

De Principiis Missae

Liturgical Aetiology

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Every formal inquiry and every form of knowledge finds its completion in knowing the causes of a thing. For it is not enough for man to simply know the facts about a thing for man desires to know the essences of things and he only knows the essence of a thing perfectly when he knows its cause. The modern inquiry into the liturgy, begun earlier in this century,⁽¹⁾ spent a great deal of time pursuing the facts regarding the liturgy and, as a result, the product of these inquiries, in large part, has been statements regarding historical occurrences of different liturgical uses. Most modern liturgical studies, however, have not been preoccupied with liturgical forms from the point of view of their causality. In large part this is due to the fact that aetiology is largely a philosophical endeavor⁽²⁾ and aside from the philosophical presuppositions governing modern liturgical discussions and mentalities, philosophical analysis of liturgical forms has been virtually nonexistent.⁽³⁾ No doubt part of the reason is that liturgical studies are part of the science of sacred theology. However, on a historical level, theology has always made use of the tool (handmaid) of philosophy and where deemed appropriate based on the subject matter, the employment of philosophical concepts and methods of reasoning have shed a great deal of light on the objects of theological study. On one level, it is not possible for theology to proceed without some philosophical presuppositions⁽⁴⁾ and, on another level, the greater mastery a theologian has of philosophy, the more equipped he is to penetrate the depths of theological questions and answers.⁽⁵⁾ It is for this reason, that in this article it appears fitting that some time should be spent on some philosophical reflections on the nature of causality and how these reflections relate to the various liturgical forms. For this reason, the article will be divided into two parts, the first is a consideration of the nature of the various forms of causality and the second is to consider the predominate liturgical forms in the western Church, viz. the Mass promulgated by Pope St. Pius V and the Mass promulgated by Pope Paul VI, in light of aetiological conclusions.

Part I: Thomistic Aetiology

Since the Church has repeatedly pointed Catholic philosophers to the philosophy of St. Thomas⁽⁶⁾ in order to avoid error⁽⁷⁾, it would seem fitting that in proffering an explanation of aetiology, we should begin with the writings of St. Thomas.⁽⁸⁾ These writings offer many different distinctions among causes; however, it seems suitable that we cover those most clearly perceived as applying to the liturgy, viz. the distinction of the four kinds of causality, the distinction between proximate and remote causality and finally the distinction between primary and secondary causality.

To begin, St. Thomas treats causality in a number of places throughout his writings; however, he devotes an entire work to the nature of principles and causality entitled *De Principiis Naturae*. St. Thomas defines a cause as "that from which the existence of a thing follows."⁽⁹⁾ A cause is something upon which the being or the coming to be of a thing somehow depends. For example, a father and a mother are the cause of their child's coming to be.

Accepting the distinction of the causes from Aristotle, Aquinas posits that "there are four causes, viz. the material, efficient, formal and final."⁽¹⁰⁾ Everything that is caused has four causes and since the liturgy is not subsistent existence itself,⁽¹¹⁾ it likewise will have four causes. Before we can analyze the four causes of the liturgy, we ought to take a look at St. Thomas' understanding of each of the four causes so that a clear grasp of them is had from the outset. The first cause is the material cause and matter is defined as "that from which a thing is generated"⁽¹²⁾ or comes to be. By this we understand that the material cause is that out of which a thing is made, e.g. when we make a statue, the bronze is the material cause insofar as it is the matter out of which the statue is made.

Matter is what perdures during a substantial change,⁽¹³⁾ so when the matter which exists under the form of grass is eaten by the cow, it comes to exist under the form of the cow. In this sense matter is the substrate or thing standing under the change of forms.⁽¹⁴⁾ Moreover, matter is in potency to various forms⁽¹⁵⁾ and as a result does not have an existence of its own but receives its act or existence from the form.⁽¹⁶⁾ We can say, therefore, that the matter is a cause insofar as material things cannot exist without matter. While prime matter⁽¹⁷⁾ is capable of receiving any form in one sense since it is not specified to any one given form, nevertheless matter never receives a specific form without it first being disposed toward the form and its operations.⁽¹⁸⁾ In other

words, one cannot take matter disposed toward becoming a tree and put a human form (i.e. the soul) in it. For the matter capable of becoming human and the matter capable of becoming a tree are disposed in different ways. The material cause, therefore, can be anything from which something is made.

The formal cause is "the first, actual, proper principle by which a natural body is *what* it is."⁽¹⁹⁾ The formal cause is that which makes the matter be a certain kind of thing. For instance, the form of treeness (which is the formal cause of the tree) is what makes the matter it informs be a tree rather than, for instance, a dog. There are two kinds of formal causes, viz. the substantial formal cause and the accidental formal cause.⁽²⁰⁾ The substantial form is that which makes matter have a certain specificity. Whereas the accidental form is the further modification of something which already possesses a substantial form,⁽²¹⁾ e.g. bronze has the substantial form of bronze, but can undergo changes to its shape and become a statue. Those changes to the bronze which do not change its nature are the accidental forms.

The efficient cause is that which causes the existence of the thing.⁽²²⁾ It differs from the definition of cause insofar as a cause is anything upon which the thing's being somehow depends in anyway whatsoever. Whereas the efficient cause is the cause of the act of existence of the thing as such. The efficient cause is the agent which brings about the things existence or motion.⁽²³⁾ For example, a sculptor is the efficient cause of the statue because he is the one who causes the existence of the statue made out of bronze.

The final cause is the end⁽²⁴⁾ for which the agent or action strives. The final cause is the reason why the agent causes the existence of a thing or its motion. In looking at our example of the bronze statue, the sculptor may have made the statue for the sake of capturing his wife's beauty or he may have made it for the sake of selling it in order to support his family. Hence, the material, formal, efficient and final causes answer respectively the questions regarding a thing:

from what a thing is made, what is it, who made it and why.

Given the four kinds of causes, there are further distinctions which are very important not only in metaphysics but as will be seen in the consideration of the liturgy. The first distinction is within the nature of efficient causality. It is possible that a thing has more than one efficient cause. The primary cause of everything that exists is God.⁽²⁵⁾ Yet God has chosen to work through instruments which He has created and these things are the secondary causes of

their effects.⁽²⁶⁾ God is the primary cause, but instrumental causes are also causes of the existence of a thing but in a secondary way. For example, the man may be the cause of a sculpture insofar as he molded and shaped it. However, God is not only the cause of the substantial form of bronze, He is also the primary cause of accidental forms it may have for substantial and accidental modes of existence are both found in the thing. Yet, the proper effect of God is existence⁽²⁷⁾ and so anything that exists whatsoever has God as its cause, whether it is a substantial existence or an accidental existence. It should be kept in mind that when, for instance, a man performs some action like sculpting, both the man and God are fully causes of the sculpture but in different ways: God is the primary cause of the statue and the man is the secondary cause. Because God is the primary cause it should not be inferred that the secondary cause is less of a cause as a result of it. Both are fully the causes of the thing.⁽²⁸⁾

Another distinction among causes which is of import to our discussion is the distinction between remote and proximate causes. The proximate cause is that cause which is closest, nearest or next to its effect.⁽²⁹⁾ The remote cause is the opposite, i.e. it is the furthest or further from the effect. For example, our sculptor may have two reasons why he made the statue. His proximate final cause may have been to create a thing of artistic beauty while the ultimate (remote) reason he is making the statue is so that he can support his family by selling it. The beautiful sculpture is the first thing for which he strives, while the paying his bills is the last thing that will happen as a result of his work.

Part II: The Liturgy in Light of Thomistic Aetiology

1. Material Cause

It may appear that aetiology and liturgy have very little in common, yet if we approach the liturgy from the point of view of its various causes, we are able to see the liturgy in a different light. The best way to approach this consideration seems to be according to the different distinctions we made regarding causality. With respect to the material cause, if we consider those things out of which the liturgy is made, we begin to see that the material causes⁽³⁰⁾ of the liturgy⁽³¹⁾ are numerous. Some of which are the church or chapel itself, the various parts of the church, e.g. the sanctuary, sacristy, altars, the altar appointments, the tabernacle, the pews, etc. The material cause also includes the things used by the priest, e.g. the vestments, the chalice, cruets,

etc. All these things are the material causes since they are those things out of which the ritual is made in some way. If a material thing cannot exist without matter, then clearly if all of these things are absent, the ritual cannot take place.⁽³²⁾

The people are also the material cause of the Mass but in a specific way. They are not a necessary material cause of the liturgy.⁽³³⁾ This means that one can have the true nature of the Mass without the faithful being present since they are not a necessary material cause. While this applies to the Mass, it does not apply to the other sacraments. All of the other sacraments require the presence of at least those faithful who undergo the sacramental action. The uniqueness of the Eucharist is that it is a Sacrament which does not require the people.⁽³⁴⁾

One tendency today is to over emphasize the importance of the presence of the laity. Some priests will not offer the Mass unless there are at least some of the faithful present. This is largely due to an error in understanding the nature of the Mass. It is believed either that the laity are also the efficient cause of the Mass⁽³⁵⁾ or they are a necessary material cause of the Mass. But the fact is that a Mass can be pleasing to God as well as a valid and licit Mass without anyone present but the priest. Part of this may be due to the fact that when the priest faces the people as he does in the New Rite, the people can become the focus of the Mass. As a result, the priest may have a feeling of "disorientation" in the sense that he would be saying Mass facing nothing if the pews are empty. This is one of the reasons why offering Mass oriented is not only theologically more suitable but on a natural level, it is better for the priest.

2. Formal Cause

Since the form is that which makes the matter be what it is, then the form of the liturgy will be that which makes all of the material aspects come together to be a Mass. The form of the Mass is a sacrifice:

And inasmuch as in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the mass is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner the same Christ who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross, the holy council teaches that this is truly propitiatory and has this effect, that when we, contrite and penitent, with sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence, draw nigh to God, we obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid.⁽³⁶⁾

The essence of the Mass is the unbloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ.⁽³⁷⁾ It is the priest's offering to God the Father His Son in propitiation for the sins of the priest himself and for all of those who attend the Mass and for whom the Mass is offered. The priest acts *in persona Christi* since instead of Christ Who offered Himself to God the Father at Calvary in the bloody sacrifice, the priest takes the place of Christ and offers Christ up to God the Father in propitiation for our sins. The formal cause of the Mass, therefore, is this sacrifice.⁽³⁸⁾

Since the formal cause makes the matter be what it is, then we can consider the various material causes from the point of view of the formal cause. The church in which the Mass is celebrated ought to be designed for a sacrifice.⁽³⁹⁾ It ought to have a becoming high altar which draws one's attention to it, since the sacrifice is the essential aspect of the Mass. The Mass ought to be oriented since the Mass is not offered to the people but to God.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Since it is a sacrifice, the priest ought to be vested in a manner which is pleasing to the One to Whom the sacrifice is offered. This is why in the past, the chasuble, stole and maniple were made of silk or some other fine material. As with all the materials used in the altar and church appointments, the best (or at least the best the people could afford) was used. Noble materials were the norm since one is participating in THE single salvific event of history.⁽⁴¹⁾ Chalices were made of precious metals rather than pottery, wood, glass or crystal.

The church by its very nature moved one to devotion which disposed one to taking more fervent part in the sacrifice. High vaulted ceilings gave one the impression of the infinitude of God, Who is present. Men strove to built magnificent churches and by magnificent we understand the Latin derivation of that word, viz. *magnus* and *facere*, i.e. to make something that is great. They were not "theaters in the round" where everyone gathers around a table for a meal. By the interior lay out, one was naturally led up to the high altar where the great act would take place. The people did not sit higher than the altar out of a due sense of humility in that the people did not judge themselves greater than God Who would, during the Mass, be laid on the altar, elevated and at times resided with us in the tabernacle. The church was designed so that the people and priest all faced God to Whom the sacrifice is offered.

The priest's vestments were tastefully ornate, often embedded with Catholic symbolism which instructed the faithful in the teachings of the Church or drew their attention again to God. Unfortunately, in the New Rite, the vestments have lost almost all of the religious symbolism. Even the vestments which tend

to be ornate tend not to contain religious symbolism but contain merely secular or profane design.

It is not necessary to continue, for even a superficial investigation into previous and current practices bring to the fore that in the ancient liturgies, the material aspects were more ordered and disposed toward the form of the Mass, which is a sacrifice. Here it would be good to recall the fact that the matter must be disposed in a certain way to receive the form, and a bad disposition affects the operation of the form, e.g. the material disposition of a man near death and at the height of his youth are clearly different. For the young man's body is more disposed towards the operations of the soul (e.g. running, jumping, etc.) than the man near death who is not even able to move himself out of bed. In a sense, this is what has happened in the modern liturgies. The various churches and altar appointments have been designed more for the Mass being a communal event often portrayed as a meal, i.e. another formal cause, rather than as somehow pointing to a sacrifice taking place. While the new liturgies as approved by the Church are valid and licit, they do not convey the same impression to the faithful as the older liturgies do. In a phrase, they are not designed for the actions of a sacrifice but for the actions of a meal and perhaps this is why the newer liturgies have failed to act upon the faithful as much as the previous liturgy did.⁽⁴²⁾

In this matter, we are in complete agreement with the analysis of Cardinal Stickler:

Firstly, in the light of the Protestant heresy,⁽⁴³⁾ the Mass of Pius V emphasized the central truth of the Mass as a sacrifice, based on the theological discussions and specific regulations of the Council. The Mass of Paul VI (so-called because the liturgical commission for the reform after Vatican II worked under the ultimate responsibility of the Pope) emphasizes rather the integral part of the Mass, Communion, with the result that the sacrifice is transformed into what could be termed a meal. The great importance given to the readings and to preaching in the new Mass, and even the faculty given to the priest to add private speeches and explications, is another reflection of what can be called an adaptation to the Protestant idea of worship.⁽⁴⁴⁾

Prior to this century, the emphasis on the Mass as a sacrifice had pride of place as opposed to the idea of the form being a meal. For example, in the documents of the Council of Trent and in its subsequent catechism, there is not a single mention of the Mass as a meal. In fact, the essential form cannot be a

meal for if the meal is the essence of the Mass with sacrificial aspects, then the Mass is essentially centered on man, for man is the one who eats, not God. But if the Mass is a sacrifice with certain aspects having the notion of a meal, then it is essentially something offered to God of which man later partakes. Even the rite of receiving Holy Communion within Mass in the Old Rite has sacrificial overtones, e.g. the communion cloth was used like a corporal or altar linen, the rite was predominately the action of the priest as an administration of the sacrament,⁽⁴⁵⁾ the Host is round and white.⁽⁴⁶⁾ The newer rituals tend to imply that the real formal cause of the Mass is the form of a meal rather than the form of a sacrifice.

This shift in the liturgical perspective from sacrifice to meal happened rapidly among the Protestants at the time of the reformation but seems to have taken a different route among Catholic liturgists. If one looks at the literature during the liturgical movement of this century, the first shift of perspective is away from the notion of the Mass as a sacrifice as such. The change of emphasis went from the Mass as a ritualistic sacrifice to a sacrificial ritual. In other words, discussions about the Mass subtly shifted from the essential element of the Mass being a sacrifice to it being ritual. For example, Adrian Fortesque as early as 1910 when he wrote the section in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* on the entry "Mass" starts the entry as follows: "A. Name and Definition. - The Mass is the complex prayers and ceremonies that make up the service of the Eucharist in the Latin rites."⁽⁴⁷⁾ Fortesque then exhibits what appears to be classical behaviour of those in the liturgical movement, viz. the discussion slips into etymological considerations of the term Mass, then a historical look at the Mass and finally a consideration of the current ritual of the Mass.

The focus tends to be the Mass as ritual rather than the Mass as sacrifice which results in liturgical studies being heavily dominated by historical considerations. If the Mass is freed from the sacrificial aspect as the overriding formal cause, then the ritual is no longer bound to conform itself to that perspective. Hence, the liturgical movement spent a great deal of time talking about the different ways the ritual was performed historically and very little analysis was done based on whether the previous historical rituals expressed the sacrificial understanding better than another. Moreover, once the ritual is freed from the sacrificial form, then it is able to take whatever form one wants and thus the interest in the historically different ways to do the ritual. In

general, when the liturgists of this century offered advice about the liturgical changes it was not in reference to the sacrificial form but about what was done in the past.⁽⁴⁸⁾

The freeing up of the liturgy from the sacrificial form also resulted in liturgical restlessness. Once the focus was no longer an offering to God, liturgists often went around seeking different rituals in order to find some form of satisfaction about the liturgy. This liturgical restlessness finds its codification in the life of the Church in the document *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and is manifested more overtly when Paul VI established the concilium to work outside the jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation of Rites which had made only some changes to the previous ritual. Moreover, once the Mass was freed from having sacrificial overtones, it came to be emphasized as a celebration⁽⁴⁹⁾ and a meal.⁽⁵⁰⁾

Part of the material cause which undergoes the action of the liturgical form is the people. The people ought to enter into the mystery of the sacrifice. Their attendance at the Mass ought to help them conform themselves more perfectly to the Passion and the Death of Our Lord in their own lives. As Christ was hanging upon the Cross, in His Divinity He was able to look out and see all of those present at His Sacrifice, not only those who are present physical at Calvary on that day, but those who are present at Calvary by means of the Mass throughout time. It means that people's demeanor and presence ought to conform itself to the seriousness of being at Calvary. Their demeanour should be one of reflectedness upon the event taking place and not one of distraction, for it is highly doubtful that those faithful present at Calvary on that day stood around shaking hands and saying "hi" and people watching.

The people, in being a secondary material cause, ought to dispose themselves (as matter must be disposed to form) to receive the action of the Sacrifice. The stress on the active participation of the faithful must be understood in this context. The active participation is primarily a spiritual entrance into the mystery present so that they can be disposed toward the fruits which flow from the Mass. Just as the form communicates the act of existence to the matter in ontology, so the people ought to be "passive" (i.e. disposed) to the action of the Mass. It would seem at this level that exterior activity, other than that which is necessary for the laity to be disposed to the liturgical actions taking place, would seem to militate against an aetiological understanding of the sacrificial action. At Calvary, it is not the faithful who are on the Cross;

they can only desire to be on the Cross spiritually as a member of Christ's Mystical Body. But since they are not Christ, nor an *Alter Christus* who acts *in persona Christi*, it is not really their place to be engaging in "material" activities. In other words, if matter already has act, then it is through some form already in it. But the matter must dispose itself contrary to the actions of one form in order to be disposed toward receiving another form. This means that the laity ought not be engaged in activities which are not proper to their state or which militate against spiritually entering into the sacrifice.

3. Efficient Cause.

The primary efficient cause of the Sacrifice of the Mass is God alone for only God is the primary efficient cause of anything that exists. By virtue of the fact the ritual of the Mass exists, it has God as its primary efficient cause. The secondary efficient cause of the Mass is the priest. Contrary to the Protestant heresies, the faith of the people is not a sufficient cause to consecrate the Eucharist and thereby bring about the Sacrifice.⁽⁵¹⁾ One ought not to infer that the faith of the people is insignificant: quite the contrary. It is through the faith of the people that they are moved to offer up their own sacrifices in union with the priest who consecrates and thereby offers the Son to the Father. However, in some of the translations of the New Rite, during the offertory the priest says to the people "pray brethren that *our* sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Father almighty" even though the Latin clearly says "orate, Fratres, ut *meum ac vestrum* sacrificium fiat acceptabile ad Deum Patrem omnipotentem," i.e. "Pray brethren that my *sacrifice and yours* may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty." It seems as if the translator would like one to have the impression that there are not two essentially different offerings, viz. the one by the people and the one by the priest but this implies that the people are also the secondary efficient cause of the sacrament. While the Church herself in the Latin edition is clear, why she has tolerated these mistranslations given what they imply is a bit perplexing. The rituals ought to conform to reality and since the priest, by virtue of the indelible mark residing in the possible intellect, alone has the power to command the sacrament to be consecrated,⁽⁵²⁾ he alone is able to offer the sacrifice which is essentially different from that of the people.⁽⁵³⁾

We could, however, make a distinction among secondary efficient causes of the Mass by saying that while the priest is the immediate secondary efficient cause since he is the one who offers the unbloody sacrifice, the servers are the mediated secondary efficient causes. They are not the secondary efficient cause in the sense that they have the sacramental power to cause the sacrifice, but by charity and faith they assist the priest who offers the Mass.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Moreover, the people can be said to offer God the Father His Son, not in the way the priest does, but insofar as they can offer the Son by means of the priest. That is to say that they are able to offer, along with and thereby dependent upon the priest, the Son to God the Father. However, they are incapable of doing it alone. They can only do so along with the priest who alone has the capacity to offer the Son on his own accord.⁽⁵⁵⁾

4. Final Causality.

Since the final cause is that toward which an action by nature tends, then we can say that the final cause of the Mass is God, or more specifically, God the Father. This would follow from the fact that the Mass is the offering of the Son of God to God the Father in propitiation for our sins. It means, therefore, that like all things that exist, they have as their finality God according to their mode of being.⁽⁵⁶⁾ Even the propitiation of the sins of the people and their sanctification which flow from the essence of the Mass are, in effect, an ordering to God. For by forgiving the sins of the people, they participate more in grace which is defined as the participation in divine nature⁽⁵⁷⁾ and so even the forgiving of the sins of the people is not done for their sake except insofar as it is done for sake of God's glory.⁽⁵⁸⁾

We can say, therefore, that if the finality of the Mass is God, then all the actions of the Mass must either directly or indirectly be ordered to God. The direct ordering to God would entail when the priest or people pray to God or when the priest actually offers God the Son to God the Father. An indirect ordering is when something is done which does not have God as its immediate end but as the remote end of the action, e.g. Holy Communion is done for the sake of the sanctification of the people which has God as its remote end.

Given the aforesaid, it is clear that the New Rite differs from the Old Rite. Altar orientation is by far the clearest expression of a ritual's embodied finality. In the Old Rite, the priest faces God (Who is in the east) rather than having his back to God by facing the people. The sacrifice is not offered to the people,⁽⁵⁹⁾

but to God and for that reason alone the altar and priest ought not to face the people.⁽⁶⁰⁾ The question is whether there could be circumstances in which the priest would not face God but the people. In some instances in the Old Rite, like Mass offered oriented in the New Rite,⁽⁶¹⁾ the priest turns to address the people. Note that it is the priest who, after due reverence, turns to the people, the altar itself is not turned toward the people.⁽⁶²⁾ The minute the altar is turned toward the people, it immediately gives one the impression of a meal rather than a sacrifice. The reduction of the sacrificial dimension of the New Rite not only comes from the different altar orientation but a reduction within the ritual itself of sacrificial prayers and gestures; a superficial comparison of the two offertories bares this out. When ideas are proffered about reform of the reform, the key issue ought to be over altar orientation. If the priest is facing God, it is much easier to give the faithful the impression that this is a sacrifice. Moreover, it will become much easier to make the changes to the liturgy to bring it into conformity with its sacrificial nature.

As long as the priest is facing the people, it will be exceedingly difficult to make changes which bring it into conformity with its sacrificial nature and still make sense. For example, in the Old Rite the priest looks up to God as he offers the host which will be consecrated, but to do that in the New Rite requires the priest to turn away from looking at the people and look up to God. Meanwhile, if that is done facing the people, it would draw the people's attention to the priest's face (and how pious or impious he is). This is perhaps the fundamental difficulty with changing the physical orientation (finality) of the altar. It requires the people to sustain the personality and piety or lack of piety on the part of the priest. Instead of providing an opportunity for the priest's own "personality" to fade into the background and Christ's "personality" take its place (whence *in persona Christi*), the priest's personality is foisted upon the people. Unfortunately, man's personalities cannot sustain people very long and this is why if the priest is facing God, the people are not drawn to the priest's personality. His personality is specifically "covered" by his eastward orientation. This gives the faithful more of an impression that the priest is acting as an *Alter Christus*. Moreover, it provides the priest with the opportunity to leave himself behind and be absorbed into the mystery of the Mass. In facing the people, he has to be concerned with whether he is projecting his voice and appearance in a manner acceptable to the people. The people, thereby, become a distraction to the priest; he is not

able to pray as deeply since he has to be concerned about appearances. The altar orientation says everything about the finality of the Mass and it is for this reason that it is the juggernaut in the whole liturgical debate. Serious reform is not possible without a changing of the appearance of the ritual and this will only come when the priest's "persona" is lost and Christ's takes its place by means of facing God.

As one reflects more and more on the modern rituals, it becomes ever more evident that the reform has lost its proper direction, i.e. its finality has ceased being God and has become man. For example, in the New Mass, the Kiss of Peace is exchanged by everyone present and yet, Christ remains unattended at the altar. Even if the priest remains at the altar, his attention is directed away from Our Lord. In the Old Rite the priest exchanges the Kiss of Peace with the deacon at the altar but Our Lord is not left unattended since the subdeacon is present at the foot of the altar and the remaining congregation and/or choir are in attendance to Our Lord. Unlike the Old Rite where there is always someone attending to Our Lord in adoration,⁽⁶³⁾ the New Rite has everyone exchanging the Kiss of Peace simultaneously, thus effectively leaving Our Lord abandoned for what often degenerates into a mutual admiration fest.⁽⁶⁴⁾

Finally, the disorientation in the newer rituals has resulted in an erosion of the notion of a hierarchy. A hierarchy is an order or series of things towards that which is the highest. In creation, the hierarchy of being stretches from the lowest material beings in a continuous order to the highest angel and then to God. In the Old Rite, during High Mass the deacon and subdeacon line up behind the priest to give a sense of the transcendent by means of the visible hierarchy. Even at Low Mass with the faithful behind the priest, the priest stands at the foot of the altar above the faithful facing God. Hence, the hierarchical sense remains intact. In the New Rite, since the priest offers the Mass facing the people, the order or series is effectively broken on a visual level. When everyone stands around the altar on pretty much equal footing, the sense of series or order stretching up to heaven is lost. Psychologically, when one views the Old Mass, it is evident that the priest is ascending to perform a task which the faithful cannot do, and so they stand below him in the hierarchy. Whereas in the New Rite, there is no sense of this since there is no visible sign which points to a hierarchy resulting in a lessening of the sense of the transcendent.⁽⁶⁵⁾

Conclusion

Much of the analysis of the two respective rites could be proffered without a resorting to aetiological considerations. However, by looking at the rituals from the point of view of its causes can bring them into better perspective. Perhaps the most significant is that much of the liturgical action in the newer rituals lacks a proper understanding of the formal cause of the Mass. Moreover, the finalities as portrayed in the two rituals are clearly different. Perhaps this is the most telling sign of all regarding the new ritual, viz. that its actions seem out of place or incongruous, not only because there is a lessening of a sense of the sacrifice, but the proper finalities are lacking:

- actions performed do not have God as their end, either implicitly or explicitly. All forms of prayer, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass included, must have God as their end. Until more reflection is done on the New Rite regarding what the real ends of its actions are, it will be difficult to re-direct them to their proper ends. It seems, at times, that in the New Rite, there is no sense of what its action is doing at all. While theological principle is pre-eminent in considering what should and should not be in the liturgy, theological principle always rests on natural principles, and so it would behoove the members of the Church to consider the natural principles and causes which apply. Until principles become the basis of discussion regarding the liturgy, the reform of the reform will never succeed. Before we get to the point where we apply the principles to the liturgy, we must first have a certain and clear grasp of all the principles affecting the liturgy and in light of that consideration, it seems that we have a long way to go.

Endnotes:

1. Here reference is made to the liturgical movement begun in Europe in the 10s and 20s of this century.
2. The exception, of course, regards the sacramental aspects of the liturgy. Historically, a great deal of effort has been spent on arriving at the causes of the sacraments themselves as opposed to the causes of the liturgy which surround the particular sacrament.
3. Part of the reason for this lacuna in the liturgical literature is due to the fact that to even ask the aetiological questions can be viewed as overly polemical. For instance, discussions of the various finalities in relation to altar orientation have a direct impact on how the liturgy is viewed.

4. For example, a moderate realist would normally accept the notion that God causes the perduring existence of creatures in His creation commonly called preservation in being, whereas a deist would not hold the position that God must maintain things in existence once He has created them. Hence a realist holds that God's involvement in creation is on going and therefore revelation is possible whereas a deist would reject revelation since God has nothing to do with His creation.

5. The reasons for this are several, however, to name a few we can say that: 1) someone who knows metaphysics well will know what kinds of methods are proportionate to what kinds of beings (objects of study) and will thereby realize one cannot use an empirical method on a supernatural object; 2) someone well trained in philosophy will have the intellectual virtues in place by which he is able to engage sacred theology with great penetration; 3) knowledge of the natures of things which philosophy provides helps one to avoid basic errors in theology. Even recently the Church has recognized the necessity for sound philosophical presuppositions when one engages in theology as is exhibited by the Holy Father's document *Fides et Ratio*.

6. See among others see: Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris*, passim, but especially paras. 21, 25 and 33; Pope St. Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, para. 45; CIC/83 can. 252, §3 and Sacred Congregation For Catholic Education, *Ratio Fundamentalis*, paras. 79 and 86.

7. Among other see: Leo XIII, op. cit., paras. 18, 21 & 29 and Pope St. Pius X, loc. cit.

8. While it is true that the Church has pointed Catholic philosophers in the direction of St. Thomas, it should not be inferred that the Church deems it fitting to align herself with any one philosophical system as such. See John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, para. 49.

9. *De principiis naturae*, cp. 3: "causa est ex cuius esse sequitur aliud." All translations of St. Thomas' writings are the author's own, based on the Leonine edition (*Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia*, Iussu Impensaue Leonis XIII, edita., Roma: ex Typographia Polyglotta et al., 1882).

10. Ibid.: "sunt quatuor causae: scilicet materialis, efficiens, formalis et finalis."

11. Aquinas applies the term *ipsum subsistens esse* to God alone, among other places, in *De ente et essentia*, c. 4, nn. 6 and 7.

12. *De principiis naturae*, cp. 2: "id autem ex quo est generatio, est materia."

13. Ibid.: "et quia in generatione materia sive subiectum permanet, privatio vero non, neque compositum ex materia et privatione, ideo materia quae non importat privationem, est permanens: quae autem importat, est transiens."
14. Thomas Aquinas, *De substantiis separatis*, chpt. 6: "et iterum materia illi formae substrata."
15. *De principiis naturae*, chpt 2: "et quia omnis definitio et omnis cognitio est per formam, ideo materia prima per se non potest cognosci vel definiri sed per comparisonem ut dicatur quod illud est materia prima, quod hoc modo se habet ad omnes formas et privationes sicut aes ad idolum et infiguratum."
16. Ibid., chpt 1: "simpliciter loquendo, forma dat esse materiae."
17. Prime matter is matter stripped of all form and determination.
18. II Sent. d. 5, q. 2, a. 1: "in eodem enim instanti quo primo est dispositio necessitans in materia, forma substantialis inducitur."
19. Bernard Wuellner, *A Dictionary of Scholastic Philosophy*, (Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, 1966, 2nd ed.) p. 106.
20. *De principiis naturae*, chpt. 1: "quod autem facit actu esse substantiale, est forma substantialis, et quod facit actu esse accidentale, dicitur forma accidentalis."
21. Ibid.
22. See Wuellner, op. cit., p. 43.
23. *De principiis naturae*, chpt. 3: " oportet ergo praeter materiam et formam esse aliquod principium quod agat, et hoc dicitur esse efficiens, vel movens, vel agens, vel unde est principium motus."
24. Ibid.: "Et quia, ut dicit Aristoteles in secundo Metaph., omne quod agit, non agit nisi intendendo aliquid, oportet esse aliud quartum, id scilicet quod intenditur ab operante: et hoc dicitur finis. Et sciendum, quod omne agens tam naturale quam voluntarium intendit finem, non tamen sequitur quod omne agens cognoscat finem, vel deliberet de fine."
25. SCG II, c. 15.
26. Ibid.
27. See SCG I, c. 15, n. 4.
28. What is explicitly rejected here is the deist position which does not accept God's involvement in His creation. They would reject the distinction between primary and secondary causality, at least with respect to God and His creatures, because He has no involvement in the affairs of His creation once He created it. For a Thomist, this means that when we perform actions which God is the

primary cause, we must always be sure that those actions are in accordance with God's Laws and His Will least we be abusive of Him through His causality.

29. Wuellner, op. cit., p. 251.

30. The notion of cause is analogical and therefore applies somewhat the same and somewhat differently to different things. This should be kept in mind when the various types of causality are applied to the different aspects of the liturgy.

31. It should be born in mind, again, that when we are talking about the various causes of the liturgy, we are not referring to those things necessary for the valid confection of the sacraments but the liturgical ritual which surrounds the sacraments.

32. This is not to deny that some things are more necessary than others, e.g. a chalice and vestments are more necessary than a church for one could offer Mass in a place other than a church.

33. While it is true that the priest is one of the faithful, he is an efficient cause. See below.

34. This is not to imply that it is not preferable that faithful be present at the Mass and the non-essential faithful be present at the other sacraments (other than those requiring secrecy).

35. See below regarding the efficient cause of the Mass.

36. Council of Trent, sess. 22, chpt. 2 (as found in *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, trans. By Rev. H.J. Schroeder, O.P., B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1950).

37. The form of the Mass was determined by Christ Himself. In the Gospels, Christ first gives the Apostles his Body once It is confectioned, then He gives them His Blood after noting that the New Covenant would be in His Own Blood. He then tells the disciples to do this in His memory. The thing that they are to do in His memory is to offer the Body and Blood of Our Lord in an unbloody manner. The separating of the blood from the body is a form of a sacrifice and that is accomplished in the Mass by confectioning the two species and thereby sacramentally "separating" the Body from the Blood of Christ. This is what Christ did, and this is what He commanded.

38. Our comments here echo the thoughts of Cardinal Alfons Stickler in his conference "The Attractiveness of the Tridentine Mass" as it appears in the summer issue of *Latin Mass Magazine*.

39. "And since the nature of man is such that he cannot without external means

be raised easily to meditation on divine things, holy mother Church has instituted certain rites, namely, that some things in the mass be pronounced in a low tone and others in a louder tone. She has likewise, in accordance with apostolic discipline and tradition, made use of ceremonies, such as mystical blessings, lights, incense, vestments, and many other things of this kind, whereby both the majesty of so great a sacrifice might be emphasized and the minds of the faithful excited by those visible signs of religion and piety to the contemplation of those most sublime things which are hidden in this sacrifice." *Council of Trent*, session 22, chpt. 5. Even at the Council of Trent there was an understanding that the externals (material causes) ought to congrue and point to the sacrifice (formal cause).

40. Regarding this, see the important work by Klaus Gamber, *The Reform of the Roman Liturgy* (published by Una Voce Press, San Juan Capistrano, California).

41. That is since the Mass is the participation in the Calvary Sacrifice in an unbloody manner, it means, as it were, that one is spiritually present at Calvary in a way not fully grasped by man.

42. This is assuming, of course, that the newer liturgies are, at least, part of the cause of the decline in Mass attendance world wide.

43. The Cardinal is making reference to the Protestant heresy of Martin Luther who insisted that the Mass was not a sacrifice.

44. Stickler, op.cit.

45. What is not implied is that the laity were non-essential to the communion rite, rather what is implied is that the priest had the active role and the laity had a passive role. Unlike in the New Rite, the laity have taken on more and more of an active role which gives one more of an impression of a meal where everyone feeds themselves rather than the sacrificial impression with the priest who represents Christ Who gives his Body over for our benefit.

46. The Host was round and white to signify God's simplicity. It often had a cross or a symbol of Christ on it. It was white to represent the unblemished Lamb which is slain. At times in the New Rite, thicker brown breads are used which gives one more of an impression of a meal.

47. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (The Gilmary Society, New York, 1913) Vol. IX, p. 790f.

48. This is one of ironies of the newer rituals. The advocates of the newer rituals view the Tridentine rite in the pejorative because it is outdated and yet,

they insist that the liturgy ought to be conformed to their view of the early church rituals. It should be noted, however, that many of the liturgist considered themselves as aiding the Church in a liturgical revival; in other words, their intentions were good.

49. If the Mass is a sacrifice in which we commemorate Christ's Passion and Death, it would be inappropriate to label it a celebration. But if it can be freed from the sacrificial form, then it can be considered a celebration of ourselves, which often is what it degenerates into. One of the most obvious manifestations of a lack of knowing what is appropriate in various situations is the singing of the Alleluia at funeral Masses in the New Rite. The family and friends are mourning and the person's body lies dead in the casket in the middle of the aisle while people are encouraged to sing "Alleluia" before the Gospel. This is one of the ways in which the Old Mass is eminently superior to the New Mass in that the Old Mass clearly manifests appropriate liturgical actions and words based on circumstances.

50. By the time Jungmann was writing his work on the liturgy, the notion of the Mass as a celebration and a meal already found its place among the Catholic liturgists, e.g. regarding the Mass being viewed as a celebration, among other places, see Jungmann, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 195. One interesting passage in the aforesaid work by Jungmann shows a clear shift of emphasis from the Mass first and foremost being a sacrifice to it being a meal (vol. 1, p.161): "Here it was, then, that the Communion movement came into contact with the liturgical movement, a decade or so after the appearance of the decree. And the latter kept making these facts plainer and more manifest: the offering to God in the sacrifice is the proper preparation for the Holy Communion; the sacrificial meal belongs to the sacrifice, God invites us to it; all the prayers of the Mass lead up to it; and this meal is at the same time the meal of the Christian community." The emphasis could not be any clearer. For Jungmann, the sacrifice to God is a *preparation* for Holy Communion. Communion becomes the central event because the Mass is seen as first and foremost as a meal which leads one to infer that the Mass is not so much for God but for man.

51. Catechism of the Council of Trent, p. 253: "It must be taught, then, that to the priests alone has been given power to consecrate and administer to the faithful, the Holy Eucharist."

52. Saint Thomas discusses the indelible mark as a power residing in the

possible intellect as a subject in IV Sent., d. 4, q. 1.

53. If the essence of the priesthood is the indelible mark residing in the possible intellect by which the priest commands the sacraments to be conected, then the priestly identity consists in the indelible mark. In other words, the fundamental nature of the priesthood is the forgiveness of sins through sacramental actions, primarily that of conecting the Eucharist (i.e. offering up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass) and through absolution in sacramental Confession. While the priest also can cause the other sacraments (except that of marriage), nevertheless, even they are ordered toward the Eucharist. Therefore, the priestly identity must conform to reality and the reality is that the priesthood was meant for conecting the sacraments. All other aspects are secondary to these. If an integral part of the identity of the priest is the commanding of the conection of the Eucharist (i.e. the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass), then anything which militates against that understanding will cause confusion in the mind of the priest as to his proper identity. The New Mass, which is not adequate in its ritual in relation to the offering of a Sacrifice, is bound to bring confusion to the mind of the priest. Reflection on the details are not necessary here, but a mere pointing out of the fact that it was not until the rituals were changed that the crisis of priestly identity surfaced. Even among those priests who try to be faithful to the magisterium and offer the Mass with reverence, there is still a lacking of a clear grasp of the specific identity of the priest. Moreover, when laity are given functions which properly flow from the essence of the priesthood (e.g. giving out Holy Communion), the priest is bound to suffer confusion of identity.

54. See ST III, q. 82, a. 1, ad 2.

55. What this means is that the laity, without the priest, are incapable of even being mediated secondary causes of the Sacrifice. This should not, however, lead to the conclusion that it is not preferable for the laity to be at Mass. In other words, their mediated secondary causality does add to the extrinsic and impetratory value of the Mass by the multiplication of their offerings of their own finite sacrifices in union with the priest's Infinite Sacrifice.

56. See SCG III, c. 17.

57. See *Dictionary of Dogmatic Theology* (Parente, Piolanti and Garofalo, Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1951) under the term "habitual grace," p. 117.

58. It should be noted that the people are not the final terminus of sanctifying

action, God is.

59. This is why it is not essential that they see it, even though it is shown to them at the major elevation and before Holy Communion.

60. It is fascinating to note that this very issue was perceived by Jungmann. In his book, *The Mass of the Roman Rite* (vol. 1, p. 255), he makes the following observation in footnote #15 referring to R. Schwarz work *Vom Bau der Kirche*: "Orientation at prayer and the symbolism it entails has lost much of its meaning for us. But the basic principle that at prayer all-including even the celebrant-should take a God-ward stance, could easily be at work here too, in establishing the celebrant's position at the altar. If the Mass were only a service of instruction or a Communion celebration, the other position, facing the people, would be more natural. But it is different if the Mass is an immolation and homage to God. If today the altar *versus populum* is frequently chosen, this is the result of other considerations that come into play-considerations which are rated as of paramount importance particularly as a reaction to earlier conditions. It serves to narrow down the distance between priest and congregation and to highlight the instructive items contained in the prayer and the rite. In certain circumstances-like the services for young people-these reasons appear to be well-founded." Here Jungmann notes that if there is to be prayer offered to God it should be offered towards Him and if it is not offered toward Him it is done for other reasons.

61. Contrary to common perception, the *General Instruction to the Roman Missal* of Paul VI does contain this provision.

62. Here Gamber's book is of prime importance regarding those instances in which, in the past, the altar may have been in the direction of the people, but this was because the altar was still facing east. See Gamber, *op. cit.*, p. 77-89.

63. The ancient Dominican rite, in this regard, is even clearer. The priest touches the chalice as he extends the peace to the deacon, thus not leaving Our Lord behind in the process.

64. One of the unfortunate results of the New Mass being viewed as a celebration is spiritual gluttony. People now judge a liturgy on whether they "get anything out of it" which usually implies some type of spiritual or sensible consolation. This will pose an obstacle to authentic reform which will eliminate forms of spiritual gluttony from the liturgy in that people will be less accepting of liturgy which does not admit of those consolations. Again, this is where the Old Mass is superior to the New Mass in that the Old Mass does not

foster spiritual gluttony as a rule. In fact, the silence during the canon and the restrained liturgical expressions actually militate against spiritual gluttony. This is why when some come from the New Mass to the Old Mass, their appetites for spiritual gluttony are not sated in the same way and as a result there is a certain distaste or feeling of emptiness. It is not until they have attended the Old Mass for some time that they cease judging it based upon the spiritual or sensible consolations.

65. Another psychological factor is the choice of languages in the two rituals. In the Old Rite, the liturgical language was Latin. In this context, Latin served to provide a sense of the transcendent by giving one the impression of mystery, since it was not in one's own language. But it also has a different finality than vernacular languages which are used in the New Rite. Latin is more pleasing to God than the vernacular because it is a sacred language. Since it is more pleasing to God, its use implies that one ought to please the one to whom the sacrifice is offered and in this case it is God. The vernacular/profane languages have people as their finality because they are used for the sake of the people and their "understanding" of what is taking place. But the sacrifice is not offered to the people and, therefore, they ought not be that to which the liturgy is conformed, rather God should be. Latin ought to be retained in any future liturgy so that it can be more pleasing to God.