

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Master of Sacred Theology Thesis

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

9-1-1970

Factors Affecting Frequency of Celebration and Reception of the Eucharist in Twentieth Century Non-roman Churches and Religious Communities

Paul Clarence Dorn

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/stm>



Part of the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Dorn, Paul Clarence, "Factors Affecting Frequency of Celebration and Reception of the Eucharist in Twentieth Century Non-roman Churches and Religious Communities" (1970). *Master of Sacred Theology Thesis*. 430.

<https://scholar.csl.edu/stm/430>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master of Sacred Theology Thesis by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

85122

MS
127

**FACTORS AFFECTING FREQUENCY OF CELEBRATION AND RECEPTION
OF THE EUCHARIST IN TWENTIETH CENTURY NON-ROMAN
CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

Page

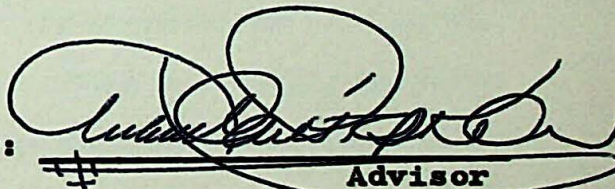
A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Systematic Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

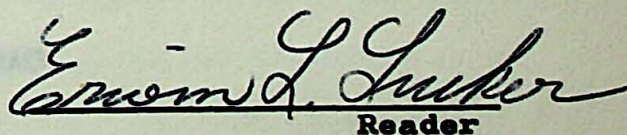
by

Paul Clarence Dorn

September 1970

Approved by:


Advisor


Reader

ARCH
BV
4070
C69
M3
1971
no.17

89422

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. EARLY CHRISTIAN AND MEDIEVAL CELEBRATION AND RECEPTION	4
III. REFORMATION PRACTICES ON CELEBRATION AND RECEPTION	38
IV. THE LATER SIXTEENTH CENTURY THROUGH THE ERA OF RATIONALISM	54
V. PRESENT-DAY PRACTICES	66
VI. CONCLUSIONS	89
BIBLIOGRAPHY	94

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In general, the problem under consideration is to determine what factors affect the frequency of both celebration and reception of the eucharist in twentieth-century Christendom, more specifically in non-Roman communities. Implied behind this quest is the assumption that frequency or infrequency can have both good and bad effects on the religious life of the people. The theological reasons for advocating a frequent celebration and participation must be stated if one is to propose any sort of recommendation to the laity of the church for their spiritual growth and welfare. It is highly useful to know the extent of lay reaction through the centuries to the theological emphases given in the past with respect to the eucharist. Theologians of all ages have made unfortunate statements that have given the laity reason to fear a frequent reception as well as a frequent celebration. The more one is aware of the reaction of people in the history of the church to eucharistic theology, the more one can deal effectively with the laity in feeding them with the Word of Life. This naturally assumes that a frequent participation in the eucharist is for the benefit, not the detriment, of a Christian.

The limitation of this study to non-Roman churches does not imply that all other bodies will be studied, but

only the churches and religious communities that celebrate a weekly eucharist. Included in the limitation is a restriction of the subject matter to frequency and related factors involved in it. There is no attempt to discuss other matters such as the presence of the body and blood of Christ or transubstantiation.

The study traces the practice of the Christian church from the time of the New Testament to the present day in relation to the matter of frequency of reception and celebration. The assumption is that a study of earlier eucharistic practices will give a better perspective to the study of present-day churches and religious communities.

Up to the present time there has been no study as inclusive as this one with regard to all of the non-Roman churches. Partial studies have been made which have been concentrated only on certain eras or churches within Christendom today. Peter Browe, a German Jesuit scholar, has worked in the area of the Middle Ages. Theodore Tappert, a Lutheran historian, has given a somewhat sketchy review of the early and medieval church and Lutheranism. Within other studies one finds traces of frequency examined. A few other works which leave many questions unanswered have not been satisfactory enough to warrant their practical use.

Some of the major sources used in this study were the Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, the Patrologia Graeca and the Patrologia Latina edited by J. P.

Migne, Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch--Lutherischen Kirche edited by Hans Lietzmann, the Weimarer Ausgabe of Luther's collected works, and the Corpus Reformatorum.

The method of study is mostly chronological through the fifth chapter. The sixth chapter is denominational. The findings show that frequency of participation tends to increase as frequency of celebration increases as long as canonical and customary barriers are not imposed on those who intend to communicate.

CHAPTER II

EARLY CHRISTIAN AND MEDIEVAL CELEBRATION AND RECEPTION

The New Testament Period

The New Testament provides no clear information about the frequency with which the very early church celebrated the eucharist.¹

The Early Church through the Fifth Century

Ignatius of Antioch (circum 30-110) enjoins frequent "giving thanks to God" (Εὐχαριστίαν Θεοῦ):

Take heed, then often to come together to give thanks to God and show forth his praise. For when you

¹References are often made to Acts 2:42 and 46 as well as to Acts 20:7 as "proof" of the existence of a frequent eucharist in the early church. These passages speak only of a meal but say nothing of the eucharist as understood by St. Paul and the synoptic writers. See Hans Lietzmann, Mass and the Lord's Supper, translated from the German by Dorothea H. G. Reeve (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1953--), pp. 170-171 and 185. Oscar Cullmann, "The Meaning of the Lord's Supper in Primitive Christianity," in Essays on the Lord's Supper, translated from the French by J. G. Davies (Plymouth, England: Latimer, Trend and Co., c.1958). The word εὐχαριστία in 1 Cor. 11:17-34 says nothing of the frequency of celebration. See George Arthur Buttrick, The Interpreter's Bible, exegesis by G. H. C. MacGregor (New York: Abingdon Cokesbury Press, c.1954), IX, 50-52 and 267. Gerhard Delling, a German exegete, seems to think that the "breaking of bread" would normally be considered as the Lord's Supper. However, he does not discuss its frequency. Gerhard Delling, Worship in the New Testament, translated from the German by Percy Scott (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, c.1962), pp. 135-155.

assemble frequently in the same place, the powers of Satan are destroyed, and the destruction at which he aims is prevented by the unity of your faith.²

It is possible that *εὐχαριστίαν Θεοῦ* here means "to celebrate God's eucharist."

Pliny the Younger, Legate of Bithynia (111-113), had arrested and examined some Christians. He found that they were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before dawn (stato die ante lucem) and of singing in verses a song to Christ their God. Then they bound themselves by a sacred oath not to do any wrong. They dispersed and assembled again at a later hour for a harmless meal.³ This may be a reference to the eucharist.

The Didache may refer to a celebration every Sunday among the early Christians of its time and place, probably Syria in the first half of the second century:

²Ignatius, "Epistle to the Ephesians," chap. 13, edited by J. P. Migne, Patrologia Graeca (Paris: n.p., 1844), V, 656 A. Translation from Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, editors, The Ante--Nicene Fathers (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1896), I, 55. Hereafter Migne's edition will be referred to as MPG and the corresponding Patrologia Latina as MPL.

There is the possibility at the time of Ignatius that the Docetists practiced non-communicating attendance, although this is uncertain. "They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they confess not the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father, of His goodness, raised up again." Ignatius, "Epistle to the Smyrnaeans," chap. 7, MPG, V, 713 A. Translation from Roberts and Donaldson, I, 89.

³Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus, Epistulae in Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum, edited by C. F. W. Mueller (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1903), p. 292.

Every Lord's day, gather yourselves together, and break bread and give thanksgiving, after having confessed your transgressions, so that your sacrifice may be pure.⁴

Justin Martyr (circum 100-166) of Rome is the earliest author who declares explicitly that in his day and community the church celebrated the eucharist every Sunday. Apparently all participated. Those who were absent received a portion of the eucharist that the deacons brought to them.

And on the day called Sunday [*τῆ τοῦ ἡλίου λεγομένη ἡμέρα*], all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons.⁵

He identifies the above as the eucharist when he says earlier,

⁴Didache, xiv, 1. Francis Xavier Funk, editor, Doctrina duodecim apostolorum (Tübingen: Henricus Laupp, 1887), p. 42. Translation from Roberts and Donaldson, VII, 381. This passage has been exegetically debated as to its use for the eucharist. See Theodor Schermann in "Das 'Brotbrechen' im Urchristentum," part II, in Biblische Zeitschrift (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1910), VIII, 162. Frederick Ercole Vokes, The Riddle of the Didache (London: SPCK, 1938), pp. 197-207.

⁵Justin Martyr, Apology, i, 67. MPG, VI, 429. Translation from Roberts and Donaldson, I, 186.

And this food is called among us *Εὐχαριστία* [the eucharist], of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined.⁶

There is indication that by the time of Tertullian (circum 160-230) the church at Carthage was celebrating the eucharist at least on Wednesday and Friday as well as on Sunday and possibly on other days of the week also. Wednesdays and Fridays were designated as "watching days" on which Christians were to take up their respective "stations" as soldiers and watch and pray. They were also to fast. Rigorists among them felt that such fasting included abstaining also from the sacred species on those days. Tertullian's advice to these people was that they should take the consecrated species with them to their homes, and when their fasting was completed, they would then be able to partake by themselves.⁷ Apparently the reasoning was that if the species could be taken to the ill, it could also be reserved for those fasting.

It appears that some Christians were in the habit of partaking of the reserved species in their own homes before

⁶ *Ibid.*, i, 66. *MPG*, VI, 428. Translation from Roberts and Donaldson, I, 185.

⁷ Tertullian, "Liber de Oratione," *MPL*, I, 1286-1288. "Accepto corpore Domini, et reservato, utrumque salvum est, et executio officii."

eating their regular meals. In his advice to a Christian woman not to marry a pagan, Tertullian says:

Will not your husband know what it is you take in secret before eating any other food? If he recognizes it as bread, will he not believe it to be what it is rumored to be [food dipped in a murdered baby's blood]? Even if he has not heard these rumors, will he be so ingenuous as to accept the explanation which you give, without protest, without wondering whether it is really bread and not some magic charm?⁸

Cyprian (circum 200-258) also seems to imply the practice of daily reception of the eucharist in North Africa. In his commentary on the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer, he says:

Moreover, we ask that this bread be given daily, lest we, who are in Christ and receive the Eucharist daily as food of salvation, with the intervention of some more grievous sin, while we are shut off and as non-communicants are kept from the heavenly bread, be separated from the body of Christ as He Himself declares, saying: 'I am the bread of life which came down from heaven. If any man eat of my bread he shall live forever. Moreover, the bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world.' Since then He says that, if anyone eats of His bread, he lives forever, as it is manifest that they live who attain to His body and receive the Eucharist by right of communion, so on the other hand we must fear and pray lest anyone, while he is cut off and separated from the body of Christ, remain apart from salvation, as He Himself threatens, saying: 'Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you.' And so we petition that our bread, that is Christ, be given us daily, so that we, who

⁸Tertullian, "Ad Uxorem," book 2, chap. V. Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna: Academia Litterarum Caesarea, 1882), LXX, 118. Hereafter this work will be referred to as CSEL. MPL, I, 1296. Translation from W. J. Sparrow Simpson, Non-Communicating Attendance (London: Longmans, Green and Co., c.1913), p. 19.

abide and live in Christ, may not withdraw from His sanctification and body.⁹

Cyprian considers the threat against the Christians in Thibaris (modern Thibar) so great as to warrant a daily reception of the eucharist.

A severer and fiercer combat is now threatening for which, with an incorrupt faith and robust courage, the soldiers of Christ ought to prepare themselves, considering, therefore, that they daily drink the chalice of the Blood of Christ so that they themselves may also be able to shed their blood for Christ.¹⁰

At the time of Cyprian we also find one of the first indications that infant communion was practiced. He mentions the giving of the eucharist to an infant not yet old enough to speak.¹¹

The determination if one is to communicate appears to be left to the conscience of the individual. Clement of Alexandria around 200 A. D. mentions that:

Some in the dispensation of the Eucharist, according to custom, enjoin that each one of the people individually should take his part. One's own conscience is best for choosing accurately or shunning.¹²

⁹Cyprian, "The Lord's Prayer," chap. 18. CSEL, III, i, 280. Translation from Roy Joseph Deferrari, translator and editor, The Fathers of the Church (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947-), XXXVI, 142-143.

¹⁰Cyprian, "Epistle to the Thibarians," chap. 1. CSEL, III, ii, 657. Translation from Deferrari, LI, 163.

¹¹Cyprian, "De Lapsis," chaps. 25-26. CSEL, III, i, 255-256.

¹²Clement, "Miscellanies," book I, edited by Henri de Lubac and Jean Daniélou, Sources Chrétiennes (Paris: Editions

The Apostolic Tradition ascribed to Hippolytus (circum 160-235) tells the Alexandrian Christians:

But let each of the faithful be zealous, before he eats anything else, to receive the eucharist . . . let each one take care that no unbeliever taste the eucharist, nor a mouse, nor any other animal, and that nothing of it fall or be lost . . .

A token cup of wine which was blessed by the communicant himself was directed to be imbibed after receiving the holy species.¹³ This would seem to indicate a daily reception of the eucharist. It would not affirm a daily celebration since we have seen that the consecrated species was taken by the Christians to their homes.

In Asia around 250 A. D., under Gregory Thaumaturgus (213-270) of New Caesarea, a system of receiving penitents back into the church evolved in which there were four types of penitents: the mourners (flentes), the hearers (audientes), the prostrate (substrati), and finally the costanders (consistentes). From start to finish it took a period of up to twelve years to be reinstated, up to three years for every stage. It was the last-named group, the costanders, who were allowed to be present while the eucharist was

du Cerf, 1951), XXX, 47. Translation from Roberts and Donaldson, II, 300.

¹³Hippolytus, "Apostolic Tradition," xxxii, 1-4. Lubac and Daniélou, XI, 118 and 120. Translated by Burton Scott Easton, The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (Ann Arbor: Cushing--Malloy, Inc., 1962 reprint from Cambridge: University Press, c.1934), p. 60.

celebrated and distributed. However, they were not allowed to communicate with the faithful until their term of penance was finished.¹⁴ This penitential system provided the church with the first instance where it formally allowed some present not to communicate. This was apparently contrary to the practice followed by earlier Christians during the time of Justin Martyr, where all present participated in the reception.¹⁵

The custom of receiving the eucharist daily did not become universal. Thus the Life of Epictetus, Presbyter (died 290) records an instance where its subject prescribed communion for a girl he healed. She should receive it once a week together with her family.¹⁶

In the Apostolic Constitutions, an ancient liturgy used extensively in Syria and Egypt before 400 A. D., there are specific instructions as to who was dismissed before the actual eucharistic celebration. It was celebrated every Lord's day and all the faithful were expected to receive it. Those who did not intend to communicate were to depart.¹⁷ The order of those participating was as follows:

¹⁴Gregory Thaumaturgus, "XI Canons," Giovanni Domenico Mansi, Collectio sacrorum conciliorum (Paris: Hubert, 1901-1927), I, 1024-2025 and 1028-1029.

¹⁵Supra, p. 6.

¹⁶MPL, LXXIII, 394.

¹⁷P. A. deLagarde, editor, Constitutiones Apostolorum (London: Williams and Norgate, 1862), ii, 25, 50-53.

After that let the bishop partake, then the presbyters and deacons and sub-deacons, and the readers and the singers and the ascetics; and then of [sic!] the women, the deaconesses, and the virgins and the widows; then the children; and then all the people in order.¹⁸

The Council of Antioch (341) enacted the following canon (II):

All who enter into the Church of God and hear the sacred Scriptures but do not communicate in prayer with the people, or turn away from the participation of the Eucharist through some disorderliness, these are to be cast out of the Church.¹⁹

This canon shows that some Christians attended the mass without communicating. It is possible that the penitential system of a century earlier was already affecting certain people who considered themselves as temporary costanders because of certain sins they had committed in secret. At first glance this canon would appear to force all present to communicate. The Apostolic Canons seem to make allowance for those who have a valid reason for not participating.

The eighth regulates the practice of the clergy:

If any one, bishop, priest or deacon, or on the roll of the clergy, shall not have communicated when the oblation was made, let him explain the reason, and if it is commendable, let him be excused. But if he do not explain, let him be suspended from Communion, as one who becomes a cause of mischief to the people, and

¹⁸Ibid., viii, 13, 260. Translation from Roberts and Donaldson, VII, 490.

¹⁹Mansi, II, 1310. Translation from Simpson, p. 83.

who has raised suspicion against him who offered, as not having offered in the lawful way.²⁰

The ninth canon regulates the practice of the laity:

All the faithful who enter and hear the Scriptures, but do not remain for the prayer and the Holy Communion, ought to be suspended as causing disorderliness in the Church.²¹

Whatever the intent of these canons may have been, they were not wholly successful in achieving it. They had authority in the East and were circulated in the West, but they did not prevent a non-communicating attendance at the eucharist.

Apparently the practice of infrequent communion existed in the fourth century among some Western Christians. Pseudo-Ambrose says:

If it is daily bread, why do you receive it once a year as the Greeks in the East are accustomed to do? Receive daily that which daily can profit you. So live that you may deserve to receive every day. He who does not deserve to receive daily does not deserve to receive once a year. Did not Job offer a daily sacrifice for his sons, in case they had sinned either in thought or speech? And you hear that as often as the Sacrifice is offered, the Lord's Death, the Lord's Resurrection, the Lord's exaltation are declared, and the forgiveness of sins. This Bread of life, then, do you not receive daily? He who is wounded requires to be healed. We are wounded, for we are under sin. The healing is that heavenly and adorable Sacrament.²²

²⁰The Apostolic Canons, viii. Herman Theodore Bruns, editor, Apostolic Canons (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1889), p. 2. Translation from Simpson, pp. 83-84.

²¹Ibid.

²²Pseudo-Ambrose, "De Sacramentis," V, iv, 25. CSEL, LXXIII, 68-69. Translation from Simpson, p. 101. The

Commenting on the words, "As often as we receive we announce the Lord's death," the writer says:

If we announce the Death, we announce the forgiveness of sins. If as often as this Blood is poured forth it is poured for the remission of sins, I ought to receive it always, that my sins may be always forgiven. I who always sin ought always to receive the medicine for sin.²³

In the late fourth century, the Church at Caesarea was concerned because the faithful partook of the eucharist in their own homes. Typical is the response that Basil the Great (circum 330-379) makes to the question that the church at Caesarea put to him in 372:

As to the question concerning a person being compelled to receive Communion by his own hand in times of persecution, when there is no priest or minister present, it is superfluous to show that the act is in no way offensive, since long-continued custom has confirmed this practice because of the circumstances themselves. In fact, all the monks in the solitudes, where there is no priest, preserve Communion in their house and receive it from their own hands. In Alexandria and in Egypt, each person, even of those belonging to the laity, has Communion in his own home, and, when he wishes, he receives with his own hand. For, when the priest has once and for all completed the sacrifice and has given Communion, he who has once received it as a whole, when he partakes of it daily, ought reasonably to believe that he is partaking and receiving from him who has

author's description of Eastern practice in this passage needs correction. See, for instance, the statements of Theodore of Canterbury in the seventh century (infra, p. 25).

²³Pseudo-Ambrose, IV, vi, 28. CSEL, LXXIII, 57-58. Translation from Simpson, p. 101. The Lutheran Symbols give an exact citation of this passage in support of frequent reception in the Augsburg Confession, XXIV, 33. See Hans Lietzmann, editor, Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch--Lutherischen Kirche (6th edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1967), p. 94.

given it. Even in the church the priest gives the particle, and the recipient holds it completely in his power and so brings it into his mouth with his own hand. Accordingly, it is virtually the same whether he receives one particle from the priest or many particles at one time.²⁴

Elsewhere, Basil says:

We ourselves, of course, receive Communion four times a week, on Sundays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays; also on other days if there is a commemoration of some saint.²⁵

Timothy of Alexandria (381-385) allowed the insane to take communion if they did not carry on blasphemous conversation, but only on designated days.²⁶ This seems to imply that the others received the eucharist more frequently.

Epiphanius of Salamis (310-403) stressed the importance of the eucharistic celebration three times a week and traced the practice back to the time of the Apostles.²⁷

Chrysostom (circum 344-407) seems to uphold the practice of a frequent reception:

What a custom! What a presumption! In vain is the sacrifice made every day; in vain do we stand at the altar! There is none to partake. I say this, not that you should partake rashly, but that you should make yourselves worthy. Are you unworthy of the Sacrifice, and

²⁴Basil, "Letter to Caesarea about Communion" (No. 93). MPG, XXXII, 484-485. Translation from the Greek by Agnes Clare Way in Deferrari, XIII, 208-209.

²⁵Basil, MPG, XXXII, 483. Translation by Agnes Clare Way in Deferrari, XIII, 208.

²⁶Timothy of Alexandria, "Hebrews," Homily XVII, 3. MPG, CXXXVIII, 891.

²⁷MPG, XLII, 825.

unfit to partake of it? Neither then are you worthy of the prayers. You hear the herald standing and proclaiming, "All ye that are penitents, withdraw." All those who do not partake are penitents. If you are one of the penitents, you ought not to partake, for he that does not partake is one of the penitents. Why, then, does he say, "Ye who cannot pray, withdraw," and you impudently stay? But, I suppose, you are not one of those, but one who is able to partake, and you do not reflect? You do not weigh the matter? Consider, I pray. The royal table is prepared, the angels minister round the table, the King Himself is present, and do you stand gaping? Your garments are defiled, and do you care not? But, you will say, they are clean. Then sit down, and partake. The King comes daily to see His guests, and converses with them all. And now in your consciences He says, "Friends, why stand ye here, not having a wedding garment?" He did not say, "Why have you sat down?" but before he sat down, He pronounces him unworthy so much as to come in. For He did not say, "Why have you sat down?" but "Why did you come in?" The same now He says to all of us that stand here impudently and shamelessly. For every one that does not partake of the mysteries, stands shameless and impudent. For this reason they that are in sin are first cast out. For just as, when the master is present at table, those slaves who have offended him must not be present, but are sent away, in the same manner here, when the sacrifice is performed, and Christ the Lamb of God is offered up, when you hear the words, "Let us all pray together," when you see the doors closed, think, then, that heaven is drawn down from above, and that the angels come down. As, therefore, none of the uninitiated ought to be present, so also none of those that are initiated, if they be defiled. Tell me, if one invited to a feast washes his hands and sits down, and is ready for the feast, and then partakes not of it, does he not insult him who invited him? Were it not better that such a man had not come at all? In such a manner you, too, have come. You sang the hymn, you professed in the face of all that you are worthy when you did not depart with the unworthy. Why did you stay, and yet do not partake of the table? One says, "I am unworthy."²⁸ Then you are unworthy also of the communion in prayer.

²⁸ Chrysostom, "Epistle to the Ephesians," Homily III, 4 and 5. MPG, LXII, 29-30. Translation from Simpson, pp. 107-108.

Elsewhere he displays his annoyance toward those who leave the service before the eucharist.

Will you have me point out from what source this disturbance springs? It is because we do not close the doors against you, but allow you to leave the church before the final thanksgiving. This conduct shows disrespect. What is it you are doing, O men? Christ is present, the Angels gather round, the table is prepared, and you abandon it and depart. Yet you are called to the feast. You would not venture to act so among your friends. Will you have me tell you whose example they follow who withdraw before the thanksgiving? Judas!²⁹

In another address, however, he neither condemns nor approves any stipulated frequency:

Many partake of this Sacrifice only once in the year, others twice, others more frequently. These words, therefore, are profitable to all, even to those who dwell in the desert. For they communicate only once in the year, and often only once in two years. Which of these shall we approve? Neither those who communicate only once a year nor those who communicate often, but those who communicate worthily with clear conscience, pure heart, and blameless life. They who are such, let them always approach; they who are not such, not even once: why? Because they bring upon themselves judgment and condemnation and punishment.³⁰

Jerome, one of Augustine's contemporaries (340-420) indicates that in Rome the practice was, in contrast to other churches, to have a daily reception of the eucharist. He also takes the attitude that frequency of reception is in the area of freedom of choice.³¹ A correspondent asked him

²⁹Chrysostom, "Extracts," Homily 47. MPG, LXIII, 897. Translation from Simpson, pp. 116-117.

³⁰Chrysostom, "Epistle to the Hebrews," Homily 17, 4. MPG, LXIII, 131. Translation from Simpson, p. 113.

³¹Jerome, "Letter 71 to Lucinius," par. 6, CSEL, LV, 6; MPL, XXII, 672.

if one should receive the eucharist daily as the people did in Rome and Spain. Jerome replied:

The best advice that I can give you is this: Church traditions, especially when they do not run counter to the faith, are to be observed in the form in which previous generations have handed them down; and the use of one Church is not to be annulled because it is contrary to that of another.³²

By the time of Augustine (354-430) the people in some places received the communion with varied frequency and on varied days:

some receive daily the Body and Blood of the Lord, others receive it on certain days; in some places no day is omitted in the offering of the Holy Sacrifice, in others it is offered only on Saturday and Sunday, or even only on Sunday . . .

Augustine remarks that these practices are all a matter of freedom and the frequency of reception should be left up to the individual.³³ At the same time he seems to be very much disturbed in one of his sermons that so few people desire the eucharist and he asks them why they do not come forward to the meal prepared for them.³⁴

³²Ibid. Translation from Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, editors, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), VI, 154.

³³Augustine, "Letter 54 to the Inquiries of Januarius," chap. 2. CSEL, XXXIV, 160. MPL, XXXIII, 200. Translation by Wilfrid Parsons in Deferrari, XII, i, 253.

³⁴Augustine, "Sermo 132," par. 1. MPL, XXXVIII, 735.

Augustine was in favor of infant communion and based the practice on the text, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you."³⁵

He was also aware of the dangers of abuse of the sacred species as they were borne home by the Christians of his day when he mentions the case of a poultice made from the eucharist.³⁶ Archdale King, a contemporary British Roman Catholic scholar, shows to what extent the eucharistic species were used as charms for journeys and to what magical abuse it had fallen.³⁷ Reservation of the eucharist in private homes may have survived as late as the time of Hormisdas of Rome (514-523).³⁸

Concerning evidence of infant communion, Innocent I of Rome (402-417), in a letter addressed to a Synod of Bishops in Africa in 417 A. D., rejects the Pelagian theory that infant Baptism is unnecessary and says, "Except they eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, they will have no life in them."³⁹

³⁵ Augustine, De peccatorum meritis et remissione, i, 27-28. CSEL, LX, 26-27.

³⁶ Augustine, Opus imperfectum contra Julianum, iii, 162. MPL, XLV, 1315.

³⁷ Archdale Arthur King, Eucharistic Reservation in the Western Church (London: A. R. Mowbray and Co., c.1965), pp. 22-25.

³⁸ This is the opinion of Caesar Baronius, Annales ecclesiastici (Rome: Typographia Vaticana, 1587), I, 473.

³⁹ Augustine, "Epistle 182," par. 5. CSEL, XLIV, 720.

On the part of the faithful a lack of desire for the eucharist becomes increasingly obvious by the middle of the fifth century. Salvian of Marseilles, for instance, complained that the Christians were no longer interested in coming to the eucharist, but strayed away to amusements while they left the Body of Christ on the altar unused.⁴⁰ In the early sixth century, the Synod of Agde in France fixed the minimum of reception for lay people at three times a year.⁴¹

One of the letters (458) of Leo the Great of Rome recommends that children taken captive in war and parted from their parents at a tender age should be asked whether they received what was given to their parents in the eucharist, and if they cannot remember, they should be baptized.⁴²

Although the life of Melanie (died 439) indicates that it was the custom in Rome for some Christians to communicate daily,⁴³ Leo the Great (440-461) indicates in one of his

⁴⁰Salvian, De gubernatione Dei, vi, 7, 38. CSEL, VIII, 135. MPL, LV, 116.

⁴¹"Canon 63," Mansi, VIII, 335. Caesarius of Arles, who presided over the Synod of Agde (506) in a number of sermons emphasizes the offering of the Mass, not its reception. Appendix to Augustine's Sermons, Sermons 173, 281, 292. MPL, XXXIX, 2076-2078, 2276-2278, 2297-2301.

⁴²Leo, "Epistle 167," MPL, LIV, 1208-1209.

⁴³Carolus de Smedt, Gulielmus van Hooff, Josephus de Backer, and other editors, Analecta Bolländiana (Paris: Société Générale de Librairie Catholique, 1882-), VIII (1889), 57, 32, cited by Peter Browe, Die häufige Communion im

sermons that many other Christians in Rome received the sacrament infrequently.⁴⁴

There are varied explanations given for the decline in the frequency of reception of the eucharist through the fifth century. Peter Browe, a contemporary German Jesuit scholar, accounts for the decline in the frequency of reception by saying that the barbarians who invaded the Roman Empire were never really converted to a solid type of Christianity. He also sees a further factor in the separation of the offerings from the reception of the eucharist.⁴⁵

W. J. Sparrow Simpson (died 1952), an Anglo-catholic scholar, lays the blame for non-communicating attendance on some of the monarchs of the Empire who often set poor examples for the people in matters of faith. The people who were politically orientated fell into the same pattern. Another problem arose when vast crowds of barbarians overwhelmed the church by storm. The best solution was to give them permission for non-communicating attendance.⁴⁶

Jacob Andreas Jungman, another contemporary German Jesuit liturgiologist, relates the decline in the frequency

Mittelalter (Münster: Regensberg'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1938), p. 7.

⁴⁴Leo, "Sermo 42," par. 1. MPL, LIV, 275.

⁴⁵Browe, pp. 133-137.

⁴⁶Simpson, pp. 121-122.

of the eucharist to the intense fear injected by extreme anti-Arianism:

It is worth noting, in particular, how fear was stressed at this time with regard to the Eucharist; "the terrible Sacrifice"; "the fearful table"; "the hour of terror" are all expressions which appear in Chrysostom, but which were known already to Basil, and which later in their strongest forms became characteristic of those liturgies belonging to a Monophysite, that is, to an extreme anti-Arian, milieu.⁴⁷

He concludes:

In the concept of the Church, the foreground was no longer, as in earlier times, the communion of the redeemed bound together with a glorious Christ in one Mystical Body. In Spain and France the fight against Arianism had caused the thought of the glorified God-man, mediator and high-priest, to be brushed aside in favor of a stronger accentuation of His divine prerogative. One necessarily became more clearly aware of the external earthly Church, its hierarchical structure of clergy and laity. The social position of the clergy--who were far and wide the governing class in society and practically alone in possession of a higher education--contributed no little to estranging them, lifting them above the people.⁴⁸

Arthur Vööbus, an Esthonian-born Lutheran church historian, shares this opinion and adds:

The terminology [Theodore of Mopsuestia] uses manifests the extent of the implications of the development in the practice of the Eucharist. In giving his instructions, Theodore does his best to instill fear in his people. He depicts the eucharistic sacrifice not as a source of joy, but of dread and terror reminiscent of

⁴⁷Jacob Andreas Jungmann, Pastoral Liturgy, translated from the German (New York: Herder and Herder, c.1962), pp. 12-13.

⁴⁸Jacob Andreas Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development, translated from the German by Francis A. Brunner (New York: Benziger Brothers, Inc., c.1951), I, 82.

the attitude of primitive peoples toward sacred objects. His reflections have one purpose--to bring his trembling faithful to realization that the mystery of the sacrifice is an awe-inspiring experience that generates horror and strikes terror in believers. As the consecration of the sacrament is a terrifying event, so also must the Communion be an experience of "limitless fear." This must find its manifestation, and the new eucharistic piety invents its new forms. Theodore tells us the communicants have to express their fear in proper manners and respective gestures. They must stand with their eyes cast down, their heads bowed, and their hands stretched out so that the right hand, palm upwards and fingers close together, is resting upon the left. Before they are allowed to put the element into the mouth they have to sign their eyes and other senses with the holy bread, the deepest form of adoration of the consecrated bread. Theodore reminds them again and again that all this has to take place in a terrifying and awe-inspiring atmosphere. The slaves approach the King!⁴⁹

The Medieval Period

In the mass of the church in Rome, which exerted great influence on the rites elsewhere in the West, simplicity increasingly gave way to complexity. This was particularly true in the fifth century, with its Gothic threat and

⁴⁹ Arthur Vööbus, "The Eucharist in the Ancient Church," in Helmut T. Lehmann, editor, Meaning and Practice of the Lord's Supper (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1961), p. 69. Theodore Tappert, another Lutheran church historian, makes the apodictic observation in this connection: "Besides, further development of the earlier tendency to make of the Lord's Supper a cultic act in which the particular words which a priest spoke over the elements were supposed to transmute them must likewise have contributed to the decline. Not that the decline was uniform, for custom varied." "History and the Frequency of Communion," The Lutheran Quarterly, XI (November 1959), 288.

Lombard invasion.⁵⁰ The practice of stational services began with people from every quarter of Rome attending.⁵¹

Increasing non-communicating attendance gave cause for some embarrassment at times. Gregory of Tours (died 595) writes of a wealthy woman who offered the oblation every day for an entire year in the Church of St. Mary for the repose of her husband's soul. She purchased the costliest wine for this purpose, but a thievish deacon took the wine for his own use and substituted a very sour vinegar. The woman did not communicate and the fraud was not discovered. In a dream the widow was warned about the fraud. Finally she communicated and the fraud was revealed.⁵²

At Constantinople in the sixth century, the historian Evagrius reports:

It is an old custom in the imperial city, that when there remains over a considerable quantity of the holy fragments of the immaculate Body of Christ our God, boys of tender age should be fetched from among those who attend the schools to eat them.⁵³

This practice may suggest that non-communicating attendance was common.

⁵⁰Jungmann, Mass of the Roman Rite, I, 57-59.

⁵¹Ibid., I, 59.

⁵²Gregory of Tours, Liber de gloria confessorum. MPL, LXXI, 875-876. "Muliere non semper a communicandi gratiam accedente."

⁵³Evagrius, Historia Ecclesiastica, iv, 36. MPG, LXXXVI, ii, 2769. Translation from Simpson, p. 117.

Eusebius of Alexandria (seventh century?) says:

If conscious that your mind is pure, draw near to the reception of the Lord's Body and Blood. But if your conscience condemn you for unadvised and evil deeds, refrain from reception, until you have healed your conscience by penitence, but assist at the prayer, and do not depart from the Church until dismissed.⁵⁴

Theodore, the second Archbishop of Canterbury (668-690), who had lived in Rome, describes the situation in his day:

The Greeks communicate every Sunday, both clergy and laity; and those who do not communicate for three Sundays are excommunicated, as the Canons have it. So, too, the Romans communicate, if they please; but those who do not choose to do so are not excommunicated.⁵⁵

By the seventh century the development of the sanctuary, apse, cathedra, and a courtly processional had taken place. The schola cantorum increasingly replaced the singing of all the people.⁵⁶

In France during the eighth century, both the design of the eucharistic vessels and the ceremonial tended to make the eucharist something remote and alien:

there is a transformation in the paten hitherto in use. Some sort of large platter-like dish had been required for breaking the Bread into, and for distributing it. But now that type falls out of use and instead the paten becomes a tiny plate fitting over the cup of the chalice and used for the priest's host alone, while for the particles intended for the Communion of the

⁵⁴Eusebius of Alexandria, "Sermo 16," MPG, LXXXVI, i, 416. Translation from Simpson, p. 107.

⁵⁵Theodore, "Penitential--Other Collected Chapters from Fragments," xii. MPL, XCIX, 955. Translation from Simpson, p. 99.

⁵⁶Jungmann, Mass of the Roman Rite, I, 67-83.

faithful the container employed is a chalice-like ciborium. In the manner of distributing Communion, opportunities arise for giving in to the desire for a more reverent handling. The particles are no longer handed to the faithful (the particles are hardly suited to this), but are laid at once on the tongue, a thing more difficult in the case of the brittle [spröderen, fragil] pieces of leavened bread. The next step--which, however, took quite a long time--was for the faithful to receive kneeling. And this, in turn, had a final effect on the church building: the low communion rail was introduced, a feature of which ancient church architecture knew nothing.⁵⁷

In the eighth and ninth century the slow change to unleavened bread took place. Alcuin (735-804) and his pupil Rabanus Maurus (?776-856) are the first clear witnesses to this new practice. Increased reverence for the species helped to introduce the use of these pure white wafers. The advantage was that they could be broken more easily without concern about crumbs.⁵⁸

Jungmann summarizes the general trend of the early Middle Ages:

The Mass becomes all the more the mystery of God's coming to man, a mystery one must adoringly wonder at and contemplate from afar. The approach to the Holy Table of the Lord in Communion is no longer the rule

⁵⁷Ibid., I, 85. See Josef [same as Jacob] Andreas Jungmann, Missarum Sollemnia (Vienna: Herder, c.1949), I, 108-109. Worry over the crumbs was already evident in Great Britain in the sixth century. A canon of Gildas (died 570) decrees that "if anyone by negligence let fall and lose a sacrifice, leaving it to be devoured by birds or beasts," he incurs a penance of three quarantines or Lents. Thomas Edward Bridgett, History of the Holy Eucharist in Great Britain (London: C. Kegan Paul, 1881), I, 22-23.

⁵⁸Jungmann, Mass of the Roman Rite, I, 84.

even on feast days; already the Eucharist had not been our daily bread for a long time.⁵⁹

As the proportion of non-communicating worshippers increased a special order became necessary for the early dismissal of those who did not remain until the final blessing.⁶⁰

This period also saw the multiplication of private masses, although occasional domestic celebrations with only a few communicants present go back as far as the second century. By the time of the ninth century, the celebration of the Mass without a congregation was wide-spread.⁶¹

The ninth century is the time in which the celebration of Mass takes on an increase. Many celebrate two or three times a day, and the report is circulated--as an encouragement and comfort--that Pope Leo III [795--816] occasionally offered the sacrifice seven and nine times in a day The appropriation of the sacrifice to the diverse concerns of the faithful had really aroused the desire of the faithful and so led to a multiplication of the celebration altars started to increase in number.⁶²

Among those who resisted the demand for daily private celebrations by each priest was Francis of Assisi (1182-1226),

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid., I, 235. As late as the ninth century non-communicating attendance was not officially allowed, according to De officiis septem graduum, "Exorcistam oportet abicere demones et dicere populo qui non communicat det[de L(?)] locum et aquam ministerii effundere." Roger E. Reynolds, "A Florilegium on the Ecclesiastical Grades in CLM 19414: The Testimony to Ninth-Century Clerical Instruction," Harvard Theological Review, LXIII, ii (April 1970), 252.

⁶¹Jungmann, Mass of the Roman Rite, I, 213-215.

⁶²Ibid., I, 221-222.

who encouraged ordained friars to participate in a single common daily mass for the whole community.⁶³

Other factors confirmed the laity in their reluctance to receive the sacrament frequently. With the exception of the Sermon and other minor portions, the Mass was in the Latin tongue. Besides, the majority of the people were illiterate in their own vernacular, so that the use of bilingual missals was impossible for educational as well as economic reasons. Again, in the eleventh century, "the eucharistia has become an epiphania, an advent of God who appears amongst men and dispenses His graces" to those who gather before His altar in an attitude of wondering contemplation.⁶⁴

Even if a person at this time were to consider his own unworthiness, at least he could see the veil under which his Lord lay hidden. This in itself was a sufficient substitute for sacramental communion in the mind of the average

⁶³Ibid., I, 199. See Heinrich Boehmer, Analekten zur Geschichte des Franciscus von Assisi (2nd edition; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1930), p. 40. It is true that the practice of non-communicating attendance at the Mass did not go unchallenged. Thus, for instance, Queen Margaret of Scotland, wife of Malcolm III (1057-1093), King of Scotland, attempted a number of reforms in the church. "One such reform she desired was to increase among the people the practice of communicating regularly and frequently." William Delbert Maxwell, A History of Worship in the Church of Scotland (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 28.

⁶⁴Jungmann, Mass of the Roman Rite, I, 117.

⁶⁵Ibid., I, 120.

layman by the twelfth century. Jungmann shows that the Mass developed a new focal center, attested to by the many Grail legends which sprang up at this time.⁶⁵ He also describes at length practices in which the worshippers engaged in trying to look at the Host during the consecration and elevation.⁶⁶

It was also at this time that the idea of unworthiness of the individual was pondered as an outgrowth of the emphasis on the deity of our Lord. Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274) did not favor a daily reception. He said:

because in most men many hindrances to this devotion often occur through want of the right disposition of body or soul, it is not useful for all men to approach this Sacrament daily, but as often as a man finds himself prepared for it.⁶⁷

In suggesting an appropriate prayer for those who wished to communicate, Thomas gives this as his ideal:

My Lord, who art Thou, and who am I, that I should presume to place Thee in the foul sewer of my body and my soul? What hast Thou done to me that I should inflict this dreadful injury on Thee? A thousand years of tears would not suffice for once worthily receiving so noble a Sacrament. How much more am I unworthy, wretched man, who daily sin, and continue without amendment, and approach in sin. But Thy mercy is

⁶⁵Ibid., I, 120.

⁶⁶Ibid., I, 121.

⁶⁷Thomas Aquinas, "Summa Theologiae," iii, 80, 10. Opera Omnia (Rome: Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 1906), XII, 243. Translation from Darwell Stone, A History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., c.1909), I, 336-337.

infinitely greater than my misery. Therefore, trusting in Thy goodness, I presume to receive Thee.⁶⁸

This prayer implies that a worthy reception of the Sacrament in the sense of not having committed any sin is humanly impossible. It would be a worthy reception only if the communicant had lived a perfect life. Bonaventura's (1221-1274) conception of worthiness, similar to that of Thomas Aquinas, is embodied in the following statement:

If any one were always prepared, it would always be useful for him to receive this Sacrament, since in that case he would have a clean habitation for it, and would eat this food spiritually with honor and devotion. Because in the time of the primitive Church Christians were clean by their baptismal innocence and glowing with love through the gifts of the Spirit, it was right that they should communicate daily. When in many love grew cold and the baptismal purity was lost through sin, it was left to the decision and conscience of each one that he should receive when he saw himself to be rightly disposed, lest otherwise he should eat to his own condemnation. And, because men began to become negligent, it was needful that frequency should again be established by the supreme Pontiff. But, because many communicated frequently without preparing themselves well, Fabian established the custom that men should communicate on the three yearly festivals on which they are better prepared, and which they more eagerly look for, namely Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost (Decret. III, ii, 16). And because as time went on men still prepared themselves carelessly at these three times, this was at last reduced to the easter Communion, which is preceded by the time of preparation, namely, Lent. If, therefore, inquiry is made whether any one ought to communicate frequently, it should be said that, if he see himself to be in the condition of the primitive Church, it is praiseworthy that he communicate daily; if in the condition of the Church as it came to be, that is, cold and sluggish, that he communicate rarely; if he is in a middle state,

⁶⁸Thomas Aquinas, De praeparatione ad missam, 13, cited by Stone, I, 337.

he ought to act in a middle way, and sometimes to abstain so as to learn reverence and sometimes to approach so as to be inflamed with love, because honour and love are due to such a guest; and then he ought to incline in that direction in which he sees that he makes the better progress, which a man learns only by experience.⁶⁹

Perhaps both Thomas' and Bonaventura's statements here reflect more of an explanation of what was happening at their time than of what should have been happening.

Quite logically Thomas discourages infant communion in his commentary on St. John.⁷⁰

The growing cult of the reserved sacrament led to the establishment of Corpus Christi as a feast of the universal church in 1246. The idea of a vicarious communion through the priest seems likewise to have arisen at this period. In a sermon that is ascribed to Otto of Bamberg (circum 1120-1130) and that in any case is earlier than the latter half of the twelfth century, there is an exhortation to communicate frequently, but the author goes on to say,

If you cannot, because you are carnal, partake of this most holy thing yourselves at all Masses, at least partake through your mediator, that is, the priest, who communicates for you, by hearing Mass faithfully and reverently and devoutly. Yet you yourselves, if it

⁶⁹Bonaventura, "Sententiae," IV, dist. XII, para II, art. II, quaestio II, concl. Opera Omnia (Florence: Clara Aqua, 1889), IV, 296. Translation from Stone, I, 337. For the reference to the Decretum, see Aemilius Friedberg, editor, Corpus juris canonici (Graz: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1955), I, 1319.

⁷⁰Thomas Aquinas, "Catena super Joannis evangelium," Opera omnia (Parma: Petrus Fiaccadori, 1862), XII, 336.

cannot be more often, ought to make your confessions and communicate of the Sacrament itself at least three or four times in the year.⁷¹

The priest therefore begins to communicate for all the worshipers present.

While there was a minimum limit of participation in the Eucharist set by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 as being at least once a year,⁷² in some areas there was a maximum limit that discouraged the practice of frequent communion. The Ancren Riwe or Regula Inclusarum for anchoresses, which may have been written for the nuns of Tarrant in Dorset by Richard Poore, who died there in 1237 after serving the Sees of Salisbury and Durham, is such an example:

Men esteem a thing as less dainty when they have it often; and therefore ye should be, as lay brethren are, partakers of the Holy Communion only fifteen times a year And, if anything happens out of the usual order, so that ye may not have received the Sacrament at these set times, ye may make up for it the Sunday next following, or, if the other set time is near, ye may wait til then.⁷³

It is to be remembered that the monastics did have a practice of more frequent reception, but even among them there tends to be a discouragement, evident here, of the practice, despite the very frequent celebrations.

⁷¹Otto of Bamberg, "Sermo ad Pomeranos," MPL, CLXXIII, 1358. Translation from Stone, I, 283.

⁷²Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 (Innocent III), XXI, Omnis utrisque sexus, in Mansi, XXII, 1007-1008.

⁷³James Morton, editor and translator, The Ancren Riwe (London: Nichols and Sons, 1853), p. 413.

The obligation to receive the sacrament thus becomes one of law rather than that of privilege, of terror and mystery rather than that of comfort and joy, of exception rather than of frequency. Even as late as the fifteenth century, John Myrc, canon of Lilleshall in Shropshire, wrote in his Festival Book intended for the lay people,

This Sacrament is every man and woman bound by the law once a year as at Easter, if he be fourteen years of age and have discretion to receive it, when they been with shrift and penance made clean of their sins, and it be for sickness or for some reasonable cause, which cause he must certify his curate of. For he that unworthily receiveth this Sacrament receiveth his damnation.⁷⁴

King describes the various penances inflicted upon those who had unfortunate accidents with the reserved species.⁷⁵

If a piece of the host fell to the ground, Egbert (died 729) imposed a day's fast, and if it were lost, either forty days or three forties, according to the degree of negligence.⁷⁶

Later medieval penalties for sacerdotal carelessness or inadvertence were comparably severe but were on their way to desuetude. A treatise printed around the end of the fifteenth century provides:

⁷⁴John Myrc, "Festival Book," The Lay Folks Mass Book (Early English Text Society), Appendix II, p. 121., cited in Stone, I, 381-382.

⁷⁵King, pp. 24-26.

⁷⁶Arthur West Hadden and William Stubbs, editors, Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1871), III, 428.

If through negligence anything of Christ's blood falls on the [wooden altar] table, let it be licked up and let the table be scraped. Let the scrapings be burned and let the ashes be stored near the altar. Let the priest do penance for forty days. If it falls on the stone of the altar, let the priest swallow the drop and let him do penance for three days. If the drop falls upon a linen cloth and penetrates to a second linen cloth, let the priest do penance for four days. If it penetrates to the third, let him do penance for nine days. If to the fourth, let him do penance for twenty days, as [is required] in the chapter [beginning] Si per negligentiam in distinction ii of [the third part of the Decretum of Gratian,] De consecratione, and in accordance with St. Thomas. Let care be taken that that part of the linen cloth or of the pall be cut off after washing and burned and the ashes stored on the altar. But note that the penances set forth above are now a matter of choice, as in the chapter [beginning] Deus qui [in the section of the Decretum entitled] De poenitentia et remissione.⁷⁷

The concept of worthiness in the minds of the people grew so great that it became something of which a Christian was incapable. It caused the French Reformer, Faber Stapulensis (1455-1536), to remark:

If you were to receive as a guest an earthly king, and your own king too, and should not prepare his dwelling place or take pains to adorn it, but should put him in a mean place . . . would you not appear to despise the royal dignity, and thus to be guilty of treason? . . . But He is more to be revered than all the angels and powers in heaven and hell. Of how great an offence are you guilty, if you do not receive Him with all the

⁷⁷"Si aliqua gutta sanguinis ceciderit," in De defectibus in missa occurrentibus [Seville(?): Paulus de Colonia (?), 1940(?)], p. Aij verso. This volume is in the private library of Professor Arthur Carl Piepkorn, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Its four printed leaves contain three tracts, De defectibus in missa occurrentibus, the Tractatus missa unde exordium sumpsit, and a treatise De representatione vestium sacerdotis celebrantis necnon aliarum rerum ad officium missae pertinentium. The translation is Professor Piepkorn's.

worthiness of which you are capable; for with the worthiness of which He Himself is worthy not heaven or earth nor any creature can receive Him.⁷⁸

Hans Bernhard Meyer, a contemporary Austrian Jesuit liturgical scholar, gives some statistics as to the degree of frequency of participation in the eucharist before the sixteenth century. He shows that outside of the Easter communion, attendance at other occasions was a rare thing. It appears that communion once a year was observed by the vast majority.⁷⁹

In the city of Hilpoltstein, for instance, in the late fifteenth century, out of a population of 1400, only 60 communicated at times other than Easter. In the entire diocese of Eichstätt in 1480, again apart from the Easter communions, no more than 100[?] people communicated during the year.⁸⁰ In the relatively small parish of St. Christopher's, Mainz, 60 communicated on Palm Sunday, 150-160 on Maundy Thursday, 10-12 on Good Friday, 10-20 on Holy Saturday, 150 on Easter, making a total of about 400 who communicated. At this same parish only 60 received at Christmas. In John Eck's parish of Ingolstadt about 2000 communicated at Eastertime, but the

⁷⁸Jacques Lefevre, Epistole divi Pauli apostoli (Paris: Joannes de la Porte, 1517[?], folio 97 verso. Translation from Stone, II, 8.

⁷⁹Hans Bernhard Meyer, Luther und die Messe (Paderborn: Bonifacius-Druckerei, c.1965), pp. 316-319.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 318.

only other occasion for communion during the year seems to have been after the early mass on Christmas Day.⁸¹ In the parish of St. Gangolf's in Trier, about 1200 faithful communicated during Eastertide and about 100-400 received at Christmastime.⁸² In contrast, the Dominican Felix Fabri of Ulm, preacher at the minster from 1478 to 1502, reports that in the minster parish 15,000[?] persons received the sacrament at Easter, and that in addition the eucharist was distributed every Sunday.⁸³

It would be impossible at this point to measure with any degree of accuracy all the forces which tended to lower the reception of the eucharist and raise the celebration frequency, but we can be certain that the practice of frequency in the Middle Ages in no way resembled the practice of frequency in the Early Church. Stone gives an excellent summary of this period.

As a student surveys the long course of writings--many of them of large extent and full of elaborate detail--on the subject of the Eucharist from the sixth Century to the fifteenth in the Western Church, the most impressive fact of all is a fact which touches intimately the morality of the Christian religion and the sacramental system. It is the constant emphasis on the doctrine that, if Communion is to benefit the soul, the body of Christ must be spiritually as well as sacramentally received; and that a reception which is spiritual as well

⁸¹Ibid., pp. 316-317.

⁸²Ibid., p. 318.

⁸³Ibid. It seems that the Sunday communicants were limited largely to "pregnant, sick, and pious women."

as sacramental is possible only for those who communicate worthily. Of scarcely less importance from the moral point of view is the insistence on the possibility of Spiritual Communion for those who desire to receive the body of Christ sacramentally and are unable to do so. How far in practice these conceptions of the Eucharist were cut across by lax administration of the Sacrament of Penance, or by the theory of Biel and others that the sacrifice of the Mass might benefit those in mortal sin by helping to lead them to repentance, or by popular teaching that to behold the elevated Sacrament was a means to spiritual and temporal benefit, is, a question difficult, if not impossible, to answer.⁸⁴

contrast to the other Reformers was that his approach was that ⁸⁴Stone, I, 397. regard for the eucharist in frequency of celebration, but radical in regard to frequency of reception. It is also to be remembered that Luther's whole approach in his Reformation was based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When the Gospel was to be furthered, whatever stood in the way of it was to be discarded. Whatever furthered the Gospel was to be encouraged and used. Baptism and the Lord's Supper were for him both terms of the Gospel; because Christ had commanded them they must be used and furthered.

In his Large Catechism of 1529, Luther makes the point rather strongly that the eucharist is not a once-a-year celebration, such as the Passover, but should be celebrated often whenever and wherever the people of God have the opportunity and need.¹ In 1530, Luther had declared that the

¹Martin Luther, "Abendmahl," Grösser Katechismus, par. 37-48. Hans Lietzmann, editor, Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche (4th edition, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1967), p. 717. Hereafter Die Bekenntnisschriften . . . will be referred to as BE.

CHAPTER III

REFORMATION PRACTICES ON CELEBRATION AND RECEPTION

Luther

The most notable point to remember when considering the position of Luther on frequency of the eucharist in contrast to the other Reformers was that his approach was that of a conservative regard for the eucharist in frequency of celebration, but radical in regard to frequency of reception. It is also to be remembered that Luther's whole approach in his Reformation was based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When the Gospel was to be furthered, whatever stood in the way of it was to be discarded. Whatever furthered the Gospel was to be encouraged and used. Baptism and the Lord's Supper were for him both forms of the Gospel; because Christ had commanded them they must be used and furthered.

In his Large Catechism of 1529, Luther makes the point rather strongly that the eucharist is not a once-a-year celebration, such as the Passover, but should be celebrated often whenever and wherever the people of God have the opportunity and need.¹ In 1520, Luther had declared that the

¹Martin Luther, "Abendmahl," Grosser Katechismus, par. 47-48. Hans Lietzmann, editor, Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche (6th edition, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1967), p. 717. Hereafter Die Bekenntnisschriften . . . will be referred to as BK.

Eucharist ought "to be celebrated daily throughout Christendom."² but three years later he seems to have modified this view when he states that the eucharist ought to be celebrated only on Sundays, unless there were some who desired it more often.³ Why did he make this apparent change?

Luther could see no point in celebrating the eucharist without communicants. He understood the terror which was associated with the idea of the eucharist, and one recalls Luther's agony in connection with his first celebration of the Mass. His personal opinion of the sacrament was radically altered later on when he found the true meaning of the Gospel and the freedom it brings. He admonishes his followers when he says in the Large Catechism:

We must never regard the sacrament as a harmful thing from which we should flee, but as a pure, wholesome, soothing medicine which aids and quickens us in both soul and body. For where the soul is healed, the body has benefited also. Why, then, do we act as if the sacrament were a poison which would kill us if we ate of it?⁴

Other feelings toward the Sacrament are evident in Luther when he says:

²Martin Luther, "Sermon von den guten Werken," Dr. Martin Luthers Werke (Weimar: Herman Böhlaus, 1883-), VI, 230. Hereafter the Weimar edition will be referred to as WA.

³WA X, ii, 31.

⁴Luther, Grosser Katechismus, par. 68. BK p. 721. Translation from Theodore Tappert, editor, The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, c.1959), p. 454.

those who claim to be Christians should prepare themselves to receive this blessed sacrament frequently. For we see that men are becoming listless and lazy about its observance. A lot of people who hear the Gospel, how that the pope's nonsense has been abolished and we are freed from his oppression and authority, let a year, or two, three, or more years go by without receiving the sacrament, as if they were such strong Christians that they have no need of it. Some let themselves be kept and deterred from it because we have taught that no one should go unless he feels a hunger and thirst impelling him to it. Some pretend that it is a matter of liberty, not of necessity, and that it is enough if they simply believe. Thus the majority go so far that they become quite barbarous, and ultimately despise both the sacrament and the Word of God.⁵

In reading between the lines we see that Luther is attempting to analyse why so many people of his day did not attend the eucharist. He even lays part of the blame on himself and his colleagues when he admits that "we have taught that no one should go unless he feels a hunger and thirst . . ." implying that he wishes to correct a misunderstanding. The element of indifference and terror (implied in the previous quotation) are also present. He even shows that many people of his day treated the Sacrament with contempt perhaps because so many rules and regulations concerning preparation were demanded of the people.⁶ The gospel and its power will cause the people to desire to come rather than be forced. Again, one of the main reasons for lack of participation

⁵Luther, Grosser Katechismus, par. 39-41. BK, pp. 715-716. Translation from Tappert, p. 451.

⁶Martin Luther, "Preface," Small Catechism, par. 21. BK, pp. 505-506. Translation from Tappert, p. 340.

seems to have been that the eucharist had ceased to be chiefly an instrument of the Gospel and had turned into an instrument of the Law, as Lutherans define Gospel and Law. Luther stresses to the pastors:

You are not to make a law of this, as the pope has done. All you need to do is clearly to set forth the advantage and disadvantage, the benefit and loss, the blessing and danger connected with this sacrament. Then the people will come of their own accord and without compulsion on your part. But if they refuse to come, let them be, and tell them that those who do not feel and acknowledge their great need and God's gracious help belong to the devil. If you do not give such admonitions, or if you adopt odious laws on the subject, it is your own fault if the people treat the sacrament with contempt. How can they be other than negligent if you fail to do your duty and remain silent. So it is up to you, dear pastor and preacher!⁷

If the pastor emphasizes the Gospel and points out the real blessings of the eucharist,

It is not necessary to compel [the individual Christian] by any law to receive the sacrament, for he will hasten to it of his own accord; he will feel constrained to receive it. He will insist that you administer it to him.⁸

The external preparation for the Sacrament had often been stressed during the Middle Ages as something which was all but absolutely necessary for receiving any benefit from the eucharist. In contrast, Luther stresses the faith of the individual who receives it.

⁷Luther, Small Catechism, par. 22. BK, p. 506. Translation from Tappert, p. 341.

⁸Ibid.

This now is the preparation required of a Christian for receiving this sacrament worthily. Since this treasure is fully offered in the words, it can be grasped and appropriated only by the heart. Such a gift and eternal treasure cannot be siezed with the hand. Fasting and prayer and the like may have their place as an external preparation and children's exercise so that one's body may behave properly and reverently toward the body and blood of Christ. But what is given in and with the sacrament cannot be grasped and appropriated by the body. This is done by the faith of the heart which discerns and desires this treasure.⁹

One statement of Luther in this connection, in the Preface to his Small Catechism, is frequently misunderstood by the casual reader:

We should so preach that, of their own accord and without any law, the people will desire the sacrament and, as it were, compel us pastors to administer it to them. This can be done by telling them: It is to be feared that anyone who does not desire to receive the sacrament at least three or four times a year despises the sacrament and is no Christian, just as he is no Christian who does not hear and believe the Gospel. Christ did not say, "Omit this," or "Despise this," but he said, "Do this, as often as you drink it," etc. Surely he wishes that this be done and not that it be omitted and despised. "Do this," he said.¹⁰

Four times a year is clearly the minimum that Luther contemplates, not an average, far less a maximum.¹¹ This level

⁹Luther, Grosser Katechismus, par. 36-37. BK, p. 715. Translation from Tappert, pp. 450-451.

¹⁰Luther, Small Catechism, par. 23. BK, p. 506. Translation from Tappert, p. 341.

¹¹Theodore Tappert appears to understand the four-year minimum as an average. "On a number of occasions Luther recommended that, instead of once a year, people commune three or four times a year." Theodore Tappert, "Meaning and Practice in the Reformation," in Helmut T. Lehmann, editor, Meaning and Practice of the Lord's Supper (Philadelphia: Muhlenburg Press, c.1961), p. 100.

of frequency was realistic in terms of the once-a-year minimum standard set up by the Fourth Lateran Council (Omnis utrisque sexus) as a hopeful step in the direction of a recovery of the primitive ideal where every communicant was expected to be present at the eucharist and to receive the sacrament every Lord's Day.

Luther retained much of the feeling of the people of the Middle Ages toward the Sacrament. In 1530, Luther advised a curate to burn the host that lay uneaten on the lips of a person who had just expired.¹² Again, John Hachenburg of Erfurt reports that around 1542 a woman communicating at St. Mary's Church in Wittenberg accidentally bumped against the chalice in the process of kneeling spilling part of its contents on her jacket. Luther had the affected portion of the lining cut out and burned together with the wood shaving from the choir stall where the contents had also splashed.¹³ At a later time in 1546 Luther and Bugenhagen called for the banishment of Adam Besserer from the Lutheran community for giving a communicant an unconsecrated host and taking a consecrated host (which he had dropped) and putting it with the unconsecrated hosts.¹⁴ These examples show the habitual

¹²WA XXX, ii, 624.

¹³G. Kawerau, "Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der lutherischen Lehre von der Konsekration im 16 Jahrhundert," Zeitschrift für Pastoral-Theologie (Berlin: Reuther und Reichard, 1902), XXV, 293-294.

¹⁴WA Br XI, 258-259.

reverence which Luther and some of his associates had with respect to the eucharist. One can see why he rebuked Carlstadt for allowing the faithful to come to the altar without confession and take the bread and wine from the altar themselves. This occurred during Luther's absence on the fifth of January in 1522. On this day more than a thousand attended and received the Sacrament, a rather high figure considering that the population of Wittenberg was about thirty-five thousand with about two thousand students attending the university. This practice prevailed through February and March of the same year.¹⁵ But the original zeal of the people for the sacrament did not seem to persist. In 1531 Luther wrote to Margrave George of Brandenburg that every Sunday about a hundred or so communicants received in Wittenberg so that they are not overcrowded on any particular Sunday.¹⁶ One report indicates that in the later 1530s many in Wittenberg left after the sermon.¹⁷ At any rate Meyer is

¹⁵Hans Bernhard Meyer, Luther und die Messe (Paderborn: Bonifacius-Druckerei, c.1965), pp. 363-364.

¹⁶Letter of Sept. 14, 1531, WA Br VI, 193. On Ascension Day, 1536, Wolfgang Musculus reports that about 54 persons received the sacrament in St. Mary's Church, Wittenberg. On the Sunday before he reports that not a single male, but only "some few little women" (Paucae quaedam mulierculae) had received the sacrament in the parish church of Eisenach. Theodor von Kolde, Analecta Lutherana (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1883), pp. 217 and 220. In the Besserer incident referred to above (p. 43) there were only 17 communicants. WA Br XI, 259.

¹⁷Kolde, p. 228.

of the opinion that Carlstadt's innovation had a marked affect on the frequency of reception in the Lutheran community.¹⁸

Melanchthon

Melanchthon's position with regard to the eucharist is closely related to Luther's and perhaps best shown in the Augsburg Confession and the Apology to the Augsburg Confession, both of which are part of the Lutheran symbolical canon.

Worthiness to receive the sacraments depends on faith, "and they are rightly used when they are received in faith and for the purpose of strengthening faith."¹⁹

The Mass is to be celebrated on Sundays, holy days, and whenever else communicants are present to receive it.

Inasmuch, then, as the Mass is not a sacrifice to remove the sins of others, whether living or dead, but should be a Communion in which the priest and others receive the sacrament for themselves, it is observed among us in the following manner: On holy days, and at other times when communicants are present, Mass is held and those who desire it are communicated.²⁰

¹⁸Meyer, p. 364.

¹⁹Melanchthon, "The Use of the Sacraments," Augsburg Confession, xiii, 2. Hereafter the Augsburg Confession will be referred to as AC. BK, p. 68. Translation from Tappert, p. 36.

²⁰Melanchthon, "The Mass," AC, xxiv, 34. BK, pp. 94-95. Translation from Tappert, p. 60. See also "The Mass," Apology of the Augsburg Confession, xxiv, 1. Hereafter the Apology will be referred to as AP. BK, p. 349.

Melanchthon disapproves of private masses with no communicants:

There is nothing contrary to the church catholic in our having only the public or common Mass. Even today, Greek parishes have no private Masses but only one public Mass, and this only on Sundays and festivals. The monasteries have public, though daily, Mass. These are remnants of ancient practice, for the Fathers of the church before Gregory make no mention of private Masses. For the present, we forego any discussion of their origins. But it is clear that the prevalence of the mendicant friars brought on the multiplication of private Masses; so superstitious and so mercenary have they been that for a long time good men have wanted some limits set to them. Although St. Francis sought to regulate this with the provision that each community should be content with a single common daily Mass, reasons of piety or of profit later changed this. So when it suits them, they change the institutions of the Fathers and then quote the authority of the Fathers against us. Epiphanius writes that in Asia Minor there were no daily Masses but Communion was celebrated three times a week, and that this practice came from the apostles. He says, "Assemblies for Communion were appointed by the apostles to be held on the fourth day, on Sabbath eve, and on the Lord's Day."²¹

The followers of the Pope at the time had accused the Lutherans of abolishing the Mass. Melanchthon replies:

We are unjustly accused of having abolished the Mass. Without boasting it is manifest that the Mass is observed among us with greater devotion and more earnestness than among our opponents. Moreover, the people are instructed often and with great diligence concerning the holy sacrament, why it was instituted, and how

²¹Melanchthon, "The Mass," AP, xxiv, 608. BK, pp. 350-351. Translation from Tappert, p. 250. See also Thomas Aquinas, Letters to the General Chapter, chap. 13, in Heinrich Boehmer, Analekten zur Geschichte des Franciscus von Assisi (2nd edition; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1930), p. 40, and Paschal Robinson, The Writings of St. Francis of Assisi (Philadelphia: The Dolphin Press, 1906), p. 115. For the reference to Epiphanius, see Adversus haereses, iii, 2, Expositio fidei, xxii, in J. P. Migne, editor, Patrologia Graeca (Paris: n.p., 1844), XLII, 825.

it is to be used (namely, as a comfort for terrified consciences) in order that the people may be drawn to the Communion and Mass.²²

Again, in the corresponding article in the Apology,

To begin with, we must repeat the prefatory statement that we do not abolish the Mass but religiously keep and defend it. In our churches Mass is celebrated every Sunday and on other festivals, when the sacrament is offered to those who wish for it after they have been examined and absolved. We keep traditional liturgical forms, such as the order of the lessons, prayers, vestments, etc.²³

Vilmos Vajta, a contemporary European Lutheran theologian, summarizes the Lutheran position with regard to the purpose of the sacrament.

Luther was greatly concerned that the consecration should not be separated from the communion. Christ effects his presence in order to be received. It is an insult to him when men worship the host instead of eating it in faith.²⁴

Hence the statement of Melanchthon:

Because the division of the sacrament is contrary to the institution of Christ, the customary carrying about of the sacrament in processions is also omitted by us.²⁵

²²AC, xxiv, 1. BK, p. 91. Translation from Tappert, p. 56.

²³AP, xxiv, 1. BK, p. 349. Translation from Tappert, p. 249. In this connection Melanchthon also concedes the practice of "daily Mass" within the framework of a participating community (AP, xxiv, 35. BK, p. 360).

²⁴Vilmos Vajta, Luther on Worship, translated and condensed from the German by U. S. Leupold (Philadelphia: Muhlenburg Press, c.1958), p. 101. See also Vilmos Vajta, Die Theologie des Gottesdienstes bei Luther (Lund: Carl Blom, 1952), p. 187.

²⁵Melanchthon, "Both Kinds in the Sacrament," AC, xxii, 12. BK, p. 86. Translation from Tappert, p. 51.

Zwingli

Zwingli's basic concept of the Sacrament of Holy Communion is reflected in the following statement:

I believe, in fact I know, that all the sacraments, so far from conferring grace, neither convey nor dispense it . . . The Sacraments are given as a public testimonial to that faith which is already the possession of each individual . . . therefore I believe . . . that a sacrament is a sign of a sacred thing, that is, of grace already bestowed.²⁶

Since it was a mere testimonial of faith it was unnecessary to have it frequently. He regards the celebration of the Lord's Supper as similar to the celebration of the Passover,²⁷ and discards the weekly celebration partly because of his theological position on the Sacrament:

A Sacrament is nothing whatsoever but an initiation or public pledge; it can have no power to free a man's conscience. This only God is able to free . . . they are in error who think that the sacraments have any cleansing force . . . The sacraments then are signs or ceremonies by which . . . a man proves to the Church that he is a candidate or a soldier of Christ.²⁸

²⁶B. J. Kidd, editor, Documents Illustrative of the Continental Reformation (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), no. 225, pp. 473-474.

²⁷Huldreich Zwingli, "Aktion oder Brauch des Machtmahls (1525)," in Fritz Schmidt-Clausing, editor, Zwingli's liturgische Formulare (Frankfurt am Main: Otto Lembeck, 1970), p. 29.

²⁸Corpus Reformatorum (Leipzig: M. Heinsius Nachfolger, 1914), XC, 759-761, hereafter known as CR. Bard Thompson, an American Reformed liturgical scholar, is of the opinion that in Zwingli "there is nothing in his eucharistic doctrine to necessitate frequent Communion: the Supper did not convey grace, or mediate the divine life, or remit sins." Liturgies of the Western Church (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Co., c.1961), p. 144.

Zwingli separated the Sermon from the celebration of the eucharist in 1525 when he devised a "Liturgy of the Word,"²⁹ and an "Action or Use of the Lord's Supper."³⁰ Celebrations were held quarterly.³¹ Of all the Reformers, Zwingli stands out as probably the most negative on the eucharist.

Calvin

There is a marked difference in Calvin's theology of the eucharist compared with both Luther's and Zwingli's.

Calvin advocated a weekly eucharist for the congregation:

Now to get rid of this great pile of ceremonies, the Supper could have been administered most becomingly if.

²⁹CR, XCI, 686-687.

³⁰CR, XCI, 13-24. Luther Reed, eminent Lutheran liturgical scholar of this century states: "Leo Jud and Zwingli in Zurich were responsible for the complete separation of the Communion from the preaching service and for the quarterly Communion idea. Due to the decline of church life in Germany and England during the period of Rationalism, and to later pioneer conditions in America, the quarterly Communion became general throughout Protestantism." Worship (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1959), p. 331.

³¹Louis Bouyer, a French Roman Catholic theologian, writes: "This eucharistic liturgy without a eucharist, on the other hand, is foreseen for only [four times] yearly celebrations (Christmas, Easter, Whitsunday and once during the Autumn). It is looked upon entirely as a feast of the Christian community in which the community expresses its solidarity in this infrequent meal. It is indeed a socio-religious act, but one which tends to be merely social. It has been justly pointed out that as a consequence there persisted the disconcerting fact in Zurich that the communion service brought out a much larger congregation than the regular attendance at Sunday worship." Eucharist, translated from the French by Charles Underhill Quinn (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, c.1968), p. 394.

it were set before the church very often, and at least once a week.³²

He has harsh words for the custom of communicating once a year:

Plainly this custom which enjoins us to take communion once a year is a veritable invention of the devil, whoever was instrumental in introducing it. They say that Zephyrinus was the author of this decree, although it is not believable that it was in the form in which we now have it. For perhaps by his ordinance he did not provide too badly for the church, as times were then. For there is not the least doubt that the Sacred Supper was in that era set before the believers every time they met together; and there is no doubt that a majority of them took communion; but since all scarcely ever happened to take communion at once, and since it was necessary for those who were mingled with profane and idolatrous men to attest their faith by some outward sign--the holy man, for the sake of order and polity, appointed that day on which all Christian people should, by partaking of the Lord's Supper, make a confession of faith. Posterity wickedly distorted Zephyrinus' otherwise good ordinance, when a definite law was made to have communion once a year. By this time it has come about that almost all, when they have taken communion once, as though they have beautifully done their duty for the rest of the year, go about unconcerned. It should have been done far differently: the Lord's Table should have been spread at least once a week for the assembly of Christians, and the promises declared in it should feed us spiritually.³³

The practice of communicating once a year "renders men slothful all the rest of the year."³⁴ He goes on in his

³²John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, IV, xvii, 43, in John T. McNeill, editor, Library of Christian Classics, translated from the French by Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, c.1960), XXI, 1421.

³³Ibid., XXI, 1424. For the reference on Zephyrinus see B. Platyna, The Lives of the Popes, translated from the Latin by W. Benham (Edinburgh: Turnbull and Spears, n.d.), I, 37.

³⁴Calvin, Institutes, IV, xvii, 43, in McNeill, XXI, 1421.

condemnation of infrequent celebrations and receptions and cites Chrysostom,³⁵ who laments the infrequency which had already developed at that time.

In his argument for a weekly eucharist, Calvin cites Acts 2:42 and 1 Cor. 11:20-30 as indicating a frequent use of the eucharist. He refers to Anacletus (104-112) and Calixtus (217-222) as well as the Council of Antioch (341), which stated that all those who did not communicate in the eucharist were to be considered outside of the pale of the Church.³⁶

William Delbert Maxwell, a modern Scottish Presbyterian liturgiologist, declares:

To imagine that Calvin wished to replace sacramental worship by a preaching service is completely to misunderstand his mind and work and to ignore all that he taught and did. His aim was twofold: to restore the eucharist in its primitive simplicity and true proportions--celebration and communion--as the central weekly service, and, within this service, to give the Holy Scriptures their authoritative place. The Lord's Supper, in all its completeness, was the norm he wished to establish.³⁷

³⁵Supra, pp. 15-16.

³⁶Calvin, IV, xvii, 44, in McNeil, XXI, 1422-1423. The reference is attributed to Pope Anacletus, but not in the decretals ascribed to Calixtus I, in the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals. Gratian, Decretum III, i, 59 in MPL, CLXXXVII, 1726, or in Aemilius Friedberg, editor, Corpus juris canonici (Graz: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1955), I, 1310-1311. For the reference to the Council of Antioch, see supra, p. 12.

³⁷William Delbert Maxwell, An Outline of Christian Worship (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 112.

How did the people of his day react to his advocacy of a weekly eucharist celebration and reception? Maxwell points out that the magistrates of Geneva, who insisted on a quarterly celebration, prevented Calvin from observing a weekly eucharist according to a plan Calvin and Farel proposed entitled "Articles Concerning the Organization of the Church and of Worship at Geneva."³⁸ This fact was one of the main reasons why Calvin went to Strasbourg for a season (1538-1541) under banishment by the magistrates.³⁹ At Strasbourg the practice was more to his taste--every Sunday celebration at the cathedral and once a month in the parishes.⁴⁰ He finally gave way to the magistrates at Geneva and their quarterly celebrations "for the sake of peace."⁴¹

Maxwell summarizes Calvin's stance on frequency.

This [Preface to his service book of 1545, apologia] makes it perfectly clear that it was Calvin's wish to restore the eucharist in its primitive simplicity and completeness as the weekly worship of the Church. The Holy Scriptures, read in course and expounded, were given their central place as in the ancient rites; but he was concerned to restore not the Scriptures alone, but also weekly communion. To Calvin the "means of grace" were twofold, consisting of both the Word and the Sacraments. A minister's task and office was not only to preach and instruct, but also to celebrate the

³⁸Thompson, p. 188.

³⁹Maxwell, p. 117.

⁴⁰Thompson, p. 190.

⁴¹Maxwell, p. 117.

the Lord's Supper every week, and to teach and urge the people to communicate weekly. This Calvin himself strove to do all his life, and he set it up as an ideal for his followers who should come after him.⁴²

THE ERA OF RATIONALISM

⁴²Ibid., p. 116.

Lutheran practice in the early and middle sixteenth century followed the analogy of the Augsburg Confession, Article 24, which declares that the churches of the Augsburg Confession observe the eucharist every Sunday and on other festivals.¹

In Bugenhagen's Braunschweiger Kirchenordnung of 1528 we already find a special type of service without the consecration and distribution.² Here the idea was already suggested that the service was the only really important part of the service, even though it was not the intent of early Lutherans to do so.³

The minimum frequency of reception at this time is stipulated at four times a year in the church orders.⁴

¹Supra, p. 44. In Brandenburg, Joachim II attempted to preserve as much of the wholesome tradition of the church as possible and prescribed daily celebrations of the eucharist in cities and weekly celebrations in the country. Emil Sehling, Die Evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des XVII Jahrhunderts (Leipzig: G. H. Meisland, 1902-), III, 67.

²Sehling, VI, 1, 442.

³Paul Greff, Geschichte der Auflösung der alten gottesdienstlichen Formen in der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, c. 1937), I, 17.

⁴Sehling, IV, 250; VI, 1035. Theodore Tappert appears to be of the opinion that such frequency is recommended

CHAPTER IV

THE LATER SIXTEENTH CENTURY THROUGH THE ERA OF RATIONALISM

Lutheran practice in the early and middle sixteenth century followed the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article 24, which declares that the churches of the Augsburg Confession observe the eucharist every Sunday and on other festivals.¹

In Bugenhagen's Braunschweiger Kirchenordnung of 1528 we already find a special type of service without the consecration and distribution.² Here the idea was already suggested that the sermon was the only really important part of the service, even though it was not the intent of early Lutherans to do so.³

The minimum frequency of reception at this time is stipulated at four times a year in the church orders.⁴

¹Supra, p. 44. In Brandenburg, Joachim II attempted to preserve as much of the wholesome tradition of the church as possible and prescribed daily celebrations of the eucharist in cities and weekly celebrations in the country. Emil Sehling, Die Evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des XVII Jahrhunderts (Leipzig: O. R. Reisland, 1902-), III, 67.

²Sehling, VI, i, 442.

³Paul Graff, Geschichte der Auflösung der alten gottesdienstlichen Formen in der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, c.1937), I, 13.

⁴Sehling, IV, 230; VI, 1035. Theodore Tappert appears to be of the opinion that such frequency is recommended

Frequent reception at this early period in Lutheranism seems to have brought problems with it. One was the difficulty of instructing large numbers of intending communicants. Thus the Mecklenburg Order of 1545 states:

The people are especially to be admonished not to throng to the sacrament at the Easter festival . . . True Christians go to the sacrament throughout the year; every six weeks, every four weeks, or at least [minimum] several times. It is not possible for the minister to instruct the people in confession as he ought when so many people come.⁵

On the other hand the Mecklenburg Order of 1552 gives an extensive admonition to communicate more frequently.⁶

The length of service may also have had a part in the frequency of reception. For example, in the city of Altenburg (Saxony) in 1554 an outside time limit of two hours was set for the services.⁷

Paul Graff, a German Lutheran liturgical scholar, indicates that in general the church orders considered it important that the people stay for the eucharist, even though

rather than set as a minimum limit. "Church Orders likewise suggested [four times a year][?]." "History and the Frequency of Communion," The Lutheran Quarterly, XI (November 1959), p. 292.

⁵Sehling, V, 154. See also Aemilius Ludwig Richter, Die Evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts (Weimar: Verlag des Landes-Industrie-comptoirs, 1846), II, 69, 180, 237, 327.

⁶Sehling, V, 199-200.

⁷Ibid., I, 518.

they did not communicate.⁸ In this connection, the church order of Ott-Heinrich of 1556 for the Palatinate directed those in the church to sing communion hymns while the people communicated. The church orders of Hesse (1657 and 1662), Mecklenburg (1602/1650), Liegnitz (1594), Gotha (1645), Schwarzburg (1649), Magdeburg (1652), Braunschweig (1657), and others encouraged the people not communicating to stay,

and call on God, so that He at all times gathers a church under us and will preserve for us His Holy Word and the proper use of the Sacraments . . .⁹

According to the North German church orders, the sermon and communion service belonged together. Elsewhere variations developed. Thus at St. Sebald's in Nuremberg around 1700 there was a Mass without a sermon, a preaching service without the communion, and a service without either a communion or a sermon.¹⁰

The period of Orthodoxy witnessed no change in the frequency of celebration of the eucharist. A celebration

⁸Graff, I, 178. The practice of the communion of the sick was not uniform among the church orders. Attempts were made to emphasize the oneness of the congregation when the sick were communed; *ibid.*, pp. 179-181. The church orders did not make provisions for those who were physically unable to partake of the elements; Richter, II, 171.

⁹Graff, I, 177.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, I, 176-177.

every Sunday and holy day was normal, at least in the cities.¹¹

Practices of individuals varied considerably. During Calov's time (1612-1686) some desired Holy Communion on certain Sundays in the year while others desired it daily.¹² The minimum was maintained at four times a year.¹³

Quenstedt says:

As to the frequency of the reception, in the primitive church the Christians at first used to communicate daily . . . Christ would have its frequent use at least, and so we should go to Holy Communion rather often, indeed at least [minimum] three or four times a year. Canon XVIII of the Council of Agde [Agatha] reads: Laymen who do not commune at Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost shall not be considered or reckoned as Catholics.¹⁴

Many of the orthodox theologians left to a person's own conscience how often to partake. Johann Gerhard says:

How often this sacrament should be taken every year, cannot be prescribed definitely and by some general

¹¹One finds, for instance, that the Freiberg School Order of 1647 directs the cantor and his colleagues to come to confession and to receive the eucharist at every opportunity. Again, in the edition of 1652, the students are urged to attend the eucharist frequently: Hans Preuss, Die Geschichte der Abendmahlsfrömmigkeit in Zeugnissen und Berichten (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, c.1949), p. 121.

¹²Calov, Systema locorum theologicorum (Wittenberg: Christian Schrödter, 1677), IX, 407.

¹³Georgius Dèdekennus, Thesaurus consiliorum et decisionum, edited by J. E. Gerhard (Jena: Zacharia Hertel, 1671), I, 643. Also Caspar Erasmus Brochmand, Systema Universae Theologiae (Ulm: Johannes Görllin, 1638), II, 1187. Calov, IX, 408.

¹⁴Johannes Andreas Quenstedt, Theologia (Wittenberg: Matthew Henckel, 1685), IV, 185.

rule, but must be left free for the approval of each one's conscience and for his piety.¹⁵

On the question of the communicant's worthiness, the Formula of Concord had stated:

We believe, teach, and confess that the entire worthiness of the guests at this heavenly feast is and consists solely and alone in the most holy obedience and complete merit of Christ, which we make our own through genuine faith and of which we are assured through the sacrament. Worthiness consists not at all in our own virtues or in our internal and external preparations.¹⁶

On the other hand, it is significant that in Dunte's One-thousand and Six Cases of Conscience, for instance, the section on the eucharist sees worthiness in a different and somewhat legalistic way.¹⁷

¹⁵Johannes Gerhard, Loci Theologici (Preuss edition; Berlin: Gustav Schlawitz, 1867), V, 243. See also Ludovicus Dunte, Decisiones mille et sex casuum conscientiae (Lübeck: Ulrich Wetstein, 1664), p. 483.

¹⁶"The Lord's Supper," Epitome, The Formula of Concord, vii, 20, in Hans Lietzmann, editor, Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche (6th edition, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1967), p. 800. Translation from Theodore Tappert, editor, The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 484.

¹⁷Dunte, pp. 483-504. J. F. Ohl, a Lutheran liturgical scholar of the turn of the century sees this feature as characteristic of the church orders after the so-called Thirty Years War: "But the fatal defect of these revised Orders was their bureaucratic character. The conceptions underlying many of their new provisions were legalistic and often dogmatically unsound; obedience was to be effected not solely by the power of evangelical truth as in the sixteenth century, but rather by threats of punishment for disobedience; and the result was that the very idea of the Church and its purpose became externalized, grades and hierarchical tendencies began to manifest themselves in its ministry, and, when at last the Church had become a mere department of the civil government, the latter not only

Pietism, emerging around 1675, laid less stress on corporate worship and the sacraments.¹⁸ As one of Pietism's critics, Valentine Ernest Löscher, put it, Pietism taught that:

All external means are to be used only as scaffolding for a wall or as the star was used by the Wise Men from the East, so that the external would cease in time and be swallowed up by the spiritual.¹⁹

Pietism stressed the meeting of people in small gatherings

undertook to regulate the more external parochial affairs, but even to prescribe what liturgies, hymn-books and doctrinal standards should be used." J. F. Ohl, "The Liturgical Deterioration of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," Memoirs of the Lutheran Liturgical Association (Pittsburg: n.p., 1906), IV, 68.

Friedrich Kalb, a German Lutheran scholar, sees the basis for celebrating the eucharist as well as the baptism of infants among the orthodox theologians as lying in the Third Commandment, broadly understood. He shows that for Luther the basis for the sacraments was the authoritative institution of Christ. Theology of Worship in 17th Century Lutheranism, translated from the German by Henry Hamann (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1965), pp. 74-76.

¹⁸In the case of Gottfried Arnold, for instance, perfectionism rules out the necessity of the sacrament. He describes the primitive church in these terms: "On this foundation those who were perfect, Phil. 3:5, required no external aids, such as had been ordained for the weak in whom Christ was not yet rooted and grounded. Hence they did not bind one another strictly to the Lord's Supper, neither for the strengthening of faith nor in remembrance of Christ nor for fellowship among themselves, but left it to each one's liberty With those to whom the Lord Himself had come and revealed Himself according to His promise, this practice probably ceased after the steady indwelling of the Lord, and there began in them the marriage of the Lamb, an earnest of the future public home-bringing." Unpartheyische Kirchen und Ketzerhistorie vom Anfang des Neuen Testaments biss auf das Jahr Christi 1688 (Frankfurt-am-Main: Thomas Fritschens Erben, 1729), I, 53.

¹⁹Valentin Ernst Löscher, Vollständiger Timotheus Verinus (Wittenberg: Samuel Hannauern, 1726), I, 270.

other than the regular assembly on Sunday, but it was not normally possible to have the eucharist in private gatherings. Orthodoxy had taught that the Lord's Supper should be celebrated in the congregation and not in private homes.²⁰

The American Presbyterian church historian, James Hastings Nichols, observes:

Both Sacraments suffered from the influence of Pietism, although the early Pietists had held them in great respect. Confirmation, conceived as personal acceptance of the baptismal covenant, came to be stressed more than the act of Baptism itself. And the rigorous qualifications insisted upon for Communion, as with the Roman Catholic Jansenists, made for an infrequent celebration.²¹

During Rationalism, thought of as the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, celebration of the eucharist during the week dropped out altogether with the exception of festival celebrations.²² Pastors berated their congregations for their failure to receive the eucharist.²³

Reception of the sacrament of the altar reached a low ebb. In 1784, Hamburg had a population of 120,000. During that year 63,000 communicated. By 1816, when the population had actually increased, only 26,000 communicated.²⁴ This

²⁰ Gerhard, V, 244.

²¹ James Hastings Nichols, Corporate Worship in the Reformed Tradition (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, c.1968), p. 119.

²² Graff, II, 143.

²³ For an example, see ibid., II, 140-141.

²⁴ Ibid., II, 142.

decline in reception resulted in the need of fewer celebrations and it became common to specify certain Sundays as "Communion Sundays" which occurred once a month or four times a year.²⁵

The period of Rationalism saw a strong emphasis on preaching and teaching rather than on the traditional celebration of the eucharist.²⁶ The latter turned increasingly into a minor appendix to the regular preaching service.²⁷

It was not until Rationalism reduced the sacrament to a status of a sort of moralistic memorial after the middle of the eighteenth century that frequency of communion and therefore also frequency of administration declined. This decline was further accelerated by the removal of civil penalties for absence from church services and for abstention from the sacrament.²⁸

In Reformed areas, Pietism and Rationalism tended to reinforce the Reformed infrequency of eucharistic celebration and reception. For instance, as the result of the Reformed penetration of Anhalt, it was found already in 1599 that one celebration of the eucharist a month was adequate because too few came to partake when the sacrament was administered every week.²⁹ Thus, reasons for frequency were

²⁵ Ibid., II, 140.

²⁶ Ibid., II, 161-163.

²⁷ Ibid., II, 139.

²⁸ Theodore Tappert, "History and the Frequency of Communion," The Lutheran Quarterly, XI (November 1959), p. 292.

²⁹ Sehling, II, 535-536.

sometimes practical, depending on the attitudes of the magistrates, popular custom and the availability of pastors.³⁰

Outside the Holy Roman Empire, another factor may have been the extensive preparation demanded of the communicants by the Reformed in the sixteenth century. To enable a review of the roster of prospective communicants by the elders, announcement had to be made two weeks in advance.³¹

Of particular interest during this period after the Reformation is the practice of the Church of Scotland. For one thing, it shows the consequences of carrying out Pietistic practices to their ultimate conclusion. For another, it provides part of the background for the Restoration Movement churches which are discussed in the following chapter.

As with Calvin, the Lord's Supper was the norm of public worship in Scotland [at the beginning of the Reformation]. When communion was not celebrated, as much as possible of the eucharist was retained, only that which pertained to consecration and communion being omitted.³²

The original rubric specified that the eucharist be celebrated once a month, but the shortage of ministers made it impossible to serve all the parishes adequately, and so as a rule the celebration came to be held quarterly. By the time that every parish was supplied with a pastor, infrequent

³⁰Nichols, p. 45.

³¹Ibid., pp. 77-79.

³²William Delbert Maxwell, An Outline of Christian Worship (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 126.

communion was more thoroughly established in the minds of the people.³³

After 1640 Sunday worship in Scotland became increasingly limited to nothing more than singing, preaching and prayer.³⁴ The eucharist was seldom celebrated; according to Thomas Morer, an English Army chaplain stationed in Scotland in 1690, the communion was observed "once or twice a year, the congregation sitting."³⁵

By about 1730, the celebration of the eucharist in Scotland was held once a year. It became an enormous festival of rededication. People would make long pilgrimages to the central point of celebration, traveling forty or fifty miles to attend. During this time the people submitted themselves to serious scrutiny, rigidly "preparing" themselves to receive the sacrament.

The event began with preaching on Thursday, and concluded with sermons on Monday, the ministers whose parishes were involved coming to share in the duties.³⁶

Actual physical punishment in the form of whipping as well

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ William Delbert Maxwell, A History of Worship in the Church of Scotland (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 107-115.

³⁵ "Ecclesiastical Records," Spalding Club, lxix; Short Account of Scotland (London: n.p., 1702), cited in Maxwell, History of Worship, pp. 125-126.

³⁶ Maxwell, History of Worship, p. 142.

as confinement to the stocks was inflicted upon the wrongdoers in some instances.³⁷

The practice of large circuit-wide celebrations at one locality would make it possible for a particular parish to go for several years without a eucharist celebrated in its midst. But this happened even before these mass celebrations began to take place. Maxwell reports:

In Glasgow, it is interesting to note in passing, a cathedral and university city, under six successive archbishops, and with parochial clergy, holy communion was celebrated only twice during the twenty-eight years of the second episcopacy, once under [Robert] Leighton [1611-1684] and once under [Gilbert] Burnet [1643-1715]. Between 1645 and the Restoration, under presbyterianism, there were six celebrations of holy communion--not frequent certainly, but it is a mere matter of history that even in a period of disorganization celebrations under presbyterianism were more frequent than they were under episcopacy during the second episcopate.³⁸

Again,

Glasgow saw eight Communion services in the forty-five years after the Westminster Assembly.³⁹

³⁷Maxwell, History of Worship, pp. 145-150. Nichols states that these communion services "were the seedbeds of some of the great revivals" in the American colonies. Nichols, p. 108.

³⁸Maxwell, History of Worship, pp. 118-119.

³⁹Nichols, p. 108. In sharp contrast was the Wesleyan movement in England. Holy Communion was celebrated at least monthly or quarterly. Maxwell, An Outline of Christian Worship, p. 144. "Wesley presupposed regular Anglican parish worship and instructed his Society members to attend there. Methodists in Wesley's lifetime far exceeded the conventional Anglican practice of three or four annual Communion services, and Wesley himself communicated three or four times a week. But few of the new members gathered in had his personal sense of

Under the Westminster Directory of 1644, the Puritans despaired of the lack of discipline and preparations for the Lord's Supper. They desired the examination of the people by the elders and admonitions.⁴⁰

The Directory itself required also a preparatory service unless the Supper were to be held weekly (the apparent meaning of "frequently" here) whereby all might come better prepared to the heavenly feast.⁴¹

Nichols is of the opinion that the exercise of discipline in the Reformed tradition set the pace for infrequency.

The popular association of fencing with the Reformed tradition is just, however, for no other major Protestant tradition took the problem of discipline so seriously. Many or most Reformed churches in Switzerland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, England, and Scotland passed through serious controversies over the control of the exercise of discipline, especially the ultimate sanction of excommunication. The frequency of celebration was affected, since it was usually connected with a disciplinary review of the whole congregation and thus made into an instrument of social control.⁴²

indebtedness to the Church of England, and Anglican clergy put great difficulties in the way of Methodist communicants." Nichols, pp. 128-129.

⁴⁰ Maxwell, An Outline of Christian Worship, p. 144.

⁴¹ Nichols, p. 105.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 46-47. "Fencing the Tables: A Scotch-Presbyterian term for the address made at the table before the administration of the Lord's Supper, because in it the character of those who may and may not partake is described." Samuel Macauley Jackson, editor, The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (Ann Arbor: Cushing-Malloy, 1950), IV, 296.

CHAPTER V

PRESENT DAY PRACTICES

The Restoration (Christian) Tradition

The churches of the Restoration (Christian) movement are almost unique among major American religious movements in requiring a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper.

The background of the Restoration movement includes the Scottish Presbyterian Church. One eighteenth-century leader in this church body who was dismayed over the spiritual condition of the people of his day was John Glas (1695-1773). It seemed to him that the communion practices of the church had much to be desired and he emphasized the corporate aspect of the Lord's Supper as being of its essence.¹ He advocated the practice of weekly communion as over against the monthly, quarterly, and yearly celebrations of the Scottish Presbyterian Church.² The Haldanes, Robert (1764-1842) and James (1768-1851), who became Baptists in their theology in 1808, were sympathetic with the views of Glas and his followers.³ They introduced the practice of every

¹Alfred Thomas DeGroot, Disciple Thought: A History (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University, c.1965), p. 124.

²Winfred Ernest Garrison and Alfred T. DeGroot, The Disciples of Christ: A History (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, c.1948), p. 47.

³James DeForest Murch, Christians Only (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, c.1962), pp. 16, 18.

Sunday observance of the Lord's Supper with everyone participating.⁴

In the meantime the Great Awakening in America was gradually unfolding. By the early 1800s it was in full strength and was a part of the preparation for the Restoration movement launched by Thomas Campbell and his famous Declaration and Address in 1809.⁵ Campbell, influenced to a large degree both by the Haldanes and by the philosophies of John Locke, Thomas Reid, and Francis Bacon,⁶ called for the application of basic restoration principles with a view to achieving the strength and spirit of the New Testament church. First, a perfect pattern for the church was and is in the mind of God. Secondly, the Apostles had authoritative revelation for this pattern. Finally, the New Testament contains an exact record of that pattern.⁷ By 1812 Thomas Campbell could say that "New Testament worship ceases" when the Lord's Supper is not observed weekly.⁸

⁴Ibid., p. 17.

⁵Ibid., pp. 19-23.

⁶David Edwin Harrell, Jr., Quest for a Christian America: The Disciples of Christ and American Society to 1866 (Nashville: The Disciples of Christ Historical Society), pp. 28-29. See DeGroot, p. 129, footnote 14, "The influence of John Locke on Campbell and on American life and thought has not been overdone in recent studies."

⁷Garrison and DeGroot, p. 22.

⁸Ibid., p. 163. By 1829 immersion was a requirement for admission to membership, but the unimmersed could be admitted to the Lord's Table. See DeGroot, p. 109.

Barton Stone, another leader in the Restoration movement, decided by 1830 that weekly observance of the eucharist was the practice of the early church.

Whenever the church shall be restored to her former glory, she will again receive the Lord's Supper every first day of the week.⁹

Isaac Errett (1820-1888), a distinguished Restoration leader, wrote a summary of principles by which the movement operated in his time. In it he said:

The Lord's Supper, too, holds a different place with us from that which is usually allowed to it. We invest it not with the awfulness of a sacrament, but regard it as a sweet and precious feast of holy memories, designed to quicken our love of Christ and cement the ties of our common brotherhood. We therefore observe it as a part of our regular worship, every Lord's day, and hold it a solemn, but joyful and refreshing feast of love, in which all the disciples of our Lord should feel it to be a great privilege to unite. . .¹⁰

By 1862 about two-thirds of the churches were allowing those who considered themselves qualified to communicate.¹¹

The current practice among the Disciples of Christ, the "denominational" wing of the Restoration movement, is this:

All are invited and urged to partake, the emblems are passed through the pews and each one is to examine himself and act accordingly.

⁹Garrison and DeGroot, p. 212.

¹⁰Murch, p. 175.

¹¹Garrison and DeGroot, p. 348. Grover Cleveland Brewer, a contemporary leader, quotes St. Paul in 1 Cor. on the obligation of each person to examine himself and continues: "It is his own affair; let him examine himself, and let others keep hands off." Contending for the Faith (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., c.1955), p. 309.

Open communion is almost universal in the Christian Churches. It is generally understood that members of other denominations are welcomed, and there is a growing tendency to state on the printed programs that all Christians are invited to partake with us.¹²

A devotional book used by the Disciples for Communion observances does not demand perfection before receiving Communion.¹³ On the contrary, it holds that God forgives us in order to make us worthy.¹⁴ The writer of these devotions affirms that "unworthy" means "in an unworthy manner." Worthiness is seeking out the mercy of God. Both sinners and saints are worthy as long as they seek His mercy.¹⁵ But the Lord's Supper is only for the committed.¹⁶

Wide divergences of belief are tolerated with respect to the Sacrament and no conformity is required.¹⁷ Disciples feel no conscience pangs over receiving the Lord's Supper in churches outside of their own denomination.¹⁸

Disciples are not too concerned about the question of the minister of the Lord's Supper.

¹²DeGroot, p. 121.

¹³Carlton C. Buck, At the Lord's Table (St. Louis: Bethany Press, c.1956), p. 87.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 94.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 103-107.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 99.

¹⁷James M. Flanagan, What We Believe (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, c.1956), p. 74.

¹⁸DeGroot, p. 122.

We have given consistent testimony to the fact that the Table belongs to the Lord rather than to his disciples and ministers. Consequently there have been no major disputes about who has the right to administer the sacrament. Laymen usually offer the prayers of blessing and dedication for the elements.¹⁹

The Disciples consider it improper to administer communion, except when the Lord's Supper is administered in a locality previously agreed upon by the group of Christians as a place for worship. They contend that private communions have no place in the early church practice--at least in New Testament practice.²⁰

The Lord's Supper is observed partly because it is regarded as the central act of Christian worship.

with us the Lord's Supper is the Central act of Christian worship and is the chief service of every Sunday. We inherit from our Glasite connections the Sunday morning service which includes, without formalism, all the elements of a full and corporate eucharistic act; invocation, penitence, lections, prayers of the brethren, sermon, offering, the Breaking of the Bread, and praise . . . Upon this sacrifice [Christ's] the Church spiritually feeds in fellowship (communion) which is God's giving and our receiving . . . generally speaking, the character of our service has been less penitential than Western rites, and, like Eastern rites, much more eucharistic in the sense of emphasizing the note of thanksgiving, praise, and victory--the Feast of Christ the King and not only of Christ the Victim.²¹

¹⁹Flanagan, p. 73. Disciples do not require ordination as a precondition for presiding at the Lord's Supper. "Holy Communion may be administered by a 'layman' if he is appointed by the Church to do so [our emphasis]" DeGroot, p. 118.

²⁰Brewer, pp. 315-317.

²¹DeGroot, p. 120.

In a recent official Disciples of Christ--Roman Catholic dialogue, from April 29 through May 1, 1968, in St. Louis, Missouri, the following statement was agreed upon with respect to the eucharist:

Each of our churches gathers at least every Sunday around the table of our Lord. We mutually recognize that the bond of Christian unity and the power of Christian life are centered upon eucharistic celebration. For both of us the nature of the church is discernible principally in the fellowship of the Lord's Supper.²²

Other comments indicated "our [Roman Catholic and Disciples] understandings of the Lord's Supper are more similar than we had expected."²³

The Churches of Christ (Disciples) in Canada, who number only about five thousand, hold to the same basic beliefs and practices with regard to the Lord's Supper as do the Disciples of Christ in the United States.²⁴

The noninstrumental Churches of Christ and the "Centrist" bloc of Christian Churches stand to the right of the Disciples, but they too practice a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper.²⁵

²²Unity Trends, I, xiv (June 1, 1968).

²³Ibid.

²⁴Arthur Carl Piepkorn, draft copies of a section, "Churches of Christ (Disciples) in Canada," p. 2, for a forthcoming publication, Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada.

²⁵Murch, pp. 309-310. "They are faithful in attendance upon divine worship and the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper."

Eastern Churches

Eastern Orthodoxy has changed its eucharistic theology and practice very little since the seventh and eighth centuries. One difference between Eastern Orthodoxy as compared with the pre-Vatican-II Roman Catholic Church is the vital function that the congregation plays in the eucharist.

Just as veneration of the Eucharistic elements is not separated from the Eucharistic liturgy, so also consecration is not performed without a congregation. Celebration of the Eucharist by a priest without a congregation present is unthinkable in an Orthodox church. The congregation . . . is invited to the meal and takes part in it.²⁶

At the same time, reception of the eucharist by the lay people is relatively infrequent.

In general the deep awe with which the act of communion is regarded has led to its infrequency. In some Churches, such as the Serbian, total abstention from animal food for at least a week is expected before each communion, which is therefore restricted to special occasions. In other Churches the stress on purification makes confession to the priest, and general reconciliation with one's neighbours, essential to the act of communion. There is, however, a growing tendency towards more frequent partaking of the sacraments but most Eastern Christians still receive it only three or four times a year and some only once--before Easter. Attendance at the Eucharist without communicating is therefore the usual practice of Eastern Christians who consider that the participation in this mystery by prayer is uplifting and purifying.²⁷

²⁶ Ernst Benz, The Eastern Orthodox Church, Its Thought and Life, translated from the German by Richard and Clara Winston (Chicago: Aldone Publishing Co., c.1963), p. 38.

²⁷ Nicolas Zernov, Eastern Christendom (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, c.1961), p. 269.

It is possible that the extensive preparation required of communicants may discourage frequency of reception.

Nevertheless, some voices have been raised on behalf of more frequent reception of the holy communion.

A distinguished Russian Orthodox Christian of the turn of the century, Father John Sergiev of Cronstadt (1829-1909) "revived frequent communion among his followers and used public confession of sins as a means of conversion."²⁸

Apostolos Makrakis (1831-1905), a Greek Orthodox layman excommunicated for his radical attacks on political and ecclesiastical abuses, who nevertheless laid the foundations for the influential Zoe Brotherhood, writes in a strain reminiscent of John Chrysostom:

But if there be any who would offer as an excuse the pretense that they fail to come forward at the Eucharist out of respect for the holy articles, because he deems himself unworthy of the holy articles, he will be told like Saul, "If it be pleasing to the Lord, are respect and honor the same things as listening to the voice of the Lord?" Who has taught people to pay respect and honor by disobedience? Peter, the Apostle, too, out of pretended respect for the Lord, refused to let Him wash his feet, but was told at once, "Unless I wash thee, thou hast no part with me." Thus God rejects unreasonable respect, and discountenances those who would honor him by disobeying Him.²⁹

The other ancient Eastern Christian churches, such as The Church of the East and of the Assyrians and the

²⁸ Ibid., p. 206.

²⁹ Apostolos Makrakis, Memoir on the Nature of the Church of Christ, translated from the 2nd Greek edition by D. Cummings (New York: Christian Brotherhoods, Zealots of Orthodoxy and John the Baptist, c.1947), p. 158.

non-chalcedonian churches of Armenia, Syria, Egypt, and Ethiopia, likewise celebrate the eucharist at least weekly and on high festivals. But in general, the number of lay communicants, except at certain seasons, tends to be minimal.

The Anglican Churches

Ever since the break between the Church of England and Rome, the Anglican ideal has been a celebration of the eucharist at least once a week, although this ideal has often been only imperfectly realized.

In the first Book of Prayer of 1549 a directive was given for non participants to leave the "Quire" during the reception.³⁰ This statement raised the question if non-communicants should be present at the eucharist. The second Book of Prayer of 1552 printed an exhortation after the offertory for use when the curate notes negligence among the people:

And whereas ye offend God so sore in refusing this holy Banquet, I admonish, exhort, and beseech you, that unto this unkindness ye will not add any more: Which thing ye shall do, if ye stand by as gazers and lookers on them that do communicate, and be no partakers of the same yourselves. For what thing can this be accounted else than a further contempt and unkindness unto God? Truly it is a great unthankfulness to say Nay when ye be called: But the fault is much greater when men stand by, and yet will neither eat nor drink this holy

³⁰W. J. Sparrow Simpson, Non-Communicating Attendance (London: Longmans, Green and Co., c.1913), p. 145.

Communion with other. I pray you what else can this be but even to have the mysteries of Christ in derision? It is said unto all, "Take ye and eat; Take, and drink ye all of this; Do this in remembrance of Me." With what face, then, or with what countenance, shall ye hear these words? What will this be but a neglecting, a despising, and mocking of the Testament of Christ? Wherefore, rather than you should so do, depart you hence, and give place to them that be godly disposed.³¹

The debate on allowing non-communicants to attend during the eucharist continued down to the time of the Oxford Movement.³² In 1872, a memorial of the English Church Union, with about 9000 members, gave as one reason for infrequent reception:

Seventhly, because we firmly believe that one main reason for the paucity of communicants, especially among the lower and middle classes, is that they are never present at the celebration of Holy Communion, which in itself is a valuable means of instruction for those who are being prepared to approach the Lord's Table.³³

A celebration of the eucharist at least once a week is normal in the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U. S. A. and in the Anglican Church of Canada.

The Lutheran Church

In Colonial America, the Lutheran Community did not celebrate the eucharist with great frequency. Whenever an

³¹Ibid., pp. 150-151.

³²Ibid., pp. 141-204.

³³Church Union Gazette, March 1, 1872, p. 70, cited in Simpson, p. 209.

ordained clergyman came to a frontier community there might have been a celebration. In parishes with a resident pastor, the sacrament was celebrated regularly not more than four times a year: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and early fall. The practice of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, the father of Lutheranism in America, was only twice a year in his early ministry during the 1740s. Since he was of Pietistic background, this was understandable. The Liturgy of 1748, however, specified three festivals for the celebration of the eucharist, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.³⁴

During Muhlenberg's time, confessional examination, usually private, was held in advance of the administration. The practice of communion announcements was observed. The elders carefully reviewed the names of those attending together with the pastor. Those who lived in sin were expected to give evidence of repentance.³⁵

Gradually the eucharist began to be celebrated more frequently. The minimum number of celebrations in most parishes was set at four. By the later 1800s monthly celebrations began to be held by some.³⁶ Greater frequency was not achieved without stubborn opposition.

³⁴ Helmut T. Lehmann, editor, Meaning and Practice of the Lord's Supper (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1961), p. 140.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 139.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 160. One pastor protested that the annual

During the period of Rationalism in this country it was not difficult for communicants to come to the sacrament without being previously instructed as to its meaning. The only restrictions seemed to have been imposed on those living in obvious sins.³⁷

Initially the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, however, exhibited a modest range in the frequency of reception of the eucharist. Some congregations in the early period of the Synod showed a fairly high frequency of reception. For instance, Trinity in St. Louis, the congregation of C. F. W. Walther, founder of the Missouri Synod, showed a definitely higher degree of frequency than the average of the other congregations of the Missouri Synod at that time. While the majority of the churches averaged around two receptions or less per year per baptized [?] member (here the word Seelenzahl is used), Walther's congregation averaged almost twice that number. The following table illustrates this:

celebration encouraged a superstitious and unspiritual use of the sacrament abetting conceptions of magic. The eucharist, he said, should not be the "annual retaking of the oath of allegiance." Charles Stork, "Conference Reports," Lutheran Observer, May 28, 1880, pp. 419, 422, cited by Reginald W. Deitz, "The Lord's Supper in American Lutheranism," in Lehmann, p. 160. Henry E. Jacobs said, "Where a weekly communion is administered or advocated, it is never the intention that all members of the congregation should commune[?], but only to provide for the individual need . . ." Summary of the Christian Faith (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publishing House, 1905), p. 368. In 1838 another writer declared that the spirit of Lutheran worship called for weekly communion. See Benjamin Kurtz, "Communion Seasons," Lutheran Observer, May 18, 1838.

³⁷Lehmann, pp. 143-144.

TABLE I³⁸

AVERAGE FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION PER BAPTIZED[?]
MEMBER PER YEAR AT TRINITY CHURCH,
ST. LOUIS(1848-1851)

1848 . .	2.87
1849 . .	3.26
1850 . .	3.97
1851 . .	3.98

It is to be noted that such frequency on the Synodical average does not occur until the early 1950s.³⁹ In addition, if the word Seelenzahl designates all baptized members, the frequency of reception per communicant would be considerably higher.

In 1970 the present writer conducted a survey of all three major Lutheran church bodies in the United States and Canada. The purpose of the survey was to determine the approximate frequency of celebration of the eucharist in the Lutheran churches. The questionnaire was a post card consisting of three questions sent to every district/synodical president of the three major Lutheran bodies. The questions were stated as follows:

How many parishes are there in your District/Synod?
Approximately, how many parishes in your District/
Synod celebrate a weekly eucharist?

³⁸ Figures are obtained from the Synodal Berichte der Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio, und andern Staaten (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synod von Missouri, Ohio, und andern Staaten, 1876), passim.

³⁹ See Table III, p. 82.

What is the approximate average number of celebrations per month in your District/Synod?

The results were as follows:

TABLE II

Church Body	Parishes Reported	Parishes Celebrating Weekly	Average Celebrations per Month	Reply (%)
L.C.A.	5024	226	1 per mo.	97%
T.A.L.C.	3789	117	1 per mo.	94%
L.C.--M.S.	4672	615	2 per mo.	86%

It is highly probable that the estimates made by the respective district/synodical presidents were rather conservative. A few reported that there were no churches in their districts that had a weekly eucharist. Some did not report any churches with weekly celebrations because they had no way of determining if there were any.

In general, the results of the survey seem to correlate fairly well with the survey made in the early 1960s by Michael J. Taylor, an American Jesuit ecumenist. Through a questionnaire sent to representative congregations of the major non-Roman Catholic bodies in America, among the Lutherans he found that there was a noticeable difference among the Synods. Missouri Synod Lutherans who responded celebrated the sacrament weekly in almost thirty percent of their parishes, but other Lutheran clergymen who responded celebrated as often in only ten percent of their parishes. Twenty-five percent of the Missouri Synod respondents

celebrated the Sacrament twice monthly while only ten per cent of other Lutheran respondents celebrated this often.⁴⁰

The customary celebration among the United [non-Missouri Synod] groups was monthly; fifty-five per cent of their parishes celebrated the Sacrament this often. The remaining twenty-five percent of the United pastors celebrated quarterly, and, significantly, showed no interest in the renewal. Thirty percent of the Missouri Lutherans celebrated the Sacrament monthly. The remaining fifteen percent of the Missouri pastors were non-committal, so it is impossible to say whether or not any of them celebrated quarterly; none stated specifically that they did. Ten percent of the pastors who celebrated monthly were dissatisfied with "such infrequency" and were working for weekly celebrations. Among both groups, but more prominently among Missouri Lutherans, a number of pastors indicated that the Sacrament was celebrated daily throughout the year in their parishes. Others said that during certain liturgical seasons daily celebrations were held; for example, during Lent, Advent, the octave of Pentecost, etc. . . . Quite frequently pastors mentioned that they celebrated the Mass not only on Sundays, but also on the great festival days of Christ; for example, the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, the Transfiguration, the Epiphany, etc. A few ministers also celebrated Holy Communion on the "Marian Feasts."⁴¹

There are further evidences of an increasing regard for the weekly eucharist among many of the Missouri Synod congregations. Unfortunately, the Lutheran Church in America and The American Lutheran Church do not have statistics which would indicate any particular frequency of reception. The figures of average yearly frequency are available for

⁴⁰Michael J. Taylor, The Protestant Liturgical Renewal (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, c.1963), p. 239.

⁴¹Ibid.

the Missouri Synod. Table III⁴² indicates how the yearly average frequency of reception per communicant in the Missouri Synod has increased during the past 85 years. It is worth noting that until about 1920 the yearly average was consistently about 1.8 per member. Gradually the frequency increases over the years following. The cause of this increase could well be the increase in the frequency of celebration.

In support of the above conjecture is the evidence supplied by various congregations in the Missouri Synod which have either shown a marked increase in the frequency of reception or already have had a remarkably higher average than the Synodical average. These particular congregations have either introduced a weekly eucharist or have had a weekly celebration since their beginning. In Table IV⁴³ one finds nine representative congregations in the Missouri Synod which observe a weekly eucharist.

The first congregation listed in Table IV began a weekly celebration at the end of October, 1969. In October of 1967

⁴²Infra, p. 82. Figures are obtained on the basis of the Statistical Year Book of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1948-1970); Statistical Yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1919-1947); and Statistisches Jahrbuch der deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio, und andern Staaten (St. Louis: Lutherischen Concordia Verlag, 1885-1891; Concordia Publishing House, 1892-1918), passim.

⁴³Ibid. Infra, p. 83.

TABLE IV

TABLE III
AVERAGE NUMBER OF COMMUNIONS
PER COMMUNICANT PER YEAR
FROM 1884 TO 1969
IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH--MISSOURI SYNOD

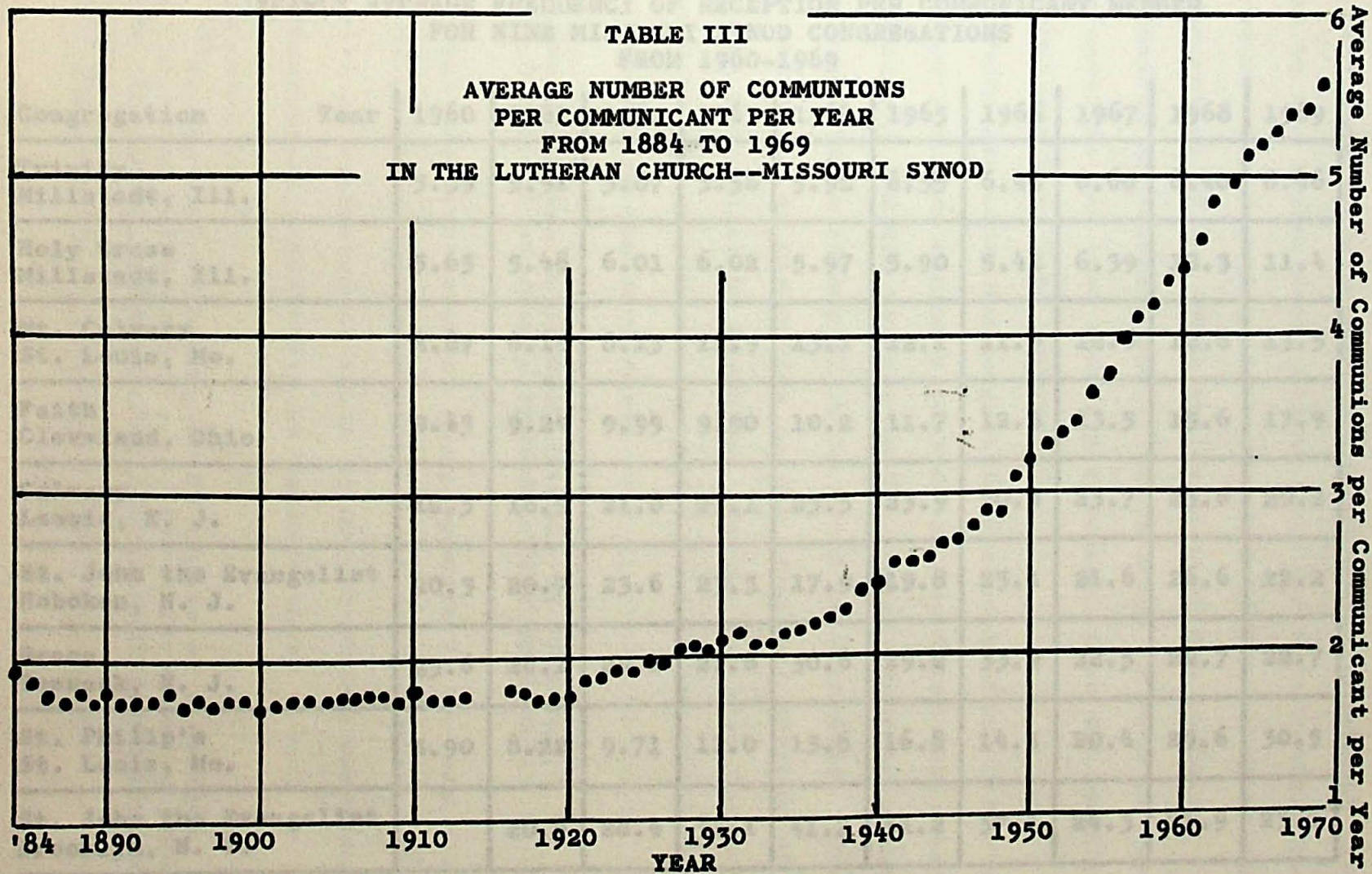


TABLE IV

YEARLY AVERAGE FREQUENCY OF RECEPTION PER COMMUNICANT MEMBER
FOR NINE MISSOURI SYNOD CONGREGATIONS
FROM 1960-1969

Congregation	Year	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Trinity Millstadt, Ill.		5.39	5.31	5.87	5.58	5.92	6.35	6.48	6.60	8.40	8.46
Holy Cross Millstadt, Ill.		5.65	5.48	6.01	6.02	5.97	5.90	5.41	6.39	10.3	11.4
Mt. Calvary St. Louis, Mo.		4.87	8.15	8.15	12.9	13.1	12.1	11.9	12.6	12.6	13.3
Faith Cleveland, Ohio		9.45	9.24	9.95	9.90	10.2	11.7	12.3	13.5	15.6	17.9
Calvary Leonia, N. J.		18.5	18.5	21.8	23.1	23.5	23.9	20.9	23.7	23.6	20.2
St. John the Evangelist Hoboken, N. J.		20.3	20.7	23.6	23.3	17.9	19.8	23.1	21.6	26.6	22.2
Grace Teaneck, N. J.		25.6	28.1	29.1	27.6	30.6	29.2	33.9	22.5	22.7	22.7
St. Philip's St. Louis, Mo.		5.90	8.22	9.71	11.0	13.6	16.8	14.5	20.4	29.6	30.5
St. John the Evangelist Brooklyn, N. Y.			20.8	28.4	32.1	41.2	41.2	37.1	24.3	21.9	23.2

the same congregation began a bi-monthly celebration. Previous to the latter date, celebration was on a monthly basis. The second congregation listed began a weekly celebration in commemoration of the 450th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in October, 1967. The average of both of these congregations has been steadily climbing since the weekly celebrations have been inaugurated.

There are other congregations listed in this table which followed the same apparent pattern as the first two, namely St. Philip's and Mt. Calvary in St. Louis. Another congregation showing a steady climb is Faith in Cleveland. One item which may be misleading is the frequency average of St. John the Evangelist in Brooklyn. During the last three years a round figure of nine thousand was used as the number of those receiving the eucharist.

The Christian Fellowship (People on "The Way,"
Disciples of Jesus, Friends, "Two-by-twos")

This movement oriented group appears to be very reluctant to give out any information about its activities.⁴⁴ Its size is estimated at about 15,000 to 30,000 members.⁴⁵ Its theological orientation is conservative.

⁴⁴ Arthur Carl Piepkorn, draft copies of a section, "The Christian Fellowship," p. 2, for a forthcoming publication, Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

The Lord's supper ("breaking of bread") is observed every Sunday. Bread and unfermented wine in a common cup are used and only believers may take part. The service is understood as a memorial meal at which the communicants are to reflect on what Christ has done for them and what they owe him.⁴⁶

**The Apostolic Church
(In Canada and the United States)**

With a membership of seven hundred persons in the United States and Canada, this church body came out of Welsh Pentecostalism. They observe "the Lord's Supper on the first day of every week with the bread portraying Christ's body and wine portraying His blood."⁴⁷

The Plymouth Brethren (Christian Brethren)

The Plymouth movement originated in England in the mid-1820s because of the desire of its early adherents to separate church and state. The movement has about ten branches that are independent of each other because of minor differences.

Brethren celebrate the Lord's supper ("the breaking of bread") at a separate meeting--the only meeting at which Brethren take an offering--every Lord's day, usually in the morning. Any male who feels led to do so by the Holy Spirit may pray publicly, read and comment on a passage of the Bible, suggest a hymn to be

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁷ Arthur Carl Piepkorn, draft copies of a section, "The Apostolic Church," p. 2, for a forthcoming publication, Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada.

sung, give thanks for the bread and wine, or pass the elements.⁴⁸

The Catholic Apostolic Church

This all but extinct group had its origin in the early 1800s in England and incorporated many elements of Anglican, Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches into its worship. During the era that it flourished, it affirmed:

The two Dominical sacraments are the eucharist and baptism. The eucharist was celebrated every Lord's day and was reserved in a tabernacle with a sanctuary lamp burning before it; but the Catholic Apostolic Church denied both that the eucharistic elements ceased to be bread and that the eucharistic sacrifice is a repetition of the death of Christ.⁴⁹

The Churches of God in the Fellowship of the Son of God, The Lord Jesus Christ

This particular religious community, which has only seven churches and fewer than three hundred members in North America, split from the Plymouth Brethren.⁵⁰ In the minds of the founders, the Plymouth Brethren were not sufficiently

⁴⁸ Arthur Carl Piepkorn, draft copies of a section, "The Plymouth Brethren," p. 5, for a forthcoming publication, Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada.

⁴⁹ Arthur Carl Piepkorn, draft copies of a section, "The Catholic Apostolic Church," p. 3, for a forthcoming publication, Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada.

⁵⁰ Arthur Carl Piepkorn, draft copies of a section, "The Churches of God in the Fellowship of the Son of God, The Lord Jesus Christ," p. 1, for a forthcoming publication, Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada.

conscious of the importance of the principles laid down by Christ and the apostles.⁵¹ They formed their own community more in line with what they considered apostolic principles. "The meeting for the 'breaking of bread' in remembrance of Christ and in proclamation of his death is held every Sunday morning in every assembly."⁵²

The Renovated Church of Jesus Christ

This schismatic Roman Catholic community holds to the conservative theology of the Roman Catholic Church before Vatican II. It has strong mystical, ascetic, apocalyptic, and Mariological thrusts.⁵³

Children under the age of reason may receive the holy communion. The faithful may receive the communion oftener than once a day; the eucharistic fast is not required. The sacrament may be reserved in "eucharistic homes," that is, homes of families belonging to the Renovated Church of Jesus Christ that are authorized to have the reserved sacrament. Priests may say mass in any decent and suitable place, day or night. Prescribed fasts and abstinence no longer bind the offender under pain of grave sin, but every Christian must engage in voluntary mortification. Failure to assist at Sunday mass is no longer a mortal sin, but the faithful must sanctify the day by prayer and retirement from "the frivolities of the world."⁵⁴

⁵¹Ibid., p. 2.

⁵²Ibid., p. 3.

⁵³Arthur Carl Piepkorn, draft copies of a section, "The Renovated Church of Jesus Christ," p. 2, for a forthcoming publication, Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 2-3.

The "Disciples" among them are an order of married or unmarried members committed to an ascetic life.

If they are married [they] are required to make their homes "centers of fervor"; wherever possible, they are expected to have the reserved sacrament in their homes ("eucharistic homes").⁵⁵

In the United States there are an estimated 250 "eucharistic homes."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 6.

¹ James Hastings Nichols, professor of church history, Princeton Theological Seminary, is of the opinion that this change "is perhaps the most radical in the whole history of the Lord's Supper." Corporate Worship in the Reformed Tradition (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), p. 22.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

In the long history of eucharistic practices, there emerge many factors which may have contributed toward the frequency or infrequency of both the celebration and the reception of the eucharist.

In general, the early church is characterized by at least a weekly celebration of the eucharist in most of the known areas. At times these celebrations were three or more a week. During the same time the frequency of reception was at least as frequent as the celebrations, and in some areas the reception was more frequent, that is before every meal, because of the practice of reservation of the species in the home. Gradually the eucharist became separated from the common meal during the first half of the second century.¹

The penitential system in parts of Christendom around the third and fourth century may have given cause to lowering the frequency of reception. The costanders were allowed in the presence of those partaking the eucharist.

¹James Hastings Nichols, professor of church history, Princeton Theological Seminary, is of the opinion that this change "is perhaps the most radical in the whole history of the Lord's Supper." Corporate Worship in the Reformed Tradition (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, c.1968), p. 20.

After the middle of the fifth century one finds a shift in the frequency of celebration and reception. The frequency of reception drops off sharply while the frequency of celebration gradually increases until, during the Middle Ages, normally each priest celebrated one mass every day.²

A major factor which led to a lowering of the frequency of reception was the struggle against Teutonic Arianism. Christ's divinity was so emphasized that approaching the elements was a matter of terror and fear. The practice of surrounding the elements with awe and mystery, together with the type of artificial surroundings that would least suggest the eating of a common meal, gave added support in discouraging people from approaching the eucharist and partaking. Added to these was the idea of worthiness³ as a concept of perfection necessary before receiving the Supper, such as Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura emphasized. The decrees of the councils in setting a minimum number of participations tended to canonize these minimums as averages and even maximums.

²Karl Rahner, a modern German Jesuit scholar, attributes the frequency of celebration to the influence of the liturgy rather than on any individual piety at any given time. See Karl Rahner and Angelus Häusling, The Celebration of the Eucharist, translated from the German by W. J. O'Hara (New York: Herder and Herder, c.1968), p. 1.

³For an enlightening discussion of "ἀγιος," see Werner Foerster, "ἀγιος," in Gerhard Kittel, editor, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, translated from the German by Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1964), I, 379-380.

Not to be forgotten was the influx of new converts from the pagan tribes into the church. The church had to be content with their presence in their eucharistic celebrations as they took the church by storm. The church was not prepared to receive them and to instruct them adequately.

At the time of the Reformation, the Reformers among the Lutherans for the most part seem to have been successful in establishing a renewed frequent reception. Among the Reformed this was not attempted to the degree evident in Lutheranism. Luther had emphasized the idea that the eucharist is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was a gift that should not be refused or neglected, but used with the full intent that Christ placed on it.

Even though Calvin desired a weekly eucharist, the opposition to it within the Reformed community was too great. In some places reception of the Lord's Supper became the touchstone of moral reform among the people and such a heavy discipline was connected with the sacrament that it lost its chief characteristic as being a gift from God. The effect of the age of Pietism and Rationalism only tended to emphasize the Reformed policies on policing the eucharist.

The more evangelical thrust of early Lutheranism was replaced in the later Pietistic and Rationalistic eras by a more legalistic Reformed emphasis. Preaching and teaching

became the main and sometimes only emphasis in the religious life of the people and the eucharist was observed only on special occasions.

The frontier life of America with its rugged individualism was uncongenial to the idea of dependence on other members of the Body of Christ, particularly as expressed in the eucharist. Yet we find the Disciples of Christ as well as other denominations making a sincere effort to follow what they saw as the dominical injunction of a weekly commemorative meal. Implicit in their observance of the Lord's Supper is a concept of social awareness and mutual dependence on each other.

The Lutheran, Anglican, and Eastern Orthodox communions appear to be regaining a higher appreciation of the eucharist and have been stressing a greater frequency not only of celebration but also of participation. It is hoped that with additional emphasis on the eucharist as a gift from God as well as a sacrifice of praise to Him such a participation will increase. The traditional position of all these three major bodies would favor a highly frequent reception.⁴

⁴In raising the question of how often the eucharist is to be celebrated and received, Karl Rahner suggests the following principle: "The general conditions of physical and moral possibility being presupposed, the sacrifice of the altar is to be offered as often and only as often as in it and by it what is in human estimation a greater measure of actual personal participation in the Mass as Christ's sacrifice is attained, a greater measure than would be achieved if Mass were said less often or more

The statistics gathered with reference to frequency in the Lutheran church bodies in America appear to confirm the fact that if the eucharist is offered more frequently, the frequency of reception will definitely tend to be higher.

Finally, one of the main issues in present day ecumenical dialogue is the eucharist. Unfortunately in the past the eucharist has often been the point of separation rather than of unification. The frequent use of this gift of God will tend to unite those bodies that use it as Christ commanded it to be used.

frequently. In other words, Mass must be celebrated as often as its repetition increases the fides and devotio of those taking part." Rahner and Häusling, p. 91.

- 1935.
- Brochard, Caspar Erasmus. Systema Theologiae Christianae. 2 vols. Ulm: Johannes Gerdin, 1636.
- Bruns, Herman Theodore, editor. Antiquitates Christianae. Berlin: G. Reiner, 1889.
- Calov, Abraham. Systema Theologiae Christianae. Mittheberg: Christian Schödel, 1677.
- Calvin, John. Institutes of the Christian Religion. Translated from the French by Ford Lewis Battles. Vol. III in Library of Christian Classics. Edited by John F. McNeill. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960.
- Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum. 86 vols. Vienna: Academia Litterarum Caesarea, 1822.
- De defectibus in missa occurrentibus. [Severini?] Coloniae: de Colonia(?), 1590(?).
- Bedeckens, Georgius. Theologiae Christianae Systema. I. Edited by J. S. Sartorius. Jena: G. B. Neumann, 1671.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Primary Sources

- Aquinas, Thomas. Catena super Joannis evangelium. Vol. XII in Opera Omnia. Parma: Petrus Fiaccadori, 1862.
- _____. Summa Theologiae. Vol. XII in Opera Omnia. Rome: Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 1906.
- Arnold, Gottfried. Unpartheyische Kirchen und Ketzer-historie vom Anfang des Neuen Testaments biss auf das Jahr Christi 1688. Vol. 1. Frankfurt-am-Main: Thomas Fritschens Erben, 1729.
- Boehmer, Heinrich. Analekten zur Geschichte des Franciscus von Assisi. 2nd edition. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1930.
- Bonaventura. Sententiae. Vol. IV in Opera Omnia. Florence: Clara Aqua, 1889.
- Bretschneider, Carolus G., and others, editors. Corpus Reformatorum. 101 vols. Halle and other places: Schwetschke und Söhne and other publishers, 1834-.
- Brochmand, Caspar Erasmus. Systema universae theologiae. 2 vols. Ulm: Johannes Görllin, 1638.
- Bruns, Herman Theodore, editor. Apostolic Canons. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1889.
- Calov, Abraham. Systema locorum theologicorum. Wittemberg: Christian Schrödter, 1677.
- Calvin, John. Institutes of the Christian Religion. Translated from the French by Ford Lewis Battles. Vol. XXI in Library of Christian Classics. Edited by John T. McNeill. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, c.1960.
- Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum. 82 vols. Vienna: Academia Litterarum Caesarea, 1882.
- De defectibus in missa occurrentibus. [Seville(?): Paulus de Colonia(?), 1490(?)].
- Dedekennus, Georgius. Thesaurus consiliorum et decisionum. I. Edited by J. E. Gerhard. Jena: Zacharia Hertel, 1671.

- Deferrari, Roy Joseph, editor. The Fathers of the Church. 62 vols. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947-.
- deLagarde, P. A., editor. Constitutiones Apostolorum. London: Williams and Norgate, 1862.
- Dr. Martin Luthers Werke. 89 vols. Weimar: Herman Böhlau, 1883-.
- Dunte, Ludovicus. Decisiones mille et sex casuum conscientiae. Lubeck: Ulrich Wetstein, 1664.
- Easton, Burton Scott, editor and translator. The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus. Ann Arbor: Cushing-Malloy, Inc., 1962, reprint from Cambridge: University Press, c.1934.
- Friedberg, Aemilius, editor. Corpus juris canonici. I. Graz: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1955.
- Funk, Francis Xavier, editor. Doctrina duodecim Apostolorum. Tübingen: Heinrich Laupp, 1887.
- Gerhard, Johannes. Loci Theologici. V. Preuss edition. Berlin: Gustav Schlawitz, 1867.
- Hadden, Arthur West, and William Stubbs. Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1871.
- Kidd, B. J. Documents Illustrative of the Continental Reformation. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911.
- Kolde, Theodor von. Analecta Lutherana. Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1883.
- Lefevre, Jacques. Epistole divi Pauli apostoli. Paris: Joannes de la Porte, 1517(?).
- Lietzmann, Hans, editor. Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche. 6th edition. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1967.
- Löscher, Valentin Ernst. Vollständiger Timotheus Verinus. I. Wittenberg: Samuel Hannauern, 1726.
- Lubac, Henri de, and Jean Daniélou, editors. Sources Chrésiennes. 153 vols. Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1951-.

- Mansi, Giovanni Domenico, editor. Collectio sacrorum conciliorum. 53 vols. Paris: Hubert, 1901-1927.
- Migne, J. P., editor. Patrologia Graeca. 161 vols. Paris: n. p., 1800-1875.
- Migne, J. P., editor. Patrologia Latina. 221 vols. Paris: n. p., 1800-1875.
- Morton, James, editor and translator. The Ancren Riwle. London: Nichols and Sons, 1853.
- Plinius, Gaius Caecilius Secundus. Epistulae in Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum. Edited by C. F. W. Mueller. Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1903.
- Quenstedt, Johannes Andreas. Theologia. Wittenberg: Matthew Henckel, 1685.
- Reynolds, Roger E. "A Florilegium on the Ecclesiastical Grades in CLM 19414: The Testimony to Ninth-Century Clerical Instruction," Harvard Theological Review, LXIII (April 1970), 235-259.
- Richter, Aemilius Ludwig, editor. Die Evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts. 2 vols. Weimar: Verlag des Landes-Industrie-comptoirs, 1846.
- Roberts, Alexander, and James Donaldson, editors. The Ante-Nicene Fathers. 10 vols. New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1896.
- Robinson, Paschal. The Writings of St. Francis of Assisi. Philadelphia: The Dolphin Press, 1906.
- Schaff, Philip, and Henry Wace, editors. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. 14 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912.
- Schmidt-Clausing, Fritz, editor. Zwingli's liturgische Formulare. Frankfurt-am-Main: Otto Lembeck, 1970.
- Sehling, Emil, editor. Die Evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des XVI. Jahrhunderts. 14 vols. Leipzig: O. R. Reisland, 1902-.
- Statistical Yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1919-1947.

Statistical Yearbook of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.
St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1948-.

Statistisches Jahrbuch der deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten. St. Louis: Lutherischen Concordia Verlag, 1885-1891; Concordia Publishing House, 1892-1918.

Synodal Berichte der deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio, und andern Staaten. St. Louis: Druckerei der Synod von Missouri, Ohio, und andern Staaten, 1876.

Thompson, Bard. Liturgies of the Western Church. Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Co., c.1961.

B. Secondary Sources

Benz, Ernst. The Eastern Orthodox Church, Its Thought and Life. Translated from the German by Richard and Clara Winston. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., c.1963.

Bouyer, Louis. Eucharist. Translated from the French by Charles Underhill Quinn. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, c.1968.

Brewer, Grover Cleveland. Contending for the Faith. Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., c.1955.

Bridgett, Thomas Edward. History of the Holy Eucharist in Great Britain. I. London: C. Kegan Paul, 1881.

Browe, Peter, Die häufige Communion im Mittelalter. Münster: Regensbergsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1938.

Buck, Carlton C. At the Lord's Table. St. Louis: Bethany Press, c.1956.

Buttrick, George Arthur, editor. The Interpreter's Bible. 12 vols. New York: Abingdon Cokesbury Press, c.1954.

Cullmann, Oscar. "The Meaning of the Lord's Supper in Primitive Christianity," in Essays on the Lord's Supper. Translated from the French by J. G. Davies. Plymouth, England: Latimer, Trend, and Co., c.1958.

DeGroot, Alfred Thomas. Disciple Thought: A History. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University, c.1965.

- Delling Gerhard. Worship in the New Testament. Translated from the German by Percy Scott. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, c.1962.
- Flanagan, James M., editor. What We Believe. St. Louis: Bethany Press, c.1956.
- Foerster, Werner. "Eucharist," in Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. I. Edited by Gerhard Kittel. Translated from the German by Geoffrey Bromiley. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1964.
- Garrison, Winfred Ernest, and Alfred T. DeGroot. The Disciples of Christ: A History. St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, c.1948.
- Graff, Paul. Geschichte der Auflösung der alten gottesdienstlichen Formen in der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands. 2 vols. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, c.1937.
- Harrell, David Edwin, Jr. Quest for A Christian America: The Disciples of Christ and American Society to 1866. Nashville: The Disciples of Christ Historical Society, c.1966.
- Jackson, Samuel Macauley, editor. The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge. IV. Ann Arbor: Cushing-Malloy, 1950.
- Jacobs, Henry E. A Summary of the Christian Faith. Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publishing House, 1905.
- Jungmann, Joseph Andreas. The Mass of the Roman Rite. Translated from the German by Francis A. Brunner. 2 vols. New York: Benziger Brothers, c.1951.
- _____. Missarum Sollemnia. 2 vols. Vienna: Herder, c.1949.
- _____. Pastoral Liturgy. Translated from the German. New York: Herder and Herder, 1962.
- Kalb, Friedrich. Theology of Worship in 17th Century Lutheranism. Translated from the German by Henry Hamann. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1965.

- Kawerau, G. "Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Lutherischen Lehre von der Konsekration im 16 Jahrhundert," in Zeitschrift für Pastoral-Theologie. XXV. Berlin: Reuther und Reichard, 1902. pp. 293-299.
- King, Archdale Arthur. Eucharistic Reservation in the Western Church. London: A. R. Mowbray and Co., c.1965.
- Kurtz, Benjamin. "Communion Seasons," Lutheran Observer, May 18, 1838.
- Lehmann, Helmut T., editor. Meaning and Practice of the Lord's Supper. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1961.
- Lietzmann, Hans. Mass and the Lord's Supper. Translated from the German by Dorothea H. G. Reeve. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1953-.
- Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue. 3 vols. Published jointly by U. S. A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation and the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.
- Makrakis, Apostolos. Memoir on the Nature of the Church of Christ. Translated from the second edition by D. Cummings. New York: Christian Brotherhoods, Zealots of Orthodoxy and John the Baptist, c.1947.
- Maxwell, William Delbert. A History of Worship in the Church of Scotland. London: Oxford University Press, 1955.
- _____. An Outline of Christian Worship. London: Oxford University Press, 1936.
- Meyer, Hans Bernhard. Luther und die Messe. Paderborn: Bonifacius Druckerei, c.1965.
- Murch, James DeForest. Christians Only. Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., c.1962.
- Nichols, James Hastings. Corporate Worship in the Reformed Tradition. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, c.1968.
- Ohl, J. F. "The Liturgical Deterioration of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," Memoirs of the Lutheran Liturgical Association. IV. Pittsburgh: n. p., 1906.

- Piepkorn, Arthur Carl. Draft copies of a forthcoming publication, Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada.
- Platyna, B. The Lives of the Popes. I. Translated from the Latin by W. Benham. Edinburgh: Turnbull and Spears, n. d.
- Preuss, Hans. Die Geschichte der Abendmahlsfrömmigkeit in Zeugnissen und Berichten. Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, c.1949.
- Rahner, Karl, and Angelus Häussling. The Celebration of the Eucharist. Translated from the German by W. J. O'Hara. New York: Herder and Herder, c.1968.
- Reed, Luther D. Worship. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1959.
- Sasse, Hermann, This Is My Body. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1959.
- Schermann, Theodor. "Das 'Brotbrechen' im Urchristentum," part II, in Biblische Zeitschrift. VIII. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1910.
- Simpson, W. J. Sparrow. Non-Communicating Attendance. London: Longmans, Green and Co., c.1913.
- Stone, Darwell. A History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist. 2 vols. London: Longmans, Green and Co., c.1909.
- Tappert, Theodore G., editor. The Book of Concord. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, c.1959.
- _____. "History and the Frequency of Communion," The Lutheran Quarterly, XI (November 1959), 286-297.
- Taylor, Michael J. The Protestant Liturgical Renewal. Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, c.1963.
- Unity Trends, I. (June 1, 1968).
- Vajta, Vilmos. Luther on Worship, An Interpretation. Translated and condensed from the German by U. S. Leupold. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1958.
- _____. Die Theologie des Gottesdienstes bei Luther. Lund: Carl Blom, 1952.

Vokes, Frederick Ercolo. The Riddle of the Didache.
London: SPCK, 1938.

West, Robert Frederick. Alexander Campbell and Natural
Religion. New Haven Conn.: Yale University Press,
c.1948.

Zernov, Nicolas. Eastern Christendom. London: Weidenfeld
and Nicolson, c.1961.