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Ceremonial and the Sacramentals which are Authorized in the Agenda Used by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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CEREMONIAL AND THE SACRAMENTALS
WHICH ARE AUTHORIZED IN THE AGENDA USED BY
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD

A Research Paper Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for elective
P-505

by
Peter S. Hoyer
March 1971


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And every one who handles the subject of religious ceremonial will do well to think beforehand what his own affinity of mind is, and to make allowance accordingly. It is only by recollecting continually his own personal bias that he will be able to be fair and considerate to others.¹

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PREFACE

In order that there be understanding as to the direction of this paper, a few introductory remarks are necessary. One of the unfortunate things about this topic is the lack of Lutheran materials on ceremonial and the sacramentals. While much has been written on the two or three sacraments of Lutheranism and Rome's other four as they occur as occasional services for Lutherans, very little has been written about sacramentals and their ceremony. However, many of the ceremonial principles which apply to the Eucharist can also be applied to our topic. Because we shall be drawing heavily on the ceremonial for the sacraments, our definition of liturgy is important. We shall use Paul H. D. Lang's, which broadens the base of the term. "Liturgy is the worship of God by the universal church or by an individual Christian or a group of Christians as an expression of the church's official worship."² Or further: "By liturgy we mean the church's worship as distinguished from private, personal, and group devotions."³ Liturgy, then, is defined as a corporate activity of the church universal, a dimension beyond mere locality. With these definitions in mind, the reader will be able to read this work to the best advantage, ignoring the usual connotation of liturgy as applying only to the Eucharist.

The direction of the ceremonial writings of Lutherans in this century has been based on its common catholic heritage with the See of Rome and with the See of Canterbury. These principles are still evident in the more recent literature. We shall direct our thinking in this work on ceremonial within the liturgical churches of the Western Rite. Thus we shall avoid speaking of Eastern ceremonial among the various Orthodox churches; and we shall avoid speaking of the ceremonial (or lack of it) among the Reformed or Protestant churches.

It might help to summarize the Roman Catholic point of view concerning sacramentals, to define what they are. The information presented is from the New Catholic Encyclopedia (1967) and includes Vatican II's latest words on the subject. The article begins by saying that sacramentals are "sacred signs instituted by the Church to prepare for and prolong the sanctifying effects of the Sacraments." That is a simple answer compared with the official definition of Vatican II:

"These are sacred signs which bear a resemblance to the Sacraments: they signify effects, particularly of a spiritual kind, which are obtained through the Church's intercession. By them men are disposed to receive the chief effect of the Sacraments, and various occasions in life are rendered holy."

There is a difference of opinion, however, whether the blessing itself or the object blessed is the sacramental. The author of the article seems to say the evidence points to the former point of view being preferred. Even some of the ceremonies surrounding the seven sacraments might be considered sacramentals (e.g. the blessing of salt at baptism), since they have not been instituted by Christ. Thus it can be said that "sacramentals could only have been instituted by the Church in service of the Sacraments, of which they are imitations." They are connected with the sacraments, such as the blessing of ashes with Penance and the dedication of churches with Holy Orders.

The theology of the article is concise and straight forward. It states that "all sacramentals, as everything else in the Church, are related to the Eucharist." On this basis, Vatican II declared that the faithful must be able to participate in the sacramentals, as it is to do also in the Eucharist. From a Roman Catholic point of view, then, "sacramentals are an extension of the central work of the Church, her worship of God with her Head in His Sacrifice and other saving actions." Of what use are sacramentals? The answer is stated clearly:

Their first function is to extend the sign language of the acts of Christ Himself and to prepare men for the most fruitful possible participation in these. Beyond this, they remind us that all life's activities have a Christian dimension and bless these.⁴

Two other notes are in order at this stage. One is to give St. Thomas Aquinas' classic view of the divisions of the sacramentals.

Sacramentals may be divided, following St. Thomas Aquinas, into consecrations (benedictiones constitutivae, or consecrationes), blessings (benedictiones invocativae), and exorcisms (exorcismi). The first stamp as sacred the persons or things in question; the second transmit God's special help and grace if used in a reverent and trusting manner; while the third are intended to repel or liberate from diabolic influences. In accordance with a liturgical principle, sacramentals often precede consecrations or sacraments...⁵

Second, one Lutheran in a discussion of consecrations gives the following information:

Du Fresne's Glossary gives the following definitions:

A bishop dedicates a hall, temple, altar. That is he presents the place to God, blesses and sanctifies it.

A bishop consecrates the vessels of the church, the chrism, oil, incense, etc. He consecrates those things which are thus separated from a common to a sacred use.

When the grace of God is invoked on persons and on a religious use of things, the benediction is pronounced. It is performed with the sign of the cross, invocation of the Holy Ghost, imposition of hands, ointment, holy water, incense, etc., with the use of the prescribed forms contained in the Benedictionals of the Roman Church. Some of the benedictions are pronounced by bishops only, others by any ordinary minister.⁶

According to Roman Catholic usage, there are blessings done by a priest, consecrations done by a bishop, and blessings done by a priest only with the permission of a bishop.⁷ In our discussion of sacramentals and our description of some, as laid out in the agenda used by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, we shall not be so distinct. Rather, we shall view the blessing of various objects in one category, the category of sacramentals. We note that the Agenda uses the word "dedication" in referring to what is done to a church,

bell, or dwelling.* And since we have no bishops in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, it is perhaps useless to divide the sacramentals into rites conducted by bishops or clergy.^o

Since neither The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church nor The Lutheran Cyclopedia refer to Lutheran usage of sacramentals, and only discuss them as rituals of the Roman Catholic Church, we might do well to set down an introductory definition of sacramentals in our own words. We would say they are services of blessing for persons and things, where the special blessing of God is asked by the Church for these objects or people. This is done because of the role they are to play in the life of the Church and her people, or because of something that has happened to them (e.g. the churching of women). This will be refined as the paper develops. For this paper, we shall be concerned only with the blessing of things, objects to be used by the Church and her people for the greater glory of God and the proclamation of the Gospel.

*That is not to say that we agree with the practise. Nor is all of American Lutheranism in agreement. One should note the usages as given in The Occasional Services used by the Lutheran Church in America and The American Lutheran Church. More work has to be done on definitions, but that is not the purpose of this paper. That is a project for another time and another paper. Moreover, it should be noted that the Missouri Synod's worship commission several years ago decided that instead of revising the Agenda, it would suggest the use of The Occasional Services when present supplies of the Agenda were exhausted.

^oAs Arthur Carl Piepkorn says in another context: "In the West, the use of a pectoral cross has been common only since the seventeenth century and has identified a Roman Catholic bishop or abbot Since we do not have bishops, abbots, canons, or monastic orders bound to wear such a device, it would seem to be a species of presumption for any of our clergy to wear pectoral crosses or crucifixes over their vestments."⁸ One could go, perhaps, in the other direction and suggest that since the pectoral cross as worn by bishops is an invention of the seventeenth century, more ancient usage (especially at the time of the Reformation?) would permit pectoral crosses. And by extension, the use of certain blessings by bishops and others by parish pastors. Again this is for another paper. We only mention it here.

There are two things we shall not be about: One is that we are not setting up confessional backing for ceremonial or sacramentals. We want to go beyond that. Ceremonial and sacramentals are a part of Lutheranism's catholic heritage and would not be objected to in the Confessions (though their misuse would be). If one is interested in this aspect of the topic, he would do well to read The Book of Concord or Arthur Carl Piepkorn's pamphlet, What the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church Have to Say About Worship and the Sacraments, especially pages 7-12. The other thing about which we shall not concern ourselves is the presentation of general ceremonial already found in Charles McClean's The Conduct of the Services, a revision and expansion of Piepkorn's The Conduct of the Service. While this might not always be possible, we hope that the contents of this work will be an extension of McClean's into the area of ceremonial and the sacramentals. There will be places where we disagree with McClean's conclusions and directions. While we are not doing a critique of his work, some mention may be made of the differences. Our conclusions and directions may seem to differ to one one who has read and studied McClean, but we shall not be at pains to point them out. Some of our suggestions will come as a result not only of sixteenth century foundations of Lutheran ceremonial, but also as a result of the trend toward liturgical reform in the twentieth century. On the basis of Chapters I-III and Appendixes A and B, our suggestions in Chapter IV will take on what we feel has real meaning for the Church today, especially the Lutheran branch.

We shall give direction only to some of the sacramentals and their ceremonies in the Agenda. This is due to space, time, and the purpose of the Fourth Year Research Paper at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

CHAPTER I

AN APPROACH TOWARD CEREMONIAL IN THE SACRAMENTALS

Liturgiology

To a great extent, the science of liturgiology has had to struggle on its own within the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Instead of being of definite importance in the theological training and life of Missouri Synod clergy, liturgiology has been relegated to the personal interest of the seminarian and the clergy in the field. The situation is changing to an extent, but not in comparison to the importance of the subject.

Liturgiology is an independent theological science, having its own subject-matter, the worship laid down by Christ and the Church, and its own historical-exegetical method. It is independent of pastoral theology, which did not make its appearance as a special branch of theology until modern times.¹

If one is ready to accept that statement, then it is time to start acting as though it were so. The science of worship in words and form, while being independent, is also intricately bound up with the other areas of theological education. They cannot, and should not, be separated. But this interdependency does not have other theological sciences at the center and liturgiology on the perimeter. The situation is actually reversed. This is not just an academic question, a question of how to set up a curriculum for theological schools. Rather, it affects the very life of the Church, the laity.

"No liturgical finger can be given without danger of losing the theological arm". Liturgiology is therefore not an "extra" in the theological curriculum but its very core and should be taught in the context of Dogmatics, Church-history and Pastoralia. For it is in worship, much more than in sermons or lectures, that theology makes its impact on the faithful.²

The Church is always interested, so she says, in making theology relevant and alive for her people. If she is serious, then she should take another deep and serious look at what she is doing in the area of liturgiology. Part of the reason for this paper is to take another look at how we go about making worship, and the theology it presents, alive and a vital aspect of people's lives.

Worship

We are not concerned just with making worship and theology alive for the Church's people. But even more, we are attempting to make the people themselves alive to and in worship. If worship is response and the people do not respond to the vitality of worship, the point has been missed. The classic definition of liturgy as the work of the people requires action (or reaction) on their part.

The Liturgy in the broadest sense, the whole ceremony of divine worship, constitutes one of the most important signs of life of the Church. One can, therefore, perceive in the liturgy something of the real life of the Church.³

It is only as the people are at work that others can see that the Church is alive. For what goes on within the church building, if it is alive, cannot but spread to the outside. All along, it is not ceremony for its own sake that is being sought to make worship more lively. Rather, the people of God, the people of the Church, are always uppermost in mind. "We plead for the recognition of that which is in every believing heart, the desire to use the privilege of worship, for opportunity for this to come forth."⁴

Worship's actions are really the people's movements. It is not a stage show, but a co-ordinated effort of the pastor and the people. Their action extends beyond what is visible to the eye. The pastor and people "are not

engaging in the recitation of a ritual or in the performance of certain functions and ceremonies; they are striving to realize the Presence and abide there, offering the outpourings of heart and soul"5 It is direction God-ward and not turned in upon themselves. The movements are an aid to attaining this "God-realization." As we shall see later, movement is a natural response of people, a natural means of communication. Or to put it another way, the total man is to be involved in worship. As one Roman Catholic theologian has put it:

There are those who criticise the elaborate ceremonial of Catholic worship and who, in defense of a more austere form of worship, quote the scriptural text to the effect that we should worship God in spirit and in truth. A purely intellectual cult of God, without external expression, would indeed be a worship of Him in spirit but it would not be a worship of God in truth. It would not be true to man's human nature. We are men and not angels. We are composed of matter as well as spirit, of body as well as soul. Hence the body with its senses as well as the soul with its faculties must be concerned in worship of God. The body is the instrument through which the soul expresses its activity.⁶

Ceremonial

The word "ceremonial" defines the actions of the people of God (both clergy and laity) moving in worship. It is this aspect of worship which we hope to emphasize in this paper, seeking the "why" and "how" of what the people do. There is a definite progression in ceremonial life within the Church. Walter Howard Frere set them out as: "experiment or innovation", "consolidation and settlement", and "stagnation and formalism."⁷ Obviously, the place we want to stay is within stages one and two. For with experiment must come a stabilizing process if the people are going to be able to do worship to their best. Constant change without "consolidation" makes for a people unsure if they are coming or going. A lack of surety leads to an

inability and lack of desire to participate fully. That is not to disparage experiment, but to say experiment must be responsible.

In an effort to put these two stages into action, students at Concordia Seminary have available to them a manual on the conduct of the main services of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, prepared by Charles McClean. This work is part of what is being done to make worship, in its ceremonial aspect, a living entity within the Church and among its people. McClean writes in his introduction: "In addition to the rites and rubrics of our authorized service books, three principles have guided the preparation of this manual: historic precedent, ecumenical consensus, and contemporary need."⁸ This manual is an attempt to place the importance of worship and liturgiology back in its proper place in the life of the theological curriculum and the worship of the Church. But more must be said. In the area of ceremonial, development must continue so that ceremony can be useful to the worshipping community. As we speak of ceremonial in this work, we shall have a specific direction in mind. "For a sound basis of all liturgical development we must demand: Reality, objectivity, simplicity and straight-forwardness expressed in exact language;...."⁹ Hopefully this direction will show itself in the rubrics discussed and proposed in Chapter IV for some of the sacramentals in the agenda used by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Sacramentals

The sacramentals are an extension of the three sacraments of Lutheranism and the other four of Roman Catholicism. For our purposes, we shall say that the sacramentals are outside the classic seven sacraments of Rome. As Martin Hellriegel has put it:

The sacramentals, as the word indicates, are the "little sacraments," the completion, unfolding and radiation of the sacrificial sacrament and the six others, either preparing for the sacraments or accompanying us home as we return from them to our work and duties.¹⁰

The Church takes the opportunity to make all things that touch the Christian in his life a positive force. It even extends to making the sign of the Holy Cross. According to Rome's definitions, this too is a sacramental.¹¹ Martin Luther suggests the very same thing when in his Large Catechism's discussion of the Second Commandment he says that children make the sign of the Cross and ask for God's help in times of trouble. "By her sacramentals the Church draws all created things and every department of life into her orbit."¹²

It must be kept in mind that what makes the sacramentals a useful part of the Church's worship is the "prayer of the Church" and the "user's true spirit of trust in God and his humble submission to him."¹³ It is not a trust in the object or person blessed, but it is always the Christian's connection with God in Jesus Christ that makes all created things redeemed for the use of Christian living in this world.

Ceremonial and Lutheranism

Our perspective on ceremonial and the sacramentals will project, we hope, a Lutheran point of view. "We Lutherans are a liturgical church. It is our official policy to follow the best forms or to seek to restore them where they have been discarded."¹⁴ The restoration of ceremony is not for the sake of history, but for the sake of the best proclamation of the Gospel. By restoring the use of both ceremonial and sacramentals, Lutherans would hope to be using, once again, what is rightfully theirs

in the continuum of the Church's history. The question then arises, "What exactly is Lutheran in the area of ceremonial?" The classic answer is

Arthur Carl Piepkorn's:

The sixteenth century saw the beginning of extensive innovations in Roman ritual and ceremonial. In general, these had not reached northern Europe by the time the Reformation began. Consequently they exerted only slight influence on the historic Lutheran rite. Where the historic Lutheran rite has been retained or restored, it generally reveals a purer and older form of the Western rite than the reformed Roman Catholic rite of today [1952] exhibits. This is significant. It gives us a denominationally and confessionally distinctive rite to which we have historic title and which we have not lately borrowed from alien sources. It gives us a rite which is an invaluable symbol of the antiquity, the historic continuity, and the thorough Catholicity of the Church of the Augsburg Confession. At the same time it gives us a rite which is both older than, and significantly and recognizably different from, the present Roman Catholic rite.¹⁵

What Piepkorn and others would hope for is not just a return to ceremony, but a return to seeing ceremony as a form of communicating the Gospel. The task is always one of getting the Gospel across clearly, precisely, and understandably. If ceremony contributes to this communication, then it must be used.

The Lutheran liturgy expresses itself ceremonially, that is, in material objects, in signs, in symbols, and in other art forms. These forms of expression are important. They are a language which many Christians no longer understand, because they think that words and more words are the only form of communication. But there are many other forms.... Here the ceremonial of the liturgy opens up to us a whole new world, a world filled with truth and beauty. To appreciate this world, we must learn to realize again that there are non-verbal forms of communication and that these are often more effective than the verbal kind.¹⁶

What is Lutheran in ceremonial is in need of being relearned in many instances. American Lutheranism in particular has lost its heritage from the perspective of ceremonial. Eugene Brand suggests that the situation is the following: "The language of ceremony has become foreign to much of Lutheranism, and the sign-character of the service has suffered because of it.

An unbiblical dualism which attempts to spiritualize worship still grips most pastors and people."¹⁷ This view is based on the religious scene in early America. The overwhelming Calvinistic background of Protestantism in America caused many Lutherans coming to the New World to forgo their rights in the area of worship and ceremony for fear of being thought of as "pseudo-Papists" by the rest of their Calvinistic countrymen.¹⁸ Out of this grows the lack of ceremony which we find in the Lutheran agenda in the New World. When The Occasional Services appeared in the early 1960's, one reviewer had the following to say of it:

My major and pervading criticism of the book is that it displays a bias against liturgical action in favor of the nuda verba (the word alone). The rites are but verbal torsos of more full catholic actions. Seldom do the rubrics make the "sayings" optional, but often non-verbal signs are optional indeed, particularly the sign of the cross.¹⁹

We do not single this out as a negative comment on this massive undertaking, but rather it is a statement which, we feel, could be said about much of the ceremonial for rites found in American Lutheranism, from the early days until now.

Perhaps a more important question at this time in history, given the past situation, is, "Where do we go from here?" What is the future of ceremonial in the Lutheran use of sacramentals?" In a speech to a group on the East Coast some years ago, Piepkorn asked a devastating question of this gathering of Lutherans. Once this question is answered, we shall know the way we have to go in the area of ceremonial within American Lutheranism.

And I would ask, therefore, are we consistent evangelical Christians? Are we taking seriously the injunctions that we have either by expressed command or by -uh- implication in the Lutheran Symbols, with reference to certain, admittedly, external, very practical devices that are, however, available to us and to our people? Now, are we practising ourselves, even though we may not need it quite as desperately as some of

the poor people in our congregations may (I'm not so sure that probably we don't stand in greater need of it), but assuming that they need it much more than we do, are we doing our full duty over against them by failing to practise ourselves and imparting to them by precept --precept and example some of the useful devices that our Symbols encourage?²⁰

From his perspective, the use of ceremonial becomes an obligation of the clergy so that they might be doing the best for their people.

At least one pastor in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod saw a change beginning to take place as early as 1952. He wrote, "Gradually I believe both faithful and clergy are beginning to realize that worship isn't simply something 'homilectical [sic], hymnodical, and offertorical' but also traditional, cultural, inspirational, and historical even in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod."²¹ While it may be true that the situation is changing, correcting what for so long was wrong on the American Lutheran scene, much more has to be done to direct Lutherans to a full understanding of their heritage, and the fullest possible usage of ceremony within the context of Reformation principles. Perhaps for the future, agenda for the Lutheran Church will have to accommodate the entire spectrum of Lutheran practise, from those who accept sixteenth century principles and practises, to those who accept the principles and practises of the American religious scene. To this end one writer suggests:

Our official books of rites should include all permissible liturgical actions among Lutherans without making the whole mandatory for any congregation. This would seem to be most in line with the Lutheran Geist (spirit) of freedom in matters liturgical. The essential core of any rite should be pointed out rubrically, with its possibilities of elaboration noted.²²

Cermonial and the One Studying and Using It

The very first quotation in this paper suggested that the person who studies ceremonial and seeks to be of lasting value in the course of its

discussion must know both his own bias and the subject he is persuading. While we do not claim perfection in this area, we would repeat the warning "that only those can safely handle the subject of religious ceremonial whose minds have been trained to tolerate an alien, and even incomprehensible, point of view."²³ The discussion of ceremonial is one which has gone on down through the centuries of Christian history. Perhaps no one issue has been more emotionally discussed, because emotions themselves are involved. But before we can intelligently discuss the issue, we have to be aware of both sides of the issue. There is a warning here: there is not just one side. Or more strongly: there are no absolutes. Again and again we shall see that the pastoral office plays a role in the life of the Lutheran clergyman. He is a man who is to be vitally concerned both for the historical continuity of the Church's worship and for the life of the people committed to his care. At all costs, individual quirks are to be avoided, both in the doing of the liturgy and in the guiding of the people of God. Yet the role of pastor must be performed, enabling a "particularism" if extraordinary needs arise.²⁴ But there dare not be a copying of abuses for the sake of the people. The worship of God always is to be kept at a high level, using ceremony which expands people and helps them realize and practise God's Presence. At the same time, it should not lower God to our level, but keep His Glory uppermost. Abuses in ceremonial must always be avoided; carefully looking at our ceremonies will help to accomplish this.²⁵

For the clergyman who has come to see his role as both priest and pastor, a suggestion is in order. "Improvement is needed, but he serves the Church best who works steadily toward clear goals, not being unduly concerned whether they are reached tomorrow or not."²⁶ The key word is "unduly." The desire for, and use of, ceremonial dare never overshadow our concern for the

worshipping people of God. The goal is to make them worshipping people in action as well as in words. We can study all we want and we can write all we want about ceremonial, but ultimately it only takes on value as it is used by the people of God in their worship.

Ceremonies Teach

If, as Piepkorn suggested, our task is to help the people in their God-ward action through the use of ceremonies,²⁰ then we must come to realize and accept the fact that ceremonies do teach. Part of the pastor's task is to teach, to bring about growth in Christian things among Christian people. Wayne Saffen, whose critique of The Occasional Services we mentioned before, again and again brings out this notion of the teaching task of ceremony. He writes, "We are not arguing for the necessity of ceremonial for the validity of the act....but....By omitting the ceremonial in our official books we fail, to that extent, to teach."²⁷ Lack of ceremony means a misuse of time and energies in the midst of worship which could be used for teaching, as well as for the praise of God. What better time is there to learn than in the midst of the community's worship? Saffen goes on:

What one fears is that prevailing practice becomes normative. Contemporary books of rites simply represent a consensus on how Lutherans in America happen to be administering the rites. This is too vicious a circle to let remain unbroken. For obviously nothing could become more meaningless repetition than that which is done simply because it has been done. Rites teach.²⁸

He is not just riding his own hobby-horse. Others within Lutheranism have said it. As far back as 1906, Elmer F. Krauss wrote in the Memoirs of the Lutheran Liturgical Association, "We learn far more through the eye than through the ear."²⁹

Paul H. D. Lang in Ceremony and Celebration talks of the teaching aspect of ceremonial. But he goes one step further and adds a "doing" dimension. He says that if we neglect ceremonies, we neglect one of the best methods for teaching the children of the Church. "In the Christian training of children, ceremonial is particularly necessary and important. Children learn through ceremonies. They love them, they live them, and they gain a lifelong impression from them."³⁰ Children learn to live ceremonies; it is something alive for them. Ceremonial does teach the people of the Church through their eyes. But the people are not passive. What they see, in that must they also participate.

We do learn more by seeing than hearing. And we retain in memory that which is seen longer than that which is heard. In this connection, we must call attention to the fact that we often forget this in our neglecting rich and proper symbolism and colors available for use in our churches.

But we learn still more by doing.³¹

CHAPTER II

THE WHY OF CEREMONIAL IN THE SACRAMENTALS

Worship

There really is a reason for discussing ceremonial in the sacramentals. There really is a "why" to it all. Worship is the place to begin understanding the "why." The purpose of worship is for man to glorify God. This is the first purpose. It is a response-action on man's part which has been motivated by God's initiating action in Jesus Christ. Because of this action in Jesus Christ, worship takes on a secondary purpose, that of the "salvation of men." This "is expressed in the sacraments and sacramentals."¹ God's action leads to our action of praise and proclamation of the Gospel. Through the sacramentals, we praise God for His good creation and proclaim to men that the God Who is concerned that His creation be used to His Glory, is the same God Who is concerned that all men become His in Jesus Christ, to the praise of His Name.

As worship is in this sense both God-directed and man-directed, so also it is interior and exterior.

Worship in general is religious activity directed immediately to God. It is primarily interior worship, expressing itself in acts of adoration and petition, but it overflows at once into words and gestures, and so becomes exterior worship. And as man is by nature dependent on associations with others, exterior worship becomes, by a further development, communal worship. If it were not for the interior worship from which it springs, exterior worship would have no value or significance; in its turn, however, the latter gives to interior worship a greater intensity.²

Our worship is interior in that it is used for the primary goal which is God-directed praise and for the secondary goal of prayer for the salvation of all

men. But our worship is also exterior in that our praise of God shows itself, not only to God Who sees all things, but also to men, that they might see our witness, and seeing hear, and hearing believe.

"'We have no altars,' Origen frankly declares, 'but the temple of our God is the whole world, and the altar most acceptable to him is a pure and innocent heart.'"³ He sounds like a naturalist, or at least a Thoreau. Perhaps what he is really saying is that God is bigger than man. Just as all man's buildings are not big enough to contain Him, so all man's words are not numerous enough to praise Him. In some way all of creation is to be involved in God-directed motion. In some way all of man is to be involved in God-directed motion. Worship Him is spirit, yes. But worship Him in space and time as well.

Worship is more than a matter of words. We misconceive the nature of man if we think of him only as two ears connected by a cranial cavity, mounted upon a pair of legs. Man is a psycho-physical organism and each of his senses is a potential opening for the grace of God. Through all his sense organs man reaches out towards God's grace and through all of them God ventures his grace.⁴

Man lives within the confines of time and space. Man is a man and not yet a timeless being. Until that time, man must be what he is, putting his whole self into the worship of God who made him what he is. As Horace Hummel has written:

Until the parousia comes, we remain creatures of space and time and have no choice but to distinguish "sacred" and "secular." Since it is impossible for us to worship "spiritually" everywhere and at once, we must heed the particularities of continued space and time in our worship."⁵

Ceremonial in worship serves this purpose. The sacramentals with their ceremony help tie all of man and creation together into one great praise-session.

Two cautions appear in our discussion. One is the need to avoid barrenness in our worship. While it is true that we are to give God due reverence and respect in both our interior and exterior worship,⁶ this is not only done in a Mennonite meeting-house. Ceremony can accomplish this also, if it is done properly. From a Lutheran perspective, motion is a gift of God to be used.

The role of ritual is to give solemnity, dignity and reverence to worship. More than mere ceremonialism and a concern about the "length of candles" is involved. Ritual is an active and vital ingredient in worship, for worship is not merely an intellectual exercise in semantics. Ritual does not detract from the essentially spiritual quality of worship but makes it more real and vivid. It seems to prevent religious worship from being barren, bleak, and so "simple" that the worshipper's heart and soul fail to be touched.⁷

Paul H. D. Lang is more blunt about avoiding barrenness. "For example, He is dishonored by cheap, ill-kept churches and by bare, slovenly services when such things are due to selfishness."⁸ But selfishness can go the other direction, to misusing ceremony. This is the second caution, that ceremony dare not become a show of the execution of timed-action. "Important--above all--is that a service dare never become a spiritless, punctilious observance of unimportant niceties."⁹ Both cautions are in order for the sake of the Gospel. For it is in the Gospel that all our worship focuses. This is the center of our existence and of our worship.

All that we employ in the service whether it be choir, organ, bells, vestments, ornaments, ceremonies--whatever it may be, dare not distract the mind of the worshiper from the Word of God. All must be made subservient to the one goal and purpose to extol, to glorify, to exalt Christ and His Word.¹⁰

We have been talking of the "why" of ceremonial as it pertains to worship. It is safe to say, we feel, that liturgical-Lutherans (to coin a phrase) are unanimous in confessing that ceremony, from their perspective,

is for the glory of God and also for the development of the Christian life. H. Douglas Spaeth, who was associated with the Lutheran Liturgical Association at the beginning of this century, wrote: "We firmly believe that every minister and every congregation who strives for liturgical accuracy is thereby striving for and attaining a deeper spiritual experience."¹¹ Arthur Carl Piepkorn closely parallels this when he said, nearly fifty years later, "But it is this lack of--of a disciplined liturgical life which is--uh-- affecting a lot of other aspects."¹² It was to affect other aspects of the Christian life that groups of like-minded liturgical-Lutherans got together. Berthold von Schenk says that the Society of St. James was begun, not only to make use of what was rightfully Lutheran or beautiful in ceremonial, but also to "help the faithful in their devotions, and assist them to get as much as possible in their worship"¹³ Lang says nearly the same when he writes that ceremonial is union with the Church of the past and that it also has "great value both for instruction in the faith and aiding the devotional life."¹⁴

Sacramentals

While Lutherans are willing to discuss ceremonial as it pertains to the sacraments, they are, as a rule, less willing to (or rarely do) talk of ceremonial within the context of the sacramentals. No doubt the reason for this stems from Dr. Martin Luther's view on the sacramentals, which we shall speak of in the last section of this chapter. It is the Church of Rome which has set up a neat, precise definition and theology concerning the "why" of sacramentals and ceremonial. A Catholic Catechism 2, written for young children, makes it clear that the sacramentals were instituted by the Church and not by Christ. "The blessings and consecrations are similar to the

sacraments; for this reason they are called sacramentals. They are not, however, instituted by Christ, as the sacraments were; instead they were instituted by the Church."¹⁵ The catechism goes on to explain that the power which the sacramentals might have is due to the prayer of the church.¹⁶ The power is not there in and of itself, but as the Church makes use of the command of Christ to pray.

Rome's theology has a big plus in its emphasis on the Church as the Body of Christ and as the community of the redeemed effecting change in the world. It is only in the light of this that we can understand and be sympathetic towards (and jealous of) their use of various sacramentals to bring the things of this world and the Church close together.

In her use of sacramentals we have an example of the Church's method. She takes all created things into her hands and every circumstance of human life and turns them into instruments for man's good. Her view of the world of evil spirits, which touches upon our own lives at every turn, is eminently sober and realistic. Many of her blessings and consecrations begin with an exorcism. By this means she breaks the power of evil which once held sway over this world of ours; she breaks it with the power of the cross. Her sacramentals proclaim her sovereignty over all creation. All that is created can be made a means of grace."¹⁷

(Personal piety has got in the way of a solid theology of the community of the Church in Lutheran theology.) What this says is that nothing in this world can stand in the way of our relationship to God in Christ Jesus. Just as all creation groaned for salvation (Romans 8:22), so it rejoices and resounds the praise of God as it joins the Church's praise (the praise of the Body of Christ).

Martin Hellriegel adds both a helpful and a hindering note to this discussion. He writes:

True, the efficacy of the 'little sacraments' is not quite as certain as that of the 'big sacraments.' Much of their power

will depend on the faith and confidence of the recipient. But this is certain that, hallowed, executed and spoken by the Church, they possess an efficacy which surpasses all personal efforts and petitions.¹⁸

While Lutherans would rejoice at the middle sentence on the faith of the recipient, they would have trouble with the last sentence. But when this statement is seen in the context of Rome's concept of Church, it takes on more positive meaning: the emphasis on the community of worshipers, rather than on personal piety.

If we accept the portion of the definition of sacramentals as being involved with the prayer of the Church, then we can move on to see that all of creation is to be affected by this prayer. Piepkorn suggests a definite relationship between the people of God and created things.

The formulation of the Lutheran Symbols is thoroughly Augustinian. It says that an individual unless he is reborn of baptism and of the Holy Spirit is without God and is destined to eternal loss. Now here is where the necessity of a baptizing of this creation and through the Christian as a priest, the baptizing of the lesser orders of creation comes into the picture.¹⁹

He is not speaking of a "baptism" to save the object in question, but more to bring the object within the sphere of the Church's life, that we Christians might rejoice in the things of this life. Or as Hellriegel put it: "By the sacramentals the Church sanctifies the world about us and hallows all those things that are for our use and service, so that redeemed man might not suffer too much from an unredeemed world surrounding him."²⁰

Because the Church is continually aware of God's having made everything for Himself,²¹ therefore "everything from sick babies to linotype machines, from expectant mothers to beer is made sacred...."²² Again, all of this is not done for the sake of the object itself, but that all of life and creation might praise God and give Him glory. For this reason the Church is involved with all of life.²³ W. van der Syde in an article entitled "Principles of

Liturgical Reform" makes the following suggestion:

As the Christian Faith is 'totalitarian', so its liturgical impact on all aspects of human life must be total and not confined to some crucial stages of it (birth, marriage, death) but also comprise areas, commonly considered as 'profane', such as recreation, political life, work, etc. This requires an immense extension of 'occasional services', such as no existing church has provided for....Here is ample room too for the exercise of the 'general priesthood' and apostolate of the Christian layman--and woman.²⁴

This requires a looking beyond ourselves to the whole of God's creation and our life within it. It is a tall order, but in the long run it is for the Christian man's benefit. For that reason we have to talk of discipline in the things of worship, liturgics, ceremonial, and sacramentals.

The eschaton has broken in us, we are dead in baptism. We are risen again in Christ. But we still have to live; and we still have to anticipate the hour when we shall die. And it is on this account that we have to talk about discipline to our people. And it is on this account that we have to talk about discipline to ourselves.²⁵

If the sacramentals do no more than call our attention to the object, then the point of them has been lost. The action of blessing an object is not for the sake of the object, but for the sake of the community of believers. "The sacramentals are to help us live holy lives in this world, and to use the things of this world for God's honor and for our salvation."²⁶ They are useful to our salvation in that we come to realize the proper use for which the object was intended; that we use it not to our damnation, a dreadful misuse of it. Indeed, Lutheran liturgical people back in 1906 were saying that it is "a Christian duty to make a right use of things, which is possible through the Word of God and prayer."²⁷ Thus the Lutherans were able to affirm about sacramentals:

With the recognition of this principle that it is not the thing which is to be consecrated but that we are to be consecrated and that our use of the thing is to be consecrated, we gladly accept every service in which persons or things are devoted to the service of God.²⁸

Symbolism

To talk about the symbolic aspects of ceremonial in the sacramentals really requires an artist in order to understand all the nuances. Yet the nature of this paper requires that we say a few words about it. One thing symbolism tries to do is teach. Arthur Carl Piepkorn says that even piety in Lutheran circles "accepted symbolism as a reinforcement and enrichment of ritual."²⁹ Somehow the desire for symbolism and an understanding of its effectiveness is present even among those who object to Rome's misuse of it. In spite of its misuse, symbolism in ceremony has positive value. Symbolism is pointing not only to something beyond itself, but is in very fact bringing that "something" into the immediate present, at the very moment use is being made of the symbol.³⁰ Yet the use of symbolism may be both a natural part of the act of worship and a foreign action brought in specifically in order to teach.³¹ However it is viewed, symbolism must be taught to the congregation that is to make use of it in its worship. This must be done in order that the most value might be gained from the use of symbol.

So it will take time and effort to teach a congregation the language of Christian symbolism and proper ceremonies employed in a church. Yet, what congregation is serving the edification of its worshipers better: the one that builds a barren church edifice where symbolism and proper ceremonies and a truly Christian ritual are studiously avoided, or the one which provides all of this in the most churchly and dignified way?³²

For liturgically-minded Lutherans, the question is rhetorical. The answer is obvious. The end sought is one of teaching through word and symbol, to involve all the senses of man.

The second thing that symbolism does is to communicate the Gospel. Just as stained-glass windows and paintings were meant to teach the significant Christian doctrines, so the symbolism of ceremonial seeks to do the same.

That is part of the task of ceremony. "It endeavors to impress upon the worshipper by means other than mere words, which after all are but oral symbols, the love, mercy, glory and majesty of the Holy and Undivided Trinity."³³ Even more, symbolism seeks to get across the point to the man in the pew that God in Jesus Christ is forgiving the sinner.³⁴ This is where symbolism takes on its real meaning, its real task.*

Yet symbolism is not only action proclaiming Gospel from the clergy's vantage point. It is also a response to the Gospel on the part of the clergy and laity. This is the third use of symbolism. Man by nature uses symbols and symbolism to express to others a thought or an idea that is within him.³⁶ That is part of creation. It is a relatively simple thing to move this concept into the area of worship.

The need of honouring the Deity through symbols and in fixed places arises from the relativity of man's worship of an infinite being, whom he can adore only by means of tangible forms corresponding to the degree of civilization to which he has attained and to the conception, more or less sublime, which he has of the divine being.³⁷

From a Christian perspective, when man is desirous of expressing himself to God in response to God's gift in the Man and his actions, Jesus Christ, then man begins to use symbols to more fully express what is inside of him. Just as God used a Real Person, real actions, and real things to express the truth of His love for mankind, so man in response uses symbolism which "uses real personages, real actions and real things as emblems of the truth."³⁸ Extending this, the motions of the body within the action of

*For the well-initiated Christian, the one who has become totally immersed in the action of ceremony and its symbolism, there is the move not only toward a straightforward interpretation of the action, but a mystical one as well. "Mystical interpretation is an attempt to give not the primary meaning of things, but their hidden and recondite meanings."³⁵

worship become a part of the liturgical sign or symbol, which man uses to express his response.³⁹

The fourth comment we wish to make on symbolism is that it is alive. In that they are living, symbols can assist man in being a lively respondent to the grace of God. Paul Vanbergen writes:

One criterion [to govern the elaborating of the liturgy] imposes itself right from the start: the maintenance of rites and symbols, which are a specific mark of man. They do not merely belong to an age in which mankind was in its infancy and which is behind us now that technological man has come of age. Just as in Jesus's day, human life today is highly ritualized and symbolism is far from dead. If our symbols and rites are no longer apt, if they are ineffective for modern man, then that is because the forms in which they are expressed are out of date. It is at the level of forms that the cultural adaptation of the symbols and rites used in Christian liturgy must take place. The prime problem, therefore, is not to create new symbols, as some think, or to invent new rites: the real problem is to give a new life to old symbols, to help the man of today to experience the old symbols in terms of his modern mentality.⁴⁰

This becomes a fantastic statement when one considers the need for historic connections with the Church of the past and a continuity with those saints, and also when one considers the need for confronting man with symbolism that is relevant to his day and age. This is done specifically because man cannot live and be "man" without symbolic expression of what is in him. The liveliness of symbols is necessary for the Gospel to remain lively in the Church's expression of it. "Therefore, because of the sign-character of liturgical forms, the possibility of their change must be kept open. The sign must effectively point to the changeless Christ in the midst of a changing world."⁴¹ That is being alive; being ready to change for the sake of the Gospel; ready to head in a new direction to make a changeless Christ a lively option for a world that changes.

Ceremonial*

Paul Lang, in his description of what ceremonial is, describes it as everything involved in doing a particular rite. So he is talking not only of the motions of the people, but also the inanimate objects which are a part of the worship life of the Church. "Ceremonies are solemn religious things and actions," he concludes.⁴² For our part, we are speaking mainly of the actions of the people at worship, though in Appendixes A and B, we shall discuss some of the things involved specifically with the sacramentals. Ceremonial has a number of directions in which it goes to be a part of the Church's worship.

A large part of ceremonial began and still goes on upon purely utilitarian grounds; another section may be called interpretive, because the ceremonial is meant to explain or comment on the circumstances to which it is annexed; while the third division will contain all such ceremonial as is purely symbolical.⁴³

That is a neat and concise way of putting it. Though it must be remembered, as with all categories, that there is an overlapping of one type of ceremonial into another category at times. It is not as clean-cut as Frere would seem to make it. We must realize the validity of ceremonial whether it be utilitarian, interpretive, or symbolical in the midst of worship. If that is the direction of ceremonial, then its reason or purpose also should be stated: the greater glory of God.

Traditional ceremonial does not center in itself. It is not just "playing church" or going through the motions. The objective of ceremonial is the glorification of God in the salvation and sanctification of man.

The ceremonial of the Liturgy is nothing new or strange. It has been in existence as long as the church. It is concerned, in view of the needs of our times, with the great concern of the church of all times--the worship of God "in spirit and in truth."⁴⁴

*See also Appendix A.

Ceremonial is human. It is the natural thing to do. It is a part of any life that is human.⁴⁵ While saying this, though, our main aim is not the fact that all mankind does some kind of ceremony. Rather, we want to emphasize that the living Body of Christ, the Church, is made up of human beings, who being natural, are ceremonious. It would be "un-human" if this did not find its way into the worship life of the Body.

Movement is of the very nature of the Church, as being a living body; there is no real danger in this; it is stagnation that is really dangerous. A living body must grow and must at least be susceptible of "crises." The Church exhibits its life by experiencing them, and its divine character by surviving them, and emerging with added grace and beauty.⁴⁶

In part, people who are anti-ceremonial fail to realize that verbal communication itself is ceremonial. The reverse is also true: ceremony is communication. "Public worship cannot be unceremonial because it requires some form of communication and all forms of communication are ceremony. When people speak about unceremonial worship, it is not a question of ceremonies, but of informality and spontaneity."⁴⁷ Or we could add: it is a question of more or fewer ceremonies, or of complex or simpler ceremonies, or of living, people-involving or dead ceremonies. Mankind is a creature that communicates to himself and to God. Because this communication is so important to life, it is also important how it is done. It has to be done with conviction, concentration, and belief in what one is trying to express. Otherwise, the message never gets through. A manual of ceremony for saying the Hours puts it in these words: For saying the hours,

the gestures and the posture of the body are hardly less important than the text itself. Firstly, they have a definite value as a sacrifice: through them not only our souls or even our voices become the substance of our offering to God, but our entire body. They have also an expressive and educative value which greatly helps us, without any intellectual strain, to place ourselves in the state of a soul claimed by the words we pronounce.⁴⁸

Ceremonial, as well as the sermon, is a statement of what is believed. In all of man's humanity, body and soul, he confesses and expresses openly what he believes in his heart. That is part of being a man.

Not only is ceremonial a part of humanity, within the Church it has an historical nature as well. Anyone who was raised in a happy home life no doubt recalls certain things (ceremonies, events, etc.) that happened consistently within the life of the family. These things, he remembers and tries to pass on to his children. Just as families live in continuity with the past, so does the Church.

To speak of the need of norms is to imply the existence of forms to which the norms are to be applied. The attitude of the Church toward her traditional forms is involved here. Liturgical forms do not exist in the vacuum of an unhistorical abstraction. Their shape has been determined through historical development.⁴⁹

One need not be a church-historian to understand this. It is true of secular history as well. The Church from its earliest time was ceremonial in its worship.⁵⁰ That ceremony was a vital part of man's expressing himself in worship.

"While the needs of modern man and the significance of the action to a congregation are of primary importance, they are not the only criteria of value. In matters of ceremonial, historical practices should also be taken into account."⁵¹ In its expression of the community of saints, the Church needs a connection with the past. Not only in the area of apostolic teaching, but in the area of the action of worship is this true. "In any given age the Church must incorporate that which has gone before."⁵² The word "incorporate" is important here. The Church of today is not to take over the forms of past ceremony necessarily in the same dress in which they came. Rather, the Church is to make use of them in a new, vibrant, and exciting worshipful way. Eugene Brand wrote:

Making our static worship come alive will not be done by re-creation, no matter which age is selected as model. Some ceremonies of the past can be reintroduced as living entities; others in new cultural dress.^{53*}

We are not sure, however, which "cultural dress" ceremonial should be wearing according to Brand. New "cultural dress" must always take into account the developments of the past. Just as a father would hope his child would not disregard the wiser judgments of the "hoary head," so the Church of the twentieth century (a child of Church-past) ought not take lightly its Mother's direction. While forms of ceremony may be examined to see if they still communicate the Gospel,

this critical attitude toward inherited form must never lead to treating it lightly. Because they have withstood the critical testing of generations, because the existence of the worshipping community is an historical existence, and especially because Christians in their freedom are not enslaved through the dark power of traditional rites, the Church has the obligation to regard with honor those inherited forms which edify.⁵⁵

What is historical must affect the Church today. The task is not completed by merely taking from the past and using it today, but rather in learning from the past and applying the past to today. The Church is not out to copy abuse or excellence of the past, but to make positive use of the very best in ceremonial. "Christian ceremonial is inevitable. Since we must live with it and through it, we should surround ourselves with the best. We should take care that the ceremonial that we practice belongs to the Christian tradition."⁵⁶

*Piepkorn wrote nearly 40 years ago: "We contend that the proper touchstone is the principle of the movement toward liturgical re-creation: 'We desire to reintroduce the maximum of common Occidental formulae and ceremonies, whatever their source, consistent with the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Confessions of our Church.'"⁵⁴ While we have to appreciate what Piepkorn and men like him have done to restore to Lutherans their ceremonial heritage in worship, we wonder if the sixteenth century is the place to stop or start. More discussion has to be done on how far back does one go or not go. Or again, how futuristic does one get in the area of ceremonial.

The central focus for ceremonial is the Gospel. When we talk of direction, or humanity, or historicity of ceremonial, it all comes to a head at this point: the Cross. A Catholic Catechism 2 in its discussion of sacramentals states, "If we imagine that we shall receive help not from God but from the outward sign alone, we commit the sin of superstition."⁵⁷ God reconciled the world to Himself in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:19). This is the Word to keep in mind when speaking of sacramentals and of ceremonial. If this point is lost, then superstition and religious nicety take over and there is no need for a discussion such as we are giving. The accompanying outward sign or action is not the norm for ceremonial worship with the sacramentals.

What, then, is the proper norm? If it is true that the service is a creature of the Word, and if the objections to other norms are valid, it would seem that the answer is clear: the Word, the Gospel. If the service grows out of the Word, then the Word should govern it. The forms of the past should be measured against it; critical theological study should apply it as norm; art forms should be brought into its service. The Word of God, the Gospel, is sovereign in liturgical practice.⁵⁸

When the Gospel is not being proclaimed and served, then ceremonial and the sacramentals are worthless; and there is no reason for bothering with them.

One of the early pleas for having more ceremonial within the Lutheran Church also cautioned against showy performance of ceremony, or in other words, ceremony without purpose. To do ceremony "without a meaning or a definite purpose is nonsense."⁵⁹ We shall say it again: the purpose is the Gospel. There is another caution besides superstition. It is expressed by F. R. Webber when he wrote in Pro Ecclesia Lutherana:

There is not the slightest danger that beautiful ceremonial will "offend the people," as some fear. No task is easier than to persuade a congregation to accept full ceremonial if the matter is explained to them properly. This has been done,

again and again, of late, and in every part of the country. But there is danger that our people may get a taste for ceremony, and develop a craving for it, so that they no longer go to church because of a desire to worship God, but because display is agreeable.⁶⁰

These dangers, however, ought not keep the Church from employing ceremony, if it is always kept at a conscious level that the Gospel is being proclaimed and that ceremony is to help the people of God proclaim the Gospel well.

The Lutheran Society for Worship, Music and the Arts has stated:

Liturgical ceremonial is the appropriate way of doing what should be done. Ceremonial actions should be intelligible and communicate the Gospel. All actions which draw attention to themselves, rather than pointing to the presence of God, are distortions of worship.⁶¹

Ceremonial, while it is important, is always subservient to the needs of the Gospel. Ceremonial "must never be paraded as a substitute for the gospel. It is the servant of the gospel."⁶² If this is kept in mind, ceremonial can go a long way toward helping the Church realize and activate its mission.

Ceremonies teach. A few words have been said about this in Chapter I. But because it is such an important consideration in the doing of ceremonial and the sacramentals, we shall add a few more thoughts. Ceremonial can be viewed as a teaching agent in the realm of a catechetical approach of teaching Christian doctrine. "Rites and ceremonies are an outward expression of what a church believes and teaches. An ancient Latin formula puts it this way: Lex orandi lex credendi. 'As we worship so we believe' or 'as we believe so we worship.'⁶³ There is, it would seem, a close relationship between belief and the act and actions of worship. Thus in many ways what is done by a group of people in worship reflects, or better states, what they really believe, even more so than do their printed confessional statements.

Rites and ceremonies may not only be an unreflected testimony of what is believed and taught, but they may also be a valuable safeguard for the retention of purity in doctrine among the people, even after a church has departed from the truth in its doctrinal position....The liturgical books of the Roman Catholic Church and of the Eastern Orthodox Church minimized the impact of Pietism and Rationalism on these churches. On the other hand, the lack of traditional and conservative rites and ceremonies in the Protestant and some Lutheran churches made them an easy prey to Pietism, Rationalism, and Modernism.⁶⁴

We come back to the point made in Chapter I when talking of the teaching aspect of ceremonial: "Ceremonial again is expressive of religious truths. Sometimes these are better defined by a gesture or a symbol than by theological definition."⁶⁵ Ceremonial, sacramentals, and teaching are closely linked.

Ceremony has to be made use of if it is to be of value. It can be written about, but ultimately if it is not put into action, it is useless. "Ritual becomes meaningless if people fail to understand it, fail to participate in it, and fail to live it."⁶⁶ Ritual and ceremony really is response. It is a response by man to the proclamation and reception of God's Gift in the Gospel. As the Spirit helps man pray for those things which by himself he cannot express (Romans 8:26), so ceremony helps the Church to express its inner most reaction to the Gospel. "Ceremonial is an external because it is an expression of an inner reality; this reality is often of such a sort as to baffle expression by any other means."⁶⁷ Ceremony is not only response to something, but it is also response toward Someone. Because it is towards Someone, it needs to be talked of, improved upon, and used. Walter Howard Frere says that "ceremonial is action Godwards, and therefore demands the highest possible degree of excellence."⁶⁸ As stewardship programs say the people are to give of their abundance, the first-fruits, the best, so also in the area of worship: in all of worship, the best is to be used to the praise of God's Name. Thus if we had to

express another goal or direction of ceremonial, it would be that of getting the people to respond to God. "Ceremonial which encourages response on the part of all is to be favored."^{69*} If there is no response, no breath from the Body, it is, for all practical purposes, dead. Ceremony and response go hand in hand.

Ceremonies are adiaphora? Question marks are marvelous things. We use it to say: perhaps ceremonies can no longer be considered adiaphora. Hopefully what has already been said helps one to see this statement as both possible and sound from a Lutheran perspective. In 1962, Eugene Brand wrote: "Here the ringing phrases of the Reformers apply: forms are adiaphora, they are relative, they dare not be absolutized and made binding on men's consciences. To deny this would be to fly in the face of one of Luther's cardinal principles."⁷¹ This is the classic Lutheran position on ceremony as adiaphora. They ought not be an element necessary for salvation. In 1966, Brand wrote: "Thus ceremonies are not adiaphora in the sense that they are indispensable, of little significance, or can be chosen and shaped arbitrarily."⁷² The statement of 1962 would leave room, it seems, for doing as one liked because of the relativity of forms. Yet, on the basis of the 1966 quote, we find that the choice perhaps is not quite so arbitrary;

*So the Church gets her boys involved in doing worship through the ceremonies of serving in God's House. "And so the Church schemes and plans; she schemes and plans in love. She tries to find ways and means by which her boys may have activities made available to them whereby they can use their time and talents in as constructive a manner as possible. And the result of all the Church's loving plans and schemes lies crystallized in this contention: that the very best way to arouse her boys to what is the very best in life is to give them to the Lord, and to offer them carefully supervised opportunities to serve Him in His house."⁷⁰

perhaps not even open to the whim of each pastor as to what can be added or omitted. Paul Zeller Strodach in A Manual on Worship made the following statement:

There are adiaphora; but there is a time when such developments as the Liturgy, rites and ceremonies, and their symbolic adjuncts, may no longer be regarded as such. Rather on the other hand, they must be regarded as an exemplification and a truly confessional vitalization of the Faith. They genuinely are the contribution of faith working in life: they are the "dress" in which devout devotion presents its worship. Now this, --such things, --certainly cannot be adiaphora!⁷³

If one is ready to accept that statement as definition of ceremony, then care must be taken by the Church in what it does with worship forms and ceremonies. This is true not only on the parish level (congregational supremacy), but even more on the level of who is appointed to worship commissions. And perhaps if commissions fail in this point, the prerogative of the parish pastor and his people is definitely to leave in worship what worship commissions leave out. Ceremonial forms may not be necessary for salvation, but for a vital and full-bodied expression of the Faith and living of the Faith, they ought not be taken lightly.*

If the opening chapter of Genesis says anything, it is the fact that chaos is not God's nature. From the plan of creation, to the plan of salvation, to the plan of the eschaton, God is in control, working toward fullness in time (Galatians 4:4ff). Liturgical-Lutherans (to use that word again) have always used this principle in talking of the order that should be present in the ceremonies of worship. Paul H. D. Lang is but one of them.

*We present this really as a private, unsteady soap-box at this time in history. Time may prove it wrong. But that is for time to tell. Yet it would seem that this is the natural outcome of what has gone before in this paper. The uncertainty is always present between how demanding are "shall" rubrics and commissions' worship forms, and how much freedom is to be allowed to individuals.

"God is a God of order. He is against disorder, confusion, slovenliness, crudeness, and ugliness."⁷⁴ If the Gospel says anything it is that God is a God of love as well as of order. He does not take a club labeled "order" and beat the Church over the head with it. Rather He "examples" His order within the midst of the Church: His creation and action in Christ Jesus. In response to this, the Church sees and desires an ordered response in her worship. Hans Goebel in an article titled, "Wilhelm Loehe and The Quest for Liturgical Principle," writes: "Loehe proposed two 'liturgical principles' to guide the Lutheran liturgical scholar; freedom and love."⁷⁵ These can guide, without being contrary to orderliness, when God's love in Jesus Christ is realized fully and the freedom which that love has given the Church catholic to develop a worship-response system through the ages is recognized.

Luther and the Subject at Hand

Because of the part he played in the Reformation and formation of the Lutheran Church (Piepkorn's Church of the Augsburg Confession), some attention should be given to Dr. Martin Luther's approach to the topic of ceremonial and the sacramentals. Luther was an interesting man of contrasts. In many ways, he was indifferent to any kind of "controversy" over things liturgical.

Finally Luther's doctrinal position is reflected in his absolute disregard for rules of liturgical practice. The kind and extent of ceremonial usage practiced in any congregation was a matter of utter indifference to him. Personally, he could not conceive that such accessories as incense, tapers, vestments and processions could affect the purpose of the service in any way as long as the pure Word was preached.⁷⁶

Yet, when his people were ready, he did make changes,* both "more conservative

*For example, see his different eucharist and baptismal services.

and more creative" than his contemporaries. But "Luther had no time or inclination to work out every pedantic detail and could not be bothered with fussing over liturgical minutiae."⁷⁷

Perhaps the most important point for the direction of this paper is Luther's conservative nature. The Lutheran Reformation compared with that of the other Reformers was conservative in that Luther felt himself to be reforming and not revolting nor desirous of a split. According to A. Wismar, Luther was right in line with the idea that form and bodily motion in worship are natural. "Luther retained the customary gestures of worship as genuflexion, arising, folding of hands[,] making the sign of the cross, kneeling. Where there is true adoration, he contended, such expressions of worship issue spontaneously."⁷⁸ He was also of the opinion that those forms not contrary to the Word of God ought to be retained, and only those contrary were to be dropped. The historical continuity of the Church held much weight with him. Concerning the main service, it is said of Luther:

The essential conservatism of Luther's doctrine of the Church is seen in his liturgical conservatism. If the Church has always had the Spirit of God then the forms of worship long used by the Church are not to be lightly cast aside merely because they have been misused or have been covered over with false ideas. They are to be tested and proved by the Word of God. If they are contrary to the Word of God they must be rejected; if not, they should be retained.⁷⁹

For the sake of orderliness, forms were good and ceremonies necessary. As he wrote in a letter to the Livonians:

Since the ceremonies or rites are not needed for the conscience or for salvation and yet are useful and necessary to govern the people externally, one must not enforce or have them accepted for any other reason except to maintain peace and unity between men.⁸⁰

Always uppermost in Luther's mind were the gathered people of God who were to do the worship. In his heart he was pastoral. Luther wrote:

Now even though external rites and orders--such as masses, singing, reading, baptizing--add nothing to salvation, yet it is un-Christian to quarrel over such things and thereby to confuse the common people. We should consider the edification of the lay folk more important than our own ideas and opinions.⁸¹

But this also entails the responsibility of making sure what is done is really of an edifying nature and not just a concession to "save time" by omission, or of "making show" by commission.

Luther was not about to deny the usefulness of ceremony, especially in the realm of teaching and educating the people.

That ceremonies are useful Luther admits in a letter to John Sutel (1531). He says "Ceremonies are not necessary to salvation but they are useful to move slow minds....For children and fools they are necessary, for whom they are to be observed." In 1523 he writes that it is not possible to live in the Church of God without ceremonies, but he makes no plea for uniformity in this.⁸²

As long as the people are helped in their worship by ceremonies, they are good. It was when ceremonies became the source and foundation of superstition that Luther objected to them. Nothing was to be permitted to stand in the way of anyone's relationship to God in Christ Jesus.⁸³ Yet the reality of man's sinful nature played a role. It was this nature which perverted ceremony and needed ceremony the most.

On the other hand, Luther recognized that the Christian is not only a righteous man, but also a sinner. His faith is not a static, but a growing, struggling thing. Therefore, he needs the daily nurture and exercise in the Word as provided in the church's liturgy [Mass only?], and even though he might not need it for himself, he must provide it for others.⁸⁴

Again the people of God and their welfare come to the foreground. Their needs over-rule all else. Therefore, Luther could write (though we may not agree with the first phrase):

For even from the viewpoint of faith, the external orders are free and can without scruples be changed by anyone at any

time, yet from the viewpoint of love, you are not free to use this liberty, but bound to consider the edification of the common people....⁸⁵

There were, however, a few things on which Luther was quite negative, it seems. Because the influence he has had on Lutheran agenda is so great, often his negative opinion showed in certain rites being omitted or falling into disuse.⁸⁶ Ulrich S. Leupold, the late Dean of Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, wrote:

In the course of reorganizing the church, Luther was also led to revise some of the occasional services. He had no intention of creating a complete Rituale Lutheranicum, but only issued formularies as they were called for by the demands of parishes or by the requests of his friends and co-workers.... And since he disapproved of confirmation as a special service, he saw no need for a special order. He felt the same way about special ceremonies for blessings, dedications, and the like.⁸⁷

We would assume this was so because of the ease with which superstition overtook the people in Luther's eyes and in his age. Perhaps here is where the difference enters. If Luther's objection to sacramentals was on the grounds of superstition, and if it is a valid statement to say that today's sophisticated society is not superstitious (at least not in the same way), then perhaps the Lutheran Church could well make more use of ceremonial and sacramentals than it has in the past. Or to put it in Wayne Saffin's words, "Suffice it to say that the blessings of all sorts of things for use in the Church reverses Luther's bias against such blessings, and that in this case the Church is right and Luther is wrong." Saffin continues by saying what has been said all along in this paper, that "created things shaped by man's hands to the glory of God need to be blessed in a Church which affirms the goodness of creation in service of God."⁸⁸

The other half of this, for Lutherans, would be the need of the user to dedicate or consecrate himself to the proper use of the object blessed. As

George U. Wenner wrote in the Memoirs of the Lutheran Liturgical Association:

For Lutherans, "the creature did not need any sanctification to accomplish the object for which God had created it. But men needed sanctification and this could be attained only by the Word of God and by prayer."⁸⁹ Luther's negative attitude was valid historically considered. The validity of this approach for the Church today seems doubtful, at least to us. The Church, rather than falling back from the fight and not doing ceremony for fear of wrong use, must turn and take the offensive, making positive use of all ceremonies and sacramentals to edify the people of God and to give glory to Almighty God.

CHAPTER III

THE HOW OF CEREMONIAL IN THE SACRAMENTALS

The Pastor's and Server's (Assistant's) Role

When we talk of the "how" of doing ceremony, we are talking of the actions of people. The people most obviously doing actions are the clergy and those laymen serving as representatives of the people of God in the doing of the rite. Of these people and their actions, Walter Howard Frere wrote:

Any one who is performing an official ministry in public worship can hardly count as an individual: his individuality must rightly be, to a very large extent, sunk in his office and ministry; and he must speak, move, and act as the servant of the whole body.¹

In a very real way, they lose their individuality and identity as specific people. They become in turn a sign of the actions of the entire Body of Christ assembled. They are not to stick out like sore thumbs in the performance of their duties. Therefore, it is a definite part of their training and responsibility to learn well the tasks.

The truth no doubt lies in the old Latin maxim: Summa ars celare artem, 'Art is at its highest when it is not noticeable.'

The art of ceremonial proficiency, be it in good manners or in good habits or in good drill or in good religious ceremonial, is best exemplified when it is most concealed,--when the best rules have been so well acquired and assimilated that they have become, as we say, 'a second nature.' Then the action so readily takes effect in the way which experience or propriety has laid down, that it is in this sense of the word 'natural.' But this involves a full knowledge and a zealous practice of the rules of the ceremonial in question²

Only in this way will the pastor and his assistants be doing their proper job, as well as helping the people worship more fully. Attention will not center on them as leaders, but on the Leader.

More specifically, on the pastor

rests the responsibility of interpreting and directing the worship of his people.

To interpret faithfully he must know what he is doing; why he is doing it; with what he is doing it; how to do and to use properly. This in turn he must teach to others. Then only is he in a position to control the function of worship and to harmonize it with the expression the Church gives to it and not as some others may want it.³

His role again appears to be wider than just an individual either desirous of doing things his own way, or one who is to be pushed around at the whim of some of the people he is serving. As pastor, he is also a teacher. So Arthur Carl Piepkorn is able to ask another devastating question. "Are we justified in assuming that by not telling our people how to do these things, we are instructing them adequately?"⁴ A definite part of "telling" is showing. Thus every movement and action of the pastor has a specific purpose: helping the community to worship. Thus his speaking is distinct and unaffected. His movements are done with a worship-oriented attitude. His total personality at the time of leading worship takes on an air of propriety.⁵ This does not mean, however, that a stilted manner or a hypocritical manner is used. Rather, a manner is used which will direct eyes God-ward and not leader-ward.

Not only is the pastor a leader, but he is a proclaimer as well. Luther in his "Concerning the Order of Public Worship" wrote in speaking of the Hours that at every gathering of the community, "the preaching of God's Word and prayer" should be present, even if it is very brief.⁶ These words have an interesting thing to say about the use of sacramentals. They, too, should have proclamation (unless, perhaps, they immediately precede or follow the main service of worship which would normally have a sermon). In the end, the pastor should take his role very seriously. For he "is responsible for

his people's approach to God. He is responsible for the way he does or does not lead them there; and, in so far as he is able to guide and inspire and teach, he is responsible for what they do and bring!"⁷

While laymen assisting in worship is a very old tradition,⁸ there is difference of opinion as to whether it should be a role filled by young boys or by men. Some feel that boys can be used under the stipulation that they be baptized and serious both in their faith and about their duties.⁹ On the other hand, Piepkorn¹⁰ and Adrian Fortesque¹¹ both suggest that the best is to have more mature adult men assisting. Piepkorn probably does the best job of summing up the ideal situation:

Boys probably make their maximum contribution to worship as choristers rather than servers, and should be used in the latter capacity only on weekdays, at minor services, and in those roles at the chief parochial service for which grown men are not available.¹²

More of a distinction might well be made, if we suggest that older men be used for the more important roles in assisting and young men and boys be used for lesser roles of responsibility. Piepkorn lists the traditional tasks of "lay assistants." The number of them is so varied that different ages could well be used, thus emphasizing even more clearly that the entire community is at worship.

They carried tapers[,] censer, and processional crucifix in processions (out-of-doors we find them carrying torches and bells).

.....
They held the officiant's book at baptisms, marriages, and other rites when it was inconvenient for him to hold the book himself, and ministered those articles which he required for the administration of the rite¹³

Whatever the age of the assistants, they definitely must be well trained. If we are of the mind that an untrained pastor can detract from worship, how much more will an untrained server detract? It would be especially evident

if the pastor knew his own role well. It must be remembered that this training is to lead to the required tasks being performed naturally.

A remark by Martinucci about the behaviour of servers in church may be noted with advantage here: "They should avoid too much precision or affectation, or such a bearing as befits soldiers on parade rather than churchmen. They must certainly do it gravely and regularly; but if they behave with too punctilious a uniformity the sacred functions look theatrical."¹⁴

The Worshipping People of God

These, too, have a definite role, just as important as that of the clergy and assistants, in the action of worship. We started this chapter by saying that the role of the clergy was one of servanthood for the entire Body of Christ.¹ This implies that the Body is the most important functionary in worship. After all, it is their action of worship. The words of Frere might well make a good motto: "Liturgical worship must be co-operative and corporate."¹⁵ If the Church is serious when she speaks of herself as a community, then this statement is a must, especially when talking of the "how" of ceremonial.

Since the church's worship is done by the clergy and laity together, it is important that all members of the church learn to know the rubrics and carry out the worship in accordance with the rubrics. It should not be necessary for an officiant to direct the congregation during a worship service.¹⁶

The laity have the responsibility to learn the actions of worship so that their concentration is not on the "how" but on the Who. Corporateness also requires mutual involvement in new ceremonial as it is added to the services. If the worship is the people's, then understanding of ceremonial is necessary for them.¹⁷ Piepkorn is so convinced of this that he writes:

Retained by the Lutheran Reformers was that fundamental conception of liturgical worship as "a concerted act of adoration in which everyone, from bishop to neophyte, should have something to do, in word, gesture, movement, chant or service," of which Frere says that "without doubt this is the only true ideal of Christian worship."¹⁸

Since it is their worship, the people have a role to play. Thus Loehe was to say in the introduction to his Haus-Schul-Und Kirchenbuch, volume II, that things become holy through their use for holy purposes by the holy hands and hearts of the people of God, so that the will of God might be fulfilled.¹⁹ So it is not only permissible, but necessary to make use of laymen in the doing of worship in the sacramentals, as well as in the Eucharist. They are to be made use of as servers, readers, etc. in order to emphasize the priesthood of all believers, whatever their age, "as long only as all things are done decently and in order."²⁰ In this light, Frere's words make great and lasting sense: "Each person so far as possible should contribute something to the whole; each lesson should have a fresh person assigned to read it, each respond a fresh person to sing it"²¹

A Lutheran Perspective

It is hard to pin down a Lutheran perspective on the "how" of ceremonial in the sacramentals. If we look to the past, we see that

The oldest liturgical records and books, in particular the sacramentaries, contain prayer-texts, but hardly any instructions ("rubrics") as to how the liturgy itself is to be performed. As the liturgy became ever more elaborate, the need was felt, especially in the greater churches, for such directions (ordines), in which the order of liturgical action was laid down.²²

We find that the reformation in Germany brought chaos and that "almost every centre of importance had its own Kirchen-Ordnung."²³ On top of this, there were very few rubrics given on the "how" of the ceremonial. "It was

simply taken for granted that both clergy and laity would know what to do and would continue the practice of the same ceremonial which they had before the Reformation. In other words, when no directions were given, the traditional rites and ceremonies would be continued."²⁴

In 1906, George U. Wenner wrote for the Lutheran Liturgical Association:

With reference to the dedication of bells, pulpits, organs, altars, fonts and cemetaries, the same principles governed the Lutherans as in the dedication of churches. Whenever such objects were dedicated, the service consisted in their public presentation and use, and in supplicating the blessing of God upon their use and upon those who should use them. This was a very different thing from the Roman practice of consecrating these articles in the Mass, for the purpose of communicating to them some spiritual efficacy.²⁵

Again, there seems to be a lack of ceremonial, and just a simple prayer of blessing was employed and the object was put to use immediately. Regarding Wenner's last sentence, it is interesting to note that in the present agenda used by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, many of the sacramentals are to take place within the main service of worship (or at very least within some service of worship). In the light of Wenner's fear and in sympathy with the thought that baptisms, for example, could well be placed before the main service, perhaps the same ought to be done with the sacramentals, thus not breaking up the unity of the Eucharist.

More and more today serious thought is being given to the common heritage all three "liturgical" churches in the West have. Frere says:

The ceremonial of the Church of to-day is the result of the experience of many centuries; and we are thus led to give great value to any traditions which can show the character of permanence. Similarly, we note that a considerable part of the ceremonial of the Catholic Church is in essentials common to all the divergent rites at present in use in different places; and where customs agree in spite of difference of surroundings, we are again led to give them special consideration and reverence.²⁶

Paul H. D. Lang says, "This means that when we have no specific rubrical directions, we follow church tradition and do not decide the matter arbitrarily."²⁷ Charles McClean in The Conduct of the Services supports Frere and Lang when he wrote in 1970, "The symbolical books themselves appeal to non-Lutheran usage in cases where such usage is not contrary to the gospel and where it furthers the piety and devotion of the people (Apology of the Augsburg Confession XXIV 6,93)."²⁸ For Lutherans, the present usage is to be based on what was done in the West at the time of the Reformation, when no other rubrics are given.²⁹ While all of this may be on paper, what actually happens in a specific parish is usually up to the personal feeling of the local pastor. So various "Lutheran" approaches to doing or not doing ceremony and/or the sacramentals are seen.

What does all of this say for the Lutheran perspective of the future? It must be said that any ceremonial used is to help bring out clearly and with dignity "the meaning of the rite."³⁰ The ceremonies and how they are done must continually be tested to make sure they are appropriate as the times change.

Three things must be guarded against: the reintroduction of certain medieval forms which, while impressive, contradict evangelical understanding of the nature of the primary elements (attempts to invest some of these with new symbolic meaning are not always convincing); the reintroduction of ceremonies which no longer have relevance in the cultural sphere of discourse; and the investing of utilitarian acts (e.g. lighting and snuffing of candles) with a pomp all out of proportion to their importance--ceremony for its own sake. As in the case with language, a balance must be achieved.³¹

Eugene Brand is suggesting that Lutherans dare not be so bound to the past that they fail to speak to the present and future when they arrive. To be truly Lutheran is to have all things aid in getting the Gospel spread, in edifying the people of God, and in getting the people's response to be God-directed. McClean writes:

Unthinking bondage to historic precedent is, of course, deadening. Besides, a reading of the numerous rites of Christendom would quickly show that one could find precedent for almost anything he would want to do. This, then, implies that in appealing to historic precedent, we must also consider historic consensus--in so far as that exists--and the intrinsic meaningfulness of a usage. Lutherans will in most cases give greatest weight to Lutheran precedent, in this way visibly asserting Lutheran confessional identity.³²

What will be the future of a Lutheran perspective on the subject of ceremonial in the sacramentals is best summed up by Charles M. Jacobs in an essay written for the Lutheran Liturgical Association.

If liturgical practice needs regulation let it be governed by a few safe rules. 1) No accessory of the liturgy should be used unless it has a clear meaning. 2) That meaning must be understood by the congregation; 3) must bear directly upon the interpretation of the liturgy, and 4) must be consistent with Lutheran doctrine. Uniformity of practice cannot be enforced, nor is it desirable, since the varying needs and circumstances of different congregations call for diversity of administration.³³

In many ways this is what Lutherans have always been saying. We would add only one caution to Jacob's words. Care should be taken for the history and continuity of the Church. Especially in these days of ecumenism, there is a necessity of respecting and working together with all Christians to achieve the greater glory of God.

Some General Rubrics

Only a few comments will be made in this area. We do not want to duplicate what McClean's work has as general rubrics. These would apply, of course, not only to eucharistic ceremonial, but also to the ceremonial of all worship in the Church. Only in a few instances will duplication take place in order to make sure our point is clear. Lang defines rubric as "a direction, rule or suggestion as to how a service or the parts of a service are to be carried out."³⁴ He goes on to list three types:

A "shall" rubric orders something to be done and allows for no alternative....

A "may" rubric permits another action and leaves the matter optional. But ordinarily, what is suggested is to be preferred....

A "should" rubric indicates more strongly the preferred action.³⁵

Reverence is the main and overarching principle in all ceremonial.

"Restraint and reserve" are its "marks."³⁶ Reverence is both for persons and for things involved in the worship which the Church gives to God. "A large part of the ceremonial of the clergy and others who minister in church may be defined as honorific in character; it arises from religious politeness or is designed to show respect."³⁷ Thus persons of higher rank are honored by those of lower in processions, seating, and bowing.³⁸ There is also the principle of simplicity.

While stress should be laid upon the reverent and beautiful in public worship, there must be no tendency toward ostentatious display and show, either by the use of bizarre, home-made ceremonies, or by the use of traditional forms in a flamboyant manner. Such latter procedure will invariably violate both the rubrics and the canons of good taste. There is great virtue in decent simplicity.³⁹

This is not to favor barrenness, but "showy" reverence even in secular affairs is in poor taste. So for the sake of reverence, "ceremonial demands harmony and proportion."⁴⁰ Expanding on this, Lang suggests:

When two or more are doing an action together, for example, walking, reading, bowing, genuflecting, kneeling, good form requires their doing it at the same rate of time and manner of action. But while the action should be smooth and uniform, it should remain devotional and reverent and not give the impression that it is a "performance."⁴¹

Besides reverence to persons, Lang has moved us into the area of reverence for things, especially for the place where the worship action happens.

"Good taste demands a devout and reverent bearing in keeping with the character of the place."⁴² So Paul Zeller Strodach is able to say

forcefully, "Place every sanctity about holy things. The church is intended for, dedicated to, one all important purpose. It is holy in this use and in this only! Reverence here in conduct and demeanor is not a demand to be criticized."⁴³

The main motions of the head and body are that of bowing at various places in the rite. Lang suggests head bows to those who are superiors,⁴⁴ and at the words, "And with thy spirit."⁴⁵ He suggests a body bow when facing the altar for the Gloria Patri.⁴⁶ A body bow or genuflecting is for "expressing reverence to God" when entering or leaving a church or chancel, and to the crucifix when it is in procession.⁴⁵ Eisenhofer and Lechner in The Liturgy of the Roman Rite speak of the rules for baring the head.

The liturgical rules lay down that the head must be uncovered during prayer, in accordance with the words of the Apostle [1 Corinthians 11:4], and also as a sign of veneration or to show deference to superiors. On the other hand it is the rule to remain covered when performing official acts that are mainly authoritative in nature.⁴⁷

General rubrics for the hands include joining and folding them over the breast, palms together and fingers extended* when not in use. When one hand is occupied, the other rests flat on the breast, palm down. When seated, hands are flat on the knees, palms down. When praying, the hands are extended, being rejoined at the conclusion of the prayer. In all of this, the action should be uniform.⁴⁹ The other major action for the hands is the signing of the Holy Cross. "When the Church blesses and consecrates, she

*The Anglicans beg to differ: "When your hands are not otherwise occupied, it is best to keep them just linked in front of you at waist level, but do not poke your fingers forward--an attitude which is neither natural nor beautiful."⁴⁸

makes the Sign of the Cross; it is the sign of our redemption. Holy water is also very often used in blessings."^{50*} The sign should be made neither "too large" nor too dramatic. "It should be done easily, gracefully, and reverently."⁵¹ It should be done with the "open right hand."⁵²

General rubrics for the feet include being flat on the floor, not crossed, when seated, and "when the clergy and their assistants in the chancel are not serving in front of the altar, their usual position is to face north or south."⁵³ When walking, it should be done "erect, at a medium pace, and without looking around."⁵⁴ When at the altar and at any time of standing still, the feet should be set squarely and the weight distributed evenly. When turning at the altar always turn towards the center when at either horn;⁵⁵ this applies also when the person is on the north or south side of the chancel.

The people, too, have some general rubrics. "In the church's worship it is a laudable custom to cross ourselves at the beginning and end of all services...."⁵⁶ It is respectful to stand when the clergy enter the place of worship,⁵⁷ and if not already standing to do so as they leave. The Ceremonial for the Office of the Book of Hours has some good things to say, applicable to the worshipping Christian community, even though directed toward monastic usage. One should stand for prayer, except if it is one of supplication, then kneel. Sit for psalms (standing for the Gloria Patri). Sit and listen, do not "follow the books with your eyes," during the Readings from Scripture. If Christ speaks in the Gospel, then stand and face the Reader.

*We shall not discuss the use of holy water among Lutherans since we are using the touchstone of simplicity as one of our basic premises. It may well be that it is a dodge. But time and energy do not permit the depth discussion that this topic would require.

These suggestions "depend somewhat upon material conditions, the arrangement of the places in particular." The Ceremonial continues: "It is therefore for the Superior of each Community to modify, with regard to local customs or necessities, the ceremonies indicated here."⁵⁸ It might be well to add that one need only substitute "pastor" for "Superior" to have a good general rubric for the purposes of this paper.

CHAPTER IV

A DESCRIPTION OF CEREMONIAL IN SOME SELECTED SACRAMENTALS

Based on what has been said in Chapters I-III and Appendixes A and B, this chapter will give proposed additional rubrics for ceremonial in some sacramentals. The rite of the sacramentals will be from the Agenda used by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The text of the rubrics in the Agenda is in italics. Walter Howard Frere wrote, "It may easily happen in course of time that interpretative ceremonial may cease to interpret, just as utilitarian ceremonial may cease to have any utility; and a question arises as to its retention in the altered circumstances"¹ What do we do with change in the area of ceremonial for the sacramentals? This chapter seeks to provide a beginning answer. The words of Jaroslav Pelikan are significant, when he says that "in a liturgical discussion we need to remind ourselves of the limited and conditional character of all historical forms and of the necessity for new forms."² But note that the form we shall be dealing with in this chapter is only the ceremonial, the rubrics, and not the rite (text) itself.

Introductory Ceremony*

The normal place for vesting for any service is in the sacristy. But lacking a sacristy, tradition admits to laying the vestments "on the north side of the altar" and vesting there.³ Following the vesting and just prior to entering the chancel or forming for procession, a blessing may be given.

*See also Appendix B. Details on vestments, incense, and processions are here. In this section we are dealing only with the rubrics.

Arthur Carl Piepkorn wrote, "The custom of celebrant and server(s) offering prayer together before leaving the sacristy for the altar, like the custom of the celebrant pronouncing a sacristy blessing upon the server(s), is a laudable one."⁴

The Ceremony for the Sacramentals

The Order for THE DEDICATION OF A CHURCH (Agenda. p. 157)*

At the dedication of a church, the Minister, together with assisting Ministers, and the Congregation, may hold a valedictory service at the former place of worship.

Since this is a time of celebration, the more ceremony that is present will help to emphasize the joy and importance of the event. Thus other clergy should be invited to take part in the service, possibly as assistants but most certainly in procession. This might well include the presence of

*A few comments might be helpful, in order to put some historical perspective on this rite. From earliest times the dedication rite has been simple and left open for the bishop to do as he pleased.⁵ This is attested to by the vagueness of the rubrics in the early dedication rites.⁶ Duchesne notes that "about the middle of the sixth century the Roman Church had not yet a ritual for the dedication of churches. A church was dedicated by the simple fact that Mass had been solemnly said within it."⁷ Yet it should be noted that "notwithstanding the fact that the idea prevailed at Rome that the sanctity of the Church arose entirely from the divine Sacrifice therein offered, in practice, however, there was felt the need of some accidental and preparatory sanctification ..."⁸ The overly simplistic nature of ceremony which we see in the Agenda's dedication rite for churches and other objects is both immediately noticeable and perhaps regrettable when compared with other Lutheran rites. But it fits in well with George Wenner's description of a Lutheran point of view on the subject.

The Rituale Romanum places the dedication of churches under the heading of Benedictions. The Anglican books call the act a Consecration. The Methodists call it a Dedication.

Lutherans repudiate the idea of a special sanctity of churches. They deny that they are more holy than any other place on earth.⁹

Wenner continues with an example from Luther himself:

the District President as the "bishop." In such a case, the local pastor may wish to defer to him the rubrics designated for "the Minister." (If this is not done, a significant role still ought to be given him, as well as the seat of highest honor in the church and place of highest honor in the procession.) So also the people should be gathered in force, inviting other congregations to join in the celebration.*

Then the Minister, with the assembled Congregation, shall proceed to the door of the new church, the church officers bearing the Bible and sacred vessels and the Congregation singing a Hymn.

This should, of course, be done vested (in the color of the Day or white) and in procession. (See Appendix B. Following the clergy or mixed choir, if one is present, should be the church officers if dressed in lay clothing, the builder, and local government officials.) If the distance between the sites is too great and automobiles are needed, the procession should form at one corner of the new site, and after all have arrived from the old site, the procession should begin. According to an eighteenth

The early Lutheran Agenda therefore contained no forms for church dedications. [See last of Smalcald Articles] (Perhaps also because there were no churches to dedicate.) But in the year 1546 Luther himself dedicated a church. He commenced the Service with the following address:

'My dear friends, we are now about to bless this house and dedicate it to our Lord Jesus Christ. This duty devolves not only upon me but you also are to take hold of the sprinkler and censer so that this house may be consecrated....' After the prayer he preached a sermon...and closed with these words: '...And now dear friends, since you have helped sprinkle it with the real holy water of God's Word, take hold of the censer, that is prayer, and let us call upon God...' And this was the dedication.¹⁰

*It was "especially remarkable the immense concourse of the faithful and of bishops who usually took part in them [consecration of churches after "Constantine's Peace.]" 'It was a splendid and consoling spectacle,' says Eusebius, 'to see the solemn consecrations of Christian churches and oratories...a spectacle rendered still more imposing and worthy of respect because honoured by the presence of the bishops of the whole province.'¹¹

century Saxon dedication the procession should go around the new building.¹² It, no doubt, was a remnant of when bishops went around the exterior walls aspersing them with holy water.¹³ So that the rest of the rite continues smoothly, those carrying the Bible and sacred vessels should follow immediately the Minister (or bishop) with the highest rank, and precede the rest of the congregation. The alternative would be to have the church officers who are bearing vested as servers and carrying the objects following the crucifer. A good hymn for procession might be "Christ, Thou Art the Sure Foundation," (TLH 466).¹⁴

At the door of the new church the Minister shall say:

With the procession as long as it might be, the Minister would not be directly at the door, though certainly in front of it ready to proceed in. However, for the next rubric to be completed, the Minister and builder or trustee will have to be at the door. This is perhaps best facilitated during the singing of the hymn: when the door has been reached by the thurifer, the Minister and his assistant (If the highest ranking clergy needs one as a "book-boy" and neither the server nor deacon in procession 1-3 do it, the assistant may process at the left of the Minister.) go to the door accompanied by the builder or trustee who was immediately behind the clergy in procession. The prayer shall be said facing the north¹⁵ with hands apart and joined for the conclusion. The assistant holds the book and stands at the Minister's left. The Minister's head is uncovered.

Then shall the keys be handed to the Minister by the builder or by one of the trustees of the church, and the Minister shall say:

(A German agenda has a good practise at this point. The key is given to the bishop, and the bishop gives the key to the local pastor.¹⁶ It does

not take much thought to see this being done with the Minister and the District President.) Holding the keys in one hand, the other flat on his breast, the minister begins the words, "Our Help..." At the phrase "I herewith open" he unlocks the door and a church council member opens it. The council member might well be vested as a server assisting the Minister, or a lay-dressed man making sure the people of the congregation get into the church and its pews for the inside service. At the naming of the Triune God, the Minister makes the sign of the Holy Cross in the usual manner as a blessing over the doorway.

The door having been unlocked by the Minister and opened by a member of the Church Council, one of the following Psalms may be said responsively: Psalms 24, 100, 122: or the Minister may say:

The "may" rubrics here seem general enough that both the Minister's "Lift Up Your Heads" and a psalm might be used respectively. The words of the Minister would be said outside the doors and the psalm or psalms during the procession into the church. Again this whole part is a simplified (dare we say "stripped down") form of a fuller western rite as described in Ritual Notes, an Anglican book on ceremonial.¹⁷ The Minister and people bow at the Gloria Patri; the psalm(s) might well be said responsively: the antiphon by a cantor, the clergy and choir saying the verses and the congregation responding after each with the antiphon, repeating the antiphon again after the Gloria.

The Minister, with the Congregation, shall then enter the church. Having come to the chancel, the Minister and his assistants shall enter the sanctuary. The members of the Church Council, standing at the entrance of the chancel, shall give the Bible and the sacred vessels into the hands of the Minister, who shall put them in their proper place.

The procession proceeds to the chancel, the Minister having returned to his place in the procession, or having waited immediately inside the doors for his place to reach him. Upon reaching the chancel, the thurifer, crucifer, taperers stand until the guest clergy, choir, and congregation take their places. They then go to theirs. The Minister and his assistants (lay or guest clergy) enter the chancel while those with the vessels come forward to the foot of the chancel. (If vested, they remain waiting at the foot of the chancel, making way for the Minister and his assistants to get through into the sanctuary.) The Minister turns to receive the sacred vessels and Bible from the bearers. They are to be put in their proper places (preferably credence tables until objects on which they belong are blessed). It is unrealistic to expect that only the presiding Minister should receive and place the vessels and Bible. Use could well be made of the assistants (clergy) at this point. After the placing, the assistants return to their proper places and the council members to theirs; the Minister and his assistant go to the center of the chancel.

Then shall the Minister say:

He faces the congregation. He then goes to his place. If he be the bishop, to the north side,¹⁵ if just the local pastor, to his regular place. He sits and the congregation follows suit.

Then shall be sung a Hymn.

Veni Creator Spiritus is suggested:¹⁸ "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest" (TLH 233) or "Creator Spirit, by Whose Aid" (TLH 236). In both cases the congregation rises for the doxological stanza.

Then shall follow the Order of the Morning Service, beginning with the Preparation.

This is an unfortunate rubric. Because matched with a later one, it allows for the mixing of the Order of Morning Service and the Order of the Holy Communion. It is preferable, of course, that the communion liturgy be used. According to the General Rubrics, if the communion liturgy is used, it "shall be used in its entirety."¹⁹ It is also preferable that the objects within the church not be used until they have been dedicated (e.g. the lectern and pulpit); thus the dedication rite should completely precede the Introit or Preparation. The other option would be that the undedicated object not be used for the first part of the order of service which precedes the dedication rite. If the principle that use of the object dedicates it is accepted, then there is no need for the prayers later in the rite which specifically dedicate each object.

Before the reading of the Epistle for the Day, one of the following Scripture Lessons may be read: 1 Kings 8:1-13; 1 Kings 8:22-30; 1 Chron. 30:1-20; Psalm 72; Psalm 84; Psalm 122; Psalm 138; Heb. 10:19-25.

This "may" rubric is best omitted and the Old Testament lesson for the Day read instead, unless the propers for Dedication are used in place of the ones for the Day. Those psalms which would duplicate ones read for the procession entering the church ought not be read again at this point.

COLLECT

While this is out of place where it is listed, one of the collects may well be used following the collect for the Day. But if the Dedication propers are used, it is perhaps best omitted.

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON AND OFFERTORY

One of these may be added to the General Prayer at the point of the intercessions.

THE ACT OF DEDICATION

The first prayer should be said from the Minister's place, if during the communion liturgy, and from the bottom of the chancel steps if before the service. An assistant holds the book at the Minister's left. The thurifer, crucifer, and two taperers may well precede them throughout the dedication ceremony, standing behind the Minister when the object to be blessed is reached. The sign of the Cross is made at the Name of the Holy Trinity. The Minister and assistant then proceed to the altar for the

DEDICATION OF THE ALTAR

and the

PRAYER

At the words, "altar to the glory of Thy name," the sign of the Cross may be made over the five crosses carved in the mensa, with or without chrism, depending on the parish's practise. The "Amen" response is properly the congregation's. If the altar cloths have not been put on before the service they should be placed at this point by servers (assistants) before the Minister moves with the procession to the pulpit for the

DEDICATION OF THE PULPIT

and the

PRAYER

At the words, "Bless this pulpit, that false doctrine" the sign of the Cross may be made. The procession then moves to the center of the chancel for the

DEDICATION OF ALTAR VESSELS AND CANDELABRA

This is done only if the objects are new and have not been used before. After these words and the opening paragraph of the

PRAYER

they proceed to the baptismal font and its ornaments on a table next to it. At the words "we do consecrate" and the naming of the objects, the sign of the Cross may be made over them. At the end of paragraph four of the prayer, the Minister and procession go to the credence and at the words "we do consecrate" and the naming of the sacred vessels for Holy Communion, the sign of the Cross is made. For the last three paragraphs, they go to the candlesticks and in the same manner dedicate them. The Minister rejoins his hands at the conclusion of each prayer throughout the rite and at the general conclusion of the dedication. Otherwise, his hands are open, or one is making the sign of the Cross while the other lies flat on the breast. The dedication rite concluded,

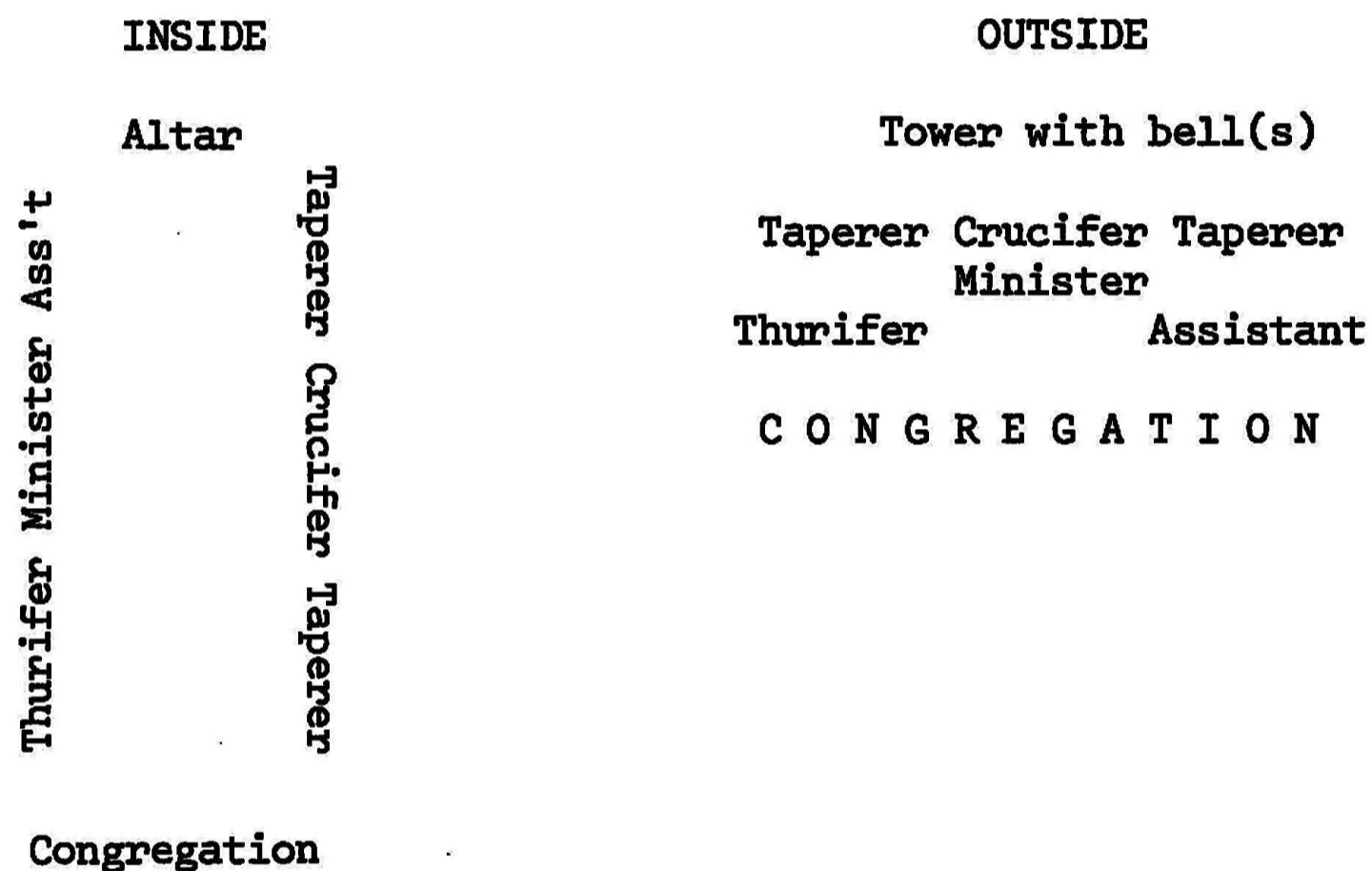
The Service shall then continue to the close according to the Order of the Morning Service or the Order of the Holy Communion if Holy Communion is celebrated with the dedicatory exercises.

Preferably, the Order of the Holy Communion is used and the necessary assistants for the parish's celebration join the Minister at the altar, after he has gone to the sacristy, removed his cope and put on eucharistic vestments; or if these are not used in the parish, only removed his cope.

The Order for THE DEDICATION OF A BELL (Agenda. p. 175)

The Form given below may be used in place of, or together with, the Prayer after the Sermon in a regular Morning Service.

This "may" rubric would allow the preferred practise of the blessing or dedication of bells to take place before the main service of Holy Communion, rather than within it. So that the bell(s) may be used in the service of dedication, it is necessary that it be hung in the tower before the blessing. The service may be conducted from either within or without the church building. If it precedes the Eucharist, the blessing might well begin with the Trinitarian Invocation and the sign of the Cross made individually; the people responding with "Amen." Positions might be as follows:



The following Scriptures may be used as Lessons before the reading of the Epistle for the Day: Num. 10:1-10; Psalm 100. The Sermon should have reference to the significance of bells in ecclesiastical usage. As texts may be used, e.g., Num. 10:2; Ps. 95:6-8; Matt. 22:4; 1 Cor. 13:1.

Since the Agenda seems to follow the principle of all things being hallowed by God's Word and prayer, it would be appropriate to have one of these suggested lessons (or another) read at this point. This could well be done by a lay reader or one of the assistants. If the rite is used in the midst of the communion service, these lessons should not replace the Old Testament Lesson for the Day. A brief homily by the Minister may

follow. While it may refer to the usage of bells, it should be short and not replace the homily of the Eucharist on the theme of the Day. Following the homily,

The Minister may say:

He faces the congregation. The "Beloved in the Lord" should be included since it can serve well as the ending for the homily and as a transition into the blessing. Before "Let us pray," the Minister and his assistant preceded by the thurifer ascend the tower in procession. The crucifer and taperers remain at the foot of the tower if the service has begun in the church; they remain with the congregation, if the service is held outside. The congregation may sing a hymn during the procession. Once in the tower, the Minister announces and prays one of the prayers.* At the words "we beseech thee to bless its use unto us," the sign of the Cross may be made. After the prayer, the congregation responds with the "Amen." The Minister's head is bared for the prayer and the blessing.

The bell may be struck three times, while the Minister says:

To save the eardrums of the clergy and his assistants, it might be best to save ringing the bell(s) until after the naming of the Triune God (with the signing of the Cross), and

The Congregation shall say or chant: Amen.

*The Roman Rite includes more ceremony at this point: "The rite includes the washing of the bell by the bishops and clergy present ('christening' the bell), the anointing of the bell with oil of the sick and chrism, and finally its incensation. For the latter the bishop places thyme, incense, and myrrh in the thurible or in a bowl of glowing charcoal, and places it under the bell."²⁰

After the "Amen" comes the ringing of the bell(s), during which the clergy and his assistants return in procession to their places.

Then all shall say

THE LORD'S PRAYER

For this and all prayers, the Minister's head is uncovered, if he has been wearing head covering when outside the church building.

Then may be sung a Hymn.

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" (TLH 39) may be sung, or there may be another ringing of the bell(s).²¹

Then shall the Minister say or chant

THE BENEDICTION

The Aaronitic is prescribed since the opening rubric sees this rite as part of the Order of Morning Service or Holy Communion after the General Prayer. The sign of the Cross is made upon the people by the Minister and by the people upon themselves. The "Amen" of the Minister should be omitted.

The Congregation shall say or chant: Amen.

SILENT PRAYER

The bell may be rung at the close of the Service.

Following this final ringing of the bell(s), the procession forms to enter the church with the Introit for the Day if the blessing took place outside. (The Preparation may immediately precede the Introit while still outside.) Or the Minister begins with the Introit or Preparation if the blessing took place beginning within the church building. During the Introit, while the congregation is still entering saying the psalm (or before the

Introit or Preparation if the ending of the service of blessing was in the chancel) the Minister goes to the sacristy to remove the cope and put on eucharist vestments, or just to remove the cope, depending on parish practice.

The Order for THE DEDICATION OF A DWELLING (Agenda. p. 185)

The Minister being properly vested in the color of the Day or in white, with an assistant, and preceded by thurifer, crucifer, and taperers, enters the dwelling in procession, gathering in the living room. The family follows immediately the clergy of highest rank, and the rest of the congregation present follows the family.

The following Introit may be sung or said:

As they are entering, the Minister begins the Introit and the gathered body joins in. Since it is proper to begin all services of worship with the sign of the Holy Cross, at the beginning of the Introit each may cross himself. Since this is a "may" rubric, the Minister should be able to choose a different psalm or use more verses with the one given, interspersing verses and antiphon between himself and the gathered body. This depends on the size of the group and the time needed for all to gather in the living room and entrance hall. Having arranged themselves, possibly in the following manner,

Taperer Crucifer Taperer

Minister
Thurifer Assistant

Family

T H E P E O P L E

and the people being within,

Then shall the Minister say:

For the prayer, his hands are open, and rejoined for the conclusion. The "Amen" is properly the response of the people, not the Minister.

*Then shall the Minister read a Scripture Lesson, e.g.
Luke 19:1-10.*

In keeping with the principle of the involvement of the faithful in sacramentals, it might be well to modify this rubric, allowing the father of the household to read the lesson.

Then may follow a short Address.

A brief homily by the Minister is always in keeping with Lutheran thought that the Word should be spoken and proclaimed at any gathering of the worshipping community. After the homily,

Then shall the Minister say:

Again his hands are in an open position. At the words "bless this household" he might well make the sign of the Cross over the family which is to live in the house. At the words "Bless, O Lord, this house," the sign of the Cross may be made. The left hand rests palm down on the breast while the Cross is made with the right. The hands are rejoined at the termination of the prayer. The "Amen" is properly the people's response.

Then may the Service close with the Lord's Prayer and the Benediction.

This rubric is best included for a fitting conclusion to this sacramental. The Lord's Prayer should be said in the proper manner. The Apostolic Blessing is best said; the people's response is "Amen." The Minister and his assistants may then be directed to, and go in procession to, a room in the house to remove and leave their vestments and ornaments if there be an open house.

Or, if the church be near, they may go in procession to the sacristy. (It may well be debated whether so many assistants should be present in this type of sacramental. Do to room size or other considerations, it may be wise to have only the Minister and Thurifer, with possibly an assistant, to lead this rite. They should, however, be vested properly, since this presents a visible and visual association in the minds of the participants with the worshipping Body that gathers for the Eucharist each Sunday.)

CHAPTER V

SOME CONCLUSIONS

What conclusions can be drawn from this discussion? Perhaps a better question is: In what direction should ceremonial within the sacramentals continue? There are two basic directions. First, the greatest glory must be given to God. Second, the community of believers must be edified. Once ceremonial has failed to do one or the other of these, its role and effectiveness (indeed its validity) has been weakened. To achieve these goals, we have said, there must be a sense of continuity with the Church of past ages, as well as a spirit of adventure for the future. Ceremonial must always come under the scrutiny of the Faith.

Ceremonial has constantly been the expression of the less educated and more superstitious mind, instead of being the expression of the better educated and more reverent conscience of the Church. Ceremonial acts must therefore be continually tested, to see how far they are according to the analogy of faith.¹

It may be that the result of this testing will show a need for pastorally-conducted experimentation; not for the sake of cuteness, but for the sake of the Faith. McClean's booklet, while basically conservative, does leave the way open for experimentation. He writes:

There will, therefore, be some tension between faithfulness to the authorized use of the church and responsible experimentation. Responsible experimentation takes place when a pastor carefully studies the problems involved and adequately prepares his people for the experiment.²

Yet the person who is serious about ceremonial will have to admit both a debt and a binding love for the advice and direction of the Church of past ages. It is just here that the pastor and liturgiologist will find direction

for the future. For the Church's traditions are a source of help "for contemporary need." They may well prove to be both a beginning point and a "helpful pattern for future developments."³

We see within the Church today a move toward simplicity; not a barren simplicity, but a monastic simplicity which gets the worship action of the Church moving toward the central purpose: the praise of God and the proclamation of the Gospel. One need only pick up a liturgical arts magazine like Kunst und Kirche, Liturgical Arts, or Art d'Église, or pick up a good ecclesiastical arts catalogue to see this in the field of church architecture and appointments. If the ceremonies of the Church are going to fit in with the surroundings in which they are done (and they must), there will have to be a genuine simplicity about them. Eugene Brand wrote, "The ceremonial void needs filling, but with clear, simple, relevant actions."⁴

The principles of glorification of God (which includes proclamation of the Gospel) and edification of the Body of Christ have been shown throughout this work. The attempt has been made to connect the past and the present in a way that only good results will be forthcoming. In some instances, for some Lutherans, the suggestions made are new. We give them up for scrutiny. Needless to say, more work needs to be done in the area of ceremonial and the sacramentals for Lutherans, particularly those of the Missouri Synod. Perhaps this is a start.

APPENDIX A

THE WHY OF VESTMENTS, INCENSE, AND PROCESSIONS

This is designed to be an appendage to Chapter II, "The Why of Ceremonial in the Sacramentals." In this section, we want to cover three of the basic parts of ceremonial from the point of view of their theology. Appendix B will show how they are to be used.

Vestments

Scott Francis Brenner in The Art of Worship states a fact and makes it a warning when he writes, "Handling the subject of vestments requires the same skills demanded in handling hot atomic wastes."¹ While many argue that Luther and his reformation never meant to do away with liturgical vestments, it is a matter of historical record that a vast portion of Lutheranism played down and even did away with the use of historic vesture. Thus as Lutherans seek today to re-establish this portion of their heritage, they must be careful, lest this aspect hinder attempts at restoring a full worship life.

One's support for the use of vestments is, of course not biblical (at least not New Testament). Rather the support is from the tradition of the Church as it developed from the time of our Lord's ascension. One's view of tradition will shape his view of whether or not to vest. Vestments do "add beauty and solemnity to the worship." One could not deny that very easily. "Secondly, the vestments conceal the individuality and personality of the officiant."² This loss of individuality is discussed more fully in Chapter III, and we need say nothing more except that this fact helps the realization

of the corporateness of the assembled Body of Christ. It helps to minimize an emphasis on individual piety in its most harmful sense.

The men of the Lutheran liturgical movement of the 1930's were convinced that "reason and experience teach that proper vestments stimulate reverence."³ So viewed, vestments have the task of teaching as well as that of praising God through color and form which His creation takes at the hands of men. The analogy may be poor, but true, that any secular pageantry takes on a different form and feeling when the participants are appareled in an "unusual" manner (e.g. judicial, academic, and royal activities); if a sense of reverence and celebration in the secular arena is so often important, should it not also be true in the Church? It must be remembered that reverence does not necessarily mean gloom. There is such a quality as reverent joy.

Vestments are also a sign of one's office, and for liturgical-Lutherans, "chaste liturgical taste demands" such a sign.⁴ They are symbols of what the wearer is doing, of what his job is, for the people of God. Not only does this apply to the clergy, but also to those who assist him. They, too, are rendering a service to God and to the worshipping community.

In the light of such a service, is it any wonder that the Church adorns her acolytes with special vestments appropriate to the surroundings in which they function!...so the acolyte of today properly renders service to God in the ancient robes designed for him by Holy Mother Church....⁵

That is the whole purpose of vestments: service to the people of God, to aid them as they present themselves, souls and bodies, before God.

Incense

Horace Hummel, formerly on the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, wrote an excellent article "On the Use of Incense" for the journal Una Sancta. In this article, he lists six meanings of incense, which, in spite of its length, we quote here:

1. Perhaps most basically, "incense owns a deity nigh" (as the familiar carol puts it). It bespeaks the "real presence" of God in his house in the midst of his worshipers.
2. Thus incense at the same time accents the mystery of God's actuality in man's worship and life.
3. Therefore, incense provides primarily for the sense of smell, [involvement of the whole man in worship] but some what also for the sense of sight (a minor part of the "beauty of holiness").
4. ...it undoubtedly [in Old Testament worship] partook of the prayer, gift, communion, and expiatory significance of all sacrifice.
5. Because all sacrifice was a sort of acted, concrete prayer, incense early became a figure of the prayers of the faithful...
6. Related is probably its purificatory significance; not only hygienically, but as a "sacramental" part of God's entire program of renewal and redemption proceeding from his word.⁶

An Anglican and a Lutheran writer each tie in incense with processions, and from what they say, we can assume that it is not just at Eucharist that it could be used, but at any time when the clergy process or the processional cross is carried. In The Chichester Customary we read:

The purpose [of incense] was fumigatory and honorific, the provision of an agreeable odour paying respect to those who ministered in holy things. Incense was therefore primarily processional in its use. Three moments in the Liturgy were thus marked; the entrance of the Celebrant and his attendants, the reading of the Gospel, and the Offertory.⁷

Charles McClean in The Conduct of the Services sees it as honoring Christ

in the celebrant who represents Him. He continues by saying that incense seems also to have been used in connection with the book containing the Gospel as it was carried in procession. The book, too, was representative of Christ. A suggestion is then made by McClean that perhaps incense should be used with the processional cross as it represents our Lord.⁸

Hummel is very sure that incense can be useful in the worship-life of the community.

The proper question, then, is: can incense contribute to God's revelation and redemptive activity toward us as well as to our adoration and praise of him? We have already submitted our affirmative answer: once its novelty and controversiality have faded, it may indeed so contribute--as has been the experience of the majority of the faithful through the millenia.⁹

For those Lutherans who have a fear of everything but the preached Word, Hummel has good things to say. Just as with the subject of vestments, the use of incense finally hinges on its role as a servant. "That is to say that incense, like everything else (including preaching), receives its validation only in the service of the gospel and can ultimately be defended only on the grounds of contributing to the impact of the gospel."¹⁰

Processions*

In discussion following James Jones' article "The Chief Processions During the Church Year" at the 1950 National Liturgical Week, Norbert Randolph is recorded to have said: "To me processions have always had a certain appeal, an appeal which illustrates what Guardini calls the playfulness of

*We shall not concentrate on McClean's material on pilgrimages which sees processions mainly as a separate service held within the church before the Eucharist. Rather we would view processions as they precede or follow or are a part of the sacramental being used.

the liturgy."¹¹ His terminology is not flippant, but is a sincere effort to express that processions are something more than just walking around the church or to some place. The children of God are at worship. They are expressing something of themselves to their Father. Processions are indeed a lot like pilgrimages and probably on most occasions, the congregation should participate,¹² to emphasize that the whole people of God is on the move and alive.

Arthur Carl Piepkorn wrote a series of articles in the late 1930's and early 1940 on processions from a Lutheran perspective. He comes to the conclusion that

There is therefore in the mind of the Lutheran Church no objection to a procession merely because it is a procession. A procession is regarded as justified if some desirable devotional or practical end is served thereby.¹³

The practical or devotional end is verbalized by Cyril E. Pocknee in his revision of Percy Dearmer's The Parson's Handbook. The end or "object" of a procession "is to go somewhere to pray and worship."¹⁴ Even more than all of this, a procession is also a sign or symbol. Maybe even more than the pilgrimage motif, the symbolic aspect of the procession ought to be used and expanded upon.

First of all a procession is walking, a walking which is prayer, a walking which is a sign, a sacrament, a symbol of something else....Walking in any liturgical procession is, I repeat, always an outward manifestation of the one great sacrament: Christ and His Church.¹⁵

Again the reason for processions, as well as for vestments and incense, is to express vividly and clearly the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

APPENDIX B

THE HOW OF VESTMENTS, INCENSE, AND PROCESSIONS

This is an appendage to the introductory portion of Chapter IV. It will concern itself with material both preparatory to the rites and the actions within the rites themselves.

Vestments

What vestments are best worn for doing the sacramentals? Arthur Carl Piepkorn is quoted by Paul H. D. Lang as saying that the only proper use for surplice and stole within Lutheranism is "for non-Eucharistic sacramental and quasi-sacramental rites in parishes where Eucharistic vestments are worn" for Holy Communion.¹ Over this, a cope may be worn for processions and occasions "of great solemnity."² Thus Piepkorn concludes: "Finally we come to the fullest Lutheran use: ...cope for processions and solemn offices, surplice and stole for non-Eucharistic sacraments and rites of the Church...."^{3*} This follows very closely the usage of the Church of Rome as discussed by Fortesque and O'Connell in The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described. They write:

During the solemn blessings in the Missal (as on Candlemas, Ash Wednesday and Palm Sunday), in processions...the celebrant wears a COPE (pluviale)....

Usually the cope is of the colour of the day....For some

*Anglican usage suggested by Pocknee is as follows: "It would accord more with primitive and older tradition if the albe was used in all rites when the stole is worn."⁴ However, if we are out to aid worshipers in their experience through ceremonial, it might make more sense to follow Piepkorn, thus enabling a variety in vestments and their effect upon the people.

solemn blessings the colour is violet (e.g. the blessing of ashes)....

At processions...he will generally wear a surplice, stole and cope....At blessings before Mass he has the amice, alb, girdle and stole. When he wears the girdle he crosses the stole before the breast. With a surplice it hangs straight down from the neck.

.....

When administering sacraments and sacramentals the priest normally wears a surplice and stole.⁵

Later, they add that "the general rule for blessings is that the priest wears a surplice and a stole of the colour of the day unless another colour is expressly prescribed (e.g., if there is an exorcism the colour will be violet). The priest stands uncovered while blessing..."⁶

We want to say just a few more words about stoles and their use. Paul Zeller Strodach suggests that "an entire set should be provided and used, or none at all."⁷ Rather than just wearing a stole on a day the color of which matches, for the sake of consistency, none should be worn at any time. As to the length of the stole, Piepkorn has some words. While he recommends 108 inches rather than the short stoles in vogue, he concludes by saying: "When worn with a surplice of decent length, the long Eucharistic stole is graceful and appropriate for all rites."⁸ It would seem that one could allow for different lengths of stole depending on the height of the man wearing it, whether he be five feet tall or six and one-half feet tall.

Something should be said about vesture for inclement weather, since we are proposing processions as part of the ceremonial for some sacramentals. Three distinct pieces are suggested by the sources consulted. One is head covering; two is a black cape; and three is a colored cope. Piepkorn writes: "Where protection against the cold and the weather, indoors or out-of-doors,

is needed, a skull-cap or a biretta should be worn. A modern lay hat is out of place with any kind of vestment. The shape of the biretta is immaterial."^{9*} And further: If temperature or weather requires a garment over the gown, indoors or out, the clergyman should secure a black cape.... If a true hood is attached to the back of such a cape, it may serve in lieu of a biretta."¹⁰ We note that the black cape worn over the black robe and not over vestments. For the latter, it would seem, a colored cope is to be used. F. W. Weidmann in a brief history of vestments has a curious note:

J. Braun (Die liturgischen Paramente, p. 121) agrees that the cope was sometimes used as a pluviale (rain-coat) but much more as a casula processoria, as a long flowing protective cape for the singers in the chilly choir lofts, then as an incensing-coat (Rauchmantel) for the priest, and finally as a substitute for the chasuble at the laying of corner-stones, the blessing of cemetaries, public blessings of people, at the reception of church dignitaries, etc.¹¹

It would seem, then, that the cope is for festive and ceremonious occasions to be worn over vestments; and the cape is just for use as an ecclesiastical "top-coat" to be worn over the cassock. (Though one would think that if a cope were not available, a cape could be used for ceremonies when the weather in- or out-of-doors required extra protection over vestments.) Piepkorn writes:

The officiant should wear a cope, if one be available, over his albe (or surplice, depending on the occasion), and copes may also be worn by the cantors. The choristers may wear black choir-copes (cappae nigrae) over their other vestments. In inclement weather out-of-doors the clergy may wear square caps, others skullcaps.¹²

*Since most churches today are heated, perhaps head covering should only be worn outside, when the weather requires. When the procession goes inside the church, the covering could be removed, a hood being dropped back to its resting place on the cope or cape and the biretta being given to an assistant to place it in a proper place.

As a final note, he says, "A cope is not a Eucharistic, nor even a clerical vestment. It is worn as a vestment of dignity for processions in and out of doors and for solemn occasions other than the celebration of Holy Communion."¹³

Vestments are also used by servers and assistants. Some very simple rules govern their use. It is important that assistants be vested with a proper and consistent norm. Piepkorn suggests that servers wear an "ankle-length black cassock," covered by a long white vestment, with or without apparels. The other clothing such as pants, shoes and socks "should be of subdued color."¹⁴ Charles McClean makes one further suggestion: "Those assisting in a service vest according to the vestment use of the officiating minister."¹⁵ If the minister is in an alb, so should be the server. If he wears cassock and surplice, so should the server.

Incense

We want to say two things about incense. What we have to say is consistent with the desire we see for simplicity in the use of things "liturgical." We said earlier in speaking of incense, that it was honorific and connected with processions. Based on that discussion in Appendix A on the "why" of incense, we go along with the following Anglican suggestion (rather than the more elaborate Roman or McClean suggestions). Dom Gregory Dix wrote that there was "the old fourth century Western custom of merely carrying a smoking censer before the bishop in the entrance-procession [of Mass] as a mark of honour."¹⁶ Since we would see the sacramentals as preceding the celebration of the Eucharist in most cases, incense might well be used as a symbol of honor and of course a symbol of the prayer of the faithful, etc., as suggested by Hummel and McClean. So we would agree with Cyril E. Pocknee when he says, "It is here suggested, however, that a

return should be made to the less ornate and simpler usage of the old Sacramentaries in which there was no censuring of persons or things."^{17*} The amount of censuring that often goes on while the congregation waits adds neither to the majesty of the service, nor to the nerves of the people, nor to the symbol trying to be conveyed. Thus any teaching or edification it would do fails for the sake of usages developed at a time when liturgy had become the work of a few (drama without audience participation) instead of the work of the people. A return in recent decades to the people-of-God-at-worship concept must also take thought for the use made of ceremony in this new context.

Processions

Here we are speaking not of litany processions, but of processions as they are directly related to the ceremony of the sacramentals. Thus, for our purposes, it is not so much a "separate service,"¹⁸ as it is a practical part (as well as worshipful) of the sacramental rite involved. While processions as a separate service might well be reserved for "the great festivals of the year,"¹⁹ there still is need for them at the sacramentals, as is demonstrated in Chapter IV.

For processions which will only take place entering and leaving the chancel from the sacristy, it is the Gospel side which is used for this purpose if the sacristy is behind the altar.²⁰ According to Piepkorn, the procession can be made either in silence, with chanting or singing, or

*If, for instance, there is insistence on censuring an altar for example at a dedication, we would suggest a simpler method of censuring just the four horns and the center, at the points where the five crosses are carved.

with just the organ playing.²¹ He also says there is no need for those processing to "reverence any altar or other focus of devotion."²²

Based on McClean²³ and Piepkorn²⁴ we present various orders for the procession, depending upon the sacramental being administered and the number of clergy and assistants needed for the proper execution of the rite and the Eucharist which may follow it.

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1. | Thurifer
Taperer Crucifer Taperer
Server
Celebrant | 2. | Thurifer
Taperer Server (Crucifer) Taperer
Subdeacon
Deacon
Celebrant |
| | 3. | | Thurifer
Taperer Crucifer (Server) Taperer
Choir (if all male)
Subdeacon
Deacon
Assisting Clergy
Celebrant (local pastor)
Bishop (District President)
Choir (if mixed)
Congregation (in pairs) |

That proper training is needed for processions and ceremonial to be done properly, goes without saying.*

Something should be said on each part of the procession. Of the crucifer, Lang says that he should have the cross facing forward, his head uncovered (in- or out-of-doors); he does not kneel, genuflect, or cross himself while carrying the processional cross. The same applies to the Taperers.²⁶ If the three cannot walk abreast, the Taperers precede.²⁷

*Martin Hellriegel is recorded to have said: "The great Abbot Ildephonse Herwegen...once said: 'Ninety percent of the people can walk, but only ten percent can walk liturgically.'"²⁵

Piepkorn notes that a banner or a Christian symbol on a staff may take the place of a processional crucifix or cross.²⁸ Both should be carried at a comfortable height, neither too high nor too low. It is worthwhile to note what one Anglican writes:

If, for instance, a church possesses a processional Cross and three banners, they will all be carried in every Procession, thus robbing these ornaments of any special meaning. In the old days at Salisbury they knew better, and by deliberate use or non-use of the various crosses and banners gave to each Procession an added significance.^{29*}

The two basic functions of those serving will be carrying the processional candles or lanterns (outside), and carrying the book(s) needed by the clergy for the rite. Both hands should be used in carrying the candles, the outer hand on the knob (top) and the inner hand at the bottom. Both candles should be at the same height.³⁰ Lang describes how a book is to be carried:

When carrying a closed book while in the chancel or in a procession, it is most becoming to hold it upright in both hands before the breast, the side of the book which opens being to the left so as to make it convenient to open.³¹

At the site of the rite, the book-bearer should face the officiating minister either head-on or at an angle to the minister's left, letting him open the book and turn the pages.

A word should be said on banners. Lang states:

Flags and banners may be admitted into the church and the chancel, but to place them in the sanctuary next to or near the altar...is contrary to the dignity and purpose of the altar.

*He sites as examples that a cross with no corpus would be used for Lent; a banner made of sackcloth would lead an Ash Wednesday procession; a banner with a rogation day symbol would go before the processional crucifix.

He continues: "If flags and banners are carried in procession, they may precede or follow the clergy, but traditionally they are not placed within the ranks of the clergy."³² An Anglican book of ceremony suggests the following order for a procession:

Vergers, Clerk with cross, Taperers, Thurifer, Subdeacon carrying Gospel Book, Deacon, Priest, Chanters, Choirboys, Choirmen, Clergy (Bishop, with attendants, if present). Banners may be carried at intervals in the procession... suitable points would be after the Celebrant, between boys and men, and between choir and clergy at end.³³

For our purposes, banners might best be placed in the following places in the orders of procession which we suggested: between crucifer and choir, between choir and clergy, between clergy and choir, between choir and congregation.

The person of superior rank comes at the end of the procession. If two clergy are at the end, the superior walks on the right side. His seat is on the Gospel side of the chancel and ought not be "up-staged" by anyone of lesser rank.³⁴ If the procession precedes the Eucharist, one of the following two terminations are possible:

In those branches of the Lutheran Church where the Confession of Sins may be rubrically omitted at the beginning of the service, the old Introit procession could be advantageously revived. In such cases, the officiant will avail himself of the option to substitute the entire psalm for the single verse retained ordinarily, and the antiphon will be repeated by the choir and people not only after the Gloria Patri, but after every verse of the Psalm.³⁵

Or:

If the celebrant wishes to include the confession of sins in the service proper, the ministers and servers go in procession to the chancel. When the celebrant, deacon, and subdeacon arrive at the foot of the altar the confession of sins is held. After the absolution has been pronounced, the choir and/or congregation sing(s) the introit and the celebrant, deacon, and subdeacon go to the altar.³⁶

McClellan describes how a procession is to begin if it begins in the

sanctuary, as for the blessing of bells from the inside and the blessing of a dwelling if the procession goes directly from the church to the dwelling. If the blessing of bells is from the outside, or the church dedication procession begins at the old place of worship, or the blessing of a dwelling procession begins at the site of the dwelling, appropriate adjustments could be made.

At the hour appointed for the service, the servers and clergy go from the sacristy to the altar by the shortest route. The celebrant, deacon, and subdeacon stand at the foot of the altar steps....The crucifer and taperers stand behind the celebrant, deacon, and subdeacon. Other servers and clergy stand in some convenient place. If incense is used, the thurifer brings the censer to the celebrant and the celebrant puts some incense into the censer. Then the thurifer goes to stand behind the crucifer and taperers. The ministers turn to the people, and the deacon - if there is no deacon, the officiating minister himself - sings, 'Let us go forth in peace.' The choir and people sing, 'In the name of Christ. Amen.' (From Easter Day through the Saturday after Pentecost, 'alleluia' may be added to this versicle and to the response.) The organ introduces the hymn and the people join in singing it. The thurifer - if incense is not used, the crucifer and taperers - turns and the procession moves off in the customary order.³⁷

FOOTNOTES

PREFACE

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¹⁶Paul H. D. Lang, Ceremony and Celebration (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), p. 187.

¹⁷Eugene L. Brand, "Forms and Norms," Una Sancta, XIX (St. Michael and All Angels 1962), 12.

¹⁸Henry Hanson, Jr., "Ritual in Worship," Una Sancta, VIII (St. Mary Magdalene 1948), 12.

¹⁹Wayne Saffen, "The Occasional Services: A Critical Evaluation," Una Sancta, XX (Saint Matthew & The Advent of Our Lord 1963), 11.

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²²James Jones, "The Chief Processions During the Church Year," For Pastors and People: National Liturgical Week 1950 (Conception, Mo.: The Liturgical Conference, Inc., n.d.), p. 157.

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- ⁴⁰Lang, Ceremony, pp. 187-188.
- ⁴¹Ibid., p. 75.
- ⁴²Elmer F. Krauss, "The Function of the Minister in Divine Worship," Memoirs of the Lutheran Liturgical Association, V (1906), 14.
- ⁴³Strodach, p. xli.
- ⁴⁴Lang, Ceremony, p. 69.
- ⁴⁵Ibid., p. 68.
- ⁴⁶Ibid., p. 69.
- ⁴⁷Eisenhofer and Lechner, p. 155.
- ⁴⁸Alcuin Club, p. 5.
- ⁴⁹Lang, Ceremony, p. 73.
- ⁵⁰A Catholic Catechism 2 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1961), p. 124.

⁵¹Lang, Ceremony, p. 70.

⁵²Ibid., p. 71.

⁵³Ibid., p. 66.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 73.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 74f.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 72.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 67.

⁵⁸Ceremonial for the Offices of the Book of Hours (The Netherlands: Abbaye d'Encalcat, 1956), p. 7.

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²Jaroslav J. Pelikan, "Form and Tradition in Worship: A Theological Interpretation," Essays Presented at the First Liturgical Institute (Valparaiso, Indiana: Valparaiso University Press, 1950), p. 24.

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⁷L. Duchesne, Christian Worship: Its Origin and Evolution, translated by M. L. McClure (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1931), p. 404.

⁸Schuster, I, 153-154.

⁹George U. Wenner, "Consecration," Memoirs of the Lutheran Liturgical Association, VII (1906), 23.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 24.

¹¹Schuster, I, 143.

¹²Wenner, pp. 24-25.

¹³Ritual Notes (London: W. Knott & Son Limited, 1956), p. 375.

¹⁴The Occasional Services (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1962), p. 113.

¹⁵Duncan-Jones, p. 68.

¹⁶Agende für evangelisch=lutherische Kirchen und Gemeinden (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1964), IV, 136.

¹⁷"At the door, which is still closed, he knocks once upon it with the end of his staff saying, *Lift up your heads...shall come in.* From within a cleric in alb and white stole (worn deaconwise) answers *Who is the King of Glory?* The bishop and choir reply *The Lord strong...in battle.* This is done thrice, but the reply the third time is, *The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory. Open. Open. Open.* The door is then opened wide from the inside, and the bishop with the tip of his staff traces a cross on the threshold saying, *Behold the sign of the + cross; may all the spirits of evil be put to flight.*

"The keys of the church (by anglican custom) are presented to the bishop and he enters just within the threshold and halts saying, as he signs the cross in the air, *+ Peace be to this house,* to which those within respond *At thine incoming.* He goes still a little further into the church; halting towards the west end he says thrice *+ Peace be to this house* adding the first time, *from God our heavenly Father;* the second time, *from His Son who is our peace;* and the third time, *from the Holy Ghost the Comforter.*"
Ritual Notes, p. 375.

¹⁸The Occasional Services, p. 116.

¹⁹The Lutheran Liturgy (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.), p. 417.

²⁰Ludwig Eisenhofer and Joseph Lechner, The Liturgy of the Roman Rite, translated by A. J. and E. F. Peeler, edited by H. E. Winstone (New York: Herder and Herder, Inc., 1961), p. 436.

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²Charles McClean, The Conduct of the Services (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Print Shop, 1970), p. 3.

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⁴Eugene L. Brand, "Forms and Norms," Una Sancta, XIX (St. Michael And All Angels 1962), 12.

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³F. W. Weidmann, "Eucharistic Vestments," Pro Ecclesia Lutherana, II (1934), 78.

⁴Elmer F. Krauss, "The Function of the Minister in Divine Worship," Memoirs of the Lutheran Liturgical Association, V (1906), 13.

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⁶Horace D. Hummel, "On the Use of Incense," Una Sancta, XXIV (Resurrection 1967), 77.

⁷The Chichester Customary: The Rites of the Church as Observed Throughout the Year in Chichester Cathedral (London: SPCK, 1948), p. 79.

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¹³Arthur Carl Piepkorn, "Processions In The Lutheran Church I," Sursum Corda, I (Reformation 1939), 15.

¹⁴Pocknee, p. 94.

¹⁵Jones, pp. 157 & 158.

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