretariats, always careful to avoid drawing attention to his actions.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 44 ff.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 45.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 45.

According to Monsignor Bugnini, the president had entrusted the main responsibility for the revision he desired to the Austrian Redemptorist Father Josef Löw. The latter died unexpectedly on 23 September 1962. Monsignor Bugnini remarked on this: "This brought disorder to the structure of the opposition."²⁰ He was able to note the result triumphantly: "Then came the Council, which restored the text to its original version and accepted it essentially as it had been left by the preparatory commission on 13 January 1962 and accepted by Cardinal Cicognani on 1 February 1962."²¹

I had to recount these facts in detail, otherwise the procedure used would not have been understood.

In any case, my subject would be exhausted with the decree of the council relating to the liturgical constitution. However, to clarify what I have just explained, I must briefly mention the significant consequences of the principles revealed by the approach taken by the secretariat of the preparatory commission. These are particularly evident in the reaction to the criticisms made of *the Institutio generalis* in its first version.

4. Monsignor Bugnini's reaction to the criticisms

Obviously, the entire chapter 20, entitled "The Opponents of Reform," would have to be examined in detail to make the position he defends really clear. The argument that people are rebelling against the authority of the Pope is readily used here. Only the expressly affirmed authority of Pius XII and that of an apostolic constitution of John XXIII have suddenly disappeared. Clearly, only a particular conception of authority remains. I cannot develop all this here. I must limit myself to a single point, on which, it is true, Monsignor Bugnini does not take a specific position, but which is also concerned by his general judgement.

I must return here to the definition of Mass already cited, found in *the Institutio generalis*, no. 7: "Cena dominica sive Missa est sacra synaxis seu congregatio populi Dei in unum convenientis, sacerdote praeside, ad memoriale Domini celebrandum." If we examine it, against the background of everything that the Church's Magisterium (up to and including article 47 of the constitution on the liturgy) has said about the nature of Holy Mass, the question still arises, for any unbiased observer familiar with the doctrine of the Church, as to how this definition can be reconciled with that doctrine. However, it is not necessary, as Monsignor Bugnini believes, to refer to assumptions or presumptions in order to discern the ideas behind this definition. The expert of the German Bishops' Conference, probably the most competent in the field of liturgy, who was also an expert of the Consilium from 1964 to

²⁰ Ibid., p. 48.

²¹ Ibid., p. 48.

1969, himself explained things clearly. In an article on "Tradition and Progress in the Liturgy" ("Tradition und Fortschritt in der Liturgie"), E. J. Lengeling expressed himself as follows in 1975 on what he considered to be progress: "In the *General Introduction to the 1969 Missal*, the sacramental theology of ecumenism in the celebration of Mass, which was already outlined in the Constitution on the Liturgy (47)²² and in the 1967 Instruction on the Eucharist, was emphasised."²³ The conception of the Holy Mass to which Lengeling refers here is precisely the definition mentioned above. And, referring to the changes made to the definition of the Mass following serious criticism, Lengeling states with complete frankness:

Despite the new wording of 1970, which reactionary attacks ultimately imposed and which avoids the worst thanks to the skill of its drafters, it allows, entirely in line with Odon Casel's thinking, a way out of the impasse of post-Tridentine theories of sacrifice, and it corresponds to the consensus that has emerged in many interfaith documents in recent years.²⁴

Even with a minimum of fairness, it is not possible to dispute the intentions that all this reveals. It is perfectly clear that the "interfaith documents" and the "sacramental theology promoting ecumenism in the celebration of Mass" mainly concern ecumenism with the Evangelical Reformed Church.

Regarding this *General Introduction*, Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci sent Pope Paul VI a critical study of the new Mass on 25 September 1969, in which the above definition is commented on as follows:

(it) contains none of the dogmatic data that are essential to the Mass and which, by that very fact, constitute its true definition. Moreover, these data are too well known for their omission to be unintentional. The new definition being presented as adequate, it means that these data are "outdated," which is practically equivalent to rejecting them.²⁵

Monsignor Bugnini himself states: "The 'critical examination' highlighted point by point what traditionalists constantly repeat in their opposition to Paul VI's missal." Among their objections is this statement concerning the new *ordo missae*: "It is obvious that it no longer seeks to restore the faith of Trent." Monsignor Bugnini then adds:

²² When Lengeling asserts that "sacramental theology promoting ecumenism" appears in Article 47 of the Constitution on the Liturgy, a theology that was subsequently used to define the Mass in the General Introduction to the Missal, this is a particularly instructive example of an interpretation of the Council presented to respond to the intentions of the reformers. The text itself says something quite different (cf. note 14).

²³ In *Liturgisches Jahrbuch, Viertel Jahreshefte für Fragen des Gottesdienstes*, XXV, 1975, p. 218 ff. The German text is reproduced, in a broader context, in UVK, VIII, 1978, p. 314, cited in note 5.

²⁴ See note 23.

²⁵ Translated from the Italian text reproduced in *Cristianità*, Sept.-Dec. 1976, p. 8.

With a little more elegance, Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci declare in their address to the Pope: "The faithful, for whose good a law is enacted, have always had the right, and more than the right, the duty, if the law proves to be harmful, to ask the legislator, with filial confidence, for its repeal."

And Monsignor Bugnini added: "The 'brief critical examination' effectively reaches this conclusion. Even more seriously, its premises not only constitute open disobedience to the Pope and the bishops, which will trigger noisy demonstrations, but they also represent the final results of the Counter-Reformation." He then declared:

It is incomprehensible that Cardinal Ottaviani, who, as an intelligent man, proved himself equal to his task, despite his well-known traditionalism, he who, as Prefect of the Congregation for the Defence of the Faith, had approved the instruction on the adoration due to the Eucharist - from which *the Institutio* of the missal derives in large part, as well as, in addition, the new Eucharistic prayers—... that it was precisely he who could have affixed his signature at the bottom of a pamphlet that was already distinguished not only by its partiality but also by its theological ignorance. And how is it that he did not see in this opposition an attack on papal authority? As for the criticisms levelled, there is really no need to demonstrate their inconsistency.²⁶

I cannot go into further detail regarding these statements. However, in my opinion, they reveal not only the principles of the "anti-liturgical heresy" described by Dom Guéranger, but also the spirit of that gnosis whose influence on liturgical reform has been described in an impressive and sober manner by Paul Crane SJ, and which goes back to ideas that had already developed in the previous century, as Monsignor Graber has been able to demonstrate.²⁷ I will limit myself to noting that it would undoubtedly have been more useful, from a scientific point of view, to explain how the (new) definition of the Mass could really

²⁶ *Liturgical Reform*, pp. 308-310. The "inconsistency" of Monsignor Bugnini's conclusion is easily apparent when one simply reads what Pope Paul VI said in *Mysterium fidei* about the "rule of language": "Through centuries of work, not without the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the Church has established a rule of language and confirmed it with the authority of the councils. This rule has often become the rallying cry and banner of orthodox faith. It must be religiously observed" (Cf. Doc. cath., no. 1456, 3 Oct. 1965, col. 1638). Just before, he had said: "The integrity of the faith being preserved, it is also necessary to observe accuracy in the manner of expression, lest the imprudent use of certain terms suggest, God forbid, false opinions affecting faith in the highest mysteries," and he quotes a serious warning from St Augustine on this subject (*ibid.*, col. 1737).

²⁷ See Paul Crane SJ's clear explanation on this subject, *Gnosis auf dem VorMarsch, Hintergründe der Liturgiereform*, translated and annotated in English by Susan Johnson (Kempten, 1992), p. 6 ff., in particular p. 16 ff.: "Der protestantische Abendmahlsgottesdienst" ("The Protestant Lord's Supper") and, p. 17: "Das Wirken der Neugnostiker" ("The Activity of the Neo-Gnostics"); p. 25 ff. the section "Ein Misbrauch bischöflichen Vertrauens" ("An Abuse of Episcopal Trust"). See also Mgr Rudolf Graber, former bishop of Regensburg, in *Athanasius und die Kirche unserer Zeit* (1973).

be reconciled with the doctrine of the Church, rather than denigrating those who criticise it by accusing them of engaging in "an attack on papal authority".

I must emphasise here that I do not believe that the new *ordo missae*, as such, can be identified with this definition. However, the reformers themselves never acknowledged that the spirit of this definition was erroneous, and they never renounced this definition.²⁸ That is why it is regrettable that the substitute for the Secretariat of State, Archbishop Giovanni Battista Rè, in response to a petition from *Una Voce* in 1993, presented the provisions of the motu proprio *Ecclesia Dei* as a "provisional document". The stubborn refusal to take into consideration facts that have been known for decades, as well as their consequences, and to finally enforce Article 4 of the Constitution on the Liturgy, is one of the most disturbing and painful symptoms of the current ecclesial situation. Given this state of affairs, one cannot help but think back to the words of Pius XII quoted above, concerning the participation of the faithful in the sacrifice of the Mass: "He asks, finally, that we all die mystically with Christ on the Cross, so that we may make our own the thought of St. Paul: 'I am sacrificed with Christ!'"²⁹ Humanly speaking, it is difficult to have any hope in this situation. But the Church was born precisely from a sacrifice that, in the eyes of the world, was a catastrophe. It is only by associating ourselves with this sacrifice that we can strive to accomplish for the Church all that human weakness is capable of. The current Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Ratzinger, encourages this effort. In a text in memory of Klaus Gamber, he said that

What mattered to the liturgical movement at the height of its true nature... was not to fabricate texts, invent actions and forms, but to rediscover the living centre of the liturgy, to penetrate its very fabric, so that its fulfilment might come from its very substance. The liturgical reform, in its concrete realisation, moved further and further away from this origin. The result was not a revival but a devastation.

After showing that authentic liturgical reform had been falsified, Ratzinger declares: Klaus Gamber, "with the vigilance of a true seer and the intrepidity of a true witness, opposed this falsification and tirelessly taught us the living fullness of true liturgy, thanks to his incredibly rich knowledge of the sources"³⁰, not only through criticism, but also through his boundless assistance in view of a new beginning "from the very substance of the liturgy." Only the Lord can help us steady our faltering steps in order to lead them towards this new beginning from "the very substance" of the liturgy and to bring forth the truth. That is why I

²⁸ Cf. Waldstein, UVK, XXIV, 1994, p. 327 ff.

²⁹ *Mediator Dei*, no. 64.

³⁰ In *Simandron, der 'Wachklopfer', Gedenkschrift für Klaus Gamber (1919-1989)*, ed. by W. Nyssen (Cologne, 1989); the first quotation on p. 13, the second on p. 15. All his other statements there are very remarkable.

want to end, full of confidence, with the words of Psalm 37:16: "Quoniam in te, Domine, speravi; Tu exaudies me, Domine, Deus meus" ("Because I have hoped in You, You will hear me, O Lord, my God").