

Theological perspective of the Divine Liturgy in the Church of the East

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Introduction

The summit of the liturgy and one of the most important spiritual actions that the Church performs is the Divine Liturgy. The church cannot be imagined without liturgy, because it is the nerve of the spiritual life. Christ is present at the altar in the midst of his people, and here the church becomes a heaven, and the people live at the time of the Divine Liturgy during the days of heaven on earth. The celebration of this mystery that was from eternity and was revealed in the fullness of time in the crucified and risen Jesus of Nazareth and which was observed by the people of the New Testament are rooted in the worship of the people of the Old Testament.

This is called in Liturgy of the Church of The East: the tree of Life and its fruits are spiritual food for the inhabitants of the earth. It is the life-giving river watering the new creation, the Path that leads to life and the new ladder to heaven. The truth makes freedom; goodness and grace of the living presence of God among people. In short: the meeting of God and man. The tree of life is Jesus Christ and its branches are the special sects of the One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church. Jesus Christ is the Living Source, and the apostles and their successors are channels through which refreshing water is brought to the people. The splendor and depth of the liturgy can be traced back to the synagogue service celebrated in the Aramaic language and to the religious views of those Aramaic-speaking ethnic groups in whose culture most of the scriptures were handed down orally and in writing. The motherland of the East Syriac Rite is Mesopotamia and its surroundings, i.e. the land of the earthly paradise and the original habitants who have been speaking Aramaic since the 6th century BC.

The fact that Jesus and his disciples, like the Jewish people in Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia, spoke Eastern Aramaic, that is, Syriac from a liturgical point of view. It can be said that from the first century of Christianity until after the first millennium of Christianity, the Jewish and East Syriac scholastic system, which was understood as a form of worship, enriched each other. It turns out that at the time of its inception, The Church of the East was influenced by the Jewish liturgy during its stages of development in Mesopotamia. So for example, the Jewish school systems of the fifth and sixth centuries can be shed light on by the canons of the Nisibis School (southern Turkey) for teachers of the Church of the East. The mutual penetration between the East Syriac and the Jewish education system in Mesopotamia was transferred to the liturgical life in the Jewish Synagogue and the Church of the East, where the two liturgies were considered as a seat in the life of the educational system, rooted in both prayer texts and liturgical terminology, as well as interpretive-liturgical methods and theological liturgical

themes, Likewise, the liturgical architectural design and the liturgical year of the Church of the East. On this background we will be able to understand the liturgical interpretation of the anonymous author in the ninth century, which will be the fundamental source of our article explaining the theological perspective of the Holy Mass. The development of the liturgy of the church of the east is determined by theological education, which was of special interest to the ecclesiastical Fathers. They have shown a loving and zealous concern for the education of the persons entrusted to them in general, and teachers of Christian truth in particular. This was already expressed in a lecture at the opening of the academic year of the year 590 in the city of Nisibis. The study of the liturgical stage lasted three years and was understood as a spiritual exercise or a permanent conscious study of the Bible. The curriculum for Nisibis College was determined by a system of education, which was also valid in other educational centers of the Church of the East. The educational content was as follows: in the first year of study the history of the Old Testament and the Wisdom Books, the Epistles of Paul, and liturgical hymns. In the second year: Psalms, books of prophecies; in the third year: theological interpretation of the New Testament and liturgical hymns.

According to the ancient tradition, in the Church schools which were essentially concerned with liturgical education, at first arose solely on oral tradition. Consequently, different liturgical teachings developed in the first educational centers. The school of Nisibis preserved the teachings of Mar Addai and Mar Mari: it was delivered orally and transmitted by Ephrem the Syrian (373) and his disciples, and it was linked and integrated with the tradition of the School of Antioch by one famous of the fathers of the Church of the East, Mar Narsai (about 505).

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¹ The thorough study of P. Kannookadan, the Syrian Lectionary, An historical-liturgical Study, Roma 1991.

The liturgical educational centers of the Church of the East were, as far as political circumstances permitted, in close contact with the educational centers of the other sister Apostolic Churches. In the previous Christological dispute with the West Syriac Church, which was strongly influenced by the Greek Church, the Church of the East made it better acquainted with the Fathers of the Church of Antioch, Cappadocia, and Alexandria. The Church of the East also appreciates the importance of the role of Constantinople. Byzantine influences can also be seen on the East Syriac liturgy in the middle of the fifth century. The Church of the East also maintained a close relationship with the Latin Church in the thirteenth century.²

What specifically drew the attention of liturgical scholars is the essence of the East Syrian rite: the Anaphora³ of Mar Addai and Mar Mari, which originated from the roots of the Judeo-Christian worship dating back to the beginning of the second century in the city of Edessa. The peculiarity of the anaphora is that it does not explicitly contain the Words of Institution of the Lord's Supper. Thus it was part of the teaching that was passed down orally by the School of Edessa through the ecclesiastical Fathers. In the middle of the fourth century, along with the Anaphora of the Apostles, St. Ephrem taught his doctrine, which Narsai (about 505) at the school of Nisibis combined with the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350 – 428) to form a liturgical unit and which was disseminated by the students of the monk of Nisibis in later liturgical centers. When unifying the East Syriac liturgy at the hands of a former monk, Patriarch Ishoyahb III: (649-659), the Anaphora of Mar Addai and Mar Mari were used for all ecclesiastical regions of the Church of the East.

Through this gradual development of the East Syriac liturgy in general, and the historical data presented regarding Anaphora Addai and Mari in particular, I will present a theological study of the liturgical interpretation of the anonymous author (ninth century) in order to know and understand the purpose of the liturgy of the church of the east.⁴ However, despite the importance of the liturgical historical interpretation of East Syriac theology, especially of the anonymous author, this work of the first order does not receive much attention in liturgical studies due to the dominance of the symbolic interpretation of the church ritual. Also, liturgical studies realize that metaphorical theology and sacramental theology are not opposites.⁵

² Wilhelm De Vries, *Die sakramententheologie bei den nestorianern*, Roma 1947, 56.

³ Anaphora is a Greek word meaning (to raise or offer). This word was used in the Septuagint translation in the books of the Old Testament to refer to the sacrifices of the Old Testament, i.e. the raising of offerings. It is also called the rank of sanctification in the Church of the East, and it is the main part of the Divine Liturgy, which begins with a dialogue that takes place between the priest and the deacons and ends with the invocation of the Holy Spirit on the offerings.

⁴ Idris Emlek, *Mysterienfeier der ostsyrischen Kirche im 9. Jahrhundert*, Band 30, München, 2004.

⁵ Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur mit Ausschluss der christlich-palästinensischen Texte*, Bonn, 1922 239.

In addition, the understanding and the purpose of the liturgy has not undergone any significant changes since the ninth century, so what was said in the liturgical interpretation written at that time about the form and meaning of the liturgical celebrations also applies to the present.

The liturgical interpretation of the Anonymous author

The Syriac text of the anonymous author on the liturgy⁶ in the Church of the East confirms its apostolic origins, and it was able to prove this by showing its apostolic activity by reaching China and India. Unlike the Greek and Roman Churches, it never lived under Christian rule. This fact repeatedly led to their isolation and also to the rejection of the Council of Ephesus (431). The Church of the East has a complex liturgy that originated from the syriac-Jewish religious viewpoint and Antiochene thought. In addition, not only were Aristotle's philosophical works transmitted to the Christian West through the educational system of the Church of the East but also many Eastern and Greek writings on medicine and other sciences.

Liturgical Interpretation of the anonymous author explained the renewed East Syriac rite by Mar Ishoyahb III (649-659), which not only preserved the Judeo-Christian heritage, but was also shaped by monastic life, syriac teaching and liturgical centers such as Antioch and Jerusalem. The liturgical explanation by the unknown author is in seven parts preceded by two prefaces describing the author's concerns. The parts, in turn, are divided into chapters and are generally based on the composition of the particular ritual ceremonies. This liturgical interpretation is composed in the form of a question and an answer. The first part is about the liturgical calendar, the second part is dedicated to Vespers, and the third part explains the hymns and prayers of the night and morning. The fourth part explains the service of the Liturgy of the Church of the East and constitutes the core of the traditional liturgical interpretation. Of the remaining three relatively short ones, the fifth part deals with the interpretation of the mystery of baptism, the sixth part deals with the explanation of the consecration of the altar of the church, the seventh part deals with an explanation about the burial rites and in the last chapter of the seventh part deals with the ritual of betrothal and marriage.⁷

The textual form of the liturgy of the Church of the East reformed by Ishoyahb III constitutes the subject and primary source of the liturgical interpretation of the anonymous author. The composition of the Prayer Book corresponds to some extent with the events of the biblical dispensation. Therefore, the Bible is also the basis for the interpretation of the liturgy by the unknown author. The liturgical texts were wonderfully drawn up or designed by the Fathers of the Church, whose names the anonymous author rarely mentions. Among the fathers and

⁶ The word liturgy derived from the technical term in ancient Greek (λειτουργία), which literally means "work for the people" is a literal translation of the two words "litosergos" or public service in ritual prayers and worship.

⁷ R. H. Connolly, Anonymous author, the Exposition of the Church Services, ܩܘܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܘܪܒܐܢܐ ܕܩܝܡܐ, 1-17.

Authors of the Levantine Church are Ephrem the Syrian (373), Ishoyahb III (649-659), Daniel son of Mary (660), George I (661-680), Abraham bar Lipeh and Timothy I (780-823).⁸ From the fathers of the orthodox Syriac Church, he mentions the patriarchs Peter Fullo (468-486) and Severus I (537). The anonymous commentator on the liturgy also cites the following Greek fathers and the Councils of Nicaea (325) and Ephesus (431). Not infrequently the liturgical customs of the followers of Chalcedonians and the Jacobites are mentioned. Among the Jewish books and writers the following is contained in the Liturgical Interpretation of the Anonymous: The Book of the Apocryphal Old Testament, Josephus Flavius (100). As well, the ecclesiastical historian Julius is referred to as a Jewish Christian. In addition, the anonymous interpreter describes very precisely the liturgical customs of the synagogue community of his time.⁹

Who is the anonymous author?

To know the identity of the anonymous author and in order to properly evaluate the relevant research on the name of the anonymous liturgical interpreter, one must clarify the following: In the oldest manuscripts, copied between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, the required liturgical interpretation to be examined was delivered anonymously. In dealing with the index of the author, Metropolitan of the Church of the East, Mar Abdisho Bar Brikha (1318), I.S. Assemani highlighted three liturgical interpreters of the Church of the East who could claim the authorship of the liturgical interpretation, which was anonymous until its time: Metropolitan Giwargis of Erbil (after 987), Patriarch Isho Bar Nun (828) and Metropolitan of Erbil and Mosul Abdisho Bar Bahriz (from 827). And Assemani considered that the authorship belongs to Giwargis Al-Erbil as the most likely one.¹⁰

However, Editor R. H. Connolly had serious reservations about Assemani's point of view. On the basis of a critical comparison of the interpretation of the liturgical denial of the authorship of Giwargis of Erbil and defends Abdisho Bar Bahriz. However, he had to refrain from this attribution to Abdisho bar Bahriz after considering the cited sources, the last of which is Timothy I, the time of editing the liturgical interpretation of the unknown supposed to be dated in the ninth century. Therefore, he does not speak of a possible ninth-century author.¹¹

⁸ Connolly, Exposition, 1/5, 31-32; II/9, 158; 164; 10, 164-165; 12,171,172,178; III/3, 215; IV/14,34.

⁹ Exposition, 1/8, 44-47.

¹⁰ I. S. Assemani, BO III, 518-540, 167, 174.

¹¹ R.H. Connolly, Praefatio, Part I,II, 3.

As a result of his research on the Canons of Gabriel of Basra and their relation to other canonical collections of the Church of the East Fathers, H. Kaufhold proved that in the first half of the ninth century a metropolitan named Abdisho Bar Bahriz was appointed for Mosul-Arbil. Hence resorting to Connolly's long-forgotten hypothesis, he asked whether Abdisho bar Bahriz was the anonymous author of the liturgical interpretation.¹² Also probably the author is Isho Bar-Nun. Concerning the anonymous interpretation of the liturgy, unless it has received any special attention in Syriac research and one has to deal with the previously mentioned Assemani assumption. Therefore, in what follows, the authorship of Giwargis of Erbil will be considered first and the issue of the authorship of both Isho Bar-Nun and Abdisho Bar-Bahriz will be clarified so that we can then know the real author.

Concerning the alleged authorship of the anonymous liturgical interpretation by Metropolitan Giwargis of Erbil who died after 987, the following can be summarized with Baumstark: his name appears only in an unreliable connection with the anonymous liturgical interpretation. Its authorship is therefore emphatically questioned by Connolly.¹³ The source from which the liturgical teachings of Timothy I are quoted (823) is the sure criterion for searching for the anonymous author of the liturgical work in the ninth century. As the following names Isho Bar Nun and Abdisho bar Bahriz in the ninth century are also associated with the interpretation of the anonymous liturgy, their compositions must also be critically examined. In a description of the research, it was mentioned that the scholars did not pay attention to Isho Bar Nun, although Assemani gave a clear indication based on the following phrase: Odisho bar Brikha (1318) attributes in the list of authors the interpretation of the Liturgy to Isho Bar Nun.

To find out whether Isho Bar Nun was the author of the anonymous liturgical interpretation, we have to compare two texts from the interpretation of Isho Bar Nun and the interpretation of the anonymous regarding fasting. Both texts deal with fasting. The question in this context is whether or not an individual is allowed to fast on Sunday. A letter in the form of questions and answers to a monk named Macarius describes this problem as follows: Question 9: Is it permissible to fast on Sunday because of the existing custom? Answer: Fasting is not allowed on Sundays like the Manichaeans. However, we do not fast on Sundays, except for the Sunday that begins the forty-day fast. So it is certain that Isho Bar Nun confirms fasting, at least for the first Sunday, which begins the forty-day fast.¹⁴

¹² H. Kaufhold, *Rechtssammlungen*, 44-50.

¹³ Baumstark, 239. 323-325.

¹⁴ The letter of Isho Bar Nun, in the Vaticanus Syriacus manuscript, Folien, 87r-92r.

But what is the opinion of the anonymous interpreter of the liturgy about the commandment to fast on the first Sunday, which begins the forty-day fast? The anonymous author is concerned with determining the forty-day fast. He writes in chapter 13 of the first epistle: Lent is actually 40 days of fasting, just as we also fast 40 days in the fasts of Elijah and the Apostles. Six weeks in which we fast six days, except for Sundays. This makes 36 days. In addition, there are only four days of the seventh week, since the fast actually ends on the eve of Good Friday, when we celebrate the Mysteries. In addition, Good Friday and Holy Saturday are not counted among the days of fasting, since they are the days of the suffering and death of the Lord.¹⁵

Evaluation of the two passages leads to the following conclusion: Monk Macarius wonders about this custom and asks Isho Bar Nun for advice. He claims that the practice of fasting on Sundays has its origins in Manichaeism, according to which fasting must be done every Sunday. Therefore, he warns the monk against such a trend and draws his attention to an official ritual practice of the Church of the East; according to which fasting is not practiced except on the first Sunday that begins the Great Lent. However, the anonymous author of the liturgical commentary delicately argues against such a liturgical practice that questions the forty-day fast. Indeed, according to the anonymous opinion, one should not fast at all on Sundays, not even on the Sunday that begins Lent, when pure fasting should last 40 days. We conclude from this that Isho Bar Nun is not the author of the liturgical interpretation of the anonymous because he allows fasting on the first Sunday of the forty-day fast, while the anonymous liturgical interpretation claims the opposite. Since the previous investigation showed that neither Giwargis of Erbil nor Isho Bar Nun could have been the author of the anonymous liturgical commentary, the possible authorship of Abdisho Bar Bahriz must be investigated.

If one searches for references to the life and works of its actual author for the liturgical interpretation of the anonymous, one finds, by looking at the source used, that the final stage for its formulation is the year 780. In the same year Timothy I was chosen as patriarch of the Church of the East, his intervention in the East Syriac liturgy at the time of the anonymous author triggered mixed reactions in some dioceses of the Church of the East. For example, the liturgical practice of the Church of the East was not uniform with regard to the Lord's Prayer at the beginning and end of the divine service. For example, the liturgical practice of the Church of the East was not unified with regard to the Lord's Prayer at the beginning and end of the divine service. Therefore, Daniel, who is addressee, asked why the Lord's Prayer is recited in some dioceses at the beginning and end of the service and not in others. He also wanted to know why there are differences in those churches that say the Lord's Prayer at the beginning of the service regarding the exact timing of this prayer.¹⁶

¹⁵ Exposition I/ 13, 61-62.

¹⁶ Ibid, II/ 7.

Because the answer to these questions provides information about determining the end time of writing the anonymous liturgical commentary, the matter must be considered more closely. Thus the liturgical interpretation must have originated after the entry into force of the regulations of Timothy I. However, which was not followed in all the dioceses of the Church of the East at that time.

The anonymous commentator of the liturgy in the second part gives a further indication of when he was written by the following quotation: The Holy Fathers excluded from their fellowship anyone who asserted the sensory perception of the soul after its separation from the body until its reunion.¹⁷ Here the decision of the Synod convened by Timothy I in 786 was formulated, which was confirmed at the Synod convened by Isho Bar Nun in 804.

The reign of Patriarch Timothy I was marked by controversy over the doctrine of the Trinity. It was all about learning about the divine nature.¹⁸ An anonymous commentator also describes such an argument,¹⁹ which probably dates from that time. Indeed, we find that there is a debate about the oneness of God and the mystery of the Trinity between Christian, Muslim and Jewish scholars in the eighth and ninth centuries.²⁰

Moreover, the unknown interpreter also describes the liturgical customs of the Jewish communities of his time very clearly and without controversy. He tried to explain some of the contradictions in the liturgical customs of the Church of the East by comparing them with the practices of the Jewish synagogues. For Jews, the sixth day of the week is called the prelude to Saturday, while the Church of the East calls the Sunday before the forty-day fast the prelude to Lent.²¹ At this point, the question arises as to whether the indications so far existing as to the date of writing of the anonymous liturgical declaration make it possible to identify the author of Mar Abdisho Bar Bahriz.

At first, it should be noted that the life and work of Abdisho bar Bahriz can be dated with certainty to the first half of the ninth century. At first he was the Metropolitan of Harran, then Mosul, then Hazza. He translated many books on logic and philosophy and worked as a translator at the caliph's court. He is referred to as a friend of the physician Gabriel Bar Bokhtisho'. As a theologian, he intervened in the Christian debates between the Church of the East and the Syriac Orthodox and Melkite churches. He wrote in Arabic and Syriac. In Arabic he wrote a treatise on the Trinity. Abdisho bar Brikha ascribes to him not only a liturgical

¹⁷ Exposition, II/ 12,172.

¹⁸ Mar Timothy I., BO III; 101.

¹⁹ Exposition, III/3,215.

²⁰ Jacob. Guttman, Die Religionsphilosophie des Saadia, Göttingen 1882, 101-113.

²¹ Exposition, III/ 7, 235.

interpretation, but also a legal work on the division of inheritance, as Timothy I is quoted as the last author of the time. It is important to mention that Abdisho Bar Bahriz developed a theory of natural law that relates to the law of inheritance.²²

If one compares the previous results of the research, it can be said that Abdisho Bar Bahriz can be accepted as the only possible author of the anonymous liturgical interpretation. This is also confirmed by the fact that a critical comparison of the letter of Isho bar Nun to the Monk Macarios with the anonymous liturgical exegesis revealed a contradiction in content that negated the claim that the author was Isho Bar Nun.

Then the basic data on the life and work of Abdisho Bar Bahriz and the reference to the date of writing the anonymous liturgical exegesis received special attention. It turns out that the sayings of the liturgical explanation of the Anonymous are in agreement with the teaching of Abdisho Bar Bahriz. The points of connection and similarity between Abdisho Bar Bahriz and the anonymous author can be clearly identified: By presenting the historical development of the East Syriac liturgy and describing the historical doctrinal background, the Liturgical Interpreter of the Anonymous brings the reader to the time of Abdisho Bar Bahriz, whose opinions can be found in the Liturgical Interpretation of the Unknown. The anonymous work on the East Syriac liturgy suggests an author who can be seen as a translator from Greek and Hebrew into Syriac. As an East Syriac scholar of the eighth and ninth centuries, he certainly had a perfect command of the Arabic language, both spoken and written.

Also, his notes on philosophical topics such as the soul, God, and nature show him as a fine expert on Greek philosophy. The way he argues reveals his closeness to Aristotelian logic. He explains the broad interpretations about the nature of man and his development by dealing with the doctors of his time and working with the literature of the natural sciences. The interpretation of some liturgical works using the example of the customs of social life reveals the personal relationship of the anonymous author to the Caliph's court. Tendencies to deal with divine law characterize him as a jurist. All of these characteristics apply to Abdisho Bar Bahriz. In addition, it should be noted that among the sources used by the jurist Abdisho Bar Bahriz in his work on the distribution of inheritance and also used for the liturgical interpretation of the anonymous.²³

²² J. M Fiey, Ibn Bahriz es son portrait, in: ParOr 16 (1990-1991), 133-137; Abdisho Bar Bahriz, Ordnung der Ehe und der Erbschaften sowie Entscheidung von Rechtsfällen, trans. From W. Selb, Wien, 1970, 13f, 37.

²³ Idris, Mysterienfeier, 33-41.

It is precisely the comparison of the content of these two works that confirms the same view of the system of law: nature is conceived as an expression of the divine idea. It cannot contradict the word of God. It is the basis for the equality and unity of all human beings. Therefore, general laws can apply to all peoples and should be adopted by Christians as well. This system was especially effective in the age of Christ, because through Christ the chosen Jewish people and Gentiles are united into one people. Both Abdisho Bar Bahriz and the Anonymous liturgy presuppose a hierarchical system of laws: natural law is subordinated to Old Testament law, and this is fulfilled by the law of Christ.

The result of the research so far can be summarized as follows: The interpretation of the Liturgy for the anonymous does not come from Metropolitan Mar Giwargis of Erbil. In terms of content, it contrasts with the liturgical writings of Isho bar Nun, but it shows very great similarities with the writings of Abdisho Bar Bahriz. For this reason one can ascribe the anonymous liturgical interpretation to Metropolitan Mar Abdisho Bar Bahriz.

The content of the book of the Exposition of the Church Services

Anonymous liturgical interpretation comes in the form of a conversation. It came about as a result of the questions Daniel asked the author that prompted him to give clarifying answers. The subject of the conversation was the liturgical regulations applied in the Church of the East, which were known to come from the Apostles, Church Fathers, and Church teachers. In this conversation, Daniel expresses questions about an urgent request to explain to him the liturgy of the Church of the East. Then the anonymous author sets out to explain all the sacraments celebrated in the Church of the East. The questions addressed to him lead the anonymous author to an interpretation of the celebration of the sacraments. This is how the current liturgical interpretation originated, which answers many questions in 108 chapters and interprets liturgical events. The chapters are divided into seven parts; the anonymous author offers two models for their outlines: The structure of the first part is related to the liturgical year, as in the history of Eusebius of Caesarea. As for the structure of the six parts, the anonymous author wants to follow the example of Penqitha-*ܩܝܬܝܬܐ*, the East Syriac liturgical book written by Ishoyahb III (649-659).²⁴

²⁴ Exposition/ Preface, 19.

In order to understand its content, the inner essentiality of the liturgical event must be explained, because it cannot really be understood through its external image. The interpretation is guided by the following ideas: The liturgy reflects the history of salvation. Salvation history is the history of mankind, based on God's plan of salvation. With this, God issues commands and laws. With the creation of the world and man, a natural order is given, which is based on natural law. As well as the law that God gave to Moses. And the law of Christ complements the law of nature and the Law of Moses. Therefore, the laws are related to each other allegorically and typically. Nature is what is supposed for the event of salvation and the liturgical event.

Thus, the Syriac word for nature-ܐܘܪܐܘܒܐ and its derivatives becomes the basic concept for the interpretation of the entire liturgy. The author uses it a lot and in different contexts and with different meanings. Looking at the passages in the texts where the Syriac word for nature appears: refers to an inanimate nature, which is made up of four elements and dwells in the four active powers. Sometimes the words nature and creation are used interchangeably. Nature also symbolizes the age that begins with creation and is subject to natural law until the starting of the Law of Moses and they lived according to the law of nature. It is not uncommon for nature to be synonymous with the source of knowledge or reason. Moreover, nature is seen not only as part of Christ's teaching, but is also referred to as the teacher that leads man to God. In addition, it is presented as a prophetic book whose words and events are fulfilled. As such, nature has a close relationship not only with the Bible but also with church worship. The use of the word nature in conjunction with order and law is crucial to the interpretation of the entire liturgy. Therefore, the anonymous author distinguishes between three laws: the natural law, the Law of Moses, and the law of Christ.

The Syriac term for nature refers to the Law, which is a precondition and basis for other laws. According to the law of nature, evil deeds are forbidden and punished. In one passage, the law of nature is equated with the Law of Moses by noting that the Law of Moses adds nothing new to the law of nature.²⁵ It is clear to the anonymous author that the law of Christ is superior to both the natural law and the Law of Moses. This is why believers in Christ must distinguish themselves from people who live by natural law and the Mosaic Law.²⁶

²⁵ Exposition, IV/4, 11: IV/9,18.

²⁶ Ibid, III/6, 233.

This touches on a very important point in the use of the Syriac word for nature because these three laws organize the moral life into three stages. It applies to all people because they are all equal by nature. Accordingly, the history of salvation is divided into three eras: the era when man lived according to natural law, the era of the Mosaic Law, and the era of Christ.²⁷

Accordingly, there are also three forms of human life: Some live according to the flesh due to natural law. Some follow the Law of Moses. Still others live by the law of Christ. The three laws and life forms do not contradict each other. While the first two qualitatively differ little from each other, they are transcended by the law of Christ. Also Jesus himself in his teachings included both the natural order and the Mosaic Law.²⁸ And the anonymous author calls these two laws as epochs, and divides them into stages in the history of salvation. And this classification corresponds to historical facts and has a lasting importance. Therefore, he preserves every event of salvation and considers it related to the past, present, future, and eternal life.

The author tells repeatedly about the fathers of the natural order, whose era extends from the beginning of creation to the introduction of the Law of Moses. It often refers to the stages of salvation from Moses to Christ. He enumerates again and again the periods of the Old Testament, in which he particularly confirms the following: The first stage of salvation in the Mosaic Law is the wandering of the people of Israel in the desert. The second period coincides with the time of the Judges, and the third with the reign of the kings of Israel. And the fourth stage of the priesthood and the Maccabeus. John the Baptist is seen as the link between the Old and New Testaments. The life of Christ is characterized by three stages: The first stage is characterized by the fact that Christ lived according to the law of the Old Testament until His baptism. Then in the second stage he lived according to his own plan of salvation (trial, torture, crucifixion, death and Resurrection) and the third stage is revolving around eternal-immortal era of Christ.²⁹

Likewise, Patriarch Mar Elia II at the beginning of the twelfth century, in his book *The Principles of Religion*, distinguishes between three laws: the first is the law of nature or the law of mind, which was practiced by the righteous before the coming of the prophets because they have come to know God with the clarity of their minds. However, Mar Ishoyahb Bar Malkon in the thirteenth century stressed in turn that outside the laws of Moses and Christ, there is no other than the law of the jungle. As for the second law, it is the one given to Moses on Mount Sinai, which usually coincides with the law of justice, i.e. restoring rights. The third law is the law of Christ, the law of grace and forgiveness. It is the goal and perfection, for there is nothing

²⁷ Exposition, II/12,177.

²⁸ Ibid, II/12, 172-174.

²⁹ Ibid, III/5,231.

that exceeds the law of grace, benevolence and obedience. That is, the compatibility of the revelation with the human mind, which grows and develops to reach the climax of perfection at the advent of Christ. It is the law that befits God more than others, and there is no other law similar to it.³⁰

Therefore, the liturgical system of the Church of the East reflects the work of salvation and makes it possible for believers to imitate the forms of life assigned to the three stages and thus to experience the divine plan of salvation. The liturgy should not be understood from its outward appearance, but from the inner basis. Therefore, the visible is explained to the invisible: the invisible becomes visible. We understand from this that the anonymous liturgical exegete relies here on three sources in the formation of his liturgical work: the natural order, the Holy Scriptures and the tradition of the Church. He is convinced that the liturgy of his Church is based not only on the three sources of knowledge just mentioned, but also reflects in a vital way the didactic content of the sources of knowledge. For the anonymous author, the liturgy is the totality of sources of knowledge whose content can be presented in different ways.³¹

In addition, the series of feasts in the liturgical year symbolizes the history of salvation from the beginning of creation to the return of Christ, as the structure of the Book of Hours also corresponds to the development of the history of salvation. The unity of the plan of salvation agrees to the unity of the ceremonies of Vespers, Night Prayer and the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Therefore, church ministries can mediate in various ways in the hierarchy to find out the truth of the salvation plan.

God forms the image of the events of his salvation in the heart of the believer: the lost sheep is the image of the sinful person and a return to the bosom of the Father. A picture and a word can express the same idea: the painter conveys the idea to the eye through the act of drawing. The speaker conveys it to the ear through the act of speaking. In the liturgical work Christ is referred to as the Divine Painter. Christ taught his disciples to know God and himself, and then he informed them of the nature and aims of his teachings. He explained to them all the difficult sections of the law and explained to them all the important figures in the Old Testament, where he said: I did not come to abolish the law, but to fulfill it.³² Act like painters, where he draws the outline with a simple pen first. When the blueprint is developed into a picture, they paint it with brilliant colors to make it appear brighter so as to make the likeness of the original picture.

³⁰ 249-244 ببيدكت لاندرون، مسيحيون ومسلمون في العراق، ترجمة الاب عمانوئيل الرئيس،

³¹ Exposition, IV, 25,81/82.

³² Matthew 17:5.

The teaching of Christ is a product and complement of Old Testament philosophy, the foundation of true church services, and a guide to truth.³³

Likewise, in another text, the priest who performs the sacrament of the sacrifice is described as an artist: the priest approaches the holy altar at the hour of the glorification of the sacrifice. He offers the sacrifice of the Life-giving Lamb of God, who removes the sin of the world. On the altar, like an excellent painter, he allegorically depicts the mystery of death, burial, Resurrection and ascension of the life-giving Jesus. From the creative work of the Creator, man appeared as his image, man can depict God's salvific works, that is, celebration of divine Mysteries.³⁴

The theological and allegorical background to the liturgical interpretation of the anonymous author is here revealed: the teaching of the sacraments and the allegorical teaching are synonymous for the anonymous interpreter. In the sacramental theology, the contradiction between the metaphorical interpretation and the historical-grammatical interpretation is eliminated. It is clear from this that the doctrine of the sacraments is somewhat similar to the allegorical teaching of the Cappadocia Church Fathers Basil the Great (379), Gregory of Nazianzus (about 390) and Gregory of Nyssa (394), which also reveals the influence of the Alexandrian allegorical interpretation.³⁵

MEMRA on the celebration of the Holy Mass

It has already been noted that the fourth part, which deals with the holy Mass, is the most comprehensive and important of the seven. This refers to the liturgical system stipulated in the liturgical book entitled "Annual Cycle", the center of which is Holy Mass. The central position of the fourth treatise centered on the fact that the celebration of the Eucharist is seen as the center and summit of the other celebrations. The fourth part is in the middle of the seven parts, so the topic it deals with is the most important of all the topics in the remaining six parts. The celebration of the Eucharist is the most perfect of all the sacraments, because it makes the paschal mystery of Christ present. All the redemptive events aim at this and proceed from it.

Thus, the interpretations of the celebrations of the other mysteries lead to the interpretation of the celebration of the Eucharist: they are all in their own way an exposition of the Paschal Mystery of Christ. God's plan of salvation is the common background for all liturgical celebrations. It turns out that their focus is on celebrating of the holy Mass, to which they are directed, in which they gather together and through which each has its own meaning. The plan

³³ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 50-51

³⁴ Khudra I, 76.

³⁵ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 51.

of salvation exists and is present in space and time. The whole life of the Church is the image of the liturgy established by God. The liturgical activity of the Church must be understood as a complete picture of God's saving action. Therefore, each present liturgical celebration is understood as a sacramental imitation of God's past and future saving actions. The celebration of the liturgy appears as a depiction of the plan of salvation with physical and verbal activity because the liturgy is basically a sacred religious activity, which refers to the outline of the divine plan of salvation through speech and actual prostration.

The celebration of the rite of marriage and the rite of burial, which were dealt with in Part VII, their center is on the celebration of the holy Mass. The following applies to marriage: where it reveals its inner relationship to the holy Mass when it is interpreted in the form of nuptial mysticism. Just as communion is understood as a union with Christ, also sacred marriage symbolizes the sacramental marriage between Christ and the Church. The earthly life of Jesus, culminated in his Passover mystery, is referred to as a thirty-day marriage feast, while the church as Christ's bride is promised an everlasting marriage feast in his kingdom. The seven-day wedding celebration is an indication of the eternal bliss that was expected in the celebration of the holy Mass. Just as the liturgical elements of the celebration of the Mass depict and remind us of the past and future acts of God's salvation, so the gradual return of the bride indicates to the gradual entry into eternal life. Therefore, the anonymous author explains the concept of the marriage as a symbol of the Second Coming of Christ.³⁶

The burial rite is also described in the context of the memory of Christ's death and Resurrection as a sign of Christians' hope for eternal life. The deceased, who participated in every celebration of the Mystery of Christ's Pasch, when accompanied by prayers to the grave, symbolizes the death of Christ and points to the new life in Christ. The hope of believers is based on the principle of solidarity in salvation: when God raised Jesus from the dead, He would awaken those who believe in Christ to new life in Christ. Because the Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ give life to the dead, they are commemorated in the celebration of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. According to the Anonymous Author, the funeral meal, which is held on the third, seventh, fifteenth, and thirtieth day after the death of a member of the congregation,³⁷ symbolizes that the dead are in communion with the crucified and risen Lord. The meal of the dead is characterized by the character of the festive meal and the sacred sacrifice³⁸.

³⁶ Exposition, II/ 158,142-43; Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 53.

³⁷ Here the anonymous author does not mention the remembrance of the fortieth day and the Anniversary.

³⁸ Exposition, II/ 136,123;II/ 124-25, 112-113.

The works of God's salvation, described in detail in the first part and devoted to certain celebrations during the liturgical year, are present as a whole in every sacramental celebration, and hence they refer to Christ in the fourth part. In the first part, the history of the world and salvation is explained, considering such special questions as those of the immortality of the soul and the demise of the world according to natural knowledge. The liturgical calendar through which God's plan of salvation is celebrated in temporal rhythm is also explained. The weeks and feasts in which the Mystery of Christ described in the fourth part is repeatedly celebrated are formed as follows according to the anonymous author: the week of Moses, the consecration of the Church, the Annunciation, the birth of the Lord in the flesh, the Epiphany, the great fasting that culminates in the celebration of the paschal mystery of Christ and the feast of the Resurrection, the apostles, Elijah and the Cross. The Anonymous author confirms that the liturgical year is based on the Jewish calendar, whose liturgical year begins in November, known as Moses' week.³⁹ However, the Book of Khudra placed the week of the Annunciation at the beginning and the period of consecration of the church at the end of the liturgical year.

Just as the events of salvation in the Old Testament transformed simple time into the history of salvation, so Jesus transformed the events of salvation in the Old Testament as models into a complete picture. In order to emphasize the newness in the mystery of Christ's sacrifice, reference is made repeatedly to the Old Testament examples of the perfect image that points to Christ: Our Lord was ready to entrust His mysteries to His disciples in the form of bread and wine, and thus to fulfill His Eucharistic mystery. He was also willing to sacrifice faithfully for the sake of the lamb in Egypt, which was a model of his mystery. The mystical work of Christ has two levels: the first is the offering of his body and blood in the form of bread and wine, and the other is death on the cross. The work of the mystery is Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

The old paschal model was abolished by the revelation of the true mystery: This is the sacrifice of the body and blood of the Giver of our life. On the fourteenth of April, the irrational Lamb of Egypt will not be slaughtered, but the real Lamb, Jesus Christ who sacrificed himself. The model was stopped and the truth happened. Our Lord was crucified at the sixth hour, when preparations were being made for the eve of Easter. He was buried when they ate the Passover. Thus he too was offered a sacrifice to God and participated in the Sabbath rest in the grave. The sixth day of the week on which Jesus was killed partly merged into the Sabbath, which is rest and redemption so that we might partake of his rest through the sacraments of the sacrifice offered on the altar. Christ sacrificed himself in the paschal mystery when he gave his body and blood to his disciples. These were commissioned to continually commemorate his

³⁹ Exposition, I/ 28, 25.

Eucharistic Sacrament.⁴⁰ Here the historical interpretation of the liturgy prevailing in the first part appears as a precursor to the allegorical interpretation that characterizes the fourth part.

In the sixth part dealing with the sanctification of the church, the celebration of the sacrament of the Eucharist appears as the completion of the ceremony of sanctification of the altar. The dedication of the altar is celebrated on the first Sunday of the feast of the dedication of the church. Worship services are held on the first Sunday of the consecration of the church at the usual times of evening prayer, night prayer and the sacrament of the Eucharist. The coherence of these sacred celebrations is particularly manifested by the fact that both are celebrated on the first day of the week, on Sunday, and the Sacrament of Eucharist is celebrated on the previously consecrated altar.

According to biblical understanding, the first day of the week begins in the evening to appear in its fullness in the morning. In the evening and at night during the consecration of the altar, the saving work of God in the Old Testament is mentioned, and in the morning the appearance of Christ as the Risen Sun of Righteousness is celebrated. The celebration of the consecration of the Church begins on the first day of the week, because on this day the following salvific events began: the creation of the world, the establishment of the first tent of the covenant, the annunciation of the incarnation of our Lord, His Resurrection and the descent of the Holy Spirit. The altar to be consecrated is modeled on the events of salvation in the Old Testament: the erection and dedication of the Tabernacle of the Covenant by Moses, the establishment of the Tabernacle of the Covenant at Shiloh, and the construction and sanctification of the Temple in Jerusalem by Solomon and Reconstructed by Zerubbabel. As in the Old Testament, places of worship were built for God whom the heavens could not contain, so also churches were built after the emergence of Christian communities as dwellings for the presence of God. The Church of Stone is an image of Jesus' earthly existence, just as the Jerusalem Temple was an image of his earthly existence. The Ark of the Covenant in the Temple of Jerusalem is interpreted as a typical sacramental sign in two sides: In its content, it embodies the works of divine salvation, and its external form is like a throne that indicates the presence of God among his people. The four weeks of consecration of the church indicate the four periods of the rule of Israel from the time of Moses until the advent of Christ, which are the Patriarchs, Judges, Kings and Maccabees.⁴¹ The rite of consecration of the new altar symbolizes the beginning of the creation of the new world. Since the creation of the world began in the evening⁴² the rite of consecration of the altar must begin at evening prayer (عشاء).⁴³

⁴⁰ The notes of the anonymous liturgical interpreter contain a reference to the Christology of John the Evangelist (John: 13.1, 19.31, 20.1).

⁴¹ Exposition, I, 28/25; 117/107.

⁴² Gen. 1, 4-5.

⁴³ Exposition, II, 119/108-109.

The symbolic meaning of the altar reaches its climax in the interpretation of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, where the Bema-مصلى is seen as a symbol of earthly Jerusalem and the altar-house as a symbol of heaven. Likewise, the altar is a sacramental sign in two sides: it represents the redeeming work of Christ, and it is the throne on which Christ sits as the king, the high priest, and a shepherd who sits in the middle of the church and reigns with love. The altar primarily represents Jesus Christ and his saving work: the founder of the sacraments, Jesus' death on the cross, his burial, Resurrection, ascension, and sending of the Holy Spirit. That is why the altar was called the tomb and throne of Christ. It is a sign of the crucified and risen Lord who sits with His Church to celebrate the sacrament of the Eucharist and offers her His Body and Blood in the form of bread and wine.

And what is related to the Liturgical Prayers, explained in the second and third parts, arranged before the celebration of the Eucharist. For such Vespers and night prayers are understood as a gradual perception of God's saving work from the creation of the world and the creation of man to the incarnation of Christ, because Sunday is a continuous liturgical event whose culmination is in the celebration of the Eucharist. The basic elements and structure of Vespers and Night Prayers are so similar to the structural elements of the celebration part of the Liturgy of the Word.⁴⁴

When the Sacrament of Baptism and the Sacrament of Confirmation are interpreted, one sees quite clearly that the celebration of the Eucharist is the culmination of the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation. The celebration of Baptism, the Sacrament of Unction and the Eucharist requires educational preparation within the framework of the sacramental ceremonies. That is why Lent is primarily devoted to catechism, which includes not only the New Testament but also the entire Bible: Genesis regarding creation, the life of the fathers in the Old Testament, the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus. During Easter Lent, the church celebrates God's saving work in connection with the death and Resurrection of Christ.

In accordance with salvific teaching, its new members are gradually introduced to the Paschal Mystery of Christ. The celebration of incorporation into the Body of Christ begins in the middle of Easter with the writing of the names of the candidates for baptism and culminates on Easter Vigil, when those who are to be sacramentally baptized with Christ die, rise, are sealed, and partake of the Body and Blood of Christ. The celebration of the initiation sacraments coincides with the Easter night liturgy. From the perspective of theology of the mystery this means from the perspective of theology of the mystery: the congregation celebrates death and Resurrection as a comprehensive event of salvation, it gives birth to new sons and daughters in the image and likeness of the crucified and risen Lord. Just as the baptized person is buried and raised with Christ in the sacrament, so the gifts of bread and wine become in the sacrament the Body

⁴⁴ Exposition, IV/1.

and Blood of Christ. Thus, the baptismal catechism presented by Paul,⁴⁵ the Apostle of the Gentiles, is a model of sacramental theology in the thought of the anonymous author, which is clearly evident in the interpretation of the forms of the Eucharist as the mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ.⁴⁶

Celebrating the Holy Mass makes God's plan of salvation present

The spiritual meaning attributed to the interpreter of the anonymous about the celebration of the mysteries is found in what is narrated by the Word of God and in the faith of the celebrating community. Whereas past acts of salvation are made present in the narrated Word of God, future works are celebrated through the faith of believers. Thus, the celebration of the Mass is a sensory sign of past and future acts of salvation. Also the anonymous interpreter of the liturgy understands that the celebration of the sacraments is a sensible order for the plan of salvation. In the holy Mass, he learns about God's salvific work in the first covenant, and Christ's salvific work, as well as the beginning of the eschatological perfection. These three points can be formulated on the spiritual meaning of the celebration of the holy Mass according to the anonymous author.

1. God's saving work in the First (Old) Testament

It is clear that God's saving work in the first covenant can be recognized in the celebration of the Holy Mass. In fact, the author of the anonymous considers that this celebration as a sensory sign of the entire plan of salvation expresses the unity of God's saving work in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Thus, God's dealings with the Old Testament fathers can be considered as a model for Christ's saving work. Many liturgical elements come from the books of the Old Testament, so that the events of the Old Testament salvation are present both in the Liturgy of the Word and in the Anaphora, as well as during the chant accompanying the Communion. The Old First Testament is a kind of sketch, the outline of the picture that appears as a whole in the New Testament. Therefore, many of the liturgical elements throughout the celebration of the Mass can be seen as replicas of the saving events of the Old Testament. At the opening of the Liturgy, in the Liturgy of the Word, with singing hymn accompanied during Communion, the events of salvation in the Old Testament are mentioned as examples of Christ's redemptive work.

⁴⁵ Roman 6:3-11.

⁴⁶ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 52-58.

In ecclesiastical - liturgical events, the saving works of God in the Old Testament are imitated. Here the anonymous author interprets it typologically, i.e. showing match with the Old Testament, he gains a preliminary insight into the spiritual meaning of the celebration of the Mass: he sees the present represented by what was the event of salvation in the past for the people of Israel. He understands the liturgical activity of the hierarchically organized community of believers as the performance of the saving events of the first covenant. In place of the Church, which has its model in the Tabernacle of the Covenant and in the Temple of Jerusalem, it is attributed to the celebrants with ritual tasks that are consistent with the Old Testament. That is, in the sense that the liturgical activities of priests and deacons in the liturgy coincide with the works of priests and Levites in the Old Testament.

Just as God led his people through the Archangel Michael, so deacons are now charged with engaging the faithful in the saving events of the Old Testament through his liturgical ministry. The Torah-reader (قاري التوراة) shows God's redemptive activity from creation to the beginning of the Mosaic Law. In this era there was no Bible and the Law of Moses had not yet entered into force. Hence, people lived according to the natural law. In a sense, the liturgical assembly embodies those who lived from Adam to the slavery of the Israelites in Egypt.

The first reading tells about the creation and establishment of the world. It teaches believers the creation of man from dust and his return to dust. The church community teaches that all people are equal in the face of life and death. And in the voice of the first Reader (قاري) the believers recognize the voice of God who commissioned Noah to build the ark. In the recitation of the first reading, God reveals himself to the community of believers, as He revealed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As for a Sub-Deacon embodies Israel's instructions in the Mosaic Law when he reads from the Books of the Prophets (قاري الانبياء). The second reader represents all the prophets of the Old Testament, including Moses, who introduced the Old Testament law to God's people. The content of the law is the legislations governing life according to the flesh and commanded the temporary sacrificial service. Therefore, the law system is not superior to the system of nature. In this way, the community of believers embodies, as it were, all persons belonging to the first covenant who were guided by the Mosaic Law.

The community of believers now experiences a vision of the history of salvation in its liturgical work: they receive the Mosaic Law and the instructions of the prophets. They also receive the promise of seeing the rising of the light. They remember in Babylonian captivity that the land in which they were set up was once the home of Abraham, where he was promised to enter the Promised Land at a certain time. By remembering the promise to Abraham, the community of believers becomes aware of God's faithfulness and receives the promise through the angel Gabriel that after a specific time they will see the rising of the light.

In liturgical events, the stages of God's work in the First Old Testament are mentioned as the model of Christ's saving work. Because the life of the fathers is considered a model of the life of Christ, it must be present in the liturgical activity. The ministry of the fathers before the time of the Mosaic Law is referred to as service according to the order of nature. Adam's life appears as the first stage in the system of nature. This is followed by God's work with Noah and Abraham, in which Christ's redeeming work was previously described. Isaac also appears as a model for Christ.

The anonymous author considers that the Mosaic Law and the law of Christ correspond to each other in the liturgical work. It is emphasized that the sacrifices of the Mosaic Law are a model for the mystery of Christ's sacrifice. That is, the Mosaic Law has reached its completion in the New Testament. Therefore, it must be made clear in the liturgical events that the functions that were under the Mosaic Law in the Old Testament are subject to the law of Christ in the new order of salvation. Moreover, the lives of the prophets from Moses to John the Baptist appear in the celebration of the mystery of the Eucharist as a path that leads to Christ. With such interpretations, the anonymous author points out that the liturgical event always expresses how the fathers' hope is fulfilled through the coming of Christ. The fathers from Adam to the last righteous man of the Old Testament, as models of Christ, are bearers of God's blessing; and the blessing itself is Christ, from whom the blessing of the Gentiles flows.⁴⁷

2. The salvific work of Christ

While the celebration of the Mass symbolically has its spiritual meaning in God's redemptive work in the first covenant as a model for Christ's redeeming work. Some of the liturgical elements in the introduction and the Liturgy of the Divine Word, which culminates in the proclamation of the Gospel, illustrate the event of Christ, from the announcement of the angel Gabriel to Mary until the Day of Judgment. From this point of view, the meaning of the Liturgy of the Word lies in presenting the event of Christ in the words and action of the service as the completion of the Old Testament and the beginning of the Kingdom of God in the person of Christ. God intervenes in the history of his people through the Old Testament priest. The priest Zacharias remains silent while his son John announces that he is the preacher of Christ. Jerusalem, administrator of promise, insists on the hardening of the flesh while the Gentiles turn to God. The leadership of the people of Israel was entrusted to the Archangel Michael, while God directed the people of the New Testament through the Archangel Gabriel.

⁴⁷ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 62-65.

The turning point in the Old Testament occurred with the proclamation of the Virgin Birth of the Redeemer: the promise becomes reality through Mary. And the birth of Christ is the appearance of the saving light. According to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the childhood of Jesus reflects the history of the people of the Old Testament. It is a life according to the Mosaic Law, which enlightens the eyes of those present to the law and fulfills their hopes. The childhood gospels see the meaning of history and the hope of the people of Israel in the child Jesus. The hidden life of Jesus is confirmation of the law. Jesus allowed himself to be baptized by John the Baptist in order to place himself in the line of the prophets of the Old Testament, who, through the mouth of the last prophet, prepare God's people for the kingdom of heaven in the person of Jesus who came as the light and salvation to the world. As well, the radical change in the law also applies to the service community: up to this hour, the law only cut off sinful branches from sterile, unfruitful trees. From this point on, the law of Christ will root out sin.

By reading the Bible and through the priest's sermon at the Mass, Christ's saving work is shown. It is the only platform where the content of the four Gospels is solemnly announced. It is considered the summary and culmination of the entire Bible. In every passage of the Gospels, Christ is present at all stages of his life. Because the child in the manger is the Lord enthroned at the right hand of God the Father. Also, in the liturgical event the baptism of Jesus appears as a Trinitarian event of salvation.

The worship gathering is fasting with Jesus. And fight with him against the enemy of the human race. At liturgical events, Jesus calls people to follow him. He teaches of his authority and performs signs and wonders. By preaching he speaks in parables. The worshiping people hear the deeper meaning of the words of his parables: they understand their inner life as a fertile field and imitate the example of the five wise virgins. The celebrants did not want to act like the day-laborers who were unjustly angry with the Lord of the Vineyard. In contrast to the invitee who was invited to the banquet and who did not appear in the appropriate robe, church members partake of Christ's banquet in white baptismal robes.

In the Liturgy of the Word, the life of Christ is presented. The Transfiguration of Christ before James, John and Peter becomes a liturgical event. Jesus appears among his disciples, and the worshiping community recognizes him with Peter as the Messiah and the living Son of God, and they enter into the mystery of the kingdom of heaven. During the Passover Supper, Christ establishes the new order of salvation, for its continuity and for the process of the sacrament, he entrusts it to his congregation. He begins by inaugurating them in the Lord's Supper, the eschatological banquet, in the mysteries of his death and Resurrection. Through the task of

restoring he bequeathed the remembrance of the Passover mystery to his Church. Christ teaches his community the way to the Father and about the descent of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁸

The new covenant is sealed by his death on the cross. In the celebration of the holy Mass, passion, death, Resurrection, ascension, descent of the Holy Spirit, sitting at the right hand of God, and the return of Christ are presented as a unified event of salvation. At nine o'clock in the morning, the church's people begin to celebrate the sacrament of Eucharist, reminding us of three times of salvation: the hour of establishing the paschal mystery at the Last Supper, the morning hour of Christ's Resurrection, and the hour of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples. The congregation of the faithful is certain by faith that the bishop is Christ's representative, having received the power of binding and loosening from Christ at his ordination. In addition, they know that according to the promise "where two or three are gathered in my name, I am in the midst of them",⁴⁹ the Lord is in the midst of them and leads them through the bishop. The celebrants were baptized into the death of Christ and rose with him in the mystery of the Resurrection. Therefore, their life is a celebration of the mystery of Christ: (We can only offer you what you have given us. From you we have received the gift of thanksgiving. For this reason we say thank you).⁵⁰

3. The beginning of the eschatological perfection

In the celebration of the holy mass not only past events of salvation appear, but also events of the future. Two stages are distinguished in the life of Christ: from birth to the beginning of the paschal mystery, Christ lived according to the Mosaic Law. With the Last Supper, Christ completed the Mosaic Law and introduced the law of the new and eternal covenant. Living according to the law of Christ is indeed the anticipation of eschatological perfection. Celebrating the Lord's Supper is participating in the Heavenly Supper. This is why the celebration of the Mass as a whole is eschatological. In liturgical events, promise and fulfillment coincide simultaneously: the facts of salvation history appear in their eschatological perfection. The following also applies to the people of the Church: "What no one ever saw or heard, what no one ever thought could happen, is the very thing God prepared for those who love him".⁵¹

Ecclesiastical gathering are transported to the events of the end times. The scenes of the eschatological events are Heaven and Jerusalem. As the Heavenly Court prepares for the appearance of the Heavenly King, the people of Jerusalem await the invitation of the Heavenly King. As soon as the gates of heaven opened, the heavenly and earthly people would come out

⁴⁸ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 65-68.

⁴⁹ Matt. 18:20.

⁵⁰ Exposition, IV/8,126.

⁵¹ 1 Corinthians 2:9.

in cheers. They rejoice in their reunion, which has been delayed since the fall of Adam. Then the messengers of the Heavenly King come to his chosen from earth and invite them to make their way to heaven. The chosen receive the messengers benevolently and declare their willingness to accept the invitation with gratitude. After this, the chosen make their way to heaven. Heavenly messengers precede them to its door. First, the selectees enter the hall and appear before the king. They show him reverence and dignity, and line up in proper order before the throne. Then the Celestials also follow in order of precedence. Thus, the heavenly and the earthly stand in service before the Heavenly King.

The King enthroned shows himself to be Christ, the Supreme Shepherd who during his earthly life delegated pastoral authority to his disciples and successors. So this one is of heavenly origin and its earthly successors have a special mission to guide people to the true faith. The faithful come before the Heavenly King as defenders of the bishops by reciting the Creed with them. After judgment, the selectees shall receive their fair wages, as in the parable of the vineyard workers. The king instructs the angel Gabriel to summon the selectees and grant them heavenly dwellings according to their merit. Meanwhile the Cherubim and Seraphim sing praises to the Heavenly King, turning their faces, not daring to look at Him.

Christ wishes peace to the believers, whereupon Gabriel urges them to be reconciled with one another so that they may have fellowship with the firstborn recorded in the Book of Life. First, Gabriel calls the names of the New Testament saints, and then he and Michael take turns reading the names of the Old Testament righteous. The mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven has been revealed. It is a great event that a congregation of believers here with a pure heart is allowed to look upon Christ, who appears as a priest in order to do the work of sacrifice. He Himself offers, receives and sanctifies the sacrifice. Deacons - a symbol of the angels - stand in Christ's service and his sacrifice. The faithful are like Paul who was caught up into heaven, meditating on the hierarchy of spiritual beings and hearing the hymn of praise to the Trinity. The congregation of faithful is accompanied by the heavenly hosts and the prayer of Holy - Holy - Holy is recited with them.

Isaiah's vision coincides with the liturgical event. The complete manifestation of earthly reality takes place. Space and time, which do not allow a person to fully develop, are suspended. So there is no longer any separation or contradiction between heaven and earth. Both of them are now so changed that they form a perfect unit. The Unreachable Highs and the lower meet each other on the same level and join together to form a unit. The unity of heaven and earth also means the unity of its inhabitants. The unity of the earthly and heavenly Churches is based on the unity of human and divine nature in Christ: God appeared on earth and man ascended to heaven. Through the descent of God, the earth became heaven, and through the glorification of the Son of Man, heaven became earth.

The image of the risen Christ is imprinted on the purified hearts of the baptized, so that they turn to God as Father and ask Him for the bread of heaven. The heavenly bread is the mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ. The recipients of the mysteries constitute a community to which the Celestial Hierarchy also belongs. They acknowledge that Christ is the Heavenly King in the Eucharistic forms. Being in his presence is a celebration for the community of believers where singing is an expression of inner joy. The visions of the prophets merge into unity through the hymns accompanying communion. The church's children's anthem is thanks and praise to the Creator for the blessings, and also the people of God participate by repeating, saying "Amen" in the liturgy. Christ rejoices in His people who share in His happiness, and who have received many glorious blessings. Everyone who recites the Lord's Prayer is then blessed, and the doors to the wedding ceremony are closed. The saints remain in heaven and partake of perfect love, while the faithful, like Disciples of Christ, go home and express their inner joy at the holidays.⁵²

B. Celebrating the Holy Mass as a reflection and following up on the plan of salvation through liturgical performance

Through our understanding of the celebration of the holy Mass as the past and future works of God's salvation made present through the worship service, it follows, for the anonymous interpreter of the liturgy, that there is an analogy between the liturgical activity and the saving work of God. Its advantage is done through the sacramental tradition and the liturgical action is based on the act of the creative tradition, because it comes from enlightened minds and purified hearts.

This God-given liturgical activity allows the community of believers to remember past and future events of salvation and thus to participate in the events of salvation. The liturgical activity is analogous to God's saving activity in the past and the future. That is, it corresponds to God's plan of salvation. The group of believers work as God did with people and will continue to work until the end of time. Therefore, the celebration of the holy mass is a sacramental tradition with performance characteristics. Such is carried out in word and deed. Both follow a fixed order, are dedicated to a specific topic and have meaning. They create the unity of space and time through movement: the past and future of the work of salvation are present here. These actions take place through dialogue ministers of the church with each other.

⁵² Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 68-72.

The mystery of the Mass is an event in which the liturgical work and the divine work meet. The sacramental event is also described by the Syriac word combinations – ܩܕܝܫܐ – ܩܘܪܒܐܢܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ. The visual element of the celebration of the saving event is so prominent in it that one would like to express the liturgical event more appropriately to the word drama. The idea of actual performance is the spiritual development of the plan of salvation: from the beginning of creation and from the creation of man to the end of time.

The performance of past and future events of salvation does not occur out of interest in the performance as a work of art, but as an expression of the sacramental action. That is, the anonymous interpreter of the liturgy understands the performance as a liturgical manifestation of the original salvific event. For him, the liturgical event is the sacramental sign and image of the work of salvation. That is, the Eucharistic Body of Christ is seen in dynamic continuity with the actual body of the historical, glorified Jesus. The Eucharist, as the Body of Christ, shares all of Christ's historical and eternal truth.

Considerations in the course of the liturgical event aim to discover the salvific action as an archetype. The liturgical activity is a sacramental performance that has been commissioned by the Divine originator to the service community and clergy to perform the holy Mass. So they have the power to make God's saving work present. Thus, all members of the service can realize the greatness of their liturgical activity. They should know that the celebration of the holy Mass is a personal encounter with God in which the whole person participates.

The celebration of the holy Mass is the most solemn performance in life, because it draws people into the present reality of salvation. Everyone actively participates, and in the Mystery Tradition they experience not only the saving works of God in the first covenant, but also the death and Resurrection of Christ, the mediation of angels, the communion of saints, the final judgment, and the completion of the end times. Therefore, the celebration of the holy Mass appears as a sacramental performance of the mystery of Christ, in which the faithful community experiences salvation through speech and action.

As we already mentioned that the Holy Mass is celebrated by the hierarchically organized congregation of clergy and faithful in a liturgical place (Church) at nine o'clock in the morning. The place and time of the celebration signify the place and time of the event of salvation and make God's saving work present. Thus, the place and time of the celebration becomes the place and time of the event of salvation by making God's saving work present.

The Earth, whose surface looks like a circle, has a center. At this central point, Jerusalem was founded, and the heart of Jerusalem is the place where the earthly temple was standing. Above the earth's surface there is a space which symbolizes the earthly paradise, which is a prelude to heaven. This worldview is characterized by three areas merging with each other, the link

between which is the earthly paradise. This is consistent with the interpretation of the church's place as the place of heaven and earth. The place of the Holy of Holies (مسجد) is an image of heaven, the broad space (مصلى) of the staircase in front of the entrance to the Holy of Holies, on which the readers (قراء) and sub-deacons (مؤدب) stand during the liturgy, is an image of the earthly paradise, and the curtain of the temple symbolizes the separation between earthly paradise and heaven. The nave (مسجد) represents the earth, and the eastern part - the meeting place for men, symbolizes the Garden of Eden and the rising sun. Believers take refuge in this place during prayer, because one day the Messiah will appear from the East. In the western part of the nave, it shows the direction in which Canaan was exiled after his father, Ham, sinned against the drunken Noah.⁵³

The Bema, meaning the platform (مصلى - منبر), refers to the Jerusalem erected in the middle of the nave, where the Liturgy of the Word is celebrated. The path from the Bema to the Holy of Holies is the true path of life that leads to heaven. Those open doors on the way symbolize the possibility of returning to God. The table in the center of the bema means Golgotha. The Episcopal throne is the seat of the high priest of the Aaron offspring. Among those podiums on the eastern side of the Bema, on the left and right, one is used for reading the books of the Old Testament and the other for reading the Epistle and the Gospel. Therefore, the bema always symbolizes Jerusalem, and the Holy of Holies always symbolizes heaven.

Place and time do not acquire liturgical importance except through the performance of the holy Mass by the hierarchically organized service clergy group. Their liturgical action is understood as an imitative act of God's plan of salvation. They are assigned different liturgical roles and tasks, that is, in the sense of participating in the plan of salvation. Thus, the church service group, which sees itself as God's people on a small scale and its liturgical activity as reflection and following up on the plan of salvation, can follow the path that God walked with His people in the Old and New Testaments and that we also walk in it to the fulfillment of the end of time.

Two angels accompany the people of God: the first is Michael, the leader of the people of Israel, and the second is Gabriel, who leads the new people of God. At liturgical events they appear primarily as deacons, but they can also be sub - deacons (مؤدب) and readers (قراء), on condition that they include through their liturgical activity the believers in the events of the Old Testament or the New Testament.

⁵³ Gen. 9:18-27, 10:15-20.

Deacons represent the upper choir of the celestial hierarchy. Their special service is to stand to the left and right of the altar while holy Mass in the Holy of Holies and to respond to the main celebrant (priest) offering the Sacrament of Sacrifice. They act as intermediaries between the main celebrant, the priest, and the rest of the faithful. Through their prayers the community of believers is guided during the liturgy. They are also referred to as the keepers of the Mysteries; to some extent they determine the course of the celebration of the holy Mass and the correct behavior of the community of believers.

Sub-deacons (ܩܘܪܝܢܐܝܘܬܐ) represent the middle choir of the heavenly hierarchy. They are entrusted with reading the books of Moses. During the Anaphora prayer, they stand before the oil lamp, which is located between the Holy of Holies and staircase (ܩܘܪܝܢܐܝܘܬܐ). Together with the covenant daughters, that is, the nuns, they act as gatekeepers. As for Readers (ܩܘܪܝܢܐܝܘܬܐ) of the Old Testament, they are like the prophets; the sound of the Lord's trumpet. They also read the Psalter. For, during the Anaphora prayer, they symbolize the lower choir of the heavenly ranks, and they stand before the entrance to the Holy of Holies (ܩܘܪܝܢܐܝܘܬܐ). Thus the deacons, sub-deacons, and readers represent both the service of the Levites and the Old Testament prophets, and the service of the angels in the heavenly liturgy.

The liturgical ministry of the bishop and priest is, on the one hand, a counterpart to the priesthood of the Old Testament and on the other hand, the image of the high priestly ministry of Christ. The bishop is the shepherd and head of God's new people. He is the representative of Christ. His throne on the podium marks the supreme dignity. At the celebration of the Mass, he is continually accompanied by his archdeacon (ܩܘܪܝܢܐܝܘܬܐ), a Greek word given to the service leader who assists the bishop in the administration of the diocese and takes his place to the left of the bishop in the same platform. Also, one of his ritual duties is to help the bishop carry the pastoral stick and announce his decisions. Among the priests who celebrate, two are particularly emphasized: one of them the main priest offers the sacrifice during the Anaphora prayer. The priest's other job is to preach the gospel. The liturgical duties of the servants are also characterized by the white robe, which is a sign of belonging to the kingdom of heaven.

Based on these considerations, the anonymous author describes the clergy as a group that presents the mystery of Christ, whose ideal was in the Old Testament, its image in the New Testament, its archetype in heaven. The summit of this performance is the Anaphora, in which Christ, as high-priestly host, has a meal with his church. He gave his life in the form of bread and wine for those who were called, offered it to God as a sacrifice on earth and received it in abundance on the Resurrection. Thus it becomes clear that the author of the anonymous not only follows the theology of the mysteries of East Syriac Church Fathers and the mystagogical

views of Theodore of Mopsustia, but also shares the theological view of the mysteries of the pseudonym Dionysius the Areopagite.⁵⁴

The Celebration of the Holy Mass is a meeting between God and Man

A study on the mystery of the Holy Mass by the anonymous exegete reveals that the liturgical event is understood as the presence of God's plan of salvation within a spatial and temporal framework through the ministers of the Church. Also, it appears at the same time as a conversational event between God, who takes the initiative, condescends to the celebrants and offers them salvation, and the faithful responds to his call and clings to God and raise them up to Him.

Thus, the celebration of the Holy Mass is an encounter between God and man in a dialogue: here God's conversation with believers in the Old and New Testaments becomes a call to serve the Church. The meeting place is a liturgical place, that is, the church, which symbolizes the places of salvation events in the past and the future. God speaks through word and deed: He says yes to man and promises him salvation. A person answers with the word Amen, accepts salvation, and contributes to his salvation by word and action. In the celebration of the sacrament of the Eucharist, God proclaims salvation by word and deed, and man hears what he says and observes what God has done. His answer is first and foremost one of praise and thanksgiving, but also a willingness to live a life in accordance with God's willing.

1. The Divine Calling

The celebration of the Holy Mass in its entirety is God's calling to man. It is God's past and future word of salvation. God addresses the worshippers, as He spoke to the people in both the Old and New Testaments, and as He will speak to the people at the end of time. The celebration of the Liturgy as the saving word of God reflects the content of the Old and New Testaments. The word that God addresses to man is creative and powerful. It is the truth: God speaks to his people about what happened and is happening through him and can be read in the history of salvation. He works for the salvation of man through his calling - in the Old Testament, an example to follow through the fathers and prophets, and in the New Testament, through His word, which became man in the person of Christ. God instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist so that His saving words could be experienced in liturgical events and His action in sacramental activity. God's calling to the community of faithful begins as a pictorial statement of the Old Testament and the works of Christ full of symbols, as it is interspersed with the words of St. Paul, which tells the story of God's saving works.

⁵⁴ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 71-76.

Therefore, the first aspect that must be seen in the Divine Liturgy is a call from God to man, as it is the saving word of God in the Old Testament. The work of salvation, which is remembered and celebrated in divine service, has its beginning in the Word of God, through which the world and man were created. With the first reading and allusions to Genesis in the liturgical texts, listen to what God said to the fathers before Moses. As Adam was called by his name, he calls every individual among the believers by name, and he becomes a spiritual priest and representative of God. When God commissioned Noah to build the ark, he promised him and his relative salvation from the flood. It also prepares for the group of believers freedom from the forces of evil and death. All the words spoken by God when He made the covenant with Noah appear to the community of believers in light of the Resurrection of Christ.

God promises His friendship to those who will listen, as He once did to Abraham, and also calls them to offer their lives as a sacrifice to God with the sacrifice of the true Isaac, the Messiah. The listener with Jacob challenges God to search for him, wrestle with him, and ascends to the glory of the Son of Man. Thus, the life of the fathers before Moses is a constant call from God to the worshipers. It is a call for responsibility, resoluteness, self-denial, and trust in God's care and steadfast faith in Jesus Christ.

With the second reading of the Old Testament and with the liturgical texts and actions that relate to the history of salvation from Moses to John the Baptist, what God said to the fathers of the law is heard and expressed. Here God speaks to believers as He spoke to Moses and the prophets regarding the Lord Christ. God's calling to Moses comes from the bush to the celebrants through the mouth of the Risen Christ. Just as God repeatedly calls the Israelites to be faithful to the covenant, so Christ calls the members of the congregation to be eternally faithful to Him. Just as the people of Israel could experience God's words and deeds for themselves through Aaron and his descendants who were chosen to be priests and Levites in the earthly temple, so the priests and deacons of the New Testament are now mediators, so that the human nature of Christ for the ecclesiastical congregation is the new place in which God meets His people.

God speaks to His people through the prophets when their books are read to increase hope in Christ. The congregation is invited through the hymn of the Holy One and the hymn accompanying Communion to participate in the liturgy of the angels and to sing the glory of God in the heavenly temple. Just as God promised, through the prophet Daniel, the appearance of light to the people who were taken to Babylon, so also through His Word God brings the celebrants together to offer them salvation in Christ, who shines in His congregation as the Sun of righteousness and the salvific light. So, through the Archangel Michael, God announces to the people of the Old Testament in relation to Christ: *Rejoice, fathers of the law! For I announce the coming of that Messiah whose divinity I have told you. Now God has taken flesh from our*

*flesh and renewed the ordinances for your benefit. In addition, He truly declared Himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore, I say to you, rise up in the strength of our God! Heads up! Hold on to the freedom of the New Testament! Do not allow yourselves to be enslaved again by the bondage of the law! I testify that this is the Messiah whose name I proclaimed to the prophets with credibility when I was still leading the Old Testament.*⁵⁵

The second aspect according to which the celebration of the Divine Liturgy is seen as God's calling to man is God's talk about salvation in the New Testament. Here, in the liturgy, the reading of the Epistle with the proclamation of the Gospel, and the liturgical texts that refer to the Gospels and other writings of the New Testament, the redeeming work of Christ is heard and expressed. The angel of the New Testament, Gabriel announces the fullness of salvation to the new Eve. The Creative Word through whom the world was created, man brought into being, and guided in history, He dwelt in Mary hypostatically during the incarnation, and similarly, he dwelt in the community of believers as spiritual gifts.

God guides the faithful congregation through the Apostle Paul as his holy letters are read and his works told. The Church is known about the mystery of Christ through his teaching. In the Old Testament, God spoke to fathers as if they were breastfed babies. Now he speaks to the celebrants at Mass as if they are spiritually mature people. Through the words of the Apostle Paul, the Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, speaks to devout worshipers as His New Testament people. When the word of grace-رحمة الله is uttered, the congregation of believers is filled with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and receives a share in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel and its accompanying elements, God speaks through Christ to believers with words that no one heard in the Old Testament: "Peace be with you - سلام الله عليكم" in which he addresses all those who celebrate Mass and calls them to repentance and accept the kingdom of God that began in Christ. Christ calls the celebrants to self-denial and heartfelt prayer, during the rite of sanctification (anaphora) and in the rite of Communion he invites them to the spiritual meal: He wants to meet the worshipers and give them His body as food.

As for the third aspect, the celebration of the Mass can be seen as God's calling to man: it also appears as the word of God in the completion of eschatology. God calls the faithful celebrants to confess and repent of their sins, has mercy on them and addresses them as sons and daughters. And then he invites them to participate in the heavenly banquet and eternal happiness.⁵⁶ In the Divine Liturgy, God calls man to perfection so that he may gradually come to know the mystery of Christ. The Recognition is the way, the ascent; it's a ladder to heaven. Just as there are three stages that must be overcome on the path to perfection, so God, Heavenly

⁵⁵ Exposition, IV/22.

⁵⁶ Exposition, IV:21.

Father paves for humanity to approach and know the mystery of Christ in these three stages. God calls man to fellowship with Him, as it happened with the fathers and prophets who lived according to the stage of nature and the stage of Law. He also calls on man today and every day to follow Christ as a final stage: that is, members of the Church are called to die with Christ in mystery in order to rise with Him. It is a divine invitation to eternal happiness.⁵⁷

2. Faithful Response

At the call of God, a person is given the grace to approach God with all his being. Celebrating the holy Mass is to make present the plan of salvation, which is essentially the memory of his saving deeds that God has given to all mankind. This means, in fact, that the believers not only see what God does for mankind's salvation and not only hear how God promises salvation to humankind, but they are also called to respond to the Lord's call, and this means man's participation in the salvation that God promised him. Therefore, the celebration of the Mass as a whole necessarily requires the calling of God and the response of man together and form unity. The connecting factor between them is the human nature of Christ, through which the community of believers has access to the Triune God.

As the calling of God is the Word made flesh, so the gift of Jesus Christ to God is a response to the community of believers. The Church, as the body of Christ, bears the life she has received in speech and liturgical action before God. So from the perspective of salvation history, the Divine Liturgy is seen as the response of the community of believers, which corresponds to the way of life of the Old Testament Fathers and Disciples of Christ, as obedience to God's will against Adam's disobedience. It finds its counterpart in the righteousness of Noah, the obedience of Abraham, the sacrifice of Isaac, the courage of Jacob, the trust of Moses, the priestly service of Aaron, and the zeal of the prophets.

The word "yes" Mary is the perfect example of the word "faithful" to the community of believers, which expresses our acceptance of God's will in our lives. The childhood gospels, in which God's calling and man's response are clearly seen in the person of our Mother, the Virgin Mary, can be described as the response of the community of believers to God's call. This congregation encounters the incarnate Word of God, as the Sun of Righteousness, which purifies the souls of the faithful from impurities, i.e. sins. By this they become one of the disciples of Jesus who fast with him and fight the enemy of the human race and announce the approach of the kingdom of heaven. They follow Jesus' teachings like the disciples and trust in His saving work. Likewise, like the disciples, they participate in the Transfiguration, the Passover Supper, the Passion, the Crucifixion, and the burial of Jesus.

⁵⁷ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 77-82.

In the celebration of the holy Mass, the faithful community responds to God's calling by holding on to the faith of the Apostles, responding to Christ's desire for peace, announcing his Resurrection and Ascension to heaven as seated at the right hand of God the Father, making the event of Pentecost a reality, waiting for his return, hoping for the Resurrection of the dead, and facing the final judgment with confidence and Believe in eternal life.

Also, celebrating the Mass as a response to God's call is progress on the path of spiritual perfection for the Faithful. Besides the offering of bread and wine, believers present their existence and their lives as a sacrifice before God.⁵⁸ Through the completion or fulfillment of Christ's mission, they say yes to death and Resurrection with Christ in the mystery of the Liturgy through the word "Amen" in the context of the rite of the Liturgy. That is, the salvific historical acts that is the sufferings, the crucifixion, the burial, and the Resurrection of Christ, in which the worship community participates with Christ in suffering, death, and Resurrection. The response of the worshipers is to stand before God and serve Him. Every person who celebrates Mass repents with all his heart and turns with all his whole being to God. That is, in other words, recognition of self-denial, reliance, and firm confidence in God's absolute power. Therefore self-denial and unconditional obedience to God is the celebrant's response to God's calling.

In addition, in the liturgy, man always responds to God's calling with all his senses, such as the abilities of hearing and speech. One of the essential elements of Christian response is proper listening to God's calling and obedience to God's Word. In listening, the whole person stands before God. The community of faithful became contemporary of the forefathers, the disciples, and the Easter Church, and formed with the assembly of angels a partnership in hearing, contemplating, understanding, and obeying God's words. From this point of view, the celebration of the holy Mass is a process of liturgical listening, "the service of the word", in which God and the faithful confront each other in dialogue. Correct listening is the event of salvation: by listening to God's call, a person is in communion with God and lives for God.

The human response is not only correct hearing, but also sight. Hearing and sighting of the liturgical event insofar as the word is understood as sound and event. Words heard with proper hearing are also seen as events of salvation with the eyes of faith. The eye considers the word of God as an act of salvation. Thus, the worshipers are purified and become the bearer of the word. By looking, the worshipers embrace the response of the Old Testament fathers, the disciples, and the early church and share the vision of the angels. The word that God addresses to humankind and that man turns to in hearing and sight, returns fruitfully to God through the mouth of the community of faithful. The celebration of the Mass becomes a discourse in which God's redemptive actions are narrated from the beginning of creation to the end of time.

⁵⁸ Romans 12:1.

Furthermore, worshipers respond in the practical aspect, who speaking through kinetic gestures such as prostration, and in this way fully encounters God. The personal encounter of the community of faithful with God takes place in a dynamic way. So the sensual elements of the liturgical system, as movements and gestures, are the language of the community celebrating with God. Through the liturgical place, which is a reflection of heaven and earth, the heart of the worshipers is raised to the presence of God. And the hour of celebrating the holy Mass is a sign that the worshipers see that their entire lives are in response to God's calling.

The movement that organizes the course of the celebration of the Mass and then the liturgical activity of the community describes the power of the Holy Spirit through which the worshipers find their way to God. When the clergy leave the place of the Holy of Holies, which symbolizing heaven, to Bema as the center of the world, and then return from the Bema to the place of the Holy of Holies, through this dialectical ritual movement, the worshipers are allowed to inclusion in the scriptural line of the mystery of Christ, because Christ came down to earth in order to ascend the faithful in Him to His kingdom in the heaven. The community of believers responds to Christ's descent and return to heaven with a ceremonial procession that begins at the Holy of Holies, leads to the Bema, and ends in the Holy of Holies.

Christ is revered in the person of the bishop who acts on his behalf. They recognize the continuing authority in the shepherd's staff that Christ gave to his disciples and successors. Christ is worshiped as God glorified in the sign of his cross. In the book of the Gospels they see the living icon of the incarnate Word of God. With incense and lighting as a sign of worship and a virtuous lifestyle, they welcome Christ in His Word as King of Heaven and Earth.

Also, the response of the worship group to God's call is expressed in the physical condition. In prostration, it affirms that man is nothing before God and symbolizes self-denial before the Creator. Since sitting on the ground, bending the knees and standing are mystical images of death and Resurrection with Christ. Standing means serving God in the manner of angels. With open mouths and eyes, the worshipers stand before the mystery of God. They lower their eyes in awe and reverence before God Almighty. The raising of the head is a sign of joy at the appearance of Christ, who participates with his church in the Eucharist. The signs of this sacrificial meal are the gifts of bread and wine placed on the altar that are spoken of in the previous acts of God's salvation as praising and proclaiming the name of the Trinity.

Thus, the human response is expressed in both the verbal and non-verbal forms of the celebration of the Mass. This final response comes from the pure heart, which can only find comfort in God and must turn away from all earthly things and turn to God alone. In the Holy Mass the celebrating worshiper experiences an act of mystical death and Resurrection with Christ. Everything that happens through worshiper in the celebration of the Mass is his response, in which God meets man.⁵⁹

Celebrating the holy Mass as an expression of faith

The anonymous author interprets the liturgy of the celebration of the Holy Mass as making present the plan of salvation. This is the mystery of Christ, who was from eternity and appeared as a model in creation and the Old Testament, and in the end he appeared in the fullness of time and will find its final completion in heaven. Accordingly, the liturgical activity has its roots and original pattern in God's saving works in the past and the future. The celebration of the mystery of Christ is the meeting of man with the Triune God, in which the worshiper participate the work of Salvation. Therefore, the liturgical activity is an expression of the living faith and gradually reveals that the God of the Fathers of the Old Testament and the Father of Jesus Christ by the divine nature is the real bearer of the liturgical event, and the celebrants are a group of the heavenly and earthly Church. Celebrating the Eucharist is the sacrament of the sacrifice of Christ and the Church.

1. God of the Old Testament Fathers and the Father of Jesus Christ

The anonymous interpreter of the liturgy explains that the carrier of the liturgical event is God of the Fathers and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This statement is revealed from the messianic perspective: The mystery of Christ is the beginning, center, and goal of both creation and salvation history. The Father (ﷲ) of Jesus Christ is the God of the Fathers of the Old Testament, who has repeatedly declared Himself to fulfill the plan of salvation. He is the creator of the visible and invisible worlds, and he created Adam, the ancestor of mankind, in his own image and likeness. After the fall, God did not leave Adam and his descendants to the power of evil. He made a covenant with Noah and chose Abraham to be the father of all nations. Through Abraham's physical seed, he promised blessings to all peoples. Through Moses, God gave the people of Israel the Law, in which He instructed His people through priests and prophets. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the same God who appeared to Moses in the bush. He led the people of Israel into the Promised Land through Joshua and promised the house of David an eternal king.

⁵⁹ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 82-87.

Almighty, merciful and faithful God in the Old Testament fulfilled the hope of the fathers from Adam to the last righteous one in Jesus of Nazareth, who according to the flesh is the son of Adam, the promised son of Abraham, of the seed of David. Therefore, the people of the Old Testament can say through the mouth of the old Simeon to the God of the Patriarchs: "For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared for the sake of all peoples, a light revealed to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel".⁶⁰In the fullness of time, the God of the Fathers revealed Himself in the mystery of the incarnation of His eternal Word as the Triune God. Jesus excels in his words and actions the Mosaic Law, the priestly office and the prophetic ministry of the Old Testament.

That is, in the fullness of time He spoke to His people through His incarnate Word. In the humanity of Jesus of Nazareth, he hid and declared the Triune God. The God of the Fathers appeared on earth in Jesus of Nazareth. In Jesus appeared the glory of redemption and the life-giving light of the Lord of the Old Testament. Jesus of Nazareth is the one whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit. Christ lives and acts as a mediator between God and man by the power of the Holy Spirit. The word of God works and appears in the image of the servant.

During the baptism of Jesus, his transfiguration, his speaking with a heavenly authority, and the acts of salvation, he explicitly declares that he is a true God, but his birth, growth, and living under the law, which testifies to him as a true human being. Because he is God and man, he made access to God possible. In his incarnation, heaven and earth were united: God humbled himself in Christ to establish and elevate humanity through Christ. Jesus of Nazareth accomplished the work of salvation by word and deed in Jerusalem. He completed God's plan of salvation in the Old Testament and acknowledged and affirmed the duration and validity of the law. In his life and work he was at the same time above and below the law. So the law was the way to Christ. It was perfected in him: Jesus Christ is the eternal new law and legislator who interprets God's will for salvation by word and deed.

The human nature made by the Spirit of the Eternal Son of God is the place where God and man meet. Jesus' earthly life and deeds acknowledge that he is a true God and a true man. His words and actions are marked by the words and deeds of the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets. Therefore, the Angel of the Old Testament, Michael, confirms in the liturgical events of the Fathers of the First Testament that this is Christ, who made known to them by His divine nature as pre-existing. At the liturgical event, Christ turns to the people of the Old Testament and says that He came forth from the Father to gather the children of the law and lead them to God. He says to the children of the law: "Your father Abraham rejoiced that he

⁶⁰ Lukas 2:30-32.

would see my day. He saw it and was glad.”⁶¹ “Truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”⁶²

Just as the life of the righteous in the Old Testament was a model for the earthly life of Jesus, so this is a model for his paschal mystery from his birth to the establishment of the Mysteries. Jesus' self-sacrifice to the God of the Fathers for the sake of many is the liturgy of the new and eternal covenant. In establishing his Mysteries, Christ established himself as the high priest and offering of eternity, the Triune God revealing himself in Jesus' suffering, death, and Resurrection. Therefore, after His Resurrection, Christ is present in the Church with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Risen Lord has been enthroned at the right hand of God the Father and He lives and works in His Church through the Holy Spirit.

In his divine nature he is equal in essence with God and in his human nature equal to man. He participates in all human natures except sin. The individual human nature of Christ is also called hypostasis, according to Antiochene Theology. In which the anonymous author says: “Christ we call one Son and one Christ. But when we are asked to talk about how this happened, we distinguish between two natures and two hypostases. This does not mean that we see Christ in two ways: whether he has two natures and two hypostases, rather, they are united in the person of Jesus Christ, where we affirm that God became man and that man became God. But also since we see that the two natures do not change, we say: God remains God and man remains man. In this way, God did not become man by nature, and man did not become God by nature. But because of unity human and divine nature, God became man and man became God”.⁶³

Because of human nature, Christ is the only mediator between God and man. He is the true, eternal High Priest and Shepherd of the New Testament, the Bridegroom and Head of the Church and He, too will come in glory to Judge the living and the dead. His unity with the Church is the unity of the body and members. The Holy Spirit is the bond of loving fellowship between Christ and the Church, which completes Christ's saving work in the Church. Indeed, in the first covenant, the work of the Holy Spirit in the divine plan of salvation was unclear. In the fullness of time the Holy Spirit was sent with the word of the eternal God for the salvation of mankind. In the womb of the Virgin, the daughter of Eve, the Holy Spirit created the new body of Adam.

⁶¹ John 8:56.

⁶² Matt 13:17; Luke 10:24.

⁶³ Exposition, IV/24.

At the baptism in the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit descended upon the Incarnate Word to abide with Him forever. In doing so, he revealed the messianic mission of the Son of God. Also, by his descent he brought the children of the Church together in the holy faith to perfection. In other words, the Holy Spirit is present in the teachings of the Son in the Church, and teaches believers all wisdom and shows the paths leading to the Kingdom of Heaven. He bestows Mysteries on the community of faithful. In the Holy Spirit is joy and peace, gives life in abundance, and is worshiped and glorified as the Lord with the Father and the Son.

As he acted effectively at Christ's incarnation, baptism, and Resurrection, so the Holy Spirit, at the request of the celebrant priest, the offering of the bread and wine transforms into the Body and Blood of Christ. Holy Spirit emerges from the Father and worships with the Father and the Son. He is of the same essence as the Father and the Son. God addresses the worshipers during the celebration of the Holy Mass as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The saving work of the three Persons follows a definite order. The realization or fulfillment of the plan of salvation began from the Father, by sending the Son into the world to redeem it, and the Holy Spirit completes the work of redemption. That is, the three Persons are equal in essence, which we find in the liturgical events from the beginning to the end of the rite of sanctification (Anaphora) through the Trinitarian action: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and at all times and forever. Amen.⁶⁴

The unity of the three Divine Hypostases is expressed both in the Anaphora prayer for the remembrance of the saving work and in the prayer for the Epiclesis. The Hymn of Holy to the Angels introduces the heavenly and the earthly as the Holy Trinity. Glory and praise to the Trinity is the eternal liturgy of the earthly and heavenly Church. In heaven and on earth "we are all to give thanks and prostrate and sing praises to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit together and in unison, now and always and forever."⁶⁵

The Trinity is known above all in glorification, particularly in the priestly cry "Holy is fit for the saints" and the faithful answer "Only one is holy God the Father: only one is holy: God the Son. Only one is holy: God the Holy Spirit."⁶⁶The anonymous author also asserted that it is obligatory for the believer to give thanks and worship to the Triune God: "It is fitting, O my Lord, every day that we give thanks to your divinity and worship your majesty because you raised our human race from the dust and made us like the heavenly ones. Those on earth and in the heavens will recite to you a new song of praise in one congregation. Thou hast made them happy in Thy

⁶⁴ Joseph Kelaita, *The Liturgy of the Church of the East*, Mosul, 1921-1928, 26,43.

⁶⁵ Exposition, IV/24.

⁶⁶ Exposition, IV/25; *Liturgy of the Church of the East*, 48.

kingdom and taught them to tune in Thy hymns of praise, which they may sing ceaselessly, praises and thanksgiving to Thee, O most blessed Trinity."⁶⁷

The anonymous author leads his holistic thinking to show the meaning of celebrating the liturgy, that the divine work in the Old and New Testaments is based on the initiative of the Trinity God, who intervened in history for the salvation of man. Because Jesus Christ is the beginning, center, and end of the story of salvation, the celebration of the Sacrament of the Mass is the true worship service in which the true God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is worshiped and glorified.⁶⁸

2. The worship community as one earthly and heavenly church

The heavenly and the earthly sing a new hymn of praise in one congregation. In this way, the community expresses the fact that in the celebration of the Mass, people and angels come together, and that the earthly and heavenly Church are one. The unifying principle is the Word of God incarnate. Because of the divine and human nature of Christ, the unity between angels and men, which had been nullified by the fall of Adam, was restored. This unity will only be fully restored in the last days.

In the Mystery of the incarnation heaven and earth reconciled in the liturgy as a sacramental truth. There the heavenly ones are sent, angels as God's messengers, to help the earthly, people, to lead them into communion with God. Archangel Michael is the leader of the people of Israel; Archangel Gabriel leads the church from the Gentiles. The earthly group represents the descendants of Adam. It collects the dead and the living recorded in God's plan of salvation and sees itself as the people of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Church of Jesus Christ.

The Church, as the community of worshipers in Christ, has its roots in God's plan of salvation and its archetypal beginning in Adam. After the fall of Adam, his righteous offspring are considered a role model for the sons and daughters of the new Adam. The choice of Noah and Abraham, as well as the covenant of Sinai with the people of Israel, are examples of the founding of the Church through the incarnate Word of God. This means that the source of the Church in the mystery of the incarnation is the Word of God. The Holy Family is the counterpart of the Old Testament people and the beginning of the New Testament people.

⁶⁷ Exposition, IV/27.

⁶⁸ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 88-92.

By establishing the Eucharist, full reference is made to the Church. At the Last Supper, Christ concludes the new and eternal covenant with His Church sealed by His blood on the cross. Through the Resurrection of Christ, it is as a comprehensive event of salvation, which is not complete except by the descent of the Holy Spirit; the nature of the Church is clear and has become described by the Biblical-patristic dimension. Therefore, the worshipers see themselves as the liturgical gathering that God has blessed, as a ceremonial community, a new creation and the body of Christ, and love each other as related members. Therefore, the members of the congregation for worship must be one soul.⁶⁹

The hierarchical structure of the New Testament people is predetermined in the Old Testament people. The Church is the heir of the promises and functions of the Old Testament, which were fulfilled in Christ. As the function of the Levites became the position of the Stephen deacon and the priesthood of Aaron, and the kingdom of David and the function of the prophets were transferred to the position of the priest, Shepherd and the teacher of Peter: this is how the image of the Church appears in Christ in its sacramental structure, of which the people of the Old Testament were a model. The sacred structure that Christ bestowed on his disciples is transmitted without interruption in the Church through the sacrament of the priesthood. The priestly structure of the Church includes the bishop, priest, and deacon. The function of the bishop is the principle of unity: the bishop is the only member of the community who is the Mystery of Christ in the broadest sense and who represents Christ in the first place. But he also occupies the position of Peter and is the high priest, since Peter was the first among the disciples. And because the high priest is the tongue of the congregation, the general priesthood is also conferred.⁷⁰

After explaining the origin, nature, and hierarchical structure of the Church, which is characterized by its four signs: it is the One, Holy, Apostolic and Catholic Church. Specifically, the four characteristics of the Church are highlighted as follows. The unity of the Church is predetermined in the Natural and Mosaic Law. The foundational element of the unity of all human beings is formed in the image of God. The natural order as an expression of the divine will for salvation forms the basis of the unity of all people. The Mosaic Law was designed to maintain the exemplary unity of the Old Testament people around the Tabernacle until the unity of the human race in Christ was restored. In the fullness of time, the unity of the Church has been recognized: the God of the Fathers sends His Word and His Holy Spirit to earth to establish the unity of the human race.

⁶⁹ Exposition, IV/19,46.

⁷⁰ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 92-95.

This is why the community of faithful sees itself as the new creation. The Church as a new creation, sanctified through the death and Resurrection of Christ, is born again of water and the Holy Spirit. The God of the Fathers and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ made her pure to stand before Him and serve Him. Through his words and deeds, Christ led them from sinful paths to the path of His kingdom. And through the Holy Spirit He purified it and God sanctified the Church to share His holiness with it. Likewise, the worship community defines itself as sacred and at the same time needs sanctification.⁷¹

The holiness of the Church is not only collective but also individual. The baptized is holy. Lips, heart, body and spirit are sanctified and yet they must also be continually cleansed in the Sacrament of Eucharist, so that everyone in the whole Church may always confidently stand as children of God and disciple of Jesus Christ before the Heavenly Father and find himself drawn to the holiness of the Trinity. The more the Church allows itself to be sanctified, the more its members will be recognized as sons and daughters of God in the world. In this way, God's mercy should be bestowed upon all people. Therefore, the Church is comprehensive and general, in other words catholic, i.e. universal. The Church becomes the new heaven from which flows the source of salvation. God wants through His condescension, to reach the heart of every human being. He wants to return all the peoples of the earth to his kingdom so that they do not oppress and fight other peoples with each other. That is why the occasion of Pentecost is always related to the reunification of all peoples and languages in one people. Therefore, the nine o'clock in the morning was designated for the celebration of the Holy Mass because of the event of Pentecost. According to the East Syriac tradition, the apostles determined the time when the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples as the time for celebrating the sacrament of the Eucharist, as Peter said to the people: Look, it is only nine o'clock.⁷² Thus, the previous system was replaced by this system, so the Holy Mass was celebrated at nine o'clock in the morning. As a testimony to the first order, the apostles kept two days in their appointed time: the day of the establishment of the mysteries (Passover) in the evening and the feast of the Resurrection at dawn. This was the reason why Mar Ishoyahb III ordered the start of the celebration of the Mass at nine o'clock in the morning. Indeed, until now, according to the liturgy of the Church of the East in Khudra's book, all the Masses take place on Sunday morning and the days of the saints' commemorations, except for only two days, except for the Easter Thursday Mass in the afternoon and dawn of the Feast of Resurrection, which were the origin of the first system at the time of the apostles.⁷³

⁷¹ Exposition, IV/25,73.

⁷² Acts 2:15.

⁷³ Ibid, Mysterienfeier, 114-117.

When the beginning, course, and purpose of the Church are considered, one gains a comprehensive picture of the holy and Catholic Church, as an image that appears in the light of the Resurrection and will reach its completion in the place of the heavenly wedding. The community of worshipers considers itself an earthly church on its way to completion. In this way she is in vital exchange with the heavenly Church. The Church has the principle of its unity in Jesus Christ, who reconciled the heavenly and the earthly with each other and set them at the service of the Triune God. And through him, as mediator, high priest and shepherd (king), the earthly and the heavenly have free access to God. Angels and believers form one church. Because God appeared on earth and ascended our nature to heaven. Indeed, when God descended to us, the earth became heaven, and when He ascended with our human nature to heaven, heaven became earth. Heaven and earth are now one and there is no longer a separation between heaven and earth. We humans form with the heavenly ones one church in Christ and thus through the resurrection we become perfect human beings.⁷⁴

3. The mystery of the sacrifice of Christ and the Church

The mystery of the Divine Trinity gradually reveals to mankind the mystery of Christ, which is understood as the dispensation of the Old and New Testaments. Christ, as an example and counterpart to the priests of the Old Testament and the eternal High Priest, established the liturgy of the New Testament in His blood according to the order of Melchizedek. The Church of Christ, that is, the people of the New Testament, performs the Liturgy of the New Testament, whose summit is in the mystery of Christ's sacrifice. The mystery of Christ's sacrifice instituted once and for all during the Last Supper and sealed by death on the cross and Resurrection, as a counterpart to the Old Testament sacrifice is continually performed on earth by Christ and the Church. The Anaphora, i.e. the rite of sanctification, is a reflection of the historical development of the plan of salvation, as much as it is sacramental imitation of the mystery of Christ; it is also a reflection of the completion of the mystery of Christ in the eschatological perspective.

In this theological sense of the sacrament of the Eucharist, the Christ's sacrifice is also referred to as the Mysteries of the Church. The sacraments (ἁγίασμα) of the Church are the Body and Blood of Christ, and the separation between them necessarily refers to the sacrificial quality of the Eucharistic event, which is referred to as the fulfillment of the Great Mystery and is also called the Sacrifice. This is why the word Mystery-RAZA-ἁγίασμα expresses not only the sacrifice of the Eucharistic event, but also its universal significance for salvation. The Mystery of Christ's sacrifice is the only sacrificial event that ends in reconciliation.

⁷⁴ Exposition, IV / 23, 58.

This liturgical event is not only accomplished by the sacrificial hidden priest, Christ, but is also performed by the clergy. Therefore, the sacrament of Christ's sacrifice is also the sacrifice of the Church. It is said very clearly that Christ is the real responsible for the sacrificial event. It is also evident that it expresses equally that the sacrificial event is offered by the ministers of the Church. Christ and the sacrament of sacrifice are linked to each other, just as the active person is linked to his actions. Christ and the event of the sacrifice are an inseparable unity, because Christ is the sacrifice and also the priest who offers the sacrifice. Where the unknown author asserts that when standing before the mystery of the sacrifice, fear controls us, and trembling overcomes us. For at this hour we must not suffer indolence, to stand before the face of the Heavenly King. We must not stop crying now. Our crying should not be loud, but in the heart with reverence and prostration.⁷⁵

Christ's unique redemptive work at the Last Supper is the New Testament sacrifice. The sacrifice of Christ is the only true worship by which peace and fellowship can be achieved between men with God and with each other. Christ's sacrifice is offered for the sake of salvation and reconciliation, thus restoring the originally perfect relationship between God and man. The anonymous author says in this regard: "Behold, the Creator has reconciled with you, and your sins are still multiplying. You deserve great evil, but our God, who is rich in mercy, redeemed you through His Son and took you to His house. For when God humbled Him, He clothed your body and He sanctified this body and deified it. And be crowned at the right hand of God and intercede for you, so take courage and lift up your head, for your salvation is near. God came and visited us. He healed the brokenhearted and bound up their wounds."⁷⁶

When celebrating the Holy Mass, the Church not only makes present the effect of the mystery of Christ's sacrifice, but also shows that Christ performs the mystery of his sacrifice. The mystery of Christ's sacrifice is also the mystery of the Church, because Christ allows himself to be represented by the children of the Church through the sacrament of the Priesthood. As he assigned them to commemorate his Paschal Mystery, he has entrusted or delegated to her these glorious and divine mysteries for her commemoration. These glorious and divine mysteries were entrusted to Church, so that she might celebrate the commemoration (ἀνάμνησις) of his death on the cross and imprint his Resurrection on her heart with a sacred mark. After the mission of Christ, the Church derives salvation from the mystery of Christ's sacrifice, as well as from the wellspring that overflows for the faithful in the liturgical event. The invisible sacrificial event becomes strongly present in the actions of the Holy Mass. Church imitates the saving work of Christ, sacramentally receiving the salvation and passing on.

⁷⁵ Exposition, IV/20.

⁷⁶ Exposition, IV/ 20,50; IV/ 20,51.

The mystery of the sacrifice of Christ and the Church is a dialogue event with an external perspective, where he depicts and makes Jesus' meal in the upper room as a feast of the kingdom of heaven. Before the heavenly host appears in the wedding hall, his servants prepare food and drink and at the heavenly wedding banquet they are in the center of the action. The Celebrant opens and closes the Eucharistic event with the Word of Trinity in greeting and grace. Between the opening and closing of the Anaphora prayer the paschal acting of Christ is presented, which is understood as a real event and symbolically - mystical present of God's past and future saving work.

During the preparation of the offering on the altar, the dialogue announces that Christ offers sacrifice to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (Jacob), the glorious King. In the liturgical dialogue the father is also called the king. To the celebratory priest's call, "Let your minds be in the highest"⁷⁷ It is the complete response of the congregation. This call as a reference to the kingship of Jehovah in the Old Testament and to a liturgical calling to the Jewish Synod; It is an indication that Addai and Mari's Anaphora come from the Jewish Ritual.⁷⁸ Through it, we talk about the works of God's salvation in the Old Testament, with thanksgiving and praise for the offering related to the incarnation of the eternal Word of God. Then, Jesus' work of salvation as a completion of the Old Testament is expressed with thanksgiving and praise for the offering.

The Top of the sacrificial event is the narrative of the mystery of the Paschal sacrifice and the descent of the Holy Spirit. The mystery of the Paschal narrative is Jesus' sacrifice of himself to the God of the Fathers for the life of the world. This narrative lays the foundations for the mystery of the Mass by his death on the cross. Jesus took bread in his hands as the Mystery of his body on the cross and mixed it with wine as a sacred sign of his blood - which was shed on the cross. To express this fact in a special way, the celebrant also invokes the Holy Spirit over the offering to transform it into the Body and Blood of Christ. Therefore, the main theme of the narrative of the Paschal sacrifice is the death of Jesus, while the descent of the Holy Spirit refers primarily to the Resurrection of Christ.

In the Anaphora prayer the great mystery is accomplished. Christ appears complete and the congregation participates in the performance of the Paschal Mystery. This allegorical-sacramental fusion takes place on the basis of solidarity in the mystery of salvation: "When he dies, we all die in secret, and when he rises, we all rise in mystery."⁷⁹ In the rite of Communion, the crucified and risen Lord appears to the worshipers and makes them one body and one soul. They go into the world with joy and proclaim Christ as the Risen Lord in word and deed.

⁷⁷ Exposition, IV/21,54; The Liturgy of the Church of the East, 26.

⁷⁸ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 102.

⁷⁹ Exposition, IV/24,61.

The Sacrament of Christ's Sacrifice is a sacrifice for the Church itself insofar as it represents Christ as delegated or acts as a responsible person on Christ's behalf. Just as earthly rulers exercise their power through the work of delegated deputies, so Christ performs and fulfills his priestly function in the liturgical activity of the community. Christ's relationship with His Church differs from the relationship of earthly rulers with their agents. For the Church is the body of Christ: Christ is the head, the main celebrant is the mouth, and the faithful are the individual members. The sacramental work of the Church is illustrated by this image: the mouth expresses the thought and will of the Head and the obedience of the members of the Church. Thus the mystery of Christ's sacrifice appears as a comprehensive event that proceeds from the head and is accomplished by the members. The mouth also expresses the private work of the main priest and emphasizes the sacramental work of the priest, who has been empowered through priestly ordination to commemorate the death and Resurrection of the Lord in the person of Christ.

God the word took our human nature and fulfilled God's saving will. Just as the human nature of Christ performs a divine work with his divine nature because of the hypostatic union, so the Church as the Body of Christ sacramentally works in liturgical speech and acts because of its participation in the human nature of Christ. Therefore, the Fathers of the Church understood the mystery of the Eucharist as a mystical event with the image of the head and members, and in comparison with the unity of the divine and human natures in Christ. The Liturgy of the Word and the Anaphora are bound together in a sacramental event, which is thus called the celebration of the Holy Mass.⁸⁰

Abstract

We can prove that Abdisho Bar Bahriz (before 827) the legal and metropolitan of Erbil and Mosul is the anonymous author. The liturgy reflects the history of salvation. The history of salvation is the history of mankind, that is, the natural system, the Moses' law and the law of Christ are expressions of God's one saving will. Because of God's saving work, the natural system, the Old Testament law, and the age of Christ are stages of divine revelation. The order of nature and the law of the Old Testament are the introduction to Jesus' earthly life, Jesus' establishment of the mysteries with his death on the cross, his Resurrection, and the heavenly banquet is the beginning of the new age. With the presentation of the Paschal Mystery of Christ, the pre-Passover events of salvation that follow the Passover gradually become understood: while the pre-Passover history of salvation begins with the creation of the world and the creation of man and ends with the establishment of the Mysteries through Jesus, developed towards the glorification of Christ on the cross, the life of the Lord The Resurrection after Easter is the anticipation of the eschatological perfection.

⁸⁰ Idris, *Mysterienfeier*, 99-104.

The interpretation of the celebration of the Mass reveals that the anonymous author understands the world and human history as determined by the mystery of Christ present and celebrated in the service of the Mass. In other words, the history of humanity is always the history of salvation, centered on Christ. In liturgical events this world is reproduced and that history is reconstructed. The book of the liturgy, which is also called the annual cycle, is a literary work whose texts aim at kinetic performance, that is, in the sense of making the mystery of Christ present and effective in our spiritual life. The liturgical celebrations during the year are sacramental traditions of the mystery of Christ. The center and summit is the celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday, around which the days of the week revolve, and together they are combined with the group of feasts from which the liturgical year is composed.

All the annual feasts bring back to our minds one aspect of the paschal mystery of Christ as a fulfillment and completion of God's salvific activity in the Old and New Testaments. They are later pictures of the festivals of biblical Judaism. In the sense, that the mystery of Christ was celebrated in a hidden way in the liturgical year of the Old Testament. The Old Testament symbols in which God acted at certain times referred to Christ.

Presenting the events of salvation in the Old Testament is at the same time making the mystery of Christ present: when Moses' leadership of God's people is embodied in the week of Moses, the life of the prophet Elijah is celebrated in the week of Elijah. The celebration of Church Consecration Week emerges from the Old Testament descriptions of the Tabernacle and the dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem. The mentioned holidays are a preparation for the incarnation of Christ, which is celebrated on the feasts of the Annunciation, Christmas and the Epiphany. Along with Easter, it is a prologue to the celebration of the Paschal Mystery of Christ. And the week of Christ's Resurrection continues, so to speak, from the Jewish feast of unleavened bread or the first fruits to the Pentecost, that is, until the Jewish harvest festival: Christ is the perfect flower and fruit of the new creation, that is, the perfect offering. The Church celebrates the Week of the Apostles through the Holy Spirit who was working in the Old Testament.

Whereas the hour of the celebration of the Mass is the conclusion of the series of feasts in the liturgical year, the liturgical space is the subsequent image of the earthly temple and the image of heaven. Old Testament theology about the Christ-centered temple relates to the liturgical place. The earthly temple as a place for God's presence and glory in His people was a model for Christ, in which God's glory appeared. The Temple of Jerusalem was the center of the world, the summation of all places in the history of salvation, and the Holy of Holies in the Temple was an image of Heaven. The Jerusalem temple acquired its full significance as an image as soon as the archetype appeared in the incarnate Word of God. This is the final

meeting between God and man. The Jerusalem temple remains a sign or symbol of God's redeeming activity in the Old Testament and the incarnation of Christ, indicating the true temple, the risen Christ, who will one day appear as the Sun of Righteousness. Therefore, the liturgical place is not directed towards Jerusalem, but towards the east, and thus it is a sacramental sign that recalls the places of worship in the Old Testament as models, and the incarnation of Christ as an image, and the glorified body of the Lord as a heavenly temple.

The liturgical calendar and the liturgical place not only originated from the Old Testament, but also grew in the community of believers, because the liturgical life is a celebration of God's past saving works. The congregation is God's people gathered together from all peoples, whose ancestors in faith are the Old Testament righteous and whose hierarchical structure corresponds to the constitution of the Old Testament people. The functions of the special orders of the priesthood have their Old Testament patterns rooted in salvation history. As the hour of the celebration of the Sacrament of the Liturgy brings to mind time and eternity, the liturgical place is a reflection of earth and heaven and the movement of the liturgical event is a sign of the effectiveness of the Triune God, likewise, the group of believers and clergy - organized hierarchically - reminds of humanity, the angels and Christ. Therefore, they form unity with the earthly and the heavenly, and appear as one Church, declaring God's saving will in word and deed. Therefore, they form unity with the earthly and the heavenly, and appear as one Church, declaring God's saving will in word and deed.

In addition, the liturgical texts of the Holy Mass are the source of knowledge in showing the plan of salvation as a remembrance of God's saving works and as a sign of the effectiveness of the Trinity God in dispensation, in other words it is a continuation of the illustrative symbols of the Bible and the teaching of the Church Fathers. Therefore, the celebration of the Mass is a remembrance (تذكير) of a plan of salvation on a small scale. It is not the preserve of a privileged class, but is for the pure-hearted believers who long to know Christ more deeply and see His glory.

This is why the celebration of the holy Mass can be described in four aspects: It is making God's plan of salvation or the mystery of Christ present. And this preserves the unity of the Bible. The Old Testament is appreciated for its historical and prophetic reading as a complement to the celebration of the liturgy. God's saving work remains for the fathers of the Old Testament as a permanent prelude to Christ's saving work. At the end of times, the fathers of the Old and New Testaments form unity in Christ: when the prophets saw Christ from afar, the apostles saw Him face to face, but the believers will see Christ in His second coming.

The meaning of celebrating the Paschal Mystery of Christ is based on the experience of God's saving work, in which the prophets and apostles participated, as well as the believers who participate in the service of the Liturgy to this day. Therefore, from the historical side the celebration of the Mass is interpreted as a reflection of the plan of salvation in a ritual performance. It is a dialogic event performed at a specific hour in a specific liturgical location, in a specific order by the congregation of the faithful.

As much as the historical aspect of salvation is emphasized in the celebration of the Paschal Mystery, the eschatological aspect is by no means neglected, because the Anaphora prayer is considered a reflection of the image of the heavenly liturgy. In order to express as accurately as possible the idea of earthly and heavenly dialogue, the dialogical character of the celebration of the Mass is manifested allegorically within the framework of what is appropriate, so that the community of believers goes deeper into the Mass and can relive the invitations and visions of the Old Testament figures, experience earthly Jesus, and hear the parables of Jesus and move to the eschatological age. Thus, the celebration of the sacraments is a remembrance of the Risen Lord and an anticipation of the heavenly feast.

That is why the celebration of the Mass must be understood as an encounter between God and man, in which the Triune God is the principal actor, who calls the community of believers into communion with him, and through liturgical dialogue shows them his past and future saving works and invites them to participate. God takes the initiative out of mercy, love, and loyalty. He addresses man as his creation, his image and likeness, as his representative and his partner, as a son and member of his kingdom.

As for the group of believers, they are called to imitate God: with love, trust, honesty, and justice are required. It is the family and people of the covenant, the bride of Christ. Its answer is trust in turning back to God: with a clear face and a pure heart, with unwavering faith and eternal fidelity. With thanksgiving, praise, wailing, supplication, reverence, and with confidence you stand before God, who appointed His Son, Jesus Christ, as the eternal mediator between Him and His creation. Thus, the celebration of the Holy Mass is an expression of faith: the community of believers recognizes the Triune God, who revealed himself in the Old and New Testaments according to the dispensation. He is the God of the Fathers and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Jesus of Nazareth, the promise of salvation made by the Old Testament Fathers is fulfilled and completed. The God of Jesus Christ is Triune: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He wants the salvation of all human beings, and therefore established a memorial for his saving work: The mystery of Christ's Passover is the eternal revelation of the Triune God, and the celebration of the mystery of the Eucharist by the clergy with the group of believers is a sacramental celebration, it is a sacred sacrificial event of pain and death on the cross, Resurrection, eternal presence and the return of Christ.