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## **Notes on the New Liturgy: Sacramental Liturgy**

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## NOTES ON THE NEW LITURGY

SACRAMENTAL LITURGY, by Frederick M. McManus. New York: Herder and Herder, 1967. 256 pp.

Almost four years have passed since the promulgation of the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. During this time, the Sacred Congregation of Rites has released four important Instructions, prepared by the Consilium for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, that mark various stages in the gradual but thorough reform of the Church's life of worship.

Regional liturgical commissions are kept busy studying the various ways of adapting the liturgy to the cultural and pastoral needs of their particular people. The difficulties caused by strong differences of opinion between conservatives and progressives often slow down the implementation of reforms in some regions, but this is to be expected. There are certain ultra-zealous "reformers", however, who, impatient at what they consider a very slow pace in the reformation of liturgical matters, experiment with various forms of worship that very often seem to succeed in bringing the liturgy closer to the people but also betray a rather superficial understanding of the nature of the liturgy. As Father Jungmann wrote: "Doors have been opened, certainly; and there are some who seem to feel like knocking down the walls as well."

How can one be guided by the true spirit of Vatican II's radical reform in liturgy? Certainly those responsible for the worship of a congregation owe it to their flock to acquaint themselves with the Constitution on the Liturgy and the Instructions put out by the S.C.R. A good number of commentaries on the Constitution have been published in various books and periodicals. This present book contains a commentary on the first three chapters of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and one on the new Rite of Mass as set down in the First Instruction on the Liturgy ("Inter Oecumenici", Sept. 26, 1964) and particularly in the document on the *Ordo Missae* of Jan. 27, 1965. Both commentaries originally appeared in the 1964-65 issues of the liturgical magazine *Worship* and are here put into one volume in revised form. A reprint of the Constitution completes the book.

The title given to the book, *Sacramental Liturgy*, is apt to give one the impression that this is a study of the theological, biblical and spiritual background and implications of the Constitution. Though it certainly attracts, it thereby also disappoints. For one finds out soon enough that it is not the kind of commentary one had expected to find. The two commentaries are primarily pastoral, historical and, in seemingly large part, juridical. There certainly is a need for this

kind of commentary, but not every reader would perhaps be willing to plough through it.

The author has consequently refrained from commenting on the strictly theological articles of the Constitution, namely articles 2, 5-8, 10-12 and 47-48: the nature of the Sacred Liturgy and of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. His longest analyses are characteristically given to the articles on language in the liturgy and the meaning of "competent territorial ecclesiastical authority" (art. 36, 54 and 63), the homily (art. 52), Communion under both species for the faithful (art. 55) and Concelebration (art. 57).

Accepting Fr. McManus' type of commentary for what it is, the reader finds that M. handles his subject quite competently. Having served as consultor to the commissions that prepared the schema on the Liturgy and guided it through the first two periods of the Council, and being consultor at present to the post-conciliar Commission on the Liturgy, M. provides his reader with some enlightening passages, particularly when he explains what the Council meant by certain expressions used in the Constitution, or gives the historical background or origin of some principles, or points out particular instances where a change in the terms of the Constitution from the form of the schema serve to illustrate developments that took place among the conciliar Fathers, developments to which M. refers as a "gradual liberalization of attitude".

The author likewise becomes interesting when he suggests concrete ways whereby a particular reform advocated by the Constitution can be implemented. In this respect, the part of the commentary dealing with the sacraments and sacramentals proves more absorbing than the other parts where the author, a distinguished canonist, gets carried away by his penchant for juridical expressions.

Because he chose to comment on the articles consecutively and separately, M. becomes repetitious and less effective at times. Towards the end of his commentary on the New Rite (which is much more clearly arranged and divided than the commentary on the Constitution), the author has some summaries. One could have wished that there were more of those summaries, preferably in schematic form.

As previously indicated, because of the nature of this commentary, this reviewer feels that the book would make wearisome reading for the expert and, to a large extent, uninteresting for the layman. On the other hand, seminarians studying liturgy and priests in parishes would certainly find this book helpful as a reference. However, it will have to be brought up to date in some important parts and should incorporate the new adaptations contained in the other Instructions that have appeared since "*Inter Oecumenici*", namely the

Instruction on Music in the Liturgy (March 5, 1967), the Second Instruction on the Liturgy ("Tres Abhinc Annos", May 4, 1967), and the Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery (May 25, 1967).

The author's mastery of his subject, as we have said, is evident in his work. His occasional insights into the pastoral implications of the liturgical reform, though sometimes hampered by the style, invite to deeper reflections. But to this reviewer, the balanced attitude and outlook of the author as manifested throughout the book, is perhaps his main contribution. The last paragraph of the book puts this in a nutshell: "No one should seek an end to necessary and fundamental rubrical or ceremonial directions—as no one should be so arrogant as to create his own liturgy. But we should welcome the freedom and flexibility built into the liturgical reform, so that the celebration in the Christian community may become a living and real thing, the sign of genuine prayer and faith." This is thinking with the Church.

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## AMERICA AND THE BALANCE OF EUROPEAN POWER: 1783

**THE PEACEMAKERS:** The Great Powers and American Independence, by Richard B. Morris. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1965. xviii, 572 pp.

When one thinks of the American Revolution, he usually pictures counterfeit Indians dumping tea into Boston's harbor or Thomas Jefferson skillfully drafting the Declaration of Independence, or perhaps George Washington wintering with his ragged troops at Valley Forge. The drama of rebellion and war, of patriots and traitors, friendly allies and honorable foes all rise and fall on one vast historical canvas.

Such a canvas would be incomplete if it did not take into account the most crucial and concluding event of the war, the 1783 Peace Treaty of Paris. Americans have been wont to blush at the manner in which these negotiations were carried out. A cursory glance at events will show the United States peace commissioners forming a secret and separate peace with Britain prior to the general one with the allies. Hence the honest, gnawing query: Does one see here opportunist Yankees coldly stabbing their loyal French ally in the back for a few commercial privileges with the enemy? Or were the American