

STUDIA LITURGICA

AN INTERNATIONAL ECUMENICAL REVIEW FOR LITURGICAL RESEARCH AND RENEWAL

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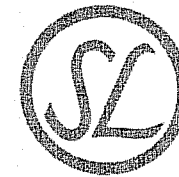
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LITURGICAL REFORMS IN THE CHURCHES

and, as pertinent to the texts of the day with their images and revelations about where we are in calendar time, make connections between those themes and the assembly's liturgical acts. In the sermon, make the connection to a song or hymn, to our intercessions, make the connection to the table or to the font, name how what we do matters profoundly. Help us know our identity as ones who have come through the waters, as those bid come to the table, again. Preaching leads us more deeply into the actions of the assembly that in turn are our formation for being sent out into the world.

2. We preach to a body of Christ assembly. Preachers can think carefully about analogies, stories, and other such forms of showings, and be sure to include a corporate sense to those types of evocative language. When sermons use only individuals as examples, it is harder to connect those examples to our being members of the body. Preachers need to work to know our beautiful individual particularities but to place us also in the genealogy of faith, in the company of the saints in light.
3. We preach to a participating-in-the-very-life-of-God assembly: We trust that, according to the promises of God, when we are at worship we are not only present to God; but, the living God is present to us, the gathered church. The living God is present to us to affect, grace, and change the world. We preach in the midst of the gathering where we are promised God in Christ encounters us regularly and dependably as in no other way, and this is for the life of the world.

I set these claims alongside all homiletical emphases on the hearer, alongside the turn to the listener, along with all of our preaching, work to include every segment of the gathering. But with a caution to those trajectories: we do not need to overcome a wall — we preach to a participating assembly. May preachers preach to help us enter our rites more deeply, may preachers preach to us as the body, may preachers preach to our being held in the very life of God, and that life poured out for the world. May preachers bring the words of life to us, the participating assembly—participating in the promised and challenging reign of God, where “we are treated like we have never been treated anywhere else . . .”²⁷

²⁷ Hovda, 220.



Beyond *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: The Future of Liturgical Renewal in the Asian Catholic Church

JONATHAN Y. TAN*

On December 4, 1963, by a vote of 2,147 in favor and 4 against, the Second Vatican Council approved and promulgated the Constitution on the Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (hereinafter “SC”).¹ The promulgation of a conciliar document that dealt specifically with the *aggiornamento* or renewal of the Church's liturgical theology, ritual, and practice was a momentous event for the universal church in general,²

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¹ All references to *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (hereinafter abbreviated as “SC”) are taken from the English translation in International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *Documents on the Liturgy, 1963-1979. Conciliar, Papal and Curial Texts* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1982, hereinafter abbreviated as “DOL”). All numerical references to the DOL refer to the paragraph numbers in the marginal column.

² For an analysis of the conciliar debates around the *schema* on the proposed liturgy constitution, see Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak, eds., *A History of Vatican II, Vol. 2: The Formation of the Council's Identity, First Period and Intercession, October 1962-September 1963* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998). For an in-depth discussion on the passage, promulgation, and implementation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, see Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak, eds., *The History of Vatican II, Vol. 3: The Mature Council, Second Period and Intercession, September 1963-September 1964* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000). For critical reflections on the reception and impact of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* generally, see Mary Collins, *Contemplative Participation: Sacrosanctum Concilium Twenty-Five Years Later* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1990); Rita Ferrone, *Liturgy: Sacrosanctum Concilium* (New York: Paulist Press, 2007); Massimo Faggioli, *True Reform: Liturgy and Ecclesiology in Sacramentum Concilium* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012); and Keith F. Pecklers, “Vatican II and the Liturgical Renewal: An Unfinished Agenda,” *East Asian Pastoral Review* 42 (2005) 26-44.

and the Asian church in particular.³ For the first time in the 2,000-year history of the Catholic Church, indigenous Asian and African bishops joined their American and European counterparts to constitute the supreme decision-making body and teaching authority of the Catholic Church. SC represents the first in a series of sixteen documents that emerged as the fruits of the first global collaboration of bishops from around the world. In the ensuing decades after the Council's conclusion, the Asian bishops sought to implement SC's norms and explore new horizons in liturgical worship, especially with their efforts at liturgical renewal and inculturation. This essay seeks to evaluate SC's impact on liturgical renewal and inculturation in Asia, particularly exploring the successes and challenges that the Asian bishops faced, and considering the future direction of liturgical renewal in Asia beyond SC.

1 SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM'S GRAND LITURGICAL VISION

SC emphasizes the centrality of the Church's liturgy when it states that the liturgy is the *culmen et fons* ("summit and fount/source") of the Church's life. In the words of the Council Fathers, the liturgy is "the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed" and "the fount from which all the Church's power flows," thereby becoming "the source for achieving in the most effectively way possible human sanctification and God's glorification."⁴ SC insists that the project of liturgical renewal seeks to change those elements of the liturgy that are not immutable and, therefore, "ought to be changed with the passage of time if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become pointless."⁵ In this regard, SC seeks to promote the

"full, conscious, and active participation" of all in liturgical celebrations,⁶ which "should be marked by 'a noble simplicity' and 'be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetitions' and 'be within the people's powers of comprehension and, as a rule, not require much explanation.'" To achieve this goal, the Council Fathers spoke of the need for a thorough revision of the liturgy and liturgical books to "express more clearly the holy things they signify and that the Christian people, as far as possible, are able to understand them with ease and to take part in the rites fully, actively."⁸ At the same time, they reiterated that "sound tradition may be retained and yet the way remain open to legitimate progress" and asserted that a "careful investigation" that is "theological, historical, and pastoral" should "always be made into each part of the liturgy to be revised."⁹

On the one hand, SC called for the use of the vernacular, acknowledging that the "use of the mother tongue in the administration of the sacraments and sacramentals can be of considerable help for the people" and recognizing that "rituals are to be adapted, even in regard to the language employed to the needs of the different regions."¹⁰ In this regard, the Council Fathers observed that "legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions, and peoples, especially in mission countries"¹¹ could be made with regard to the "administration of the sacraments, the sacramentals, processions, liturgical language, sacred music, and the arts."¹² At the same time, they explained that the Church "had no wish to impose a rigid uniformity," but rather "respects and fosters the genius and talents of the various races and peoples" and "considers with sympathy and, if possible, preserves intact the elements in these peoples' way of life that are not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error."¹³ They also insisted, however, that the "substantial unity of the Roman Rite is preserved" in any revision of the liturgical books.¹⁴

³ For detailed explorations on this topic, see John B. Chethimattam, "Bulletin: Fourteen Years After Vatican II – What Have We Achieved?" *Jeevadhara* 9 (1979) 319-327; Michael Amaladoss, "The Liturgy: Twenty Years After Vatican II," *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 47 (1983) 231-239; Josef Neuner, "Vatican II, twenty years after," *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 47 (1983) 54-66; Paul Puthanangady, "Inculturation of the liturgy in India since Vatican II," in Mary Collins & David Power, eds., *Liturgy: A Creative Tradition*. Concilium, Vol. 162 (New York: Seabury Press, 1983), 71-77; Francisco F. Claver, "The Church in Asia: Twenty Years After Vatican II," *East Asian Pastoral Review* 22 no. 4 (1985) 316-323; Julio X. Labayen, "Vatican II in Asia and the Philippines," *Ecumenical Review* 37 no. 3 (1985) 275-282; Paul Puthanangady, "Towards a new liturgy in the light of Vatican II," in Kurien Kunnupuram & Lorenzo Fernando, eds. *Quest for an Indian Church: An Exploration of the Possibilities Opened Up By Vatican II*, Jesuit Theological Forum Reflections, Vol. 8 (Anand, Gujarat, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1993), 97-117; and Angelo Fernandes, *Vatican Two Revisited* (Anand, Gujarat, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1997). For a general discussion of the reception of Vatican II in Asia, see Peter C. Phan, "Reception of Vatican II in Asia: Historical and Theological Analysis," in Peter C. Phan, *In Our Own Tongues: Perspectives from Asia on Mission and Inculturation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Book, 2003), 201-214.

⁴ SC 10, in DOL 10.

⁵ SC 21, in DOL 21.

⁶ SC 14, in DOL 14.

⁷ SC 34, in DOL 34.

⁸ SC 21, in DOL 21.

⁹ SC 23, in DOL 23.

¹⁰ SC 63, in DOL 63.

¹¹ SC 38, in DOL 38.

¹² SC 39, in DOL 39.

¹³ SC 37, in DOL 37.

¹⁴ SC 38, in DOL 38.

On the other hand, the Council Fathers also had the foresight to realize that “an even more *radical adaptation* of the liturgy is needed” even if “this entails greater difficulties.”¹⁵ In this vein, the late Filipino liturgical theologian, Anscar Chupungco spoke of SC 40 as the “magna carta of liturgical inculturation.”¹⁶ However, this “radical adaptation of the liturgy” is subject to regulation by the Apostolic See, although it may delegate some of its authority “within certain defined limits” to “competent territorial bodies of bishops lawfully established.”¹⁷ In reality, Rome could and did eventually exercise its right to limit the applicability of SC 40 and subject it to the requirements of SC 38, i.e., the insistence on *substantiali unitate Ritus romani*, thereby ending all nascent endeavors at radical liturgical inculturation in Asia along the lines that was envisaged by SC 40.

2 OVERVIEW OF LITURGICAL INCULTURATION IN ASIA

In the ensuing years after the conclusion of Vatican II, the Asian bishops worked hard at implementing SC's vision for liturgical renewal and inculturation, especially the creativity and freedom that envisaged in SC 37-40. Nonetheless, one must remember that the quest for liturgical inculturation in Asia was, in reality, initiated long before Vatican II and SC 40. For example, the farsighted vision of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (“Propaganda Fide”) in its instruction to its newly appointed apostolic vicars, François Pallu and Pierre Lambert de la Motte in 1659 on the eve of their inaugural mission to Tonkin and Cochinchina respectively:

Do not in any way attempt and do not on any pretext persuade these peoples to change their rites, customs, and mores unless these are clearly contrary to religion and good morals. For what could be more absurd than to bring France, Spain, Italy, or any other European country over to China? It is not these countries but faith that you must bring, the faith that does not reject or jeopardize the rites and customs of any people as long as these are not depraved, but rather desires to preserve and promote them. . . . Admire and praise whatever deserves praise. As to things that are not praiseworthy, they should not be extolled, as is done by flatterers. On the contrary, exercise prudence in either not passing judgment on them or in not condemning them rashly and exaggeratedly. As for what is evil,

it should be dismissed with a nod of the head of by silence rather than by words, though without missing the opportunity, when people have become disposed to receive the truth, to uproot it without ostentation.¹⁸

2.1 Putting into Practice Sacrosanctum Concilium's Vision Regarding Liturgical Adaptation

In reality, putting this vision into practice on the issue of liturgical adaptation proved much more difficult than Propaganda Fide had envisaged. For example, in September 1663, Propaganda Fide refused permission for indigenous Vietnamese Christians to celebrate the Tet Festival (i.e., the Vietnamese New Year), fearing that it would become an excuse for Vietnamese Catholics to eat meat when Tet fell on a Friday or Saturday, or during Lent.¹⁹ By a letter dated March 20, 1685, Propaganda Fide forbade the Vicar Apostolic of Siam to allow missionaries to wear the garments of Siamese Buddhist monks or Talapoints (*uti veste talapoinorum*) or even garments of the same color (*etiam quoad colorem*).²⁰ This 1685 decision was reiterated in a directive dated March 23, 1844, prohibiting missionaries from

¹⁸ This advice is found in Propaganda Fide's *Instructio Vicariorum Apostolicorum ad Regna Sinarum Tonchini et Cocinae Proficiscentium*, in *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide, Collectanea Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide: seu decreta, instructiones, rescripta pro Apostolicis Missionibus*. Vol. 1 (Roma: Ex Typographia Polyglotta, Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1907), 42 (hereinafter cited as “CSCPF”). The Latin text reads: “Nullum studium ponite, nullaue ratione suadete illis populis ut ritus suos, consuetudines et mores mutant, modo non sint apertissime Religioni et bonis moribus contraria. Quid enim absurdius quam Galliam, Hispaniam, Italiam aut aliam Europae partem in Sinas invehere? Non haec, sed fidem importate, quae nullius gentis ritus et consuetudines, modo prava non sint, aut respuit aut laedit, immo vero sarta tecta esse vult. . . . Admiramini et laudate ea quae laudem merentur; quae vero laudis expertia sunt, ut non sunt praconiis, assentatorum more, extollenda ita prudentiae vestrae erit de his aut iudicium non ferre, aut certe non temere et ultro damnare; quae vero prava extiterint, nutibus magis et silentio quam verbis proscindenda, opportunitate nimirum captata qua, dispositis animis ad veritatem capessendam, sensim sine sensu evellantur.” The English translation is taken from Peter C. Phan, *Mission and Catechesis: Alexandre de Rhodes and Inculturation in Seventeenth-Century Vietnam* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1998), 193-194.

¹⁹ CSCPF 52. The text reads, “Costumandosi (nel Tonchino e nella Cocina) di solennizzare i primi tre giorni dell'anno nuovo lunare, si domanda che si possa mangiar carne quando cadranno in Venerdì o Sabato, o nella Quaresima; e che in tali giorni si possa concedere indulgenza a chi visiterà la chiesa, farà limosina o altra opera pia. R: Cum asserta solemnitas nihil habeat Ecclesiae, nec aliquod christianae fidei mysterium repraesentet, nullatenus expedire aut concedendum esse.”

²⁰ CSCPF 537 footnote 1. The footnote reads, “Anno 1685 Vicarius Ap. Siamen. petiit ut missionarii possent ‘uti veste talapoinorum, qui apud illas gentes in religiosorum, seu sacerdotum numero habentur; vel saltem illius colorem assumere.’ Et S.C. de Prop. Fide (20 Martii) respondit: ‘Negative, etiam quoad colorem.’”

¹⁵ SC 40, in DOL 40, emphasis added.

¹⁶ Anscar J. Chupungco, “A Filipino Attempt at Liturgical Indigenization,” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 91 (1977) 370-376, 371.

¹⁷ SC 22, in DOL 22.

wearing the garb of Buddhist priests.²¹ However, Propaganda Fide reluctantly allowed the clergy of Coromandel in India to use white instead of black vestments because the local populace abhorred black garments.²² It also permitted the Vicar Apostolic of Siam to use vernacular languages in adult baptisms.²³

Moreover, in the context of Asia the issue concerning the use of vernacular translations of liturgical texts to facilitate liturgical celebrations in the language of the people rather than Latin predates Vatican II. As early as 1615, the Jesuit missionaries in China secured permission from Pope Paul V for indigenous Chinese priests to celebrate the liturgy in the Chinese vernacular instead of Latin.²⁴ Based upon this permission, the Italian Jesuit Ludovico Buglio (1606-1682) translated into Chinese the Roman Missal (*Misa jingdian*) in 1670, the Roman

Breviary (*Siduo kedian*) in 1674 and the Roman Ritual (*Shengshi lidian*) in 1675.²⁵ On the one hand, Nicolas Standaert thinks that Buglio made these translations “in the expectation that Rome would grant new permission for an administration of the sacraments in Chinese,” and because “permission to celebrate liturgy in Chinese did not follow . . . these manuals were hardly used after their publication.”²⁶ On the other hand, Thomas Reilly argues the case that “these Chinese translations of sacramental rituals were in use prior to the papal withdrawal of permission” because “it does seem safe to assume that the missionaries would have used the same language that Buglio employed in their explanation of the meaning of the sacraments.”²⁷ The “papal withdrawal of permission” that Reilly mentions is Pope Innocent XI’s withdrawal in 1680 of the prior permission of Pope Paul V in 1615 allowing the use of the Chinese vernacular in the liturgy.²⁸ In other words, Buglio’s efforts at preparing Chinese vernacular translations of the Latin liturgical texts came to naught when Pope Innocent XI expressly prohibited their use in 1680, shortly after his translations were completed.

2.2 The Need for the Liturgy to be Inculturated in the Asia Milieu

Hence, long before Vatican II was convened and the text of SC was debated and approved, the missionaries who worked in Asia realized the need for the liturgy to be uprooted from its Eurocentric foundations and inculturated in the Asian milieu, as their repeated requests to Propaganda Fide for various liturgical concessions indicated, as previously discussed in this essay.²⁹ The CICM missionary and Apostolic Vicar for Southeast Asia, Carlo van Melckebeke explained the dilemma succinctly when he stated bluntly, “if in the West Latin is the main ‘foreign’ element

²¹ CSCPF, 537. The relevant text reads, “Petebas quarto, ad facilius catholicam fidem inter tartaros induendam, an possent missionarii induere vestes a sacerdotibus Lama adhibitae, vel saltem tondere more illorum caput suum, seu penitus radere.—Alias etiam quaestio haec ad examen revocata fuit, exhibita a prioribus Vicariis, quibus anno 1685 S.C. negative rescripsit, etiam quoad habitus colorem, a qua responsione recedi non posse censuerunt Emi PP., ac prout quaestio etiam nunc proponitur, non licere dixerunt.”

²² CSCPF, 344. The relevant extract reads as follows, “Quod attinet ad alium litterarum articulum, quo A.T. exponit istos gentiles vehementer abhorere nigra vestimenta, affirmatque plurimos christianam fidem amplexuros si togae albi coloris missionarii et clericis permitterentur: S.C., pro fine tam recto tantique momenti, minime dissentit quin missionarii in istis regionibus cuiuslibet coloris vestes adhibeant, dummodo a modestia et gravitate sui muneris minime abhorreant, ac praesertim nullum adsit periculum aut suspicio superstitionis, neque sit signum protestativum falsae religionis. Intendit tamen quod nihil innovetur nisi de consilio et communi consensu missionariorum, ut concordia et uniformitas, quae adeo missioni bene gerendae necessaria est, nullum detrimentum capiat.”

²³ CSCPF, 414. The text reads, “Vic. Ap. Siam:—Non est liturgia in lingua vernacula, nec rituale, nisi quod attinet ad solemnem administrationem Baptismi adultorum, quod in linguam vernaculam translatus est. Circa interrogationes, fiunt in lingua vernacula; circa vero documenta et quaedam alia, est mihi dubium utrum possim legitime uti lingua vernacula. Ratione timoris, soleo uti utraque, tum latina, ut non utar licentia quam non habeo, tum vernacula ut intelligat a recipientibus et adstantibus. Circa quod supplico EE. VV. decernere quid in posterum facere debeam. R.—Scribendum Vicario Apostolico Siamensi Baptismum in Ecclesia latina administrandum esse idiome latino, iuxta Rituale Romanum. Caeterum, nihil obstat quominus lingua vernacula explicentur ea omnia quae pertinent ad ipsum Sacramentum Baptismi.”

²⁴ Specifically, Pope Paul V granted to indigenous Chinese clergy the faculty to use the Chinese vernacular in the liturgical and sacramental celebrations on March 26, 1615. See George H. Dunne, *Generation of Giants: The Story of the Jesuits in China in the Last Decades of the Ming Dynasty* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1962), 164-165.

²⁵ See discussion in Nicolas Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China Volume One: 635-1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 627. Thomas H. Reilly asserts that Buglio’s translation of the Roman Ritual, i.e., *Shengshi lidian* (“A manual of ritual holy matters”), covering the rituals of *xidi* (“wash of purification” or baptism), *tong jie* (“painful begging of pardon” or penance), *jianzhen* (“establish and rouse to action” or confirmation), *shengti* (“the holy body” or eucharist), *hunpei* (“to contract or arrange a marriage”), *zhongchuan* (“final transmission” or extreme unction), *zhonghou* (“after the passing” or burial), and *chugui* (“casting out ghosts” or exorcisms) suggested that “the Jesuits made the closest contact with Chinese popular religion through the liturgical life of the Church.” See Thomas H. Reilly, *The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom: Rebellion and the Blasphemy of Empire* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2004), 34-35.

²⁶ Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, 627.

²⁷ Reilly, *The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom*, 178 footnote 37.

²⁸ Reilly, *The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom*, 34.

²⁹ See the discussions in footnotes 19-23 of this essay.

with which to contend, in the Far East not only is the language foreign, but also the symbols, colors, vestments, music, gestures, and behavior.”³⁰ More importantly, Melckebeke argued that the “European superiority complex” which insisted that liturgy in Asia was “to reproduce in the most exact way possible what was being done in Europe” is untenable and “stop-gap solutions” that gave the liturgy “at least superficially an aspect conforming to the culture of the country” were inadequate in the longer term.³¹

By the late 1940s and early 1950s, Rome slowly granted permission to various Asian churches to use the vernacular in the liturgy. For example, Rome granted permission to sing the ordinary of the High Mass in the vernacular to Taichung (Taiwan)³² and Flores (Indonesia).³³ In 1949, Chinese missions were allowed to celebrate almost all of the Mass in Chinese, except for the Canon, which remained in Latin.³⁴ In 1950, Rome approved the use of the native vernacular in the administration of the sacraments in India.³⁵

Thus, the Asian Bishops were not working from a *tabula rasa* when they sought to implement the provisions of SC in the program of liturgical renewal in Asia. Indeed, SC belatedly grants the *imprimatur* to a program of liturgical inculturation in Asia begun much earlier in the seventeenth century. In this regard, the tentative steps at vernacular translations of the liturgical rites that was first granted in 1615 but withdrawn in 1680 and, then, cautiously reintroduced in the 1950s, became a fully developed endeavor in the years after the conclusion of Vatican II. Vernacular translations of the *editiones typicae* of the various liturgical books was approved for use in various parts of Asia and, by the beginning of the 1970s, the use of the vernacular translations spread like wild fire across Asia. Preparing vernacular translations was the first step in the program of liturgical renewal in Asia, soon followed by the inculturation of cultural festivals, e.g., the Lunar New Year Votive Mass for Chinese Catholics incorporating the rite of blessing and distribution of

oranges³⁶ and the previously prohibited rite of ancestor veneration.³⁷

2.3 Introducing Vernacular Translations

In practice, much of the efforts on implementing SC's vision of liturgical renewal throughout the Asian local churches involved the introduction of vernacular translations of various *editiones typicae*, as well as the composition of new vernacular music for liturgical use.³⁸ At the same time, the Consilium acknowledged in its 1969 instruction on the translation of liturgical texts for celebrations with a congregation, *Comme le prévoit*, that “texts translated from another language are clearly not sufficient for the celebration of a fully renewed liturgy. The creation of new texts will be necessary.”³⁹ This is because the “prayer of the Church is always the prayer of some actual community assembled here and now” and, thus, it is “not sufficient that a formula handed down from some other time or region be translated verbatim, even if accurately, for liturgical use.”⁴⁰ In reality, Rome was hesitant to approve the creation of new liturgical texts. To date, the only approved new liturgical text that was created pursuant to SC 40 is the *Missel Romain pour les diocèses du Zaïre*, which was approved by the Congregation for Divine Worship (CDW) on 30 April 1988. Among the Asian churches, the Indian and Filipino churches took the lead in implementing SC's program of liturgical renewal. Nonetheless, as discussed below, both the more radical Indian

³⁶ For a description of the Chinese Lunar New Year Votive Mass and its blessing of oranges, see Jean Charbonnier, “Singapour: La benediction des oranges,” *Echos de la Rue du Bac* 18 (April 1969) 122.

³⁷ For an example of the incorporation of the rite of ancestor veneration within the liturgical celebration of the Lunar New Year by Chinese Catholics, see “Veneration of Ancestors, 1990,” in Jeffrey M. Burns, Ellen Skerrett and Joseph M. White, eds., *Keeping Faith: European and Asian Catholic Immigrants* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 243-245. Historically, the participation of Chinese Catholics in the ancestor veneration ritual was proscribed by the papal bull of Pope Clement XI, *Ex illa die* of March 19, 1715 and reiterated by Pope Benedict XIV in his papal bull, *Ex quo singulari* of July 11, 1742 in response to the Chinese Rites Controversy. For critical discussions of the Chinese Rites controversy and its culmination in the absolute prohibitions by Popes Clement XI and Benedict XIV, see George Minamiki, *The Chinese Rites Controversy from Its Beginning to Modern Times* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1985), 25-76; Andrew C. Ross, *A Vision Betrayed: The Jesuits in Japan and China: 1542-1742* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), 178-199; and Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia, Volume 2* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 126-139. This prohibition was eventually reversed by the two instructions from Propaganda Fide, *Pluries instantanterque* (1936) and *Plane compertum est* (1939). See discussion in Minamiki, *The Chinese Rites Controversy*, 154-155, 183-203.

³⁸ For critical discussions on the development of new liturgical music in the Asian vernacular in the post-Vatican II era, see Michael Amaladoss, “Musique et rite en Inde,” *La Maison-Dieu* 108 (1971) 138-142; Michael Amaladoss, “Music as Sadhana,” *Journal of Dharma* 7 (1982) 181-188; “Composing Music for an Asian Local Church: An Interview with Fr. Eduardo P. Hontiveros, S.J. of the Philippines,” *East Asian Pastoral Review* 19 (1982) 38-46 and Anicetus B. Sinaga, “*Madah Bakti*: An Experiment in the Inculturation of Liturgical Music,” *East Asian Pastoral Review* 30 (1983) 120-144.

³⁹ *Comme le prévoit*, 43. In DOL 880.

⁴⁰ *Comme le prévoit* 20. In DOL 857.

³⁰ Melckebeke made these hard-hitting remarks in his paper that was read at the 1959 International Study Week on Mission and Liturgy at Nijmegen. See Carlo Van Melckebeke, “The Urgency for Liturgical Renewal in the Far East,” in Johannes Hofinger, ed., *Liturgy and the Missions: The Nijmegen Papers* (New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1960), 96-102, 100.

³¹ Melckebeke, “Urgency for Liturgical Renewal,” 98-99.

³² Hofinger, *Liturgy and the Missions*, 293.

³³ Hofinger, *Liturgy and the Missions*, 294.

³⁴ Hofinger, *Liturgy and the Missions*, 294, citing S. Paventia, *La Chiesa Missionaria*, Roma 1950, I, 388 and C. Constantini, *Le Missioni cattoliche*, Roma 1949, 35.

³⁵ Hofinger, *Liturgy and the Missions*, 294.

attempt to create a new Indian Rite of the Mass pursuant to SC 40, as well as the less ambitious Filipino endeavor to create a dynamic translation of the *Novus Ordo Missae* pursuant to SC 38-39, ultimately were not approved by Rome.

3 INDIA

In the ensuing years after the conclusion of Vatican II, the Indian Church was widely known for being the trendsetter for liturgical renewal in Asia. Nevertheless, this image masks the underlying diversity and pluralism within the Indian Church that made liturgical renewal a dangerous minefield for the unwary.⁴¹ Indeed, the situation of the Indian subcontinent highlights the complexities and challenges of liturgical renewal within three communities of churches *sui iuris*: (i) the Latin Church, as represented by the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India – Latin Rite (CCBI-LR), (ii) the Syro-Malabar Church, and (iii) the Syro-Malankara Church.⁴² Moreover, the Latin Rite Church in India is not monolithic either. As the Indian theologian, Jose Matthew Kakkallil explains, Latin Rite Indian Catholics may be broadly classified according to the following five groups: “1. the Padroado Christian Community of Western India (Catholics of Mangalore, Goa and Bombay), 2. The Latin Rite Catholics of South India, 3. The Scheduled caste communities or Dalit Church, 4. The tribal communities of north-central India, 5. The tribal communities of north-east India.”⁴³ The scope and issues concerning of liturgical renewal within the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara churches are too complex to be covered in this essay as they involved difficult issues of liturgical

⁴¹ On the challenges of inculturation in India, see Paul M. Collins, *Christian Inculturation in India* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007).

⁴² Historically, both the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Churches trace their apostolic lineage all the way back to the ancient St. Thomas Christians who trace their founding and heritage to St. Thomas who landed on the Malabar coast of India (in modern-day Kerala) around the year 50 or 52 CE. For further information on both the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara churches of India, see Cyril Malancharuvil, *The Syro-Malankara Church* (Alwaye: Pontifical Institute of Philosophy and Theology, 1973); Placid J. Podipara, *The Syro-Malabarians: Their Life and Their Activities* (Beckenried: Seminar Schöneck, 1956); Placid J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church* (Alleppey, India: Prakasam Publications, 1976). Critical studies on the St. Thomas Christians include Leslie Brown, *The Indian Christians of St. Thomas: An Account of the Ancient Syrian Church of Malabar* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Placid J. Podipara, *The Thomas Christians* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1970); Placid J. Podipara, *The Rise and Decline of the Indian Church of the Thomas Christians* (Kottayam, India: Oriental Institute for Religious Studies, 1979); Giuseppe Sorge, *L'India di S. Tommaso: Ricerche Storiche sulla Chiesa Malabarica* (Bologna: CLUEB, 1983); and Benedict Vadakkakara, *Origin of India's St. Thomas Christians: A Historiographical Critique* (Delhi: Media House, 1995).

⁴³ Jose Matthew Kakkallil, “Liturgical Inculturation in India,” *Questions Liturgiques* 77 (1996) 109-116, 111.

inculturation vis-à-vis liturgical restoration.⁴⁴ For the purposes of this essay, we shall focus our discussion on liturgical renewal for the Latin Rite Indian Catholics.

At its 1966 meeting in Delhi, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) set in motion a program of liturgical renewal when it approved an incipient program of liturgical indigenization and inculturation, and established a Commission for Liturgy to oversee its implementation. These actions were followed, on February 6, 1967, by the establishment of the National Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical Centre (NBCLC).⁴⁵ Under the leadership of its founding director, the late D.S. Amalorpavadass, the NBCLC was at the forefront of pushing the frontiers of liturgical renewal through a series of All India Liturgical Meetings (AILM) from 1968 to 1988 that sought to explore opportunities for liturgical inculturation in India.⁴⁶

3.1 Indigenizing liturgical rituals, postures, and elements to create an Indian atmosphere in liturgical worship

The first phase of the NBCLC's ambitious program comprised the preliminary step of indigenizing liturgical rituals, postures, and elements to create an Indian atmosphere in liturgical worship. This step was initiated at AILM 2 in January 1969, which proposed the introduction of Indian cultural elements into the liturgical rites, e.g., the use of various Indian gestures and postures, lamplighting,

⁴⁴ The Syro-Malabar Catholics have the added burden of having to deal with the legacy of the forced latinization of the Syro-Malabar liturgy by the Synod of Diamper of 1599, which suppressed numerous Malabarese customary rights and usages, destroyed priceless ancient Syro-Malabar liturgical texts on the grounds of being allegedly tainted by Nestorianism. See Jonas Thaliath, *The Synod of Diamper* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1958) and George Nedungatt, *The Synod of Diamper Revisited* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2001). Readers who are interested in the liturgical inculturation vs. liturgical restoration debate within the Syro-Malabar Church could refer to the following for critical analysis of the issues and proposals from both sides, i.e., liturgical renewal vs. liturgical restoration: Xavier Koodapuzha, “Crisis in Renewal,” *Jeevadharma* 9 (1979) 257-273; Johannes Madey, “On the reform of the Chaldeo-Malabar Liturgy: the Holy See of Rome in Defence of the Oriental Patrimony,” *Ostkirchlichen Studien* 33 (1984) 172-199; C.A. Abraham, “The Indian Reality – A Church at Risk,” *Christian Orient* 5 (1984) 122-133; Louis Malieckal, “Liturgical Inculturation in India: Problems and Prospects of Experimentation,” *Jeevadharma* 18 (1988) 279-292; Anthony Nariculam, “The Liturgical Crisis in the Syro-Malabar Church,” *Jeevadharma* 18 (1988) 293-302; and Cyril Mar Basileos, “Post Vatican Renewal: A Malankara Perspective,” in Paul Puthanangady, ed. *The Church in India: Institution or Movement* (Bangalore: NBCLC, 1991).

⁴⁵ Paul Puthanangady, “Inculturation of the Liturgy in India Since Vatican II,” in *Liturgy: A Creative Tradition*, eds. Mary Collins and David Power (New York: Seabury Press, 1983) 71-77, 72.

⁴⁶ Jose Matthew Kakkallil, “Liturgical Inculturation in India,” *Questions Liturgiques* 77 (1996) 109-116, 112.

the Indian style of incensing, Indian musical instruments and *bhajans*, as well as the offering of flowers and fruits.⁴⁷ This proposal was approved by the CBCI in March 1969, and sent to Rome, culminating in the Rescript for India, popularly known as “Twelve Points of Liturgical Adaptation” that was approved on April 25, 1969 by the Consilium.⁴⁸ According to the Indian Jesuit theologian, Julian Saldanha, the “Twelve Points” Rescript had a checkered history of adoption. As he explains:

While some bishops positively encouraged the introduction of the 12-point plan, others (e.g., the Archdiocese of Goa and Daman) forbade them *in toto*. The Tamil Nadu bishops withheld implementation of the adaptations pending a survey of the views of the laity and clergy. . . . The diocese of Mangalore reported that since Catholics there have been accustomed to associate Catholicism closely with Western (especially Portuguese) ways, “they feel safe in continuing their traditional ways and see a threat to their existence itself in the movement for adaptation.” In the tribal regions of Manipur and Nagaland, it was felt that the 12-point plan “may rather antagonize them (the Christians) especially considering the present socio-political conditions of these areas.” The diocese of Meerut and the Prefecture Apostolic of Jammu and Kashmir doubted the suitability of the said adaptations in Moslem majority regions like their own.⁴⁹

Saldanha’s Jesuit confrere, Michael Amaladoss agrees with him, commenting that the “Twelve Points” Rescript was not fully accepted by Indian Catholics because they did not emerge from the grassroots experiences of a faith community, but rather the “product of a committee of experts” which imposed the process of adaptation from above.⁵⁰

On the defensive, the proponents of the “Twelve Points” Rescript sought to argue that inadequate preparation and catechesis had resulted in Indian Catholics being unable to overcome centuries of demonization of such ritual gestures and actions as Hindu.⁵¹ Nevertheless, the CBCI Liturgy Commission forged ahead to explore further adaptations of Indian rituals and celebrations for liturgical use. There was some debate on whether certain Hindu rites of passage (*samskāras*) and Hindu rituals for marriage could be adapted for liturgical use, although it did

not go beyond the level of discussion.⁵² Much more fruitful was the proposal to christianize major Indian festivals, which led to the CBCI Liturgy Commission preparing liturgical texts for five votive masses for the liturgical celebrations of Indian festivals.⁵³ These liturgical texts were approved by AILM 3 in November–December 1971, the CBCI in April 1972, and the CDW on August 8, 1974.⁵⁴

3.2 The creation of new liturgical texts in the Indian vernacular

The second and more ambitious phase of liturgical renewal concerned the creation of new liturgical texts in the Indian vernacular, as exemplified in the Indian Anaphora and the proposed Order of the Mass for India (“Indian Rite”) incorporating the “Twelve Points” Rescript and the Indian Anaphora.⁵⁵ Comprised of both a long form and a short form, the new Indian anaphora was first introduced at AILM 3 in 1971, and submitted to the CBCI for consideration by the Indian Bishops in 1972. According to the Indian Jesuit theologian, Julian Saldanha, the Indian anaphora “met with the approval of the great majority of the bishops at the CBCI Meeting of April 1972, though it did not get the two-thirds majority needed before it could be presented to Rome for approval.”⁵⁶ The CBCI was unable to muster the affirmative votes of at least two-thirds of its members because a significant minority of bishops questioned the use of Hindu imagery and metaphors in the Indian Anaphora. The Indian Jesuit theologian, Julian Saldanha summarizes succinctly the conflict between the majority and minority camps as follows:

Those bishops who voted in favour of the anaphora described it as “profound, pleasing to one who loved things Indian, prayerful, and in accordance with the Indian genius and not contrary to the faith.” They observe that it “began with truths which had a basis in natural religion and then enriched it with revealed truths and as such would prove acceptable to new Christian societies and

⁵² Saldanha, “Liturgical Adaptation in India,” 24–25.

⁵³ Puthanangady, “Inculturation of the Liturgy in India Since Vatican II,” 73–74.

⁵⁴ Saldanha, “Liturgical Adaptation in India,” 25.

⁵⁵ For the complete text of the proposed Order of the Mass for India incorporating both the long form and short form of the Indian Anaphora, see CBCI Commission for Liturgy, *New Orders of the Mass for India* (Bangalore: NBCLC, 1974). For critiques of the Indian Anaphora, see Bryan D. Spinks, “The Anaphora for India: Some Theological Objections to an Attempt at Inculturation,” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 95 (1981) 529–549; K. Virginia Kennerley, “The Use of indigenous sacred literature and theological concept in Christian Eucharistic Liturgy in India,” *Studia Liturgica* 19 no. 2 (1989) 143–161, especially 148–152; and Selva J. Raj, “Adapting Hindu Imagery: A Critical Look at Ritual Experiments in an Indian Catholic Ashram,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 37 (2000) 333–353.

⁵⁶ Saldanha, “Liturgical Adaptation in India,” 25. See also Paul Puthanangady, “Inculturation of the Liturgy in India Since Vatican II,” in *Liturgy: A Creative Tradition*, eds. Mary Collins and David Power (New York: Seabury Press, 1983) 71–77, 73; and Paul Puthanangady, “Liturgical Inculturation in India,” *Jeevadhara* 23 (1993) 193–207, 196.

⁴⁷ Julian Saldanha, “Liturgical Adaptation in India: 1963–1974,” *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 40 (1976) 20–31, 23.

⁴⁸ The official approval of the Consilium (Prot. N. 802/69) is found in *Notitiae* 48 (1969) 365–374. For the complete list of the “Twelve Points” Rescript for India, see DOL 489.

⁴⁹ Saldanha, “Liturgical Adaptation in India,” 23.

⁵⁰ Michael Amaladoss, “The Liturgy: Twenty Years After Vatican II,” *Vidyajyoti* (1983) 231–239, 238.

⁵¹ Saldanha, “Liturgical Adaptation in India,” 23–24.

converts.” Most of the objections of the bishops who voted against the anaphora were based on the explicit or implicit quotations from Hindu scriptures which it contained.⁵⁷

Notwithstanding this setback, both the Indian Anaphora and the Indian Rite were used *ad experimentum* by various ashram and religious communities until 1975, when the CDW prohibited all further experimentation, circulation, and use.⁵⁸ In arriving at this decision, not just the minority dissenting votes within the CBCI influenced the CDW but, also, the backlash from many conservative Indian Catholics whose letter-writing campaign to Rome hurled charges of Hinduization, syncretism, and heresy against the Indian Anaphora and the Indian Rite.⁵⁹ For example, the use of “OM” generated significant controversy concerning if it was a purely cultural or religious phrase that was fundamental to the Hindu religious tradition.⁶⁰ According to the Indian theologian, Paul Puthanangady, who took over as director of the NBCLC after the untimely death of D.S. Amalorpavadass, the CBCI approved a revised text of the Indian Anaphora to assuage the concerns of the CDW that led to the prohibition of the original version, and sent it to Rome in 1990. No approval, however, was forthcoming from the CDW for these revisions.⁶¹

Nonetheless, as Subhash Anand notes, Indian Catholics continue to incorporate aspects of the Indian Rite, e.g., using the “squatting Mass” in small groups, using folk dances, Indian architectural patterns, replacing cassocks with Indian ways of dressing in the north, and reading Indian scriptures and singing *bhajans* in liturgical celebrations.⁶² Likewise, Virginia Kennerley notes that a number of Christian ashrams and devotional communities continue to incorporate aspects of the Indian religious symbols since the “Twelve Points” Rescript have not been banned, as well as incorporating extra-biblical Indian scriptural texts prior to the start of liturgical celebrations.⁶³ She further observes that various Indian Catholic ashrams and seminaries continue to follow “the NBCLC suggestions as far as practicable but largely using the words – and especially the eucharistic prayers – of

the standard English rite,” accompanied by “suitable *bhajans* (devotional songs) and Indian scriptural readings according to locality.”⁶⁴ More significantly, the continued modified use of the “Twelve Points” Rescript and some aspects of the Indian Rite by various Christian ashrams to accommodate the concerns of the subaltern class of Indian Dalit and Tribals would pave the way for the emergence of a new wave of hybridized,⁶⁵ dual-belonging⁶⁶ Hindu devotees of Christ. We shall analyze the liturgical implications of this important development in the latter part of this essay.

3.3 *The liturgical use of extra-biblical Indian scriptures in the Liturgy of the Word and the Office of Readings*

The third phase explored the liturgical use of extra-biblical Indian scriptures in the Liturgy of the Word and the Office of Readings. For this purpose, the NBCLC prepared a collection of selections from the Indian scriptures for discussion and experimentation in 1973, with the possibility of incorporating these texts into the proposed Indian version of the Liturgy of the Hours.⁶⁷ In 1974, the NBCLC organized a “Research Seminar on Non-Biblical Scriptures,” which concluded that “after due preparation, the sacred books of other religions may be used in the Mass, in song, prayer, quotations in homily, acclamation, and even in the anaphora,” and encouraged bishops and clergy to “integrate the non-biblical sacred books into their own prayer.”⁶⁸ In particular, the Research Seminar recommended that the proper place for extra-biblical Indian scriptures in the liturgy was either before or instead of the Old Testament Reading, or in place of the psalm.⁶⁹ Working on the recommendations of the Research Seminar, the NBCLC prepared a three volume *Texts for the Office of Readings* for the Liturgy of the Hours, incorporating texts from the Indian religious scriptures, for the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent,

⁵⁷ Saldanha, “Liturgical Adaptation in India,” 25-26.

⁵⁸ Puthanangady, “Liturgical Inculturation in India,” 196; Kakkallil, “Liturgical Inculturation in India,” 113 fn 12.

⁵⁹ Kennerley, “The Use of indigenous sacred Literature,” 146, 148.

⁶⁰ See discussion in J. Ouseparampil, “The History and Mystery of ‘OM,’” *Journal of Dharma* 2 (1977) 439-459; G. Gispert-Sauch, “A Controversial Syllable,” *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 45 (1981) 232-238 and “Liturgical Inculturation Questioned,” 46 (1982) 546-552.

⁶¹ Puthanangady, “Liturgical Inculturation in India,” 196.

⁶² Subhash Anand, “Inculturation in India: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,” *Indian Missiological Review* (1997) 19-34, 24.

⁶³ Kennerley, “The Use of indigenous sacred Literature,” 146. For a description of the use of the Indian liturgy at Bede Griffiths’ ashram, Kurisumula Ashram in Kerala, see Kennerley, “The Use of indigenous sacred Literature,” 153-154.

⁶⁴ Kennerley, “The Use of indigenous sacred Literature,” 153.

⁶⁵ On hybridized identities and their implications, see Homi K. Bhabha, “Signs Taken for Wonder,” in Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 102-122.

⁶⁶ On the implications of dual or multiple religious belonging, see Peter C. Phan, “Multiple Religious Belonging: Opportunities and Challenges for Theology and Church,” in Peter C. Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously: Asian Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 60-81; Catherine Cornille, ed., *Many Mansions: Multiple Religious Belonging and Christian Identity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002); Michael Amaladoss, “Double Religious Belonging and Liminality,” *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 66 (2001) 21-34; and Dennis Gira and Jacques Scheur, eds., *Vivre de plusieurs religions: Promesse ou illusion?* (Paris: L’Atelier, 2000).

⁶⁷ Puthanangady, “Inculturation of the Liturgy in India Since Vatican II,” 73; Puthanangady, “Liturgical Inculturation in India,” 197.

⁶⁸ Saldanha, “Liturgical Adaptation in India,” 27. For the official report of the NBCLC’s Research Seminar on Non-Biblical Scriptures, see D.S. Amalorpavadass, *Research Seminar on Non-Biblical Scriptures* (Bangalore: NBCLC, 1974).

⁶⁹ Kennerley, “The Use of indigenous sacred Literature,” 146.

Passion and Easter.⁷⁰ In 1975, however, the CDW also banned this three-volume collection together with the Indian Anaphora and the Indian Rite.⁷¹

3.4 Why the NBCLC's Project of Liturgical Inculturation Floundered

With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to see how the NBCLC's project of liturgical inculturation floundered amid much controversy. As SC merely sketched out the broad contours of "adaptation" of the liturgy in SC37-40, it remained for the local churches to determine the practical aspects of adaptation. While it is easy to blame the demise of the Indian Anaphora, the Indian Rite, and the use of Indian scriptures on the decision of Cardinal James Knox in 1975, the real issue is the uncritical "Sanskritization" of the liturgy in the Order of the Mass for India as a liturgical inculturation in the Brahmanical context. For the Dalit and tribal Catholics who are rooted in folk and tribal cultures, the ancient Sanskrit and Vedic tradition is both alien and oppressive to them. These Dalit and Tribal Catholics, which comprise the majority of the Latin Rite Indian Catholics, challenge the uncritical tendency of early endeavors at liturgical inculturation that viewed the elite Vedic or Sanskrit Tradition as the "Great Tradition" which epitomizes the essence of being Indian. In doing so, these nascent attempts at liturgical inculturation marginalized or otherwise rendered invisible the diversity and pluralism of the many "Little Traditions" throughout India.⁷² Not surprisingly, the Sanskritization of the liturgy resulted in an inculturation of the liturgy in the Brahmanical context of the "Great Tradition" of India, thereby rendering it oppressive and unacceptable to the Dalit and tribal Indians of the "Little Traditions."

As the theologian Lancy Lobo explains, the Sanskritic tradition ("Great Tradition") co-exists with the non-Sanskritic traditions ("Little Traditions").⁷³ In particular, Lobo argues that most of the Indian church's early endeavors that sought to promote dialogue, contextualization and inculturation in India have tended to favor the Sanskritic Tradition, forgetting that the oppressive impact of this high cultural-religious tradition of the elite castes on the "Non-Sanskritic Tradition" of the lower castes.⁷⁴ Lobo does not mince his words when he criticizes the Indian Church's overemphasis on the Sanskritic Tradition in its efforts at dialogue and contextualization on the uncritical presumption that the Sanskritic tradition is the essence of the "real Hinduism." He contends that more attention ought to be given to non-Vedic or non-Sanskritic traditions of the Little Traditions because most of the Indians who have responded to the Gospel message are from the subaltern Dalit and tribal communities.⁷⁵ This perspective is also shared by the Sri Lankan Jesuit theologian, Aloysius Pieris who did not mince his words when he challenged the Indian Rite's "verbosity" and "Brahmanism."⁷⁶ Likewise, the Syro-Malabar Indian theologian, Louis Malieckal contends that "an Indian *anaphora* shaped in the thought-pattern of the Vedas, Upanishads or the Bhakti religion, may not be able to bring 'salvation' to the Tribals of M.P., to the Dalit-movements, to the poor and oppressed."⁷⁷

In the same vein, Virginia Kennerley notes that its overdependence on the high Vedic culture of classical Hinduism also resulted in a rejection by Indian Catholics from the Dalit and tribal communities. She points out that opposition to the Indian Rite came from the priests working with Dalit and Tribal Catholics who found "it unsatisfactory because of its reliance on a sophisticated understanding of

⁷⁰ Saldanha, "Liturgical Adaptation in India," 27.
⁷¹ Kennerley, "The use of indigenous sacred Literature," 152.
⁷² This discussion is based on the insights of the cultural anthropologist Robert Redfield, who articulated the distinction between "Great Tradition" and "Little Tradition" as follows: "In a civilization there is a *great tradition of the reflective few, and there is a little tradition of the largely unreflected many*. The great tradition is cultivated in schools or temples; the little tradition works itself out and keep itself going in the lives of the unlettered in their village communities. The tradition of the philosopher, theologian and the literary man is a tradition consciously cultivated and handed down; that of the little people is a tradition consciously cultivated and handed down; that of the little people is for the most part taken for granted and not submitted to much scrutiny or considered refinement and improvement." See Robert Redfield, *The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956) 41. It is true that the distinction between the "Great Tradition" and the "Little Tradition" acts more as a heuristic rather than an actual description because, in reality, both traditions are not mutually exclusive. In reality, both interact actively with each other, challenging and shaping, as well as being challenged and being shaped in life encounters. Nonetheless, this heuristic is useful to assist us in assessing the limitations of the NBCLC's program of liturgical renewal in India came to a premature halt when the CDW rejected the Order of the Mass for India and the use of extra-biblical Indian scriptural readings in the liturgy.

⁷³ Lancy Lobo, "Towards an Inculturation in the Non-Sanskritic Tradition," *Vidyajyoti* 49 (1985) 16-25. According to Lobo, the distinction between "Sanskritic Tradition" and "Non-Sanskritic Tradition" was articulated by the Indian anthropologist M.N. Srinivas (see M.N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1952)).
⁷⁴ According to Lobo, "the devotees of the sanskritic tradition are drawn from the higher caste Hindus while those of the non-sanskritic are drawn from the lower castes and lower classes of Hindu society" (Lobo, "Towards an Inculturation in the Non-Sanskritic Tradition," 17). He goes on to point out that "the non-Sanskritic or little tradition was seen as a mess of jumbled up superstitions, beliefs and rituals of the low, uncouth, rural, illiterate, ignorant and backward masses of humanity. Consequently the popular folk, lay and village religion was considered somewhat inferior to the classical, scriptural, philosophical, more or less organised, religion of the elite. In the Christian civilisation the religion of the peasant was somewhat looked down upon as inferior, when compared to the religion taught in centres of learning like the Gregorian University! Similarly, in Hindu India there exists a wide gap between the peasants' religion and the religion taught in Kashi Vidyapith." See Lobo, "Towards an Inculturation in the NonSanskritic Tradition," 20.

⁷⁵ Lobo, "Towards an Inculturation in the NonSanskritic Tradition," 20.

⁷⁶ Aloysius Pieris, "An Asian Way to Celebrate the Eucharist," *Worship* 81 (2007) 314-328, 323.

⁷⁷ Malieckal, "Liturgical Inculturation in India," 291.

classical Hinduism, beyond the reach of their congregations; and its failure to take account of the plurality of cultures in India.⁷⁸ She observes that priests working with rural communities “spontaneously adapt the NBCLC order to local culture, removing the Vedic references which are unfamiliar to their congregations and substituting imagery from local folklore” to address the antipathy on the part of the scheduled caste Catholics toward a highly Sanskritized liturgical rite.⁷⁹ As she puts it succinctly, “to the Roman Catholic villagers, the Sanskrit tradition of the Vedas which the NBCLC rite recalls is almost as remote as Hellenistic and Judaic culture. *Its Brahmanic quality is also offensive to former Hindus who have experienced oppression from the higher castes*” (emphasis added).⁸⁰

Moving forward, the Indian Jesuit theologian Michael Amaladoss counsels the need to learn from the shortcomings of early efforts *before* moving ahead with new approaches to shaping renewed Asian liturgies. In this respect, Amaladoss recommends that liturgical inculturation eschew elaborate complexity in favor of “simpler rituals that seem to go well in some village communities in the North.”⁸¹ Paul Puthanangady agrees, and suggests that liturgical inculturation ought to be decentralized with liturgical rites that are diverse and pluriform, yet include many elements in common.⁸²

4 PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines in 1975, under the leadership of Anscar Chupungco, arose a proposal—the *Misa ng Bayang Pilipino* (“Mass of the Filipino People”)—out of a liturgical consultation at the Maryhill School of Theology. In 1976, and again in 1991, the Philippine Conference of Bishops submitted the proposed *Misa* to Rome.⁸³ According to Chupungco, the *Misa ng Bayang Pilipino* first emerged in 1973 at Maryhill School of Theology in the Philippines as a class project under his supervision.⁸⁴ The Filipino *Misa* represents an attempt to inculturate the Roman Rite of the Mass in the context of the culture and traditions of Filipino Catholics

while also concurrently seeking to maintain a substantial unity with the Roman Rite through dynamic equivalence pursuant to SC 38, 39, and 63.⁸⁵

Learning from the failed experience of India, the Filipino *Misa* eschewed the radical creativity of the Indian Rite in favor of a dynamic equivalent translation of the *Novus Ordo Missae* in the Filipino context that endeavors to uphold the principle of “substantial unity of the Roman Rite.” According to Chupungco, four principles shaped this project:

First, the texts must clearly express the theological content of the Roman Order of Mass, namely the church’s doctrine on the Mass as Christ’s paschal sacrifice in the form of a memorial meal which relates to the Last Supper (see SC 47). *Second*, the texts, which are adapted largely from the Roman Order of Mass, should incorporate genuine Filipino values, idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and images drawn from the life experiences of people. *Third*, without forgetting the needs of the universal church, the texts should include the contemporary concerns of the church in the Philippines, such as social justice, peace and development, ecumenism, and lay leadership. And *fourth*, when proclaimed, the texts should be catechetically clear, dignified, and prayerful (see SC 33).⁸⁶

At the same time, Chupungco further pointed out that while the proposed liturgy was modeled on the Roman Rite of the Order of the Mass, nevertheless it also incorporated Filipino rituals and patterns of celebrating religious events, creating “an atmosphere of prayer and reverence amidst the Filipino pattern of festive or baroque-like celebration.”⁸⁷

Following reviews in 1974 and 1975 by a team of experts comprising liturgists, theologians, sociologists, anthropologists, linguists, and pastors, the proposed liturgical text of the *Misa ng Bayang Pilipino* was submitted to the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) in 1975 for their consideration. The CBCP approved the liturgical text that incorporated a set of changes proposed by an ad hoc review committee in July 1976, and submitted to the CDW with the title “Roman Order of Mass for the Dioceses in the Philippines” for confirmation. When confirmation was not forthcoming, the CBCP revisited the draft liturgical text, introduced further changes, and submitted the revised proposal to the CDW in July 1991.⁸⁸ However, in view of the changing winds in Rome as the result of the two recent CDW Instructions, *Varietates Legitimae* (1994) and *Liturgiam Authenticam* (2001), this proposed Mass is effectively dead and buried. As both of

⁷⁸ K. Virginia Kennerley, “The Use of indigenous sacred Literature and theological Concept in Christian Eucharistic Liturgy in India,” *Studia Liturgica* 19 (1989) 147.

⁷⁹ Kennerley, “The Use of indigenous sacred Literature,” 153.

⁸⁰ Kennerley, “The Use of indigenous sacred Literature,” 154.

⁸¹ Michael Amaladoss, “The Liturgy: Twenty Years After Vatican II,” *Vidyajyoti* (1983) 231–239, 238.

⁸² Paul Puthanangady, “Liturgical Inculturation in India,” *Jeevadharma* 23 (1993) 193–207, 198.

⁸³ Anscar J. Chupungco, “Liturgical Inculturation,” *East Asian Pastoral Review* 30 (1993) 108–119, 118. For the full text and commentary of the *Misa ng Bayang Pilipino*, see Anscar J. Chupungco, “Shaping the Filipino Order of Mass,” in Anscar J. Chupungco, *Worship: Beyond Inculturation* (Washington, DC: Pastoral Press, 1994), 129–156. Specifically, the liturgical text of the *Misa ng Bayang Pilipino* is found on pages 139–156 and Chupungco’s commentary on pages 131–138.

⁸⁴ Chupungco, “Shaping the Filipino Order of Mass,” 130.

⁸⁵ Chupungco, “Shaping the Filipino Order of Mass,” 129.

⁸⁶ Chupungco, “Shaping the Filipino Order of Mass,” 130.

⁸⁷ Chupungco, “Shaping the Filipino Order of Mass,” 130.

⁸⁸ Chupungco, “Shaping the Filipino Order of Mass,” 130–131.

these instructions made it clear, dynamic equivalence is no longer acceptable as a mode of adapting the Roman Rite to local contexts and cultures.

5 THE 1998 ASIAN SYNOD ON LITURGICAL RENEWAL IN ASIA

In 1995, the Special Assembly of the Synod of Catholic Bishops for Asia ("Asian Synod") was first announced by Cardinal Jan P. Schotte, in response to the call of Pope John Paul II in his 1994 apostolic letter, *Tertio millennio adveniente*⁸⁹ for, among other things, special synods from different parts of the world to prepare for the coming of the third Christian millennium. The theme of the Asian Synod was "Jesus Christ the Savior, and his mission of love and service in Asia: that they may have life and have it abundantly" [cf. John 10:10]. While the principal thrust of the Asian Synod concerned the Church's missional outreach to Asians, nonetheless the Indonesian Catholic Bishops took the opportunity to voice, among other things, their disquiet about the direction of liturgical renewal in Asia.⁹⁰ In their response to the *Lineamenta*⁹¹ of the Asian Synod, the Indonesian Bishops argued that "episcopal conferences need greater freedom of decision-making with regard to inculturation," and all efforts at the "continuous and serious study and experimentation by experts not only in Liturgy but also in indigenous cultures are required," and such efforts "need to be wholeheartedly supported (and not restricted) by 'Rome'."⁹² Here, the Indonesian Catholic Bishops are calling for the development of non-Latin Asian liturgical rites, because mere translations of the *editio typica* of various liturgical texts into the vernacular are not local liturgies – they are and remain Western liturgies. In addition, by calling for greater autonomy in questions of inculturation, the Indonesian Catholic Bishops are politely telling the Vatican officials that they should have full responsibility in questions concerning inculturation, as well as full authority to produce and approve local liturgical texts and rites. This is because they know the local peoples, languages, and socio-cultural contexts of the Indonesian reality.⁹³

⁸⁹ The fulltext of the apostolic letter of Pope John Paul II, *Tertio millennio adveniente* dated 10 November 1994, in *Origins* 24 (1994) 401-16.

⁹⁰ The complete response of the Indonesian Catholic Bishops to the *Lineamenta* of the Asian Synod is found in *East Asian Pastoral Review* 35 (1998) 54-85.

⁹¹ The official text of the *Lineamenta* may be found in *Origins* 26 (1997) 502-520.

⁹² See *East Asian Pastoral Review* 35 (1998) 77, art. 10.3.3.

⁹³ In this regard, the Indonesian Catholic Bishops also criticized the efforts of the Vatican officials to control the process of inculturation: "In order to promote the inculturation process the universal Church has to be more open and ready to change its own pattern of thinking, and to allow local Churches the freedom to think and act in response to concrete life situations, guided by the Spirit and led by the local hierarchy. Rigid rules and regulations, in discord with local conditions, will put restrictions on the interest in inculturation and to genuine effects to that effect." See *East Asian Pastoral Review* 35 (1998) 77, art. 10.3.2.

The Asian Synod met in Rome from April 19 to May 14 of 1998. It opened with a solemn Eucharist concelebrated by the Pope with 6 patriarchs, 34 cardinals, 49 archbishops, 78 bishops, and 92 priests in St. Peter's Basilica on 19 April 1998. Although Latin and Italian were the two principal languages of this eucharist, nevertheless an effort was made to mirror the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of the Asian churches throughout the liturgy.⁹⁴ The Synod closed on 14 May 1998 with the Closing Eucharist at St. Peter's Basilica. Again, while the liturgy was mainly in Latin, there were distinctive Asian liturgical elements.⁹⁵

5.1 Liturgical Renewal in Asia: Calls for New Local Rites

In the synodal proceedings, various Asian Bishops raised the issue of liturgical renewal in Asia. For example, Bishop Berard Oshikawa (Naha, Japan) put forward his arguments for a harmonious "graduality" in the Holy See's role of safeguarding orthodoxy in theology and liturgical practice, noting that "the language of our theology, the rhythm and structure of our liturgies, the programmes of our

⁹⁴ For example, the Gloria was sung in Filipino using Jesuit Fr. Eduardo Hontiveros' setting of "*Papuri sa Diyos*" ("Praise be to God"), the Gospel was proclaimed in Malayalam according to the Syro-Malabar liturgical ritual, and the General Intercessions were read in Arabic, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Tamil and Vietnamese. The highlight of the preparation of the gifts was a Batak "*Tor-tor*" dance of joy and thanksgiving accompanying the eucharistic gifts which was performed by a dance troupe of Indonesian men and women carrying flowers, incense and candles to an Indonesian hymn "*Bawalah Persembahan*" ("Let us bring forth our gifts"). All the information on the Opening Eucharist is taken from Margaret Hebblethwaite "Dance of joy opens the Asian synod in Rome," *The Tablet* (25 April 1998) 530, and Union of Catholic Asian News (UCAN), "Pope Opens Synod For Asia With Call To 'Write What The Spirit Suggests,'" *UCAN Report AS9862.0972* dated April 20, 1998; http://www.ucanews.com/story-archive/?post_name=/1998/04/20/pope-opens-synod-for-asia-with-call-to-write-what-the-spirit-suggests&post_id=11262 (last accessed: October 25, 2013); and Thomas C. Fox, "Asia synod opens with call for change," *National Catholic Reporter* (May 1, 1998) 13. At the Great Amen of the Eucharistic Prayer, an Indian dance troupe performed the "*arati*" love dance for the arrival of a spouse that is part of the "Twelve Points" Rescript for India. In addition, the cover of the worship program was decorated with Christian artwork in Chinese style, from an early twentieth century collection of the now defunct Catholic University of Peking.

⁹⁵ The Gospel Acclamation was sung in Tamil according to the Syro-Malankara liturgical ritual, while the Gospel was proclaimed in Malayalam according to the Syro-Malabar liturgical ritual. The General Intercessions were offered in Mandarin, Hindi, Japanese, Malay, Tagalog and Thai. At the preparation of gifts, the eucharistic gifts were presented by Korean women in beautiful traditional costumes and accompanied by a "Condo" dance from Indonesia. Again, the cover of the worship program was illustrated with Chinese paintings from the now defunct Catholic University of Peking. All descriptions of the Closing Eucharist are taken from Margaret Hebblethwaite, "Opposing lobbies united as Asian synod ends," *The Tablet* (23 May 1998) 675, and UCAN, "Pope John Paul Closes Synod For Asia With Solemn Mass And Farewell Lunch," *UCAN Report AS0098.0976* dated May 18, 1998; http://www.ucanews.com/story-archive/?post_name=/1998/05/18/pope-john-paul-closes-synod-for-asia-with-solemn-mass-and-farewell-lunch&post_id=11436 (last accessed: October 25, 2013).

catechesis fail to touch the hearts of those who come searching.”⁹⁶ Likewise, Bishop Francis Xavier Sudardanta Hadisumarta (Manokwari-Sorong, Indonesia) argued the need for a “radical decentralization of the Latin Rite.”⁹⁷ The Jesuit Bishop Benedict John Osta (Patna, India) suggested that “instead of spending energies in translating the official texts, we need to promote creativity in the cultural context of Asia.”⁹⁸ The Superior General of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, Fr. Wilhelmus van der Weiden also threw down a gauntlet at the Roman dicasteries on the issue of liturgical inculturation:

Are the Roman *dicasteries* so afraid for aberrations from that which is considered as the only true doctrine and the only true formulation of the liturgy? Must we not say that often the bishops’ conferences with 20, 30, or more bishops and a number of theologians and specialists can better estimate what in liturgical matters is best for their flock than Roman authorities who often do not know the language and the culture of that country?⁹⁹

In a similar vein, the Jesuit theologian and retired Apostolic Vicar of Bontoc-Lagawe, Bishop Francisco Claver spoke of liturgical language as an issue of trust and dialogue:

Why do we have to send vernacular translations of the liturgy to Rome for approval? Or to the bishop of the place, for that matter, if he does not speak the language in question? Don’t we trust our people enough to speak the language of orthodoxy? But in truth, the best judges of the correctness, even theological, of translations and texts are the faithful and the clergy of the place where the language is spoken.¹⁰⁰

Bishop Remigius Peter of Kumabakonam, India echoed Bishops Claver’s concerns in reporting on his small group’s discussions at the Synod: “Speaking of translation, it was observed that the local churches make use of the services of

⁹⁶ John Mansford Prior, “A Tale of Two Synods: Observations on the Special Assembly for Asia,” *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 62 (1998) 654-665, 660.

⁹⁷ Prior, “A Tale of Two Synods,” 660.

⁹⁸ See UCAN, “Church Identity, Interreligious Dialogue, Justice Among Synod Addresses,” *UCAN Report AS9913.0973* dated April 27, 1998; http://www.ucanews.com/story-archive/?post_name=/1998/04/27/church-identity-interreligious-dialogue-justice-among-synod-addresses&post_id=11302 (last accessed: October 25, 2013).

⁹⁹ Thomas C. Fox, “In tug of war at synod, curia gets the last word,” *National Catholic Reporter* (May 29, 1998) 16.

¹⁰⁰ Francisco Claver, “Inculturation as Dialogue,” in Peter C. Phan, ed., *The Asian Synod: Texts and Commentaries* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 100-102, 101.

experts in church matters as well as of experts in the local languages to translate liturgical texts. Many expressed their experience of inordinate delay by the Roman commissions in approving translations.”¹⁰¹

Without any doubt, the highlight of the synodal interventions was that of Carmelite Bishop Francis Xavier Sudardanta Hadisumarta (Manokwari-Sorong, Indonesia). Speaking on behalf of the Indonesian Catholic Bishops’ Conference, he caused a great stir when he argued strenuously that “what we need is trust: trust in God and trust in each other. Bishops are not branch secretaries waiting for instructions from headquarters. We are a communion of local churches.”¹⁰² Bishop Hadisumarta also voiced aloud the view shared by many that the Roman curia should become “a clearinghouse for information, support, and encouragement rather than a universal decision-maker.”¹⁰³ With much finesse, he skillfully delivered his *coup de grâce* at the very end: “Do we have the imagination to envisage the birth of new patriarchates . . . and a radical decentralization of the Latin Rite – devolving into a host of local rites in Asia . . . say the patriarchate of South Asia, of Southeast Asia, and of East Asia?”¹⁰⁴ In making the call for new local rites, Bishop Hadisumarta was clearly responding to *Varietates Legitimae*’s insistence that “the work of inculturation does not foresee the creation of new families of rites” but merely “adaptations which still remain part of the Roman Rite.”¹⁰⁵ Nonetheless, his call for new local rites pursuant to SC 40 would become a moot point when *Liturgiam Authenticam* conclusively blocks all possibilities at implementing SC 40 for “radical” endeavors. This would have profound consequences for emerging subaltern Asian believers relativizing the official liturgy in favor of popular devotions and practices, as we shall see in the later part of this paper.

5.2 Proposition 43 of the 59 sub secreto propositions for the Asian Synod

The issue of liturgical renewal and inculturation made it into Proposition 43 of the 59 *sub secreto* propositions for the Asian Synod, which asked for more local church autonomy to achieve inculturation in general and liturgical inculturation in particular. Specifically, Proposition 43 acknowledges that while “liturgy is a main instrument for evangelization” and “it must touch the heart and be meaningful

¹⁰¹ Remigius Peter, “Report of Group Discussions: English Group A,” in Phan, *The Asian Synod*, 128-130, 130.

¹⁰² Thomas C. Fox, “Asian bishops remain politely persistent,” *National Catholic Reporter* (May 8, 1998) 13-14, 14.

¹⁰³ Fox, “Asian bishops remain politely persistent,” 14.

¹⁰⁴ See Fox, “Asian bishops remain politely persistent,” 14, and UCAN, “Synod Asked To Affirm Asian Way Of Evangelizing In A Decentralized Church,” *UCAN Report IJ9977.0974* dated May 7, 1998; http://www.ucanews.com/story-archive/?post_name=/1998/05/07/synod-asked-to-affirm-asian-way-of-evangelizing-in-a-decentralized-church&post_id=11364 (last accessed: October 25, 2013).

¹⁰⁵ *Varietates Legitimae*, art. 36.

to people of the local Church,” nevertheless the reality is that “for many Asian Catholics, the official liturgy is often experienced as alien and does not touch their hearts.” It goes on to state:

This points to the need for inculturating the liturgy in such a way that the liturgy becomes more meaningful and nourishing for people in the setting of their own cultures. Consequently, local churches need the authority and freedom to inculturate the liturgy by adapting it to the local cultures while recognizing the need for dialogue and communion with the Holy See, the principle of unity in the Church. The Synod requests the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments to grant Episcopal and Regional Bishops’ Conferences the authority or competence to approve translations of liturgical texts in the vernacular which are ultimately forwarded to the said Dicastery.¹⁰⁶

While most propositions were passed overwhelmingly or with little opposition or abstention, proposition 43 elicited a strong minority opposition, receiving 14 “*non placet*” votes (8.3%) out of a total of 168 votes, the highest number of *non placet* votes of all the 59 propositions.¹⁰⁷

6 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Moving beyond the fiftieth anniversary of the promulgation of SC, and taking into consideration the Indian and Filipino experiences, as well as the Asian Bishops’ interventions at the Asian Synod, it would not be remiss to ask whether SC’s vision for liturgical renewal was fully achieved in Asia. On the one hand, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* was clear and unequivocal when it insisted that liturgy is the *culmen et fons* of the Church’s life, and outlined a program of renewal that would restore the centrality of the liturgy in the Church’s life. In this regard, the Jesuit liturgical theologian, Keith F. Pecklers asserts that *Sacrosanctum Concilium* is “much more than a *via media*. In some cases, it calls for a complete revision of liturgical books and not a mere superficial editing of what was present in the Tridentine liturgy.”¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, one cannot ignore the reality that the

broad vision of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* has been narrowed by the instructions *Varietates Legitimae* (1994) and *Liturgiam Authenticam* (2001). In particular, *Varietates Legitimae* emphasizes the preference for adaptation (*aptatio*), insisting that “the work of inculturation does not foresee the creation of new families of rites,” but rather “leads to adaptations which still remain part of the Roman rite.”¹⁰⁹ With the promulgation of *Liturgiam Authenticam* in 2001, the door is shut on the kind of “even more radical adaptation of the liturgy” (*profundior liturgiae aptatio*) that is envisaged by SC40, and requested by the Asian Bishops at the 1998 Asian Synod and Proposition 43 of the Synod’s final propositions.

With both *Varietates Legitimae* and *Liturgiam Authenticam* insisting on a re-centralization in Rome, the provisions of SC 22 and SC 36 that afford episcopal conferences to have some measure of autonomy on matters of liturgical renewal effectively becoming a dead letter. Liturgical inculturation is now limited to vernacular translations of the Roman Rite that are tightly regulated and controlled in Rome, to the frustration of many Asian bishops, as evidenced in their deliberations during the 1988 Asian Synod. More significantly, Michael Amaladoss points out that this movement toward centralization with an emphasis on strict conformity and literal fidelity to the Latin of the *editiones typicae* of liturgical texts raises the question on how Rome is able to “to discern the fine point of languages, symbols, and cultures across the world even in a postmodern world.”¹¹⁰ His confrere, Keith Pecklers makes the same point when he cites the example of a Korean student of his at the Pontifical Liturgical Institute asking rhetorically, “Does anyone in the Congregation for Divine Worship understand Korean?”¹¹¹

6.1 Gravitating toward Popular Devotions and Ritual Practices

As liturgical rites are compelled to conform to Rome’s expectations rather than the needs of Asian Catholics, it should come as no surprise that Asian Catholics are increasingly gravitating toward popular devotions and ritual practices, including Marian devotions and the charismatic renewal movement. Michael Amaladoss summarizes the situation succinctly as follows:

¹⁰⁹ *Varietates Legitimae*, art. 36, cf. art. 63, which insists that “adaptations of this kind do not envisage a transformation of the Roman Rite.”

¹¹⁰ Michael Amaladoss, “Inculturation and the Liturgy,” *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 68 (2004) 641-655, 644.

¹¹¹ Pecklers, “Vatican II and the Liturgical Renewal,” 34.

¹⁰⁶ “The Synod’s Propositions,” in Phan, *The Asian Synod*, 140-165, 159.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas C. Fox, “Propositions blend Asian, Roman view,” *National Catholic Reporter* (May 29, 1998) 16.

¹⁰⁸ Pecklers, “Vatican II and the Liturgical Renewal,” 29.

The consequence is that more and more people everywhere, in the West, do not find liturgy meaningful and relevant and, therefore, stop participating. They drift towards New Age and Pentecostal movements or independent Churches for their religious needs. . . . even where people are still practicing, they are not satisfied with the official liturgy, which does not nourish them, and develop forms of popular religiosity. These are not only popular devotions. There are also parallel rituals that go together with the official ones and cater to their specific human, social, and cultural needs.¹¹²

In other words, if Asian Catholics are not nourished by the official liturgical celebrations, which is also noted in Proposition 43 of the Final Propositions of the Asian Synod, it should not be surprising to find them turning to popular piety and devotional practices. While theological conservatives rejoice over the prominence of Marian devotions among Asians as something that Europeans and North Americans could emulate, they do not realize that for Asians, popular devotions are not considered a sign of theological conservatism, but rather a sign of their ambivalence toward, and alienation from the Church's liturgy that ignores their concerns, hopes, and dreams. Not surprisingly, Asians turn to popular devotions and practices such as Marian devotions and charismatic prayer meetings with healings, exorcisms, and speaking in tongues for their spiritual nourishment because they are able to control and shape these practices to respond to their spiritual needs.¹¹³

An example of a prominent Asian Marian devotion that draws a significant number of Asians is the highly popular devotion to *Arokia Matha* (Our Lady of Good Health, also known as Our Lady of Velankanni) among Indians in India and across the world that transcends religious, ethnic, and caste boundaries. The feast of Our Lady of Velankanni begins on August 29 and culminates eleven days later on September 8, drawing massive crowds of more than a million pilgrims to the Velankanni,¹¹⁴ from the Catholic, Hindu, and Muslim communities across India, and the worldwide Indian Diaspora, ranking it third behind Lourdes and Fatima in worldwide prominence. This is more surprising when one considers that the Marian apparitions undergirding the devotion are preserved only in folklore, with

no mention in the historical ecclesiastical and colonial administrative records.¹¹⁵

More significantly, Our Lady of Velankanni draws throngs of devotees from the Catholic, Hindu, and Muslim communities who have created a liminal space for their devotion that transcends socio-cultural and religious distinctions. Moreover, centuries of combined Hindu and Catholic devotion to Our Lady of Velankanni have resulted in a hybridization of ritual practices rooted in both Hindu and Catholic traditions, e.g., bathing in the sea, shaving one's head, walking on knees, and rolling in the shrine. In spite of official clerical disapproval, devotees across the religious spectrum continue to practice these rituals.¹¹⁶

6.2 Chinese Catholicism as a Local Folk Religion

In China, self-initiated Chinese efforts have led to an impressive growth of Chinese Christians, with the majority of converts belonging to newly emerging independent house churches that are primarily Pentecostal or Charismatic in orientation.¹¹⁷ Clearly, Christianity is slowly becoming an indigenous Chinese popular religion in the same manner as Buddhism, which finally established itself as an indigenous Chinese religion when it became the popular religion of the masses in the countryside. Daniel Bays points out that the revival and expansion of Christianity in China from the 1980s onward "was substantially a rural

¹¹⁵ Local tradition recounts three miracles, two in the sixteenth century and one in the seventeenth century. In the first miracle, a "divine" lady with a child in her arms appeared to a shepherd in Nagapattinam (near Chennai) asking for milk, which miraculously flowed from his pot without emptying it. In the second miracle, a "divine" lady appeared to a lame boy asking him for a cup of buttermilk. The lame boy miraculously regained the use of his leg and the local Catholics built a small wooden shrine in honor of *Arokia Matha* (Our Lady of Good Health). The third miracle concerned a Portuguese ship sailing from Macao to Colombo that was caught in a terrible storm. The sailors prayed to Mary and vowed to build a church in her name if she would lead the ship safely ashore. The weather calmed down and the sailors were able to come ashore near Velankanni on September 8, the Feast of the Nativity of Mary. In gratitude, the Portuguese sailors rebuilt the shrine as a magnificent stone chapel. See Rila Mukherjee, "Contested Authenticities," *Rethinking History* 8 (2004) 459-463 and Margaret Meibohm, "Past Selves and Present Others: The Ritual Construction of Identity at a Catholic Festival in India," in Selva J. Raj and Corinne G. Dempsey, eds., *Popular Christianity in India: Riting between the Lines* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2002), 61-84.

¹¹⁶ Susan Bayly, *Saints, Goddesses, and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian Society, 1700-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 367-368. See also Meibohm, "Past Selves and Present Others" and Paul Younger, "Velankanni Calling: Hindu Patterns of Pilgrimage at a Christian Shrine," in E. Alen Morinis, ed., *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992).

¹¹⁷ Daniel H. Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 183-207; Xi Lian, *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); and Murray H. Rubinstein, "Holy Spirit Taiwan: Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in the Republic of China," in Daniel H. Bays ed., *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 353-366.

¹¹² Amaladoss, "Inculturation and the Liturgy," 645.

¹¹³ What follows is a précis of an argument that I first made in the essay, "Asian American Marian Devotions as Ritual Practice," *New Theology Review* 23 no. 3 (2010) 35-44, where I use aspects of Catherine Bell's ritual theory to analyse the situational and strategic dimensions of Asian Marian devotions that are practiced by Asian Americans as ritual practice.

¹¹⁴ The town of Velankanni is located on the shores of the Bay of Bengal about 350 km south of Chennai (Madras) in central Tamil Nadu in India.

phenomenon for both Catholics and Protestants.”¹¹⁸ In his groundbreaking study of indigenous popular Chinese Christianity, entitled *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China*, Lian Xi explores how the independent and sectarian Protestantism brought to China by European missionaries took root and was transformed into an indigenous popular religion that is both Chinese and Christian.¹¹⁹ More importantly, based on his fieldwork among rural Chinese Catholics in the 1990s,¹²⁰ the sociologist Richard Madsen is able to conclude that Chinese Catholicism is best understood as rural Chinese folk religion. In a groundbreaking essay entitled “Beyond Orthodoxy, Catholicism as Chinese Folk Religion,” Madsen asserts:

Catholicism in China, especially in the rural areas where the vast majority of Catholics live, is as much folk religion as world religion. I would not advocate abandoning a top-down view of Chinese Catholicism as part of a world religion and a universal Church. I will argue, however, that this view should be complemented by one that sees Chinese Catholicism as a localized folk religion. Such folk-Catholicism should not be viewed simply as an impure form of a genuine Catholic faith, but *an authentic form of belief and practice to be understood on its own terms* (emphasis added).¹²¹

Madsen goes on to draw important parallels between rural folk Catholicism and rural folk Buddhism, pointing out how rural folk Catholicism has been able “to blend more fully into the fabric of village and family culture.”¹²² For example, he notes that Chinese Catholics “honored their ancestors not by offering sacrifices of food on the ancestors’ graves, but by praying fervently to them on the Feasts of All Souls and All Saints, by having priests say Masses for the Dead, and by offering Catholic prayers in front of their graves at the Qing Ming Festival.”¹²³ In other words, notwithstanding the official liturgy that the priest continues to offer on Sundays, Chinese folk Catholic villagers continue with their own *hybridized* ritual practices that demonstrate their dual belonging to traditional Chinese folk identity markers and their Catholic faith.

¹¹⁸ Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 193.

¹¹⁹ Lian, *Redeemed by Fire*, 238-247.

¹²⁰ Richard Madsen, *China Catholics: Tragedy and Hope in an Emerging Civil Society* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press 1998).

¹²¹ Richard Madsen, “Beyond Orthodoxy: Catholicism as Chinese Folk Religion,” in Stephen Uhalley and Xiaoxin Wu, eds., *China and Christianity: Burdened Past, Hopeful Future* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe 2001), 233-250, 234.

¹²² Madsen, “Beyond Orthodoxy,” 246.

¹²³ Madsen, “Beyond Orthodoxy,” 246-247.

6.3 The Charismatic Movement in Asia

In addition to Marian devotions and folk Catholicism in Asia, the Charismatic movement has swept through much of Asia and transforming Asian Christianity in general, and Asian Catholics in particular. Asia joins Africa and Latin America as having a sizeable number of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians. The Roman Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement took root in Asia in the late 1960s, in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) that transformed the Roman Catholic Church in general, and the Asian Catholic Church in particular. Since the charismatic movement caught fire among Asian Catholics in the 1970s, it has experienced tremendous growth throughout Asia. According to recent statistics compiled by the Vatican-backed International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS), there are nearly 14,000 charismatic prayer groups in the Asian Church, with an estimated 15% of Asian Catholics involved in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement (“CCRM”). Indeed, Asia comes second after Latin America, which has an estimated 16% of Catholics involved in the CCRM.¹²⁴

Philippines has witnessed the tremendous growth of the CCRM, with vibrant groups such as El Shaddai, the Community of God’s Little Children, and *Bukas Loob Sa Diyos* (Open to the Spirit of God). The most prominent of these groups is the El Shaddai movement.¹²⁵ Established in 1981 by Mike Velarde, El Shaddai swept like wildfire among Filipino Catholics, garnering a following of about 11 million within 15 years, with chapters in nearly every province in the Philippines, and more than 35 countries around the world.¹²⁶ Filipino Catholics, with their flair for baroque exuberance,¹²⁷ find personal and emotive intensity of El Shaddai’s weekly lay-led¹²⁸ *gawain* (charismatic prayer meetings with laying on of hands, healings, and exorcisms) attractive, in contrast to the impersonal and dry

¹²⁴ The statistics are taken from the Vice President of ICCRS, Cyril John’s paper, “Lay Movements and New Communities in the life and Mission of the Church in Asia: Experiences from the Catholic Charismatic Renewal,” which he presented at the Congress of Asian Catholic Laity, which met from August 31 to September 5, 2010 in Seoul, South Korea.

¹²⁵ The following discussion on El Shaddai in this essay is taken from Katharine L. Wiegele, *Investing in Miracles: El Shaddai and the Transformation of Popular Catholicism in the Philippines* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005).

¹²⁶ Wiegele, *Investing in Miracles*, 4.

¹²⁷ As pointed out by Anscar Chupungco in his “Shaping the Filipino Order of Mass,” 130.

¹²⁸ In *Investing in Miracles*, Wiegele suggests that El Shaddai’s charismatic lay healers exercise traditional shaman-like functions (*Investing in Miracles*, 145-147), thereby replacing local folk healers (*yakal*) in exorcizing spirits and healing ailments (*Investing in Miracles*, 153).

“soberness and sense”¹²⁹ of the official liturgies of the Roman Rite.¹³⁰ Interestingly the *gawain* incorporates ritual elements of the Mass as a form of *mimicry* of the official liturgy, thereby maintaining orthodoxy while pursuing innovation.¹³¹ One important difference separates the *gawain* from the official liturgical rites, that is, the *gawain* provide space for, and empower laity from the subaltern Filipino classes as prophets, exorcists, and healers.

In India, an emerging charismatic movement with profound ecclesiological and liturgical implications is the *Khristbhakta* Movement.¹³² *Khristbhaktas* are Indian devotees of *Yesubhagavan* (Christ Jesus) as their *Satguru* who draw spiritual nourishment from Christian ashrams, maintaining a dual belonging or hybridized identity as followers of Christ and his Gospel while not formally seeking baptism

¹²⁹ Edmund Bishop succinctly described the genius of the Roman Rite as “essentially soberness and sense” in his classic 1899 essay, “The Genius of the Roman Rite,” in Edmund Bishop, *Liturgica Historica: Papers on the Liturgy and Religious Life of the Western Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918), 1-19, 19. Bishop further observed that the Roman Rite is marked by “simplicity, practicality, a great sobriety and self-control, gravity and dignity” (“The Genius of the Roman Rite,” 12).

¹³⁰ Wiegele describes the *gawain* as highly emotional and cathartic events involving a lot of singing that is led by a choir and praise band, “sharing” or testifying by El Shaddai members, dramatic sermonizing by a visiting preacher, praying in tongues, and the preacher laying hands on members for healing, casting out evil spirits, or slaying participants in the Holy Spirit. For a full description and analysis of a typical El Shaddai *gawain*, see Wiegele, *Investing in Miracles*, 147-150.

¹³¹ As Wiegele explains, “There are, however, certain ceremonial elements of the *gawain* in Sinag that mimic the Catholic mass. During one Sinag *gawain*, there was a sort of table that resembled an altar in a Catholic Church. Consisting of a table covered with white cloth, it was placed at the front of the meeting place (in this case the paved, enclosed schoolyard) in what would be the “stage” area. The preacher placed a glass of water (presumably to moisten his throat) on the table and laid a folded white handkerchief neatly across the top of the glass, mimicking the holy chalice of wine and water, with the cloth, on a priest’s altar. On this table were two candles as well as a crucifix on a stand with a rosary draped over it – again references to the Catholic altar. Holding the Bible over his head with both hands, as a priest often does, the preacher entered. He then kissed the Bible ceremoniously (again mimicking a priest) before turning around to address the group. Before preaching, the man turned his back to the crowd, faced the bare cement wall of the schoolyard, and bowed his head in a short prayer. To my research assistant, this was amusing. When the priest does this he is facing both the holy tabernacle and the crucifix in a symbolic gesture; the El Shaddai preacher was facing a cement wall. It was done in such a way, however, that any practicing Catholic would have recognized the liturgical parallels. The borrowed ritual elements seemed to give the novice preacher, an unschooled man in his early twenties, an aura of legitimacy” (Wiegele, *Investing in Miracles*, 150).

¹³² For an overview of the *Khristbhakta* movement, see Jerome G. Sylvester, “The *Khristbhakta* Movement: A New Paradigm of Faith in Christ Jesus,” *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 27 (2013) 345-359 (Part I); 443-456 (Part II) and Herbert Hofer, “Jesus, My Master: ‘Jesu Bhakta’ Hindu Christian Theology,” *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 19:3 (2002) 39-42. Although the *Khristbhaktas* are not, strictly speaking, Christians as they have neither sought baptism nor participate in the Christian sacramental life, nonetheless they demonstrate the future direction of hybridized or dual/multiple-belonging Asian Charismatic faith that confounds the institutional structures and boundaries of classical forms of Christian identity and Church membership that emerged in Late Antique Europe

and Church membership, in order to retain their Hindu identities.¹³³ From its original founding in 1993 at Matridham Ashram¹³⁴ in Varanasi among the subaltern Dalits and Tribals in the northern region of India,¹³⁵ the *Khristbhakta* movement has grown rapidly. While Matridham Ashram remains the spiritual heartland of the *Khristbhakta* movement, newer communities have emerged across northern India, including Jeevan Dham (Faridabad, near New Delhi), Yesu Darbar (Allahabad), Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh), Uttar Pradesh, Ranchi (Jharkhand), Patna (Bihar), and Haryana.¹³⁶ Eschewing the path of baptism into the Church, most *Khristbhaktas* opt to maintain a hybridized identity, remaining in the liminal space of the interstices between Hinduism and Christianity, participating in weekly charismatic prayer meetings with laying on of hands and healings called *satsangs* that combine aspects of rituals of liturgical tradition with devotionals (*bhakti*), feasting (*melā*), healing, and exorcisms that are led by lay leaders called *aguwas*.¹³⁷ From his fieldwork among *Khristbhaktas*, the IMS missionary Jerome Sylvester notes that the *Khristbhaktas* seek to combine traditional Indian devotional practices with elements from the Charismatic movement.¹³⁸

6.4 Subaltern Classes that Challenge the Homogeneity of the Liturgical Vision of Liturgiam Authenticam

One unifying thread that binds the Indian Marian devotees, Chinese folk Catholics, Filipino El Shaddai Charismatics, and the Indian *Khristbhaktas* is that many of them hail primarily from the subaltern classes¹³⁹ of their communities that are confronting the challenges of postcolonialism, postmodernism, and globalization that are rapidly transforming the world around them. Moreover, as

¹³³ Sylvester, “The *Khristbhakta* Movement, I,” 345.

¹³⁴ Founded and run by the Indian Missionary Society (“IMS”), the Matridham Ashram represents an Indian experiment at providing a liminal space for hybridized Hindu *bhakti* and Christian charismatic expressions of spiritual formation and faith development.

¹³⁵ According to Sylvester, a survey conducted between 2003 and 2007 reveals that the scheduled castes comprise about 37.3% of the *Khristbhaktas*. He notes that the majority of *Khristbhaktas* are from the subaltern communities (Dalits and Tribals) in India (Sylvester, “The *Khristbhakta* Movement, I,” 348).

¹³⁶ Sylvester, “The *Khristbhakta* Movement, I,” 345-348.

¹³⁷ Sylvester, “The *Khristbhakta* Movement, II,” 448, 452, 453.

¹³⁸ Sylvester, “The *Khristbhakta* Movement, II,” 450. Sylvester unpacks the implications of the *Khristbhakta* Movement as follows: “The *Khristbhaktas* are trying to create a social space for themselves in different ways by affirming their experience in Christ. They have found the *Khristbhakta* Movement as one of the channels. Emancipation and empowerment become the driving force that draws them to the Movement. They find support and shelter in features of free association in the Satsang. The movement is free in every sense of the word, no membership and no limiting structures” (Sylvester, “The *Khristbhakta* Movement, II,” 448).

¹³⁹ On the challenges posed by the subaltern classes, see Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-313.

the examples discussed above also reveal the complexities of multiple belongings and hybridized identities¹⁴⁰ that challenge the homogeneity of the liturgical vision of *Liturgiam Authenticam* that marginalizes the more open and radical potential of SC 40. By putting at the center of their faith life their hybridized devotional and popular ritual practices rather than the Church's official liturgy, the subaltern Asians are challenging the hegemony of a Eurocentric vision of liturgy and the relevance of a liturgy centered around the substantial unity of the Roman Rite. This has profound implications especially as the center of Christianity has shifted away from Europe to the Two Thirds World of Africa and Asia.¹⁴¹

Moreover, if the liturgy is the *culmen et fons* of a fully lived Christian experience, one has to ask how the official Church seeks to incorporate Christ-followers from the subaltern masses across Asia who have accepted Jesus, but live out their faith in an alternate *hybridized* liturgical world that synthesizes folk and popular identity markers with the Gospel message? Although Jerome Sylvester made these remarks in the context of *Khrisbhaktas*, they are pertinent to the marginal status of other subaltern groups, who reject official liturgies for their own hybridized liturgies:

The subaltern struggle against caste and class can be well understood against the background of heterodox and anti-systemic movements. Those who are at the margins negotiate the porous borders in their search of a new identity and empowerment. *Khrisbhaktas* negotiate the borders of faith and culture for empowerment against social exclusion and marginalization from the liminal position of Hinduism and Christianity.¹⁴²

7 CONCLUSION

In today's postcolonial, transnational, and global Asia that is shaped by Asians from diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds constantly on the move and rubbing shoulders with each other, the task of liturgical renewal has become more difficult and complex. The reality of ethnic diversity and cultural pluralism means that it is no longer possible to assume an ethnically, culturally, and linguistically

homogeneous worldview as the context and foundation for celebrating liturgies in Asia. Moreover, the forces of postcolonialism, transnationalism, and globalization that reshaped the Asian cultural landscape beyond recognition since the 1960s have generated multiple migrations, multiple belongings, as well as socio-cultural hybridities that pose profound challenges to liturgical renewal and inculturation. As Asians of diverse and hybridized social, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds live, work, and pray alongside each other, there is a need for church leaders to learn how to negotiate this diverse and pluralistic reality in liturgical worship.

The complexities of ethnic diversity and cultural pluralism raise the overarching question of how liturgical celebrations can integrate such diversity and pluralism, such that liturgy embodies a community's hopes and dreams, as well as pains and struggles. The reality that Asian Catholics find sustenance and strength in popular rituals such as Marian devotions and charismatic prayer meetings rather than in the official liturgies of the Church reveals the dilemma that the Church's liturgy is becoming marginalized as the province of the clerical elite. Recent instructions such as *Varietates Legitimae* and *Liturgiam Authenticam* exacerbate the problems when they limit the full potential of SC 40 by insisting that the Roman Rite is the expression *par excellence* of liturgical worship that transcends the particularities of human cultures. More significantly, the CDW's insistence on the *substantiali unitate Ritus romani*,¹⁴³ the continued use of Latin,¹⁴⁴ and the absolute control of inculturation reveals its emphasis on defending a homogeneous and essentialist view of the Roman Rite to emphasize and maintain the ideals of cohesive group identity and unity. However, in doing so, Rome also ignores at its peril the challenges of hybridized identities of the subaltern masses across the Asian world with their experiences multiple border crossings, multiple belongings, and massive generational shifts.

What is needed for the future is a renewed look at the hitherto marginalized SC 40 as the pathway for envisioning and shaping renewed Asian liturgies that would enable Asian Catholics to call these celebrations their own, rather than an alien rite parachuted from another land. This would necessarily entail that Rome would have to empower the Asian bishops to explore the possibilities for developing contemporary liturgies that would respond to the needs of Asians in a spirit of true *subsidiarity*. Indeed, this point came through loud and clear at the 1998 Asian Synod, as previously discussed, especially in the interventions of Bishop Francis Xavier Sudardanta Hadisumarta (Manokwari-Sorong, Indonesia), Bishops Benedict John Osta, S.J. (Patna, India), and the Superior General of the

¹⁴⁰ On the challenges of hybridized identities, see Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonder," in Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 102-122.

¹⁴¹ See, in particular, the excellent analysis of this paradigm shift in Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, *From Times Square to Timbuktu: The Post-Christian West Meets the Non-Western Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013); Jehu Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration, and the Transformation of the West* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008); Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity. Revised and Expanded Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Andrew Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002).

¹⁴² Sylvester, "The *Khrisbhakta* Movement, I," 348-349.

¹⁴³ SC 38 (in DOL 38).

¹⁴⁴ See, especially SC 36 (in DOL 36), which insists on the preservation of Latin in the Roman Rite, SC 54 (in DOL 54), which insists on the continued use of Latin in the Ordinary of the Mass, (in DOL 34), and SC 101 (in DOL 101), which speaks of Latin being retained in the Divine Office.

Missionaries of the Holy Family, Fr. Wilhelmus van der Weiden.

Responding to this issue of shaping renewed Asian liturgies that are able to respond fully to the needs of the Asian peoples, one can discount two extreme solutions, i.e., monolithic uniformity and chaotic heterogeneity. Monolithic uniformity promotes homogeneity at the expense of healthy diversity and differences, while chaotic heterogeneity accentuates socio-cultural and ethnic differences without seeking a middle ground that is *sine qua non* for community building. This essay proposes that the middle way between the monolithic uniformity and chaotic heterogeneity would be a *catholicity* that eschews uniformity, maintaining a connection with the universal church while also affirming the real particularities of the local concerns. Indeed, as Asian Catholics rethink the challenges of liturgical renewal and inculturation, they are faced with the tension of balancing the *catholicity* of the Church with the particularities of their own lives in all its complexities, nuances, and hybridities. By catholicity, I refer to the U.S. ecclesiologist, Joseph Komonchak's definition of catholicity as "a fullness or wholeness which reflects and embodies the fullness of the gifts of God's salvation in Christ and embraces the totality of human life and culture"¹⁴⁵ Moreover, Komonchak insists that "catholicity is not simply variety, but a *variety integrated*, made a whole, a recapitulation of all things, persons, and cultures under the headship of Christ and in the unity of the Spirit" (emphasis added).¹⁴⁶ Similarly, the Second Vatican Council has defined catholicity in as "a common effort to attain fullness in unity."

¹⁴⁵ Joseph A. Komonchak, "Catholicity and the Redemption of History," in F. Chica, et al, eds., *Ecclesia Tertia Millennii Advenientis* (Casale Monferrato: Piemme, 1997), 602. Komonchak explains that: "Theological reflection on the catholicity attributed to the Church in the Creed has varied over the ages. Reviews of this tradition present it as varying between emphasis on 'qualitative wholeness' and stress on 'extensive universality', the former dominant in patristic and medieval thought, the latter in post-Reformation apologetical argument. The last two centuries have seen a recover of the earlier, patristic qualitative notion of catholicity which has now supplemented or even supplanted the apologetical argument from geography" ("Catholicity and the Redemption of History," 602).

¹⁴⁶ Komonchak, "Catholicity and the Redemption of History," 603. For a further discussion on how catholicity is understood during different epochs in the history of Christianity, see Yves Congar, *L'Eglise: Une, sainte, catholique et apostolique* (Paris: Cerf, 1970) and Avery Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985). Theological reflections on the different aspects of the Church's catholicity include Michael A. Fahey, "The Catholicity of the Church in the New Testament and in the Early Patristic Period," *The Jurist* 52 (1992) 44-70; Joseph A. Komonchak, "The Local Church and the Church Catholic: The Contemporary Theological Problematic," *The Jurist* 52 (1992) 416-447; Jean-Marie Tillard, "The Local Church Within Catholicity," *The Jurist* 52 (1992) 448-454; and Wolfgang Beinert, "Catholicity as Property of the Church," *The Jurist* 52 (1992) 455-483.

This character of universality which adorns the People of God is a gift from the Lord himself. By reason of it, the Catholic Church strives energetically and constantly to bring all humanity with all its riches back to Christ its Head in the unity of his Spirit. In virtue of this catholicity each individual part of the Church contributes through its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church. Thus through the common sharing of gifts and through the *common effort to attain fullness in unity*, the whole and each of the parts receive increase the parts grow by the mutual sharing of all and by a common effort towards the fullness of unity (LG 13, emphasis added).¹⁴⁷

Hence, reading SC 40 in the light of LG 13 would entail that Asian Catholics privilege a *catholicity* that balances the extremes of monolithic uniformity with Rome on the one hand, and chaotic heterogeneity on the other hand. In this regard, the insight of the African American Catholic Bishops in the United States, i.e., "*to be Catholic is to be universal. To be universal is not to be uniform*. It does mean the gifts of individuals and of particular groups become the common heritage shared by all"¹⁴⁸ is also relevant for the Asian context.

Moreover, the paradigm of catholicity expresses beautifully the unitive ingathering of believers that took place at Pentecost, where everyone present heard the Good News of Jesus Christ being proclaimed to them *in their own languages*.¹⁴⁹ Clearly, cultural and linguistic particularities need not be suppressed in order to receive the Gospel and follow Christ. The bystanders were not asked to give up their languages, ethnicities, cultures, and traditions to hear the Gospel in Hebrew or Aramaic, the earliest languages of the Christian Church. Indeed, it appeared to have been divinely willed that catholicity amidst diversity and plurality, rather than homogeneous uniformity was to be the hallmark of the fledgling Church from the moment of its birth at Pentecost. Without the variety of human ethnicities, cultures, social classes, languages, and human communities across all segments in the Church, viz., there can be no true catholicity.

¹⁴⁷ Walter M. Abbott, ed. *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: America Press, 1966) 31.

¹⁴⁸ "What We Have Seen and Heard" *Origins* 14 (18 Oct 1984) 275, emphasis added.

¹⁴⁹ As the Acts of the Apostles describes it, "We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God" (Acts 2: 9-11, cf. 2:6).

Finally, a renewed Asian liturgy also would be nourished by the rich diversity and plurality of popular devotions, ranging from Marian devotions to the diverse variety of Charismatic prayer meetings.¹⁵⁰ The importance of popular devotions can never be underrated. Popular devotions provide a multi-faceted window into the *sensus fidelium* and the ethos of a community that is outside the grasp of formal and normative ecclesio-liturgical structures. Popular devotions also empower Asian Catholics on the ground to express their faith, piety, and spirituality in a manner often beyond the case of official ecclesial control, as is the case with charismatic prayer meetings and Marian devotions.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ For a general overview to the issue of popular religiosity and its implications for liturgical inculturation in Asia, see Anscar J. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity and Catechesis* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992); and Peter C. Phan, "Popular Religion and Liturgical Inculturation: Perspectives and Challenges from Asia" in Peter C. Phan, *In Our Own Tongues: Perspectives from Asia on Mission and Inculturation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003), 65-91.

¹⁵¹ For further discussion, see my essay, "Asian American Marian Devotions as Ritual Practice," *New Theology Review* 23 no. 3 (2010) 35-44, especially 41-44.

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