

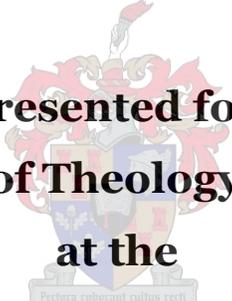
**LITURGY AND SPIRITUALITY IN THE
ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT:**

**A SYSTEMATIC-THEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

by

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**Dissertation presented for the degree of
Doctor of Theology (D. Th)
at the
University of Stellenbosch**

The crest of the University of Stellenbosch is centered behind the text. It features a shield with various symbols, topped by a crown and a figure holding a staff. A banner at the base of the shield contains the Latin motto "Perfata rursus ab initio".

Promotor: Prof. Dirk Smit

Co-Promotor: Prof. Nico Koopman

March 2010

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any other university for the purpose of attaining a degree.

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Date

SUMMARY

A growing number of scholars with an interest in liturgy and spirituality have contributed to discussions surrounding the relationship between liturgy and spirituality. This dissertation examines the relationship between liturgy and spirituality in the ecumenical movement, and in particular how four factors, namely the Charismatic Renewal, inculturation, secularization, and reflections on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM), have had an impact on its development.

Chapter One introduces this study by focusing on the particular connectedness between liturgy and spirituality. Chapters Two to Five critically examine the four challenges.

Chapter Two examines the impact that the Charismatic Renewal had on liturgy and spirituality. It discusses the interest that the ecumenical movement had in the Charismatic Renewal, as the ecumenical movement realized what the Renewal could offer them.

Chapter Three concerns itself with the challenges that inculturation poses, especially to the liturgy. One prominent question is: How do Christians proclaim Christ faithfully in different cultures? This chapter deals with the fact that inculturation involves dialogue between liturgy and culture – a dialogue which leads to mutual enrichment.

Chapter Four concentrates on the impact of secularization, especially since the 1960's. It examines how the relevance of worship was called to question by the process of secularization.

Chapter Five highlights how BEM inspired endeavours for the renewal of liturgy and of spiritual life. It describes how BEM had an impact on studies of worship and spirituality and the revision of forms of worship in several churches.

Chapter Six is a brief theological evaluation of the impact that the said factors were having on liturgy and spirituality within the ecumenical movement. Some implications of the impact are discussed and suggestions are made about how liturgy and spirituality can continually shape one another.

OPSOMMING

‘n Toenemende aantal navorsers op die gebied van liturgie en spiritualiteit het bydraes gelewer betreffende die verhouding tussen liturgie en spiritualiteit. Hierdie verhandeling ondersoek die verhouding tussen liturgie en spiritualiteit in die ekumeniese beweging, en in besonder die impak wat vier faktore, naamlik die Charismatiese Beweging, inkulturasie, sekularisasie, en besinning oor die Doop, die Nagmaal, en die Bediening, op hierdie ontwikkeling gehad het.

Hoofstuk Een dien as inleiding tot hierdie studie deur te fokus op die spesifieke verbintenis tussen liturgie en spiritualiteit. In Hoofstukke Twee tot Vyf word die vier uitdagings krities ondersoek.

Hoofstuk Twee ondersoek die impak wat die Charismatiese Beweging op die liturgie en spiritualiteit gehad het. Daar is ‘n bespreking van die belangstelling wat die ekumeniese beweging in die Charismatiese Beweging gehad het, toe die ekumeniese beweging besef het wat die Charismatiese Beweging vir hulle kan bied.

Hoofstuk Drie ondersoek die uitdagings wat inkulturasie met hom bring, veral met betrekking tot die liturgie. ‘n Belangrike vraag is die kwessie van hoe Christene die Christusboodskap op ‘n geloofwaardige manier in verskillende kulture kan uitdra. Die hoofstuk behandel die feit dat inkulturasie ‘n dialoog tussen liturgie en kultuur behels – ‘n dialoog wat tot wedersydse verryking kan lei.

Hoofstuk Vier fokus op die impak van sekularisasie, veral sedert die 1960’s. Dit ondersoek hoe die proses van sekularisasie die tersaaklikheid van aanbidding bevraagteken het.

Hoofstuk Vyf laat die soeklig val op die pogings van BEM (‘n dokument wat Christene vra om opnuut te besin oor die Doop, die Nagmaal, en die Bediening) ten einde vernuwing te bring wat betref die liturgie en die geestelike lewe. Dit beskryf die impak wat BEM gehad het op studies van aanbidding en spiritualiteit, en die hersiening van vorme van aanbidding in verskeie kerke.

Hoofstuk Ses is ‘n kort teologiese evaluering van die impak wat genoemde faktore het op die liturgie en spiritualiteit in die ekumeniese beweging. Implikasies van hierdie impak word bespreek en voorstelle word gemaak oor hoe die liturgie en spiritualiteit mekaar gedurig kan omvorm.

FOR MILDRED AND CAROL-JOY

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I echo the words of the hymn writer, “To God be the glory”! The gratitude which is at the core of my being, finds expression in similar words – “All that I am and ever hoped to be, I owe it all to Him”!

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The efficiency of the library staff at the Faculty of Theology needs to be commended. Your approachable disposition has not gone unnoticed.

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The loyal support of my extended family financially, as well as in spirit has made the accomplishment of my goal so much more accessible.

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KEY WORDS

Liturgy

Spirituality

Ecumenical Movement

World Council of Churches (WCC)

Charismatic Renewal

Inculturation

Secularization

Baptism

Eucharist

Ministry

CHAPTER ONE

LITURGY AND SPIRITUALITY IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

1.1. Introduction

It is widely accepted that there is an intrinsic connection between liturgy and spirituality, as there is between liturgy and life¹, or liturgy and ethics². As the interest in spirituality has been on the increase during the last decades, studies have been undertaken on its relationship with liturgy. This dissertation contributes to this field, especially within the framework of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Four factors (challenges) will be studied that have had major influences on the development of liturgy and ultimately spirituality, within the ecumenical movement. These factors are the impact of the Charismatic Renewal,

¹ See this writer's M.A. dissertation, *The Renewal of Reformed Worship through Retrieving the Tradition and Ecumenical Openness*, (UCT, 1999), where a chapter is devoted to this theme. See also the unpublished doctoral dissertation of Johan van der Merwe, *Liturgie en Lewe: 'n sistematies-teologiese ondersoek*, 1999, University of Stellenbosch as well as the article of Dirk Smit, "Liturgy and Life? On the importance of worship for Christian ethics", in *Scriptura* 62, 1962, and Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life*, (London: Epworth Press 1980).

² Smit says: "Daar word vandag baie gedink, gepraat en geskryf oor die noue, maar tegelyk komplekse verhoudinge tussen liturgie en etiek, erediens en lewe, aanbidding en alledaagsheid. Die nuwe belangstelling kom van albei kante af. Diegenge geïnteresseerd in erediens en liturgie kyk met nuwe oë na die wyse waarop dit die gewone lewe beïnvloed, diegene geïnteresseerd in the etiek kyk met nuwe oë na die belangrike rol wat aanbidding in die etiek speel en kan speel. Die nuwe belangstelling is aanwesig in alle teologiese tradisies, alhoewel die uiteenlopende sieninge van verskillende kofessionele tradisies, van sowel liturgie as etiek, nogal tot ingrypende verskille kan lei ten opsigte van die maniere waarop die onderlinge verhoudinge en invloede gesien en beskryf kan word – verskille waarvoor kritiese lesers en denkers sensitief behoort te wees. Ook in die Ekumeniese Beweging is hierdie nuwe belangstelling van groot belang, ook in die studieprojekte rondom die doop, die nagmaal, die gesamentlike aanbidding, en selfs gemeenskaplike spiritualiteit in die aangesig van globalisasie." See Smit, "Lex orandi, lex credendi, lex (con)vivendi? – Oriënterende inleiding tot liturgie en etiek", in *NGTT*, Vol. 45. p. 888.

the increasing need for meaningful inculturation, widespread secularization, and the consensus on baptism, eucharist and ministry. This study investigates the impact of these factors on liturgy and spirituality.

In this chapter, we will attend to the relationship between liturgy and spirituality and how it was addressed in the WCC. At first, and for the progress of this discussion, it will be helpful to gain clarity on the concepts of liturgy and spirituality. The purpose of this concept clarification is not to give exhausted definitions, but merely to indicate how these concepts are used in this study.

1.2. Finding workable definitions

1.2.1. Liturgy

James White suggests that the word 'liturgy' describes how the worship service was conducted in the first century. It is derived from the Greek word *leitourgia*, which is composed from words for 'work' (*ergon*) and 'people' (*laos*).³ Literally it means that the worship service was the work of the people and not of one person. From *leitourgia* is derived the word 'liturgy'. To call a service liturgical, according to White, is to indicate that it is conceived so that all worshippers take an active part in offering the worship together.⁴ Despite this meaning, Fink believes that the liturgy is not the work of the people, but first and foremost the work of God

³ James White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), p. 32.

⁴ Ibid.

“in the midst of and within the people”.⁵ He says that God “names the agenda” for the liturgy and in this liturgy, God is the one who transforms us for the task of his “agenda and redefines that task”.⁶

Crichton is of the opinion that liturgy does not lend itself to definition. But, he says, if it needs to be defined, it can be described as “the celebration by the Church, which is Christ’s body and in which he with the Holy Spirit is active, of the paschal mystery”.⁷ Through this sacramental celebration, Crichton continues, Christ as the “high priest of the community makes present and available to men and women of today the reality of his salvation”.⁸ In liturgy, the worshippers respond to God, whether it be in “praise, thanksgiving, supplication, or repentance, whether it be Eucharist or baptism, or liturgical prayer or the celebration of the Church’s year”.⁹ The ultimate purpose of the liturgy is to give glory to God.¹⁰

⁵ See Peter Fink, “Liturgy and Spirituality: A Timely Intersection”, in *Liturgy and Spirituality in Context: Perspective on Prayer and Culture*, ed. by Eleanor Bernstein, C.S.J., (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1990), p. 60.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁷ See J.D. Crichton, “A Theology of Worship”, in *The Study of Liturgy*, ed. by Cheslyn Jones et al., (Great Britain: SPCK, 1978), p. 28.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁰ Crichton further explains what “glory to God” actually means. He says that “glory” has sometimes been interpreted in purely human terms. It sometimes happens that people during worship impress other people. Crichton firmly believes that people are not impressed by a “splendid ceremonial” performed by people whose lives do not reflect what their worship expresses. He reminds us about St. Benedict who said long ago that glory can be given to God only through the *lives* of those who worship him. It is through the witness of the lives of Christians that glory is given to God, and it is they who express in their lives the mystery of Christ. In the end, Crichton says, it is redeemed men and women who respond to God in worship and life, it is men

In a worship service, liturgy can either be free or structured. It takes place where the Christian community assembles for worship. It deserves to be worked out carefully and prepared thoroughly, because liturgy can make people listen, or it can make people switch off. Hence, James advises that liturgy needs to involve the study of what makes people listen and what makes them switch off.¹¹ This study, he says, must be carried on at the “psychological, sociological, aesthetic and theological level”.¹² He further argues that for efficient dialogue, communication and response, “the transmitter and the receiver” must be both switched on. Both the willingness to communicate as well as the desire to receive, must be part of the worshipper’s attitude.¹³

Liturgy needs planning, study, discussion and reflection.¹⁴ The Report on the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches recorded that the worship at that Vancouver Assembly was outstanding, specifically because the preparation was done with the necessary skill and sensitivity.¹⁵ Worship was experienced as an end in itself, not a means to achieving something else.

and women who are “sanctified by the redeeming life of Christ”, who give glory to God. He recalls the phrase of Irenaeus: “It is the living human being who is the glory of God”. See *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹¹ See Eric James, “Liturgy and Spirituality for Today” in *Spirituality for Today: Papers from the 1967 Parish and People Conference*, ed. by Eric James, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1968), p. 125.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 132

¹⁵ See *Gathered for Life. Official Report of the VI Assembly of the WCC, Vancouver, Canada, 24 July – 10 August, 1983*, ed. by David Gill, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1983), p. 12.

1.2.2. Spirituality

While the understanding of liturgy is relatively unproblematic, the understanding of spirituality has undergone some changes.¹⁶ In view of the fact that the meaning of spirituality has not remained the same over the centuries, Dirk Smit argues that it is, therefore, not so easy to say what spirituality actually means.¹⁷

According to Sheldrake, the word ‘spirituality’ was at first mostly confined to Roman Catholic and Anglican circles.¹⁸ In these church circles especially, spirituality was viewed as merely an aspect of life concerned with devotions, forms of prayer and fasting. According to Richards, in some Catholic traditions spirituality is linked with a monastic commitment to meditation and worship.¹⁹ Even in some Protestant traditions, he says, the spiritual person is assumed to be a “dour traditionalist who seldom smiles and has only a critical look for those who are less holy”.²⁰ Kourie mentions that Christian spirituality has for many years been identified with a radical “world-denying, anti-materialistic, ascetic

¹⁶ See Phillip Sheldrake, *Spirituality and Theology: Christian Living and the Doctrine of God*, (Dartem: Longman & Todd, 1998), p. 35.

¹⁷ In his attempt to describe reformed spirituality, Smit observes that one first needs to find a methodology which will then help in formulating a definition of spirituality. He then develops such a methodology in his article, “Kan spiritualiteit beskryf word?”, in *NGTT*, Vol. 30. 1989.

¹⁸ Sheldrake, *Spirituality and Theology: Christian Living and the Doctrine of God*, p. 35.

¹⁹ Richards, L. *A Practical Theology on Spirituality*, (Academia Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), p. 11.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

philosophy of life”.²¹ This has resulted in what Kourie refers to as the “polarization between the spiritual and the material”.²² Spirituality is then seen as something associated with those who have over the years denied the value of the body and the world, and focused only on self-denial and an ascetic life.

Joan Puls, a Franciscan sister, has disclosed that in the Roman Catholic Church, they did not speak of the “spiritual life” before the Vatican II. This “spiritual life” tended to focus chiefly on devotions and prayer life. It was only after Vatican II that the religious spoke more readily of spirituality, meaning the whole of life.²³ Nowadays, almost no one will disagree that spirituality definitely extends beyond a mere prayer and devotional life.

Many theologians have over the last few years contributed to discussions on the understanding of Christian spirituality. As Kourie and Kretzschmar remark, an abundance of articles and books, which deal with the various aspects of spirituality, have been published.²⁴ Many retreats and seminars for clergy and laity have had their focus on spirituality.

²¹ Celia Kourie, “What is Christian Spirituality?” in *Christian Spirituality in South Africa*, ed. by Celia Kourie and Louise Kretzschmar, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2000), p. 12.

²² Ibid.

²³ See Ans Van der Bent, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns: Sixteen Documentary Surveys*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986), p. 188.

²⁴ Celia Kourie and Louise Kretzschmar, “Introducing Christian Spirituality”, in *Christian Spirituality in South Africa*, ed. by Celia Kourie and Louise Kretzschmar, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2000), p. 1.

Contrary to what spirituality was earlier believed to be, Kourie considers contemporary spirituality to impact on the totality of life. For her, it does not embody a separation between the secular and the sacred, but encompasses the entire life of faith, which includes body and mind, as well as the social and political dimensions.²⁵

Philip Sheldrake's definition of spirituality, amongst many other elaborate and good definitions, best describes the crux of the matter. He says that Christian spirituality is how we "individually and collectively, personally appropriate the traditional beliefs about God, humanity and the world, and express them in terms of our basic attitudes, life-style and activity"²⁶. Thus, Sheldrake further states, spirituality is the whole of human life viewed in terms of a conscious relationship with God, in Jesus Christ, through the indwelling of the Spirit and within the community of believers.²⁷ Echoing Sheldrake, Kourie emphasizes that spirituality should be holistic. In this sense, it should be expressed at all levels of social, economic and political life.²⁸ Emphasizing this modern-day understanding of spirituality, Barnes maintains that spirituality is having to do with the practical

²⁵ Celia Kourie, "What is Christian Spirituality?" in *Christian Spirituality in South Africa*, p. 13.

²⁶ Sheldrake, P. *Spirituality and Theology: Christian Living and the Doctrine of God*, pp. 34 – 35.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

²⁸ Celia Kourie, "What is Christian Spirituality?" in *Christian Spirituality in South Africa*, p. 13.

ways in which faith in Christ is expressed and sustained.²⁹ It is in this sense that the term ‘spirituality’ will be used in this dissertation.

1.3. The relationship between liturgy and spirituality

Many scholars with an interest in liturgy and spirituality have, through their writings, enriched the discussion on its connectedness. Michael Downey is of the opinion that worship impinges on spirituality and that Christian spirituality is not just a dimension of the Christian life, but is the Christian life itself.³⁰ He also affirms that spirituality concerns absolutely every dimension of life: “mind and body, intimacy and sexuality, work and leisure, economic accountability and political responsibility, domestic life and civic duty, the rising costs of health care, and the plight of the poor and wounded both at home and abroad”.³¹ Absolutely every dimension of life is to be integrated and transformed by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, Downey believes.

Vatican II, which was a watershed in the life of the Roman Catholic Church, also presented valuable contributions to the discussion on liturgy and spirituality.

According to Downey, Vatican II emphasized that liturgy indeed has a formative role to play in spirituality.³² Agreeing with this, Downey further suggests that

²⁹ Geoffrey Barnes, “Spirituality and Ecumenism”, in *The Ecumenical Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1, January 1997, p. 22.

³⁰ See his book, *Understanding Christian Spirituality*, (New York/Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1997), p. 45.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*, p. 81.

contemporary understanding of Christian spirituality rests upon the premise that spirituality needs to be informed by liturgy. Christian spirituality is given shape by communal worship, common prayer and praise, celebration in Word and sacrament.³³

Susan White makes us aware of the fact that even in the New Testament times, participation in worship was already regarded not only as a sign of the health of one's relationship with God, but that it contributed also to the well-being of that relationship.³⁴ Bernstein traces the interrelationship of liturgy and spirituality back to the Judeo-Christian tradition.³⁵ She makes mention of the Old Testament prophets like Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah and Isaiah, who were constantly interpreting the covenant in terms of their daily lives. She also refers to Jesus who "sought to share his vision of a God who was revealed not in abstract categories but in everyday life".³⁶

White is of the opinion that liturgy offers a variety of resources for the spiritual formation of Christian people.³⁷ Another way in which the liturgy undergirds Christian spirituality, White says, is by providing a context within which

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ See Susan White, "Spirituality, Liturgy and Worship", in *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. by Philip Sheldrake, (London: SCM Press, 2005), p. 44.

³⁵ See Eleanor Bernstein, "Introduction", in *Liturgy and Spirituality in Context: Perspectives on Prayer and Culture*, ed. by Eleanor Bernstein, (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1990), p. xi.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Susan White, "Spirituality, Liturgy and Worship", in *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, p. 44.

worshippers can experience the encounter with God. For her, entering into the spirit of the liturgy is to enter into “the arena within which the triune God is actively engaged in restoring and renewing worshippers as they make themselves available to divine power”. At the same time, “worshipping in faith, hope and love allow participants to make their relationship with God visible through the signs and gestures, words, and songs of worship. By giving voice to the praise of God, to the petition for forgiveness, to thanksgiving and offering, the Christian liturgy gives participants an opportunity to express the subtleties and complexities of the divine-human relationship, and thereby to deepen it”.³⁸

Maria Leonard takes the relationship between liturgy and spirituality a step further when she wrestles with the question of the connection between “our faith as expressed in the liturgy and our work in the marketplace”.³⁹ She once asked a top executive this question, “How does the liturgy support you in your work?” He replied, “I have heard only one sermon in my life that related to my work”.⁴⁰ This comment prompted her to ask the question about the effect of the liturgy on our working lives. For her, liturgy plays such a role in her life that what she experiences during worship, must be lived out in the workplace. She recalls Dietrich Van Hildebrand who, in his *Liturgy and Personality*, writes that the

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ See Leonard, “After Sunday – The Work Week, The Marketplace”, in *Liturgy and Spirituality in Context: Perspectives on Prayer and Culture*, ed. by Eleanor Bernstein, (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1990), p. 151.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 157.

liturgy shapes and forms our fundamental attitude towards God and others in such a way that it shapes our affections from which actions flows.⁴¹

Leonard is of the opinion that, during worship, many people probably see the Liturgy of the Word as having the most obvious role in shaping their lives.⁴² She is quick to add that there are many other parts of the liturgy whose influence cannot be overlooked. In this regard, she mentions, for example, that the eucharistic prayer reminds us that we have received the gift of life and that we are called to be thankful people. She offers an example of how a co-worker of hers once exemplified this spirit of gratitude. The colleague commented, “Look at the sky, feel the breeze, see the world around us. I thank God each day for my life and all of my creation, for my job and for the people around me”.⁴³ Strengthening her conviction of a connection between the liturgy and the workplace, Leonard offers a further example of a worker who centres her life around Christ, who uses in her prayer the doxology at the end of the eucharistic prayer: “through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, forever and ever.” For this worker, Leonard says, her work and her relationships with those who work with her are all caught up into her worship of God.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 159.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 164.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

With reference to the role of the elements in the liturgy in the formation of a spiritual life, White contends that Christians can tap into a deep source of strength by “immersion into the words and actions of worship”.⁴⁵ In baptism, she says, Christians can put on the “armour of salvation”, and in the Lord’s Supper, she believes, Christians partake of the spiritual food necessary for the “arduous journey of faithfulness”, and in the absolution of sin, Christians are “given a fresh spiritual vitality to resist the lure of evil”. White understands the Church’s liturgy as a primary resource for the devotional life of individuals and communities; hence she argues for its indispensable place in attending to the major issues of human existence.⁴⁶

Christian life, according to Downey, demands not only that liturgy should have a formative role in Christian living, but that the spirituality of the person and community should shape liturgy.⁴⁷ Liturgy and spirituality are to be shaped by one another.

Worship is dead if it is cut off from daily life. When it becomes detached from reality, either from the realities of the world or from the reality of God, it becomes irrelevant.⁴⁸ “The Church’s self-offering takes place in the daily lives of its

⁴⁵ Susan White, “Spirituality, Liturgy and Worship”, in *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, p. 45.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Michael Downey, *Understanding Christian Spirituality*, p. 82.

⁴⁸ See M. Senter, *The Praises of God*, in *Liturgy for a New Century*, ed. by M. Perham, (Whitstable, Kent: Whitstable Litho, 1991), pp. 1 – 2.

members, as we offer ourselves to God and to our neighbours in acts of love and justice and mercy and goodness”.⁴⁹ Pointing to this, Smit remarks that the liturgy is the continuation of God’s action in the world, and in turn, God’s actions in the world are the continuation of God’s action in the liturgy.⁵⁰

According to Fink, the vision set forth in the Church’s liturgy is the primary vision that must shape any authentic Christian spirituality and the primary context in which any specific Christian spirituality must understand itself.⁵¹ This means that liturgy provides a paradigm for spirituality and ought never to be separated from the formation of humanity.

The “old mood” in liturgy, as James says, concerned prescribed services in a prescribed building, while the “new mood” concerns the participation of the people in the life of a community – a community which as part of its spirituality, draws people to maturity.⁵²

1.4. The World Council of Churches

Seeing that the study is done within the framework of the WCC, it is helpful that a brief description and history of the WCC may be given here. It is important at the

⁴⁹ Ibid., p.5

⁵⁰ See Dirk Smit, “Liturgy and Life? On the importance of worship for Christian ethics”, in *Scriptura*, p. 270.

⁵¹ Peter Fink, “Liturgy and Spirituality: A Timely Intersection” in *Liturgy and Spirituality in Context: Perspective in Prayer and Cultures*, p. 61.

⁵² Eric James, “Liturgy and Spirituality for Today” in *Spirituality for Today: Papers from the 1967 Parish and People Conference*, p. 132.

outset to note that the World Council of Churches is not identical with the ecumenical movement, or vice versa. The WCC is not the ecumenical movement itself. There are many other national and regional ecumenical bodies, many of which are associated with the WCC. All these bodies have similar aims and functions as the WCC which is the predominant body, or as Robeck puts it, “one international expression” within the ecumenical movement.⁵³ Nevertheless, it is universally recognized that the World Council occupies in it a place of special responsibility, being at present the most strongly organized and widely represented inter-Church body for promoting the aims of the ecumenical movement.⁵⁴

The WCC consists of 349 member churches in more than 110 countries. WCC member churches include virtually all the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches; Anglicans; diverse Protestant churches, including Reformed, Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist churches. While most of the WCC’s founding churches were European and North American, the majority today are in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle East and the Pacific.⁵⁵ The WCC maintains its headquarters in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva whilst it also has an office in New York.

⁵³ See Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., “Pentecostals and Ecumenism in a Pluralistic World”, in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion made to Travel*, ed. by Murray Dempster, et al, (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 1999), p. 346.

⁵⁴ See Henri D’Espine, “Introduction”, in *The Ecumenical Advance: A History of the Ecumenical Movement, Vol.2, 1948 – 1968*, ed. by Harold E. Fey, (London: SPCK, 1970), p.xv.

⁵⁵ *World Council of Churches*. Retrieved June 22, 2009 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.oikoumene.org/en.member-churches/global-bodies-and-mission-communities>.

Historically, the origins of the ecumenical movement can be traced back to the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. Prior to the Edinburgh Conference, there was also the formation of various transdenominational bodies during the 19th century, inter alia the Evangelical Alliance (1846) and the World Student Christian Federation (1895). Two of the prominent figures at the Edinburgh Conference were John R. Mott and J.H. Oldham, together with one of the ushers, William Temple, who later became the Archbishop of Canterbury. In the following years, these three persons were to play a leading role in the establishment of the WCC.⁵⁶

John Mott (1865-1955), was an American Methodist who became general secretary of the World Student Christian Federation while Joseph Oldham (1874-1969), a British Anglican layman, followed in the footsteps of Mott as general secretary of the Student Movement.⁵⁷

The Conference at Edinburgh led to the International Missionary Council in 1921 which had the focus of coordinating the activities of the national missionary organizations of the different countries. A whole sequence of world missionary conferences followed in order to achieve this goal. Since 1939, the International Missionary Council started to work closer with the WCC, which was by then in the process of formation. Only after the Third Assembly in 1961 in New Delhi, did

⁵⁶ See Ans van der Bent, *What in the world is the World Council of Churches*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1978), p. 18.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

the Missionary Council became part of the WCC as its Division of World Mission and Evangelism. As Van der Bent puts it, “it had taken several decades to realize that the unity of the church and the mission of the church are but two sides of the same coin”.⁵⁸

The ecumenical movement, as it developed since 1910, flowed also through two other streams of “international Christian endeavour”.⁵⁹ Bishop Charles Brent from the American Episcopalian Church, who was present at the Edinburgh Conference, launched a proposal for a conference on Faith and Order that led to the first fully constituted World Conference on Faith and Order that took place at Lausanne in 1927. Other conferences followed at Edinburgh (1937), Lund (1952) and Montreal (1963). Apart from being concerned with organic church union, Faith and Order gatherings were held with the endeavour to seek a “common mind on various matters of Christian theology, tradition and renewal”.⁶⁰ In pursuit of this, many church denominations were encouraged to participate in its programmes and conferences.⁶¹ One of its principles was to “act as the hand-maid of the churches in the preparatory work of clearing away misunderstandings, discussing obstacles to reunion, and issuing reports which are submitted to the churches for their approval”.⁶²

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 19.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 20.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 21.

⁶¹ See John E. Skoglund & Robert J. *Fifty Years of Faith and Order*, (New York: WCC Publications, 1963), p. 33.

⁶² Ibid. p. 34.

The third channel of 20th century ecumenism, which was decisively influenced by Archbishop Nathan Söderblom of Sweden, came to be known as Life and Work. This movement had a service aspect and was of great ethical significance. Under the leadership of Söderblom, the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work was convened at Stockholm in 1925 “in order to study the application of Christian principles to international relations and to social, industrial and economic life”.⁶³ Because of the emphasis on service, discussions on doctrinal issues were avoided in this movement.

It soon became obvious that, if the churches were to give sufficient support to the cause of the ecumenical movement, then Faith and Order, Life and Work, and World Mission and Evangelism should be joined together in one movement.⁶⁴ Hence a provisional committee that met in Utrecht in 1938, laid the first foundation for the WCC. Van der Bent describes the official start of the WCC with its First Assembly that was held in 1948 at Amsterdam as follows:

Never before had so many Christians from so many different traditions and backgrounds prayed the Lord’s Prayer together, everyone in his or her own language. Never before had there been such a shared enthusiasm and conviction among Anglicans, Baptists, Congregationalists, Calvinists and

⁶³ See Ans van der Bent, *What in the world is the World Council of Churches*, p. 21.

⁶⁴ For further reading on the different strands that comprised the WCC as well on the establishment of the WCC, see Norma Goodall, *The Ecumenical Movement: What it is and what it does*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

Lutherans, Methodists, Mennonites, Quakers, Moravians, Disciples, Old Catholics, the Salvation Army and a number of the Orthodox Church. The Church of Jesus Christ was finally marching on the road to visible unity, empowered to give a joint witness and engaged in a common service to the world.⁶⁵

At this Assembly, 146 church denominations constituted the WCC. At that time, only 30 churches came from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The WCC is described as “a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit”.⁶⁶

The first general secretary of the WCC, who was a prominent figure in the establishment of the ecumenical movement, was Dr Willem Adolf Visser ‘t Hooft. After serving as general secretary of the World Student Christian Federation from 1931 – 1938, he occupied the position of general secretary of the WCC while it was still in the process of formation. Serving the WCC with diligence and passion, he retired in 1966 after he, in the opinion of Van der Bent, “almost single-handedly directed the work of the Council, presided over countless meetings, travelled widely throughout the world, and was the architect of the first official

⁶⁵ Van der Bent, *What in the world is the World Council of Churches*, p. 23.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

contacts with the Orthodox churches and the Roman Catholic Church”.⁶⁷ Visser ‘t Hooft vacated his position as general secretary after having published many books and articles on ecumenical themes during his term in office.

1.5. Consultations and Meetings

Liturgy and spirituality were discussed at various meetings and consultations before and after the establishment of the WCC. Some of the highlights of these consultations and meetings may be listed briefly: After the establishment of the WCC in 1948, the Central Committee held their second meeting at Chichester in England in 1949.⁶⁸ The meeting agreed to continue and support the tradition of showing varieties of worship that already existed among Christians. This, they argued, would bring new and deeper insights into the meaning of one another’s traditions that could not be obtained in any other way. It was also emphasized, however, that such services required careful preparation.

A volume on “Ways of Worship” was published in 1951 as preparation for the Third World Conference on Faith and Order at Lund in 1952. This book had already gained momentum as early as 1939, when an international theological commission started to work on it. The following areas were focused on: the elements of liturgy; the inner meanings of word and sacrament; liturgy and

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

⁶⁸ See *Minutes and Reports of the Second Meeting of the Central Committee held at Chichester, England, July 9 – 15, 1949*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1949), p. 48.

devotion. All three focus areas covered the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Reformed and other traditions.⁶⁹

A Theological Commission on Worship, which continued the work of the former Commission on Ways of Worship, was called into life in 1954 in Chicago as one of the Faith and Order Theological Commissions to make a comprehensive study of worship and its relationship with life.⁷⁰ It should conduct a thorough theological examination of the place and function of worship in God's whole work of redemption, and its relationship to the whole life of the Church; hence it should study the relationship between liturgy and spirituality.

At the meeting of the Faith and Order Commission in Chicago, studies were undertaken in Western as well as Eastern countries with the foci on indigenization, inculturation and inter-religious dialogue. The European theologians studied worship in relation to the great doctrines of the faith. They focused on themes such as "The Christian Tradition in Europe", "The Interpretation of the Language of Worship", "Variety and Unity of Christian Worship"; "The Presence of History in Worship".⁷¹ The American section focused on the relationship of worship to the world with the following themes researched: "Meaning and Practice of Worship in the Scriptures", "The interaction of kerygma

⁶⁹ See *Ways of Worship: The Report of a Theological Commission of Faith and Order*, (London: SCM Press, 1951).

⁷⁰ *Evanston to New Delhi: Third Assembly of the WCC New Delhi 1961: 1954 -1961. Report of the Central Committee to the Third Assembly of the WCC*, (Geneva: WCC Publications), p. 39.

⁷¹ See Geoffrey Wainwright, *Worship with One Accord: Where Liturgy and Ecumenism Embrace*, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 9.

and cultus”; “Worship in cultus and in ethical obedience”, “Worship, intelligibility, and contemporary culture”.⁷² The Asian section has devoted its main energies to the problem of indigenization. This section did not meet as one group, but rather had national consultations in Japan, the Philippines and Indonesia. The outcome of the consultations in Bangalore, India in May 1960, was published under the title *Worship and the Church’s Mission and Unity*.⁷³

When the Faith and Order Commission met at St. Andrews in 1960, the Asian section shared the following questions as problem areas that they had encountered: How can the East’s indigenous cultural and thought forms, which are part of God’s creative work, be taken over by the Church?; What are the appropriate symbols for Christian liturgical life and to what extent can Hindu symbols, for example of the relation between God and man be used?; To what degree does an exaggerated fear of syncretism impoverish the worship of the Asian churches?; What is the proper theological understanding of the distinction between indigenization and syncretism?⁷⁴

The Third Assembly of the WCC at New Delhi in 1961 touched on the relationship between liturgy and spirituality when it attended to the importance of the intimate relationship between worship and work.⁷⁵ It was emphasized that the

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ See *Evanston to New Delhi: Third Assembly WCC New Delhi 1961, 1954 – 1961, Report of the Central Committee to the Third Assembly of the WCC*, p. 40.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ See Ans van der Bent, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns: Sixteen Documentary Surveys*, p. 177.

worship of God is an end in itself and that worship at the same time serves to strengthen the worshippers for witness and service. In worship, Van der Bent says, we offer to God the work, the concerns and the people of his world, and then return again as his servants into everyday life.⁷⁶ The New Delhi report further stated that “in worship, we confess our sins and receive forgiveness and courage for the old and new daily tasks”.⁷⁷

Worship was further discussed at the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order in Montreal in 1963 with the theme “Worship and the Oneness of Christ’s Church”. Regarding spirituality, a consultation on “Eastern and Western Spirituality” took place at Bossey from 20-25 August 1962 where topics such as the biblical understanding of spirituality, spirituality and holiness, and spirituality and daily life were discussed.⁷⁸

In spite of an earlier call already made in 1949 for more variation and exposure to the unusual in worship during Assemblies, few people made the attempt to join the unfamiliar during the Opening Celebration of the Assembly at Nairobi in 1975.⁷⁹ However, at the Assembly at Vancouver, Canada, 24 July – 10 August 1983, the opposite of Nairobi was experienced. As indicated earlier, Vancouver’s

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 177-178.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 178.

⁷⁹ *Breaking Barriers: Nairobi 1975*, ed. by David M. Paton, (London: SPCK, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 10.

worship was perceived by many as the best of all the Assemblies and Committee meetings to date. This was partly due to sound planning by people who knew what they were doing. It was also due to the use of symbols, both traditional and contemporary, that cut through barriers of language, culture and denomination. Lastly, it was also due to the skilled combination of carefully sculpted form and charismatic freedom.⁸⁰

The Commission on Faith and Order organized a consultation on Faith and Renewal at Stravanger in 1985. At this meeting, a discussion on the importance of ecumenical spirituality and life-style took place.⁸¹ It was felt that spirituality is a “coherent and integral part” of all the matters with which Faith and Order deals, and is at the heart of the Ecumenical Movement.

1.6. Influences in Ecumenical developments on Liturgy and Spirituality

While discussions at earlier consultations on liturgy and spirituality, especially those prior to the 1960’s were dominated by questions on the ways of worship and how to worship together, the 1960’s brought forth new challenges. It is the focus of this study to highlight, discuss and evaluate the four particular challenges (factors) which impacted on the liturgy in the ecumenical movement, and hence on the spirituality. These challenges will be discussed as they have

⁸⁰ *Gathered for Life. Official Report of the VI Assembly of the WCC, Vancouver, Canada, 24 July – 10 August, 1983*, p. 12.

⁸¹ *Faith and Renewal: Commission on Faith and Order: Stravanger 1985, 13 – 25 August 1985*. Faith and Order Paper No. 131, ed. by Thomas F. Best, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986), p. 224.

emerged, i.e. in chronological order. **Chapter Two** therefore begins to describe the start of a renewal movement called the Charismatic Renewal that swept through the churches worldwide. This chapter tells the story of how the focus of the Charismatic Movement on renewal and the Holy Spirit enriched the liturgy of churches within the ecumenical movement. This revival also opened discussions on the theme of spirituality.

At the same time that the Charismatic Renewal impacted on the worship in the ecumenical movement, a discussion on inculturation started to appear on the agenda of the WCC. **Chapter Three** concerns itself with the challenges that inculturation posed, especially to the liturgy in the ecumenical movement. One obvious question that confronted the Council was: how do we proclaim Christ in different cultures? When the missionaries and evangelists came from Europe to South Africa, for instance, they did not bring the gospel alone, but they brought it “fully dressed in western clothes”, not bearing in mind the culture of the recipients. In the words of Ariarajah, “when the gospel was taken to Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Pacific by Roman Catholic and Protestant missions in the 18th and 19th centuries, much of the evangelistic work was accompanied by the colonization and the Westernization of these parts of the world”.⁸² Ariarajah furthermore holds that the “confidence which the colonizers had in the superiority of their own culture and religion led them in most cases to reject the

⁸² See S. Wesley Ariarajah, *Gospel and Culture: An Ongoing Discussion within the Ecumenical Movement*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1994), p. xii.

culture of the people to whom the gospel was brought”.⁸³ This chapter thus deals with the fact that inculturation is a dialogue between liturgy and culture – a dialogue which leads to mutual enrichment.

The 1960’s seem to have been a testing time for worship. The decade saw not only the emergence of the Charismatic Renewal with its renewal challenges, and the introduction of inculturation, with both factors shining their light on liturgy and spirituality; a further “new” factor – “secularization” – raised its head and challenged the relevance of worship at that time. **Chapter Four** focuses on this aspect and endeavours to depict how the ecumenical movement attempted to deal with it. It explains how elaborate discussions at the Fourth Assembly of the WCC at Uppsala in 1968, led to a Consultation on “Worship in a Secular Age” in Geneva in 1969. The Assembly requested that the crisis that was experienced in worship due to secularization, be analyzed and that new steps forward be suggested.

While the ecumenical movement had to deal with the Charismatic Renewal as well as the issues of inculturation and secularization, a document namely BEM began to take form. It started in the 1960’s, developed further in the 1970’s and was ultimately completed in 1982. **Chapter Five** tells the story of Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, where discussions started, how it began to take shape, its eventual completion and presentation, and its reception and responses by churches within the ecumenical movement. This chapter further highlights how

⁸³ Ibid.

BEM inspired endeavours for the renewal of liturgy and of spiritual life and how Christians began to understand their own faith better and at the same time became sensitive and open to the theological and spiritual insights and experiences of other traditions.⁸⁴ It will thus describe how BEM had an impact on studies of worship and spirituality and the revision of forms of worship in several churches.

Chapter Six presents a brief summary of the four factors and processes and critically reflects as to how they contributed to fostering the relationship between liturgy and spirituality.

1.7. Conclusion

The study on the influences in ecumenical developments in liturgy and spirituality will be undertaken with the aim to determine what we can learn from it: how the influences affected the liturgical life and hence the spiritual life of the churches in the ecumenical movement.

⁸⁴ *Faith and Renewal: Reports and Documents of the Commission on Faith and Order*, Stravanger,, p. 71.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL AND THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

2.1. Introduction

As the ecumenical movement is itself a renewal movement, it is astonishing that it took the World Council of Churches longer than the Vatican to recognize the necessity for a study of the charismatic movement. This omission is now remedied as it is recognized that the Charismatic Renewal contains great promises and poses a number of problems. Both are to be explored and tested.

In the process of this testing and exploring we expect the experiences of contemporary spiritual initiatives to challenge the churches and the ecumenical movement. Equally we expect the experiences of the churches and of the ecumenical movement to challenge contemporary movements of renewal.⁸⁵

With these words, W.J. Hollenweger voiced the amazement of a number of leaders from the reformation, non-conformist and Catholic traditions who met at Schwanberg, at the fact that it took the WCC so long to officially discuss the impact that the Charismatic Renewal had on the ecumenical movement. Hollenweger, however, also admits in this statement that the consultation on the

⁸⁵ W.J. Hollenweger, "Towards a Church Renewed and United in the Spirit", in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, ed. by Arnold Bittlinger, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981), p. 21.

Charismatic Renewal at Schwanberg in 1978 rectified the problem. Hence he aired his understanding of the challenges that both the ecumenical movement and the charismatic renewal would put to each other.

Before we enter into a discussion of the debates and deliberations about the charismatic renewal in the ecumenical movement, it will be useful to introduce this subject with a depiction of the charismatic renewal. The first part of this chapter will thus be chiefly informative, i.e., describing the movement, its origins, its features, what it stands for, and the leading figures. The role that the Charismatic Renewal played within the ecumenical movement will then be highlighted, as well as the influence that the former had on the latter's liturgy and spirituality.

2.2. Its Beginning

“A movement of spiritual renewal unprecedented in the history of the Christian church has been spreading through the churches of the world since the beginning of the sixties. Unlike earlier such movements, this contemporary renewal movement, sometimes called the ‘Charismatic Renewal’, is spreading all over the world, within all confessions, and among all social classes”.⁸⁶ This is how the

⁸⁶ The Pentecostal movement, which started in 1901 and really gained momentum at William J. Seymour's revival meetings at Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles in 1906, is different to the Charismatic Renewal and did not have the same impact as the Charismatic Renewal. For further reading on the spread of Pentecostalism, see Telford Work, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Worship”, in *The Oxford Dictionary of Christian Worship*, pp. 574 – 585. For further detail on the Azusa Street Revival, see Lawrence Jones, “The Black Pentecostals”, in *The Charismatic Movement*, ed. by Michael P. Hamilton, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, 1975), pp. 145 – 158.

For clarity on the differences between the Charismatic Renewal and the Pentecostal Movement, see James C. Logan, “Controversial Aspects of the Movement”, in *The Charismatic Movement*, ed.

beginning of the Charismatic Renewal is dramatically and enthusiastically described by Arnold Bittlinger.⁸⁷

Erling Jorstad traces the beginnings of the Charismatic Renewal back to the 1960's where it surprisingly first started in the Protestant circles and a few years later in the Roman Catholic Church, as was expected after an enlightened Vatican II.⁸⁸ According to Peter Hocken, Catholics interpreted their Pentecostal experience as a “providential result of the renewal thrust and ecumenical openings of the Second Vatican Council”.⁸⁹

Hocken traces the origins of the Charismatic Renewal one year earlier than Jorstad when he points out that it originated specifically in the historic churches that were situated at Van Nuys, California, USA, during 1959. Hocken describes the incident where the Episcopalian rector, Dennis Bennet, and some of his congregants had received the baptism of the Spirit and gift of tongues.⁹⁰ Since

by Michael P. Hamilton, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, 1975), pp. 33 – 34.

⁸⁷ See his article, “Charismatic Renewal – An Opportunity for the Church?”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 7.

⁸⁸ Erling Jorstad, *Bold in the Spirit: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in America Today*, (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1974), p. 9.

⁸⁹ See Peter Hocken, “Charismatic Movement”, in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, ed. by N. Lossky et al, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002), p. 165.

⁹⁰ See his “A Survey of the Worldwide Charismatic Movement”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Movement*, p. 117.

then the Charismatic Renewal spread to Latin America and Asia, to Argentina by 1967 and Sri Lanka by 1969.⁹¹

Hocken also discloses that sporadic outbreaks of what he refer to as “Pentecostal phenomena” occurred in the 1950’s outside the Pentecostal denominations.⁹² He informs us that there were circles in the Anglican and Methodist Churches in the United Kingdom that were earnestly seeking for spiritual revival – hence they fervently prayed for it. There were also Baptists in Brazil who were among those seeking a deeper spiritual life. Even the Reformers in the Netherlands, Anglicans in the UK and Episcopalians in the USA who rediscovered divine healing, were passionately looking for spiritual renewal. These concerned groups from the different churches joined together in the 1960’s into one recognizable unstructured movement.

While written records indicate that the charismatic renewal among Episcopalians began in Van Nuys in the 1960’s, there is evidence which suggests that it started much earlier in South Africa. There is an organization called *Iviyo loFakazi bakaKristu* (Legion of Christ’s Witness) which is a charismatic renewal movement that apparently started in the 1940’s. Stephen Hayes alludes in his research to the fact that there was no real attention given to this, chiefly due to ethnocentrism.⁹³ *Iviyo* was started by blacks, and as such did not count in a

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 118.

⁹² “Charismatic Movement”, in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 165.

⁹³ Stephen Hayes, *Black Charismatic Anglicans*, (Pretoria: Unisa, 1990), p. 54.

milieu where anything from black origins was not regarded as important. Secondly, the disadvantages that confronted blacks in South Africa resulted in a lack of written material on this renewal movement in South Africa.

Kenneth Greet argues that the Charismatic Renewal has its origin in the fact that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was blatantly neglected, especially in the historic churches, hence the emergence of movements such as the Charismatic Renewal.⁹⁴ Greet is also of the opinion that movements usually arise to “fill a vacuum created by the failure to maintain the fullness of the Christian witness”. His line of argument raises the question: what movement will arise next, bearing in mind that the fullness of the Christian witness will never fully be maintained and sustained due to human “fallibility”? For the time being, our attention will be on the movement that seemed to have changed and is still changing the face of the worldwide Church.

While we can safely accept and recognize that the Charismatic Renewal is now found in virtually all churches around the world, it is obvious that its influence and strength will vary from denomination to denomination, and church to church.

2.3. The Renewal Starts – and the Spirit moves

⁹⁴ Kenneth Greet, *When the Spirit moves*, (London: Epworth Press, 1975), p. 19.

As was mentioned, Dennis Bennet, the Episcopalian rector in California received the “baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of the tongues” with members of his congregation. This event then sparked off a process of spiritual renewal which was referred to as the “Charismatic Renewal”. In this process, significant roles were played by David du Plessis⁹⁵ of South Africa (Pentecostal) and Michael Harper⁹⁶ of the UK (first Anglican, and later became Antiochene Orthodox).⁹⁷

Some referred to the Charismatic renewal as a renewing process while others referred to it as a movement. For Charles Hummel, the renewal is not a movement, but rather started off as a “pattern of events in the lives of a wide variety of Christians”.⁹⁸ The Holy Spirit is at the heart of this renewal process

⁹⁵ According to Van der Bent, Du Plessis was for a generation the leading figure in relations between Pentecostal churches and the ecumenical movement. Being an ordained minister in Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa, he emigrated to the United States in 1949 where he since then, attended several conferences of the International Missionary Council. Du Plessis was also present at several WCC consultations and Assemblies dating from Evanston (1954) to Vancouver (1983). See Van der Bent, “Du Plessis, David, J.”, in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, ed. by N. Lossky et al, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002), p. 340.

⁹⁶ Harper was curator of the esteemed Evangelical Anglican Church of All Souls, Langham Place, in London. According to Fenwick and Spinks, he had in 1962 an experience of the Holy Spirit while preparing a study on Ephesians. Harper was invited by many churches to speak on the subject of the Holy Spirit. In July 1964, he became the first Director of the Fountain Trust which had the aim of promoting the Charismatic Renewal. See Fenwick and Spinks, *Worship in Transition: The Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement*, (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), pp. 107 – 108.

⁹⁷ Peter Hocken “Charismatic Movement”, in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 165.

⁹⁸ Charles Hummel, *Fire in the Fireplace: Contemporary Charismatic Renewal*, (London & Oxford: Mowbrays, 1979), p. 17. The United Reformed Church in Great Britain, when asked by the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches to submit responses on the Charismatic Renewal, indicated that they prefer to use the term Renewal instead of movement. The latter could imply an organization which one can join, whereas Charismatic Renewal could be understood to “be a term which describes the individual and corporate experience of Christians who claim a fresh realization of the Holy Spirit as the one who empowers the Church in all the concrete and specific ways described in the New Testament”. See Bittlinger and Felber, “Responses of the Churches”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, ed. by Arnold Bittlinger, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981), p. 47.

where a range of spiritual gifts are bestowed upon different people for the strengthening of the body in worship and evangelism. Cardinal Suenens agreed with Hummel by arguing that the Charismatic Renewal is not a structural organization with membership.⁹⁹ He rather preferred it to be understood as “a moving of the Holy Spirit which can reach all Christians, lay or cleric” across cultural and ecclesiastical lines.¹⁰⁰ In agreement with the mentioned opinions, we will therefore adhere to the name “Charismatic Renewal”.

Why was the renewal called “charismatic” and not “Pentecostal Renewal” or “Protestant Renewal”? What was the significance of the word “charismatic”? Charismatic, as Cecil Robeck suggested, is derived from the word “charism”. He described a charism as “a manifestation of divine grace, a gift bestowed irrespective of merit or spiritual maturity, an endowment sometimes called a ‘gift of the Spirit’ granted by the Triune God to individuals to enhance the life, worship and service of the people of God. Those who receive such charismata are sometimes called charismatic”.¹⁰¹

The word “charismatic” is normally used of people who exercise one or more of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.¹⁰² A charismatic service is where one or more of the spiritual gifts is publicly and freely exercised or manifested. Hence such a service

⁹⁹ Cardinal Suenens, *A New Pentecost?* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1975), p. 111.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ See Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., “Charism(ata)” in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, ed. by N. Lossky et al, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002), p. 162.

¹⁰² Stephen Hayes, *Black Charismatic Anglicans*, p. xii.

is not confined to the Pentecostal churches but can even take place within Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox realms. The conclusion that one can therefore come to is that it would be incorrect to speak of “charismatic churches” as if it is an ecclesiastical tradition. It is, therefore, advisable rather to speak, for example, of a Reformed church with a charismatic character.

However, it has become apparent over the years that the Pentecostal tradition wants to “own” the charismatic character. This prompted Jorstad to voice his surprise that the Charismatic Renewal had its origins in the Episcopal Church against any remote expectations. It was regarded as very strange and even impossible for the historic churches to lay emphasis on the Holy Spirit and its workings. The Episcopal Church is regarded as a church with a “heritage of apostolic succession and historic formal liturgy” and it was therefore not expected that such a church would be open to the “working of the Holy Spirit”.¹⁰³ Historic churches were perceived to be more intellectually inclined with a lesser focus on the emotional. As become clear, however, as early as at the beginning stages of the Charismatic Renewal, the Spirit of the Lord has moved all over the earth in Pentecostal as well as in historic churches.

2.4. Historic Churches *versus* Pentecostal Churches

¹⁰³ Erling Jorstad, *Bold in the Spirit: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in America Today*, p. 21.

There seems to have been a life-long relationship permeated by scepticism between the so-called historic¹⁰⁴ and Pentecostal churches. The response of David du Plessis, at the time of his being the General Secretary of the World Pentecostal Conferences, when he visited the offices of the WCC in New York during 1951 was indicative of this. On his way he prayed:

Lord, I have preached so much against them. What do I say to them now? They will not listen to me. Their churches have put our people out of their fellowship. That is why we have now a separate Pentecostal Movement. The churches were not willing to listen to the testimony of those who speak in tongues.¹⁰⁵

Du Plessis' testimonies bear witness to how his attitude later changed towards the historic churches. According to Hocken, this transformation came about when he "obeyed his inner directives" and became better acquainted with the leaders of the traditional churches.¹⁰⁶ His openness helped him in fostering relationships with traditional churches which resulted in a more positive attitude towards Pentecostalism.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ These churches are sometimes called the "mainline" churches. Such churches distinguished themselves by being more structured, particularly in their worship.

¹⁰⁵ Peter Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain*, (The Paternoster Press, 1986), p. 61.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ See John R. K. Fenwick & Bryan D. Spinks, *Worship in Transition: The Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement*, p. 109.

At the centre of the sceptical attitude of the historic churches was the acknowledgment and exercising of the spiritual gifts. According to Cecil Robeck Jr, the Charismatic Renewal has since its beginnings accomplished bringing the different and often opposing ecclesiastical strands nearer to each other through experiencing the variety of charismata. He succinctly describes the “eye-opener” experiences as follows:

The appearance of such phenomena as prophecy, healing and speaking in tongues within the historic churches has enabled previously sectarian Pentecostals to look more favourably on the historic churches and to recognize more openly the role of the Spirit in the whole church through less spectacular gifts. In turn, many in the historic churches who have experienced some of the more spectacular charismata now look favourably on the newer Pentecostal churches.¹⁰⁸

The tension that existed between the historic and Pentecostal churches was also due to the accusations of the one group being too cerebral *versus* the emotionalism of the other group. Charismatics, in their promotion of participation which often prompted emotions, enthusiastically endorse what David Shibley calls “an experiential Christianity”.¹⁰⁹ He explicates this by saying that “their faith is more than a creed”. They are not cerebral about their faith, as they believe is the case with most of the churches in the Reformed tradition.

¹⁰⁸ Cecil Robeck Jr, “Charism(ata)” in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 163-4.

¹⁰⁹ David Shibley, *A Force in the Earth: The Charismatic Renewal and World Evangelism*, (Altamonte Springs, Florida: Creation House, 1989), p. 142.

Christianity, they argue, is a religion of *praxis*. Charismatics, on the other hand, were (and are) criticized to being more worshippers and less doers.

Despite their differences, Robeck tried to pave a way forward, envisioning a process of continuous discussion between the mentioned groups, which would enhance the chances for greater unity within the church as whole; this, in turn, would ensure progress in the search for unity in the ecumenical movement.

2.5. What characterizes the Charismatic Renewal?

The Charismatic Renewal did not bring something new to the table. Leaders of the movement claimed that what they emphasized, was all biblical. As Logan puts it, “Charismatic Christians are people of the Book. They see their experience as a revival of biblical Christianity”.¹¹⁰ The gifts of the Spirit and the vibrant workings of the Holy Spirit, are biblical proclamations and events. However, the Charismatic Renewal ‘polished’ it and ‘breathed fresh air into it’. Suddenly, the focus on the Spirit and the gifts it bestows affected the worldwide church like seldom before.

Cardinal Suenens accentuated the fact that the focus on the Spirit was not something new, but rather a “re-emphasis, a stress laid on the Holy Spirit’s role and active, manifested presence in our midst. It is not a new phenomenon in the Church, but a heightened awareness of a Presence that was all too often toned

¹¹⁰ James Logan, “Controversial Aspects of the Movement”, in *The Charismatic Movement*, p. 34

down and understated”.¹¹¹ This “Presence” was to be re-instated to regain its rightful place in the life of the church.

2.5.1. *Baptism in the Spirit*

As indicated earlier, nothing that the Charismatic Renewal brought to the fore was new; hence “baptism in the Spirit” is not an “invention” of it as such. Paul already wrote about it in the first century. However, the focus on the Spirit seemed to have triggered something special. It may be due to circumstances in the church or it may be that the church had experienced a “spiritual dip”¹¹²; hence the special significance attached to the “baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of the tongues”. It was also during these times that secularization started to have some influence on the church. The church was in dire need of renewal – it cried out for spiritual rejuvenation. It was in such times that the “baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues” gained special significance and that the Charismatic Renewal became its vehicle.

“Baptism in the Spirit” was certainly the most widely used expression in charismatic circles. According to Suenens, it was the crux, for it signifies the initial experience of conversion from which all other experiences will flow.¹¹³ The heart and meaning of baptism in the Spirit was, according to Hocken, the

¹¹¹ Cardinal Suenens, *Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal: Theological and Pastoral Orientations (Malines Document 2)*, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1978), p. 19.

¹¹² This can be understood in the light of Ezekiel 37.

¹¹³ Cardinal Suenens, *Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal: Theological and Pastoral Orientations (Malines Document 2)*, p. 47.

believer's changed relationship to Jesus Christ. It brought personal revealed knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The other blessings coming with "baptism in the Spirit" such as new power in praise, evangelism and ministry, were consequences of the new relationship to Jesus Christ.¹¹⁴

Hocken summarizes what is actually meant by "baptism in the Spirit" as follows:

At the heart of all charismatic testimonies it is a witness to an interior revelation of who Jesus Christ is, in which the Holy Spirit is experienced. God's Spirit witnesses to our spirit that we are children of God and makes known His power for sanctification, evangelism and mission. This transforming experience is most frequently given the designation baptism in the Spirit. Through baptism in the Spirit, there is an added awareness of Jesus as the one filled with the Spirit. The Baptism in the Spirit is the decisive act of God and is a grace for the restoration of normal Christian life among Christians.¹¹⁵

The actual experience is also described as a "recognizable instant event" in the life of the "receiver" that makes a visible difference in the believer's public behaviour and personal devotional life.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Peter Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain*, p. 178.

¹¹⁵ Hocken, "A Survey of the Worldwide Charismatic Movement", in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Movement*, pp. 124-5.

¹¹⁶ Erling Jorstad, *Bold in the Spirit: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in America Today*, p. 102.

The experience of “baptism in the Spirit” was not exempt from criticism. While Charismatics commonly conjecture this foundational experience as a “second blessing” after primary Christian initiation, Catholics and Protestants interpreted it in different ways. The perception of the Roman Catholics about the Baptism in the Spirit was that it was a “conscious experience of those graces which sacramental baptism has already conferred.”¹¹⁷ Baptism in the Spirit does not wipe out or replace sacramental baptism.

Another counter argument to the charismatic’s belief that baptism in the Spirit is a second baptism came from the Lutheran professor, William Lazareth. He used Paul’s reasoning that there can be only one baptism.¹¹⁸ Lazareth would rather understand the experience of baptism in the Spirit as an intensive form of sanctification.¹¹⁹ He therefore called on Lutherans to clearly renounce all claims of any second baptism of the Spirit.

2.5.2. Gifts of the Spirit

For Charismatics, according to Neitz, the most important manifestation of the Spirit of God breaking through (baptism of the Spirit) and touching people’s lives is the gift of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁰ She wants us to understand, however, that the

¹¹⁷ See Peter Hocken’s, “Charismatic Movement”, in the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 166.

¹¹⁸ See Ephesians 4:5

¹¹⁹ Erling Jorstad, *Bold in the Spirit: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in America Today*, p. 102.

¹²⁰ Mary Jo Neitz, *Charisma and Community: A Study of Religious Commitment within the Charismatic Renewal*, (Oxford: Transaction Books, 1987), p. 38.

focus should rather be on the one who bestows the gifts on individuals. God is the one who bequeaths particular gifts on individuals so that the whole church can benefit from it. Individuals who receive gifts therefore ought to serve the community according to the nature of their gifts. Neitz cautioned that the reception of a specific gift is not necessarily an indication that the receiver is holy or is deserving of a gift. God bestows gifts on everyone according to his plan.

McDonnell argues that Paul, in his explication of the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12), would conceive the church to be charismatic in the broad theological sense. This he bases on the understanding that a “charism is a gift from God which manifests the Spirit in a way useful for the common good, for the building up of the body of Christ”.¹²¹ In Paul’s view, McDonnell continues, the Holy Spirit has blessed every Christian with a gift (charism) which then makes the church in its entirety charismatic. Because the gift enables one to participate in a particular ministry of the church, the latter then becomes not only charismatic but also ministerial.¹²²

According to Paul, the Holy Spirit bestows different gifts upon people of God. The gift of glossolalia seemed to be the most important for the charismatics. Amongst the nine gifts of the Spirit that Paul mentions, it was the gift of the tongues that has aroused the most discussion among both charismatics and non-charismatics.

¹²¹ Kilian McDonnell (ed.), *Presence, Power, Praise: Documents on the Charismatic Renewal, Vol. II*, (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1978), p. 52.

¹²² Ibid.

Although it is a recognized gift, it has been controversial since the time of the Early Church.¹²³

Charismatics, and, to lesser degree, also Pentecostals, believe that “baptism in the Spirit” must be attested by the physical sign of speaking in tongues. This is regarded as the “initial evidence”, the first gift to be received.¹²⁴ The critics however point out that Paul placed tongues and interpretations at the bottom of the list of the nine spiritual gifts in 1 Cor. 12, arguing that it was probably Paul’s way of giving it a low priority in his thinking.¹²⁵

While the Pentecostals believe that the gift of tongues is a sign that one has indeed received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the exercising of this gift has led some observers to dismiss the whole movement as a case of mass hysteria and to label its followers crazy and deprived.¹²⁶ Kilian McDonnell even remarks that the focus on tongues distorts not only the movement, but the gospel itself.¹²⁷ He is one of the critics who believe that the gift of tongues is not so important because, among the four Gospels, it is only the Gospel of Mark that mentions it once (Mark

¹²³ Paul discouraged the Corinthians in exercising the gift of glossolalia when it does not benefit the fellow believers.

¹²⁴ Peter Hocken’s, “Charismatic Movement”, in the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 166.

¹²⁵ Erling Jorstad, *Bold in the Spirit: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in America Today*, p. 103.

¹²⁶ Mary Jo Neitz, *Charisma and Community: A Study of Religious Commitment within the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 39.

¹²⁷ See his evaluation, “Church Reactions to the Charismatic Renewal”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, ed. by Arnold Bittlinger, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981), p. 157.

16:17). He finds it hard, on the basis of Jesus' preaching, to attribute to tongues a place of importance in the Christian life. However, he does not denigrate this gift, as he is aware that it is related to conversion and initiation.

“Baptism in the Spirit” and the speaking in tongues were mostly experienced during worship. Today, in charismatic circles, it is still indicative of whether one has received the Holy Spirit or not. Let us explore the impact that the Charismatic Renewal had on the worship life of Churches worldwide, particularly in the ecumenical movement.

2.6. Worship

The Charismatic Renewal first penetrated what is generally regarded as the heart of the church, i.e. the worship service.¹²⁸ Any renewal and changes in the church, even in its structures and administration, is evident in the church's worship. It is in the worship service that God is collectively praised and worshipped and where God's renewing power is mightily experienced.

Charismatic worship, according to Hocken, marks the significant truth that praise is first of all a “corporate gift whereby God's people are empowered to proclaim His glory and to experience the presence of God in the power set loose

¹²⁸ Theologians such as Paul Hoon (*The Integrity of Worship: Ecumenical and Pastoral Studies in Liturgical Theology, 1971*), James White (*Introduction to Christian Worship, 1990*) and A.C. Barnard (*Die Erediens, 1981*) with many others argue that worship is the most important part of church life.

by vigorous praise”.¹²⁹ Damien Magrath states that the Renewal is actually a form of worship.¹³⁰ Rex Davis has no doubts that the Charismatic Renewal has made astonishing contributions to the worship of many churches where it has had some influence.¹³¹ The irony, he says, is that much of what has been achieved can simply be explained as the return to the meaning and the recovery of feeling in worship. Having said this, Davis is not denying the immense work that has been done especially by the Liturgical Movement¹³² on the renewal of worship.

Through the influences of the Charismatic Renewal, the energetic and spirited worship replaced in many churches the more reserved and restrained worship that characterized most of the Protestant churches.¹³³ Even in churches whose worship was bounded by lectionaries, people experienced a freer and warmer liturgy through the influence of the Charismatic Renewal. The charismatics in the historic churches rejoiced in the “newly discovered freedom” to worship God more spontaneously, through such charismatic experiences as speaking in

¹²⁹ Hocken, “A Survey of the Worldwide Charismatic Movement”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Movement*, pp. 125-6.

¹³⁰ Damien Magrath, *Introduction to Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church: Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference*, (Pretoria: Henkos Printers, 1976), p. 22.

¹³¹ Rex Davis, *Locusts and wild honey: The Charismatic Renewal and the Ecumenical Movement*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1978), p. 66.

¹³² The Liturgical Renewal had a similar focus than the Charismatic Renewal with the difference that the former focused on worship. The Liturgical Movement was concerned about the worship of the worldwide church. Hence, it sought to recall the members of the church to active involvement in the liturgy of the church. See the writer’s Masters dissertation, *The Renewal of Reformed Worship through Retrieving the Tradition and Ecumenical Openness*, (University of Cape Town, 1999), pp. 46 – 48. Consult also Teresa Berger’s “Liturgical Movement” and H. E. Chandlee’s “The Liturgical Movement” in *A New Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, ed. by J. G. Davies, (London: SCM Press, 1986).

¹³³ Hocken, “A Survey of the Worldwide Charismatic Movement”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Movement*, pp. 125-6.

tongues and singing in the Spirit.¹³⁴ They perceived the liturgies that they had grown up with and had become accustomed to, as stale and dull while the worship services as a whole had become monotonous and cold.¹³⁵ Even the hymns they used to sing were experienced as too reticent and unmoving. Charismatics rejoice in what Psalms 149 and 150¹³⁶ describe as ways and means to worship God.

Tom Smail approaches the subject of worship with much sensitivity as he is aware of the power that lies within it¹³⁷. While one group experiences jubilation over the new and vibrant worship styles, Smail advocates a rather balanced view where (structured) liturgy and spontaneous worship accommodate each other. Liturgy, he says, needs to have the freedom and flexibility in it to allow for unprompted spiritual response.¹³⁸ The danger of liturgy not being adaptable is that it “quickly hardens into ritualistic performance that becomes boring and irrelevant to everyone except the conservative minorities who have invested their

¹³⁴ Erling Jorstad, *Bold in the Spirit: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in America Today*, p. 24.

¹³⁵ See J. Bezuidenhout, *The Renewal of Reformed Worship through Retrieving the Tradition and Ecumenical Openness*, for an elaborate discussion on criticisms that were levelled against the worship in many Reformed Churches.

¹³⁶ The two psalms promote the use of different musical instruments, dancing, etc. All these were to enhance freer worship styles.

¹³⁷ David Peterson says that if one wants to start a lively and often dividing conversation amongst Christians, the subject of worship must be introduced. Many schisms in churches over the years and centuries were caused by different preferences in worship. See his article, “Worship in the New Testament” in *Worship: Adoration and Action*, ed. by D. A. Carson, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1993), p. 51.

¹³⁸ Tom Smail, “In Spirit and In Truth: Reflections on Charismatic Worship”, in *Charismatic Renewal: The Search for a Theology*, ed. by Tom Smail et al., (London: SPCK, 1995), p. 114.

security in it”.¹³⁹ On the other hand, Smail cautions that “worship that despises and rejects all liturgical constraints either degenerates into licentious self-indulgence or, more likely, without realizing what is happening, evolves liturgical forms of its own that can become as strict and as constraining as any it has rejected”.¹⁴⁰

The freedom that especially the laity experience allow them to contribute and participate more freely in worship.

2.6.1. Lay participation

It was apparent from the beginning that the Charismatic Renewal enhanced and promoted the participation of laity. As a response to the impact that the charismatic renewal had on the ecumenical movement, the Evangelical Churches of Westfalen expressed the view that the transition from a structure of worship dominated by the single voice of the pastor to one which is congregational was actually more important than liturgical movements and innovations.¹⁴¹ This church endorsed the kind of participation that was encouraged by the charismatics. Rex Davis also observed that, what he called “an omniscient clericalism”, had become normative in many Protestant churches.¹⁴² The minister

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 66.

¹⁴¹ See Bittlinger and Felber, “Responses of the Churches”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p.45.

¹⁴² Davis, *Locusts and wild honey: The Charismatic Renewal and the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 66.

reads, prays, preaches and does everything alone in the worship service. It is this monopoly over everything that the Charismatic Renewal discouraged. According to Phillip Potter, General Secretary of the WCC, the participation of the laity was also accentuated by the ecumenical movement.¹⁴³ It became a priority that men and women, as well as people of different generations were allowed to be involved.

Apart from the participatory character of charismatic worship, participation was affirmed even in the simple act of sitting in the customary square or circular arrangements which then provide for continuity between the leaders and the rest.¹⁴⁴ The gatherings of the Charismatic movement also provide various opportunities for people to grow in themselves by allowing individuals to take the initiative. Davis encapsulates what can happen in a worship service when people are at liberty to take the initiative and worship freely:

Hugs, hand-clasps, smiles, tears and comforting embraces are all acceptable. And because of this, the limits of our potential in worship are expanded. Repentance is not locked into a private ego-thing; it can become a moment of mutual reconciliation. Openness to the emotions is a great blessing in the healing of so many people's little distresses and unimportant hurts which, left to fester, can become deep and scaring

¹⁴³ See his address, "The Charismatic Renewal and the World Council of Churches", in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, ed. by Arnold Bittlinger, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981), p. 79.

¹⁴⁴ Hocken, "A Survey of the Worldwide Charismatic Movement", in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Movement*, p. 124.

wounds. What a difference to be present when the “Peace of the Lord” becomes a liturgical act rather than a verbal exercise!¹⁴⁵

It is this kind of freedom in worship which enabled growth in the personal life of many laity. It also stimulated and developed their leadership skills. Bittlinger finds an important link “between lay initiative in charismatic gatherings and lay initiative in evangelism outside the prayer meetings.”¹⁴⁶ This affirms the hypothesis of an ever-existing link between liturgy (“charismatic gatherings”) and spirituality (“evangelism outside the prayer meetings”). What happens in church, does have an affect outside the church – what one experiences during worship, influences one’s life outside the worship service.

Not only did the charismatic renewal promote participation from the laity, it also transformed and expanded the music styles in many traditional churches.

2.6.2. Music

Music, as Gaddy correctly remarks, is a medium through which every act of worship can find meaningful expression.¹⁴⁷ While God can be praised through music, convictions of faith can also be sounded through music and thereby strengthened. “The pathos of true penitence can be communicated musically. Assurance of divine forgiveness can be announced musically”.¹⁴⁸ Music is a major

¹⁴⁵ Rex Davis, *Locusts and Wild Honey: The Charismatic Renewal and the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 67.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 68

¹⁴⁷ Welton Gaddy, *The Gift of Worship*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1992), p. 153.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

medium for the proclamation and furtherance of the gospel of Jesus Christ. By means of music, Gaddy says, “an invitation can be extended and a decision of faith celebrated”.¹⁴⁹

Indeed, music plays a pivotal role in liturgy. Music gives an outlet to the emotional expression of the religious life.¹⁵⁰ Charismatics have criticized the historic churches for reducing the use of music and musical instruments to the minimum. They believe that music can be a dynamic and liberating vehicle in the worship experience when used correctly and responsibly. The extensive use of musical instruments nowadays in many Protestant churches (including the more conservative) is due to the influence of the Charismatic Renewal – a probable indication of the acceptance of the latter.

In African countries in particular, charismatics do not sing without movement. Their liturgies are full of feelings, emotions and bodily expressions. According to Magoti, in the African charismatic churches, and probably also elsewhere in the world, traditional as well as modern musical instruments are used with a “high degree of spontaneity and improvisation”.¹⁵¹ The effect of this is that the music is not only purely sensational, but is also an expression of the dynamic rhythm of

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ See Faith Lugazia, “Charismatic Movements and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania”, in *Charismatic Renewal in Africa: A Challenge for African Christianity*, ed. by Mika Vahakangas & Andrew Kyomo, (Nairobi, Kenya: Action Publishers, 2003), p. 60.

¹⁵¹ Evaristi Magoti, “Charismatic Movements in the context of Inculturation”, in *Charismatic Renewal in Africa: A Challenge for African Christianity*, ed. by Mika Vahakangas & Andrew Kyomo, (Nairobi, Kenya: Action Publishers, 2003), p. 102.

life. The emphasis in this liturgical music is not on scale, intervals and harmony, but on melodic movement, rhythmic phasing and improvisation. Such music cannot be separated from dancing. The inextricable connectedness between the two had the effect that the bodily movements are in harmony with the rhythm that the instruments produce. Magoti, in describing this deep-rooted relationship, points out that the community express their disappointments and misfortunes, as well as their joy and jubilation through rhythm. He says:

Through rhythm, the community expresses the ideas and feeling of protest, complaints and rebellion in a language that is humorous, dramatic, shocking and accusing. Life unfolds itself rhythmically during prayer, and since it is a force of variable intensity, most charismatics respond by crying, emitting high-pitched sounds, saying “Amen” frequently and continuously without stopping, evoking the name of “Jesus” hysterically, and as a rule, speaking in tongues.¹⁵²

The use of music and different musical instruments has definitely contributed to the freer and warmer worship services. This freedom has encouraged the worshippers to bring their world into their worship.

2.6.3. Critique on worship

In the midst of the praises for the influence of the Charismatic Renewal on the worship and liturgical life of the church, there has also been some criticism. One criticism is that services are sometimes loaded with extreme emotionalism (as

¹⁵² Ibid.

alluded to earlier) and disorder. Davis points out that some people find the worship sometimes “artificially intense”.¹⁵³

Apprehensions and fears need to be taken into account, particularly where persons who have a conservative background, and view renewal as a totally strange phenomenon. At this point, Davis believes, a balance needs to be struck between the exuberance of charismatic worship and “the caution and rational carefulness of people who are less happy with this particular development in worship”.¹⁵⁴

Judging what is best - and worst - in these developments will always be extremely difficult, if not almost impossible. Therefore Davis rightfully concludes that judgment is clouded by upbringing, cultural background, social class and ecclesiastical background.¹⁵⁵

Despite the valuable contributions of the charismatic renewal to worship, there were also defects. We have alluded to the fact that charismatics tended to spiritualize many concrete issues and hence become blind to the suffering in this world. These defects, as Smail suggests, can easily spring from a “*theologia gloriae* that does not wrestle with a *theologia crucis*, and can engender a worship

¹⁵³ Rex Davis, *Locusts and wild honey: The Charismatic Renewal and the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 68.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

style that concentrates too one-sidedly on the triumphs of Easter and Pentecost and does not sufficiently take into account that they can be reached only by way of the cross”.¹⁵⁶ This can so easily endorse the popular perception that ‘every dark cloud has indeed a silver lining’. The truth is that many have to cope with dark clouds that do not have silver linings. The cross teaches us to walk under the dark clouds. Hence, worship ought to accommodate people’s triumphs as well as their tribulations, their joys, as well as their sorrows. Tom Smail emphasizes that worship must have a place not just for the moments when joy abounds, but also “for the dull days when we are empty and unresponsive in ourselves and can only hold out empty hands for the bread and wine, the body and the blood, the redeeming gifts of his living but crucified self that Jesus gives us from the cross”.¹⁵⁷

2.6.4. Concluding Remarks

In a world that is becoming ever more secular and “with a growing power of evil apparent”, a need has arisen for personal religious commitment¹⁵⁸. The worship experiences in the Charismatic Renewal movement have been embraced as an answer by people who found worship in their local parish life not edifying enough. People feel that charismatic worship illuminates their spiritual life and their faith has become more practical where God predominates. This vitality of

¹⁵⁶ Tom Smail, “In Spirit and In Truth: Reflections on Charismatic Worship”, in *Charismatic Renewal: The Search for a Theology*, p. 111.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-2.

¹⁵⁸ Damien Magrath, *Introduction to Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church: Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference*, p. 22.

worship and of faith, as Magrath argues, was characteristic of the early church; this should be recovered in a Church which in its life is “virtually dead since it has lost the dimension of the Spirit”.¹⁵⁹

Rex Davis believes that the charismatic contribution to worship has raised the attentiveness of those who take part. In worship gatherings like prayer meetings, Holy Communion, or any other service, he observes, those who participate seem to have a heightened awareness of what they are doing.¹⁶⁰ When the Renewal has contributed to making worship more meaningful, enriching and edifying, it proves to be worthwhile, despite its shortcomings.

We can confidently conclude and re-emphasize that worship is clearly central to all renewal. The Report of the Consultation on the Significance of the Charismatic Renewal for the Churches, rightly indicates the importance of worship with its observation that worship creates an atmosphere where visions are received and hopes are restored.¹⁶¹ Worship presents opportunities where failures are confessed and programmes and endeavours confirmed.¹⁶² In worship, people can be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit to be of use outside the sanctuary.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Rex Davis, *Locusts and wild honey: The Charismatic Renewal and the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 68.

¹⁶¹ See the “Report of the Consultation on the Significance of the Charismatic Renewal for the Churches”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 202.

¹⁶² Ibid.

Worship inside the church building (liturgy) does indeed affect the life outside the church building (spirituality).

The Charismatic Renewal, by being open to the Spirit in worship, has presented itself as a channel through which a “renewing stream of life and joy” has flowed into the corporate praise of the Churches worldwide.¹⁶³ For many Christians, the Charismatic Renewal has brought a new warmth and spontaneity to worship.

2.7. Spirituality

We know now that spirituality extends beyond mere prayer and the devotional life. We may recall Sheldrake’s definition, that Christian spirituality is how we “individually and collectively, personally appropriate the traditional beliefs about God, humanity and the world, and express them in terms of our basic attitudes, life-style and activity”.¹⁶⁴ Christian spirituality asks the question: what are Christians doing with their beliefs and theology? Charismatic spirituality will therefore ask: what are charismatics doing with the baptism of the spirit and in particular with their exuberant and energetic worship? How can they connect their devotional life (liturgy) to the daily life (spirituality)?

There is no adequate evidence that the Charismatic Renewal has significantly influenced the spirituality of charismatics beyond their devotional life. As

¹⁶³ John Newton, “One in the Spirit: The Charismatic Movement and the Churches”, in *Heart Speaks to Heart: Studies in Ecumenical Spirituality*, ed. by John A. Newton, (Darton, Longman & Todd: London, 1994), p. 116.

¹⁶⁴ Phillip Sheldrake, *Spirituality and Theology: Christian Living and the Doctrine of God*, pp. 34 - 35.

indicated earlier, some charismatics were criticized for not being deeply involved in the social and political issues. There is more than enough evidence that the Charismatic Renewal affected the liturgical life of many churches, but it seems that a dichotomy still persists pertaining to the relationship between liturgy and spirituality. It seems necessary to ask the question when we leave the sanctuary: what spirit ought our worship to have kindled within us as we go out to face life and all its crowding and clamorous perplexities? It is when we begin to wrestle with this question that we enter the “spirituality-mode”.

According to Suenens and Camara, “a Christian who is not charismatic – in the full sense of the word, that is to say, open to the Spirit and docile to his promptings – is a Christian forgetful of his baptism. On the other hand, a Christian who is not ‘socially committed’ is a truncated Christian who disregards the gospel’s commandments”.¹⁶⁵ They go on to say that “prayer and the socio-political work of evangelization are intimately united in the life of the Christian who desires to be faithful to the whole gospel”.¹⁶⁶ The Report of the Consultation on Charismatic Renewal holds the view that genuine renewal of the Spirit will undoubtedly lead to participation in the personal, social, political and economic realities which form part of the daily life of individuals and communities.¹⁶⁷ It suggests that this pattern of renewal is to be found in Jesus Christ who became

¹⁶⁵ Cardinal Suenens & Dom Helder Camara, *Charismatic Renewal and Social Action: A Dialogue (Maline Document 3)*, (London: Darton Longman and Todd, 1980), pp. 2-3.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ See “Report of the Consultation on the Significance of the Charismatic Renewal for the Churches”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 202.

flesh, taking on human nature and transforming it. Any true 'signs of renewal', the Report continues, will express this same reality of the fusion of the human divine.¹⁶⁸

Christians, in their endeavours to express Jesus Christ in and to this world, are dependent upon the gifts of the Spirit, in order to contribute meaningfully to the healing of social ills. The experience of baptism of the Spirit must bear its fruit in the community and society to testify to the Lordship and sovereignty of Jesus Christ. The 'charismatic' Christian will simultaneously be a 'social' Christian for the world to be renewed in depth.¹⁶⁹

The Charismatic Renewal will thus have to take a step further – it will have to expand its influences not only to preserve integrity, but above all for the betterment of God's creation. This will be accomplished when charismatics finally understand that liturgy and spirituality are inextricably intertwined.

2.8. The Charismatic Renewal and the Roman Catholic Church

The Catholic Church which was not part of the ecumenical movement, was nevertheless affected by the Renewal. Fenwick and Spinks remark that the penetration of the Charismatic Renewal in the Roman Catholic Church was palpable in the prayer by Pope John XXIII when he announced the summoning

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Cardinal Suenens & Dom Helder Camara, *Charismatic Renewal and Social Action: A Dialogue* (Maline Document 3), p. 38.

of the Second Vatican Council. He prayed: “Holy Spirit, sent by the Father in the name of Jesus, be present in the Church and lead it continually. We beseech you to pour out the fullness of your gifts on this Ecumenical Council. Renew your wonders in our day. Give us a new Pentecost”.¹⁷⁰ Fenwick and Spinks further mention that many would see the answer to the Pope’s prayer in the reforms initiated by the Council itself.¹⁷¹

One of the cardinals of the Catholic Church in Belgium contributed significantly to the dialogues and discussions surrounding the Charismatic Renewal. In fact, Cardinal Suenens was so much involved in the Charismatic Renewal that he wrote a series of books on how the Renewal could help to promote the ecumenical movement.¹⁷² According to Bittlinger, Suenens was the spokesperson for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and was appointed by Pope Paul VI as official go-between for contacts between the Vatican and the Charismatic Renewal.¹⁷³ In 1974, Cardinal Suenens arranged for a small international group of

¹⁷⁰ See Fenwick and Spinks, *Worship in Transition: The Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement*, p. 108.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Suenens explained that the Renewal first started in the Catholic Church among students in Duquesne University, Pennsylvania during 1967. These young people met for a week-end of prayer and fasting to ask the guidance of the Holy Spirit with regard to the social and religious crises of their time. Over the week-end they experienced spiritual renewal which spread over to other universities because of the contacts that they had with the students there. There was much enthusiasm over these charismatic experiences, which ultimately prompted an International Conference to be held in June 1973 on the campus of the University of Notre Dame. Approximately twenty-two thousand people joined this gathering with one goal in mind: to help one another to live a life true in the spirit of the Gospel and to give witness of this in the world. See Cardinal Suenens, *A New Pentecost?*, pp. 72 – 76.

¹⁷³ Bittlinger, “Charismatic Renewal – An Opportunity for the Church?”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 8.

theologians and lay leaders to prepare a statement on the theological and pastoral concerns of the Charismatic Renewal and its role in the life of the church.¹⁷⁴

Fenwick and Spinks recall that the Roman Catholic Charismatic Movement experienced a climax when ten thousand Catholics from sixty-three countries met for the third International Congress of Catholic Renewal in Rome at Pentecost 1975.¹⁷⁵ They celebrated the eucharist which was led by Cardinal Suenens at St. Peter's with twelve bishops and seven hundred and fifty priests concelebrating. It is recorded that there was singing in tongues and prophecy confirmed by long applause from the congregation.¹⁷⁶

Many Catholics have entered quite deeply into the charismatic experience.¹⁷⁷ According to Newton, these experiences have for some not only enriched their life of worship and prayer, but also affected their theology.¹⁷⁸ Since 1978, annual charismatic retreats have been held in England for Catholic bishops, priests and deacons. Newton mentions that David du Plessis commended the Catholics for

¹⁷⁴ Charles Hummel, *Fire in the Fireplace: Contemporary Charismatic Renewal*, p. 37.

¹⁷⁵ Fenwick and Spinks, *Worship in Transition: The Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement*, p. 109.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ Newton records the case of Kristina Cooper, a journalist of the Good News newsletter of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in England. She was a practising Catholic who was just saying the 'Our Father' and 'Hail Mary', and going to Mass out of habit. Her seriousness with God started when she reluctantly accepted an invitation to join a charismatic prayer group of Catholics. Through the influence of this small group, she entered into a new experience of faith where God became 'real' for her. For further reading on this, see See John A. Newton, *Heart Speaks to Heart: Studies in Ecumenical Spirituality*, pp. 112-4.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

having managed to preserve “a wholeness and balance in their spirituality”.¹⁷⁹ He observes that Catholics have gone further than just the gifts of glossolalia and healing. Their charismatic commitment has also led them into community commitment, ecumenical outreach and social action. Being critical of his own tradition, Du Plessis remarked that the latter is what sometimes was lacking in the Pentecostal movement.¹⁸⁰

The presence of the Charismatic Renewal in the Roman Catholic Church is again a confirmation that the Charismatic Renewal was like a river overflowing its banks with water running in all directions. The streams of water from the Renewal ran over the Roman Catholic Church and touched the hearts and minds of many.

2.9. The Charismatic Renewal and the Orthodox Church

Churches in the Orthodox tradition were amazed by the sudden and worldwide fuss about the Charismatic Renewal and its emphasis on the Holy Spirit. In fact, Orthodox Christians have always believe that the Holy Spirit shares intimately in the life of the church and in the mystery of the liturgy. Hence they felt that the charismatic renewal’s insistence on recovering the gifts of the Holy Spirit was somewhat superfluous and tantamount to an embarrassment. Davis states that nowhere in church was the Holy Spirit taken more seriously than in the Orthodox

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 123.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

churches.¹⁸¹ They perceived the church as the living and worshipping sign of the Holy Spirit in the world today. The Church is the *paracletos* or advocate for humanity before God, while being at the same time, the mercy-place of God's love and forgiveness.¹⁸²

Nevertheless, there were instances where Orthodox churches found themselves as minorities in secular societies, especially in the Western world. As a result some Orthodox churches were influenced by the Charismatic Renewal. In New York, USA, Father George Stephanou shared in the leadership of the Charismatic Renewal. An Orthodox charismatic magazine was published in this part of the world and a service committee for charismatic renewal in the Orthodox church was formed with Father Boris Zabrodsky, a Ukrainian Orthodox priest, as president.¹⁸³

In the official response of the Orthodox Church to the WCC on how their churches were affected by the charismatic renewal, they replied that, for them, the term 'renewal' usually referred to the life of the believers in the community, and not to the church as a whole.¹⁸⁴ "For us", they said, "renewal of the spiritual life of our believers is a work of the Holy Spirit through the teaching of the word

¹⁸¹ Rex Davis, *Locusts and wild honey: The Charismatic Renewal and the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 88.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Bittlinger and Felber, "Responses of the Churches", in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 42.

of God and participation in the mysteries of the church – especially the sacraments of repentance and communion, or confession and eucharist. It is only by returning to God from our sinful ways and seeking to be united with him through the Body and Blood of Christ our Lord that our spiritual lives can be renewed”.¹⁸⁵ They thus believed that the Charismatic Renewal as such cannot bring about renewal of the church. It is by the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit, that the church is always new.¹⁸⁶

During the 1970’s and early 1980’s, the Charismatic Renewal was, as alluded to, mostly restricted to the diaspora Orthodox Christians in the western world, primarily in Canada and the USA, but it also had its influence in small parts of Australia, Uganda and Lebanon.¹⁸⁷

2.10. Perceptions about the Charismatic Renewal

For the past few decades, the Charismatic Renewal has been a feature of Christianity worldwide. It has particularly attracted the attention of theologians “both for its character as a powerful action of God in the lives of individuals, and for the richness of its contribution to the whole Church”.¹⁸⁸ It is apparent that the

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ This was also the response of the Orthodox Syrian Church. See Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Peter Hocken, “A Survey of the Worldwide Charismatic Movement”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 119.

¹⁸⁸ See Kevin Ranaghan, “Preface” in *Theological Reflections on the Charismatic Renewal: Proceedings of the Chicago Conference, October 1 – 2, 1976*, ed. by John C. Haughey, (Michigan: S. J. Servant Books, 1978), p. vii.

Renewal presented itself as an interesting and relevant subject of study. Many publications testify to this.¹⁸⁹

There were diverse reactions to the Charismatic Renewal despite the impact that it had on the churches. For many, the Renewal brought about spiritual growth and strength. There was however also criticisms leveled against the Renewal, especially from the Reformed Churches whose focus were not so much on these aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit. Let us first explore the affirming views on the charismatic renewal from people who were interested in the renewal, but in particular from within the circles of the ecumenical movement.

2.10.1. Positive Appraisal

Kilian McDonnell was keen to remark that the Charismatic Renewal has had a striking and noticeable effect on the life of the worldwide Church in many local congregations.¹⁹⁰ Those committed members who were willing and able to contribute their insights and gifts to the church at local level seemed to have gained tremendous spiritual upliftment and growth. The member churches of the ecumenical movement as well as organizations and people outside its boundaries

¹⁸⁹ Potter remarks that when he went to the library in Geneva to look up literature on the Charismatic Renewal, he found four shelves of books on this topic, all written in the last fifteen years, i.e. from 1965-1980. See his address on “Charismatic Renewal and the World Council of Churches” in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 75.

¹⁹⁰ Kilian McDonnell (ed.), *Presence, Power, Praise: Documents on the Charismatic Renewal*, Vol. II, p. 10.

were touched by the Renewal.¹⁹¹ There are also various indications that the Charismatic Renewal has influenced the wider church life, even outside the boundaries of those who were baptized in the Spirit and formed part of the charismatic groups.¹⁹² In worship, people have become more aware of the role that the Holy Spirit can perform in evangelism and spiritual growth. Worship has in many cases adopted a celebrative character and songs of charismatic origin are now widely used in different denominations.

The charismatic movement is commended for the fact that within a few years since its beginning, it brought together the Catholic stream, the mainline Protestant stream, the evangelical Protestant stream, and the Pentecostal stream in significant numbers. Bishop Leslie Newbigin, believes that renewal by the Holy Spirit is of paramount importance.¹⁹³ He is convinced that the future of the ecumenical movement depends on grassroots renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Many stories of spiritual revival have been told. Here is one such story of how the Charismatic Renewal affected resurgence in a church in Papua-New Guinea:

We faithfully went to church every Sunday, sang hymns, said prayers, heard preaching and gave our offerings. However, this 'form of religion' did nothing to change the lives and to meet people's needs. Then we saw

¹⁹¹ See Hocken's "A Survey of the worldwide Charismatic Movement" in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 133.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 131.

¹⁹³ Bittlinger and Felber, "Responses of the Churches", in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, pp. 56-7.

God moving in ways we had not seen before. People actually started to get to know the Holy Spirit, and as the Spirit touched lives then new life was injected into the church. We have seen ministries of Healing and true Deliverance, we have seen a greater respect for God's Word with people studying it and then putting it into practice, eg. tithing, marriage, dancing etc. Many people within the church are spending more time in prayer, Bible study, fasting and fellowship. The work of evangelism has grown and spread like fire while the follow up is seen as a major need.¹⁹⁴

John Newton remarks that the Charismatic Renewal has undoubtedly brought many people to a renewed experience of the love of God in Jesus Christ, present through the power of the Spirit.¹⁹⁵ In the Western world, many Protestant Christians, used to a strongly rational and intellectual approach to religion, have found the experiential Christianity of the Charismatic Renewal as refreshing as rain after drought.

While there is an upside to the charismatic renewal, there also seems to be a downside.

2.10.2. Criticisms leveled against Charismatic Renewal

¹⁹⁴ See Ben Lenturut, "Charismatic Renewal in Papau-New Guinea", in Arnold Bittlinger, *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Movement*, ed. by Arnold Bittlinger, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981), pp. 180-181.

¹⁹⁵ John Newton, "One in the Spirit: The Charismatic Movement and the Churches", in *Heart Speaks to Heart: Studies in Ecumenical Spirituality*, p. 112.

2.10.2.1. The Absence of the first person in the Trinity

Kilian McDonnell, criticizes the Charismatic Renewal for tending to be forgetful of the first person in the Trinity – the Father. Their over-emphasis on the Son and the Spirit perpetuates a diminishment towards the Father.¹⁹⁶ McDonnell enlightens our understanding of the Trinity in his illustration that the “rhythm of the church’s life” and that of the Christian is from “the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit back through the Son to the Father”.¹⁹⁷ As with the creation, all starts with the Father.

2.10.2.2. Restricting Evangelism

Another major criticism leveled against charismatics is that they trivialize evangelization and restrict it to evangelization of the souls.¹⁹⁸ McDonnell suggests that a good understanding of the meaning of the Cosmic Lordship is the key to critical engagement with life’s issues. He says that the charismatics need to go back to the meaning of the Cosmic Lordship “in whom all things are restored, and the relationship of that Cosmic Lordship to the Father to whom Jesus hands over the Kingdom”.¹⁹⁹ In coming to an understanding of the Cosmic Lordship, one’s eyes will be open to see the struggles in life. We will then be able to see that

¹⁹⁶ The traditional way of portraying the Trinity is: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Other suggestions of portraying the Trinity have been developed over the last decades, especially within the Feminist circles.

¹⁹⁷ McDonnell, “Church Reactions to the Charismatic Renewal”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Movement*, p. 148.

¹⁹⁸ This is also a worldwide critique leveled against the Pentecostals. They are even today perceived as people who do not take interest in the daily life. They are alleged to be only interested in the soul, hence it is believed that they prefer to pray rather than to act.

¹⁹⁹ McDonnell, “Church Reactions to the Charismatic Renewal”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Movement*, p. 150.

“such secular tasks of feeding the hungry and liberating the oppressed are integral and constitutive of evangelization”.²⁰⁰ McDonnell therefore emphasizes the importance of understanding the purpose of the Creator with His creation. We need to realize why we exist in order to do justice to a comprehensive understanding of evangelism. Restricting evangelism to the “winning” of souls, is not doing justice to the relationship between liturgy and spirituality – in fact, it perpetuates an infringement.

Given the point of departure of this thesis, and in the light of the criticisms, it seems advisable for the Charismatic Renewal movement to maintain and sustain a continuity between what happens inside a worship service and what happens thereafter, to be true to the relationship between liturgy and spirituality.

2.10.2.3. Shallow emotionalism?

Some of the Churches with proper liturgies and doctrine accuse the Charismatic Renewal of sheer emotionalism. Many people who joined the charismatic style of worship, reacted against what Jorstad calls a “dead church life”.²⁰¹ It is commonly known that Protestant churches generally maintain a rather low emotional tone in their worship.

Cardinal Suenens countered the criticism of “shallow emotionalism” by arguing that people have become so accustomed to “formalism, ritualism, and

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Erling Jorstad, *Bold in the Spirit: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in America Today*, p. 114.

conventionalism” that intense personal prayer can present a challenge to our inhibitions. He said that many people are afraid to be themselves before God and before one another. People are then tempted to resort to a defense mechanism which is then labelled as “emotionalism”. Suenens concludes by remarking that too many people tend to avoid emotion in their relationship with God.²⁰²

2.10.2.4. *Fundamentalism*

Magoti in Kyomo observes that fundamentalism runs through all the functions of the Charismatic Renewal.²⁰³ He criticizes the Renewal for reading the Bible literally as they do not allow for reason. Even in their liturgical functions, Magoti says, they “re-enact literally the Pentecost event”. In their ethical functions, Magoti further comments on the facts that the charismatics use the ten commandments as sufficient moral guide for life. His opinion is that this world is too complex to apply the ten commandments uncritically to all situations and circumstances.²⁰⁴

This fundamentalist approach, particularly with regards to understanding the Bible, is dangerous, according to Magoti. In his view this approach “simplifies the Christian faith and divorces it from human reason”.²⁰⁵ He argues that the fundamentalist approach “treats reason as enemy of faith and encourages

²⁰² Cardinal Suenens, *A New Pentecost?*, p. 97.

²⁰³ See his article, “Charismatic Movements in the context of Inculturation” in *Charismatic Renewal in Africa: A Challenge for African Christianity*, p. 109.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

ignorance as a virtue and as an ally of faith. But ignorance creates fear, and fear creates conflicts”.²⁰⁶

The above-mentioned positives and negatives towards the Charismatic Renewal were also highlighted in the responses of the churches within the ecumenical movement.

2.11. The Charismatic Renewal and the Ecumenical Movement

It was clearly the desire of the WCC, that its member churches should have a better understanding on the Charismatic Renewal. For this reason, a working group on Renewal and Congregational Life, which was formed after the Fifth Assembly at Nairobi, met for a meeting in Stony Point, USA, from 29 August – 5 September 1978, to discuss the theme “Spirituality and the Charismatic Renewal”.²⁰⁷ This was followed by the meeting of a “Consultative group” who met in December 1978 at Schloss Schwanberg, Bavaria, Federal Republic of Germany. The results of the Schwanberg discussions were summarized in a paper entitled “Towards a Church Renewed and United in the Spirit”.²⁰⁸ Besides these efforts which endeavoured to get more clarity around the charismatic renewal, the different perceptions and excitement that was experienced over the Charismatic

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Van der Bent, “The Concern for Spirituality: An Analytical and Bibliographical Survey of the Discussion within the WCC Constituency”, in *The Ecumenical Review*, Vol. 38, No.1, 1986, p. 109.

²⁰⁸ Bittlinger, “Charismatic Renewal – An Opportunity for the Church?”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 14.

Renewal, prompted the churches to request the WCC to organize a worldwide consultation in order to gain a better understanding.²⁰⁹

In August 1979, the then General Secretary of the WCC, Dr. Phillip Potter, wrote a letter to the member churches in which he requested them to submit written responses of their perceptions and experiences of the Charismatic Renewal.²¹⁰ In the same letter, he gave notice of a consultation to be held the following year (1980) with the aim to clarify understanding of the Charismatic Renewal and its meaning for the churches. Many churches in the ecumenical movement submitted their responses in writing.

The Hope Reformed Church from Canada commented that although the WCC had brought together the Catholic and Protestant traditions, it fell short of becoming a grassroots movement due to their activities being mainly discussions.²¹¹ They commended the Charismatic Renewal for bringing together, in only a few years of existence, the Catholic stream, the main-line Protestant stream, the evangelical Protestant stream, and the Pentecostal stream. For them, the future of the ecumenical movement depended on a grassroots renewal by the Holy Spirit.

²⁰⁹ See Walter Hollenweger, "Introduction" in *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²¹⁰ See Potter's address, "Charismatic Renewal and the World Council of Churches", in *Ibid.*, p. 80.

²¹¹ See Bittlinger and Felber, "Responses of the Churches", in *Ibid.*, p. 57.

The United Evangelical-Lutheran Church took a positive stand towards the Charismatic Renewal. At their Bishop's Conference in Germany in May 1976, an affirmative judgment was made upon the existence of charismatic communities specifically within the German Lutheran Church. The charismatic influences were perceived to be "a power for church renewal". It is clear that the United Evangelical-Lutheran Church was more than impressed by the charismatic renewal. They also believed that the renewal could be meaningful for the future development of community life in the church. The bishops took a liberating stand when they encouraged the local churches to accept the communities affected by the renewal "as a possible form of the Christian life".²¹²

The Baptist Union in Great Britain and Ireland acted in a manner similar to that of the United Evangelical-Lutheran Church. They welcomed the influence of the Charismatic Renewal with particular reference to their worship. Their worship had previously been more structured and uncompromising: worshippers benefited when their worship became less formal.²¹³ Many who experienced the renewal appeared to have welcomed the innovations unreservedly. However,

²¹² See Kilian McDonnell, *The Charismatic Renewal and Ecumenism*, (New York/Ramsey/Toronto: Paulist Press, 1978), p. 9.

²¹³ The writer is aware of the fact that the aim of worship is not to please and satisfy the worshipper but to praise and honour God as our Creator. However some people find some worship styles more enhancing for their spiritual growth. The writer focused in his Masters research project on the worshipper where he attempted to theologially justify the importance of the ways of worship – however not to the point of elevating it above God as our object of worship.

there were a few who took offense at the physical movement and spontaneity of praise.²¹⁴

Most of the mainline denominations in Britain took this time in subjecting the renewal to serious theological scrutiny.²¹⁵ Protestant Churches in some countries were at first suspicious of the Charismatic Renewal, but it gradually found acceptance.²¹⁶ As many Catholics felt what Damian Magrath called “a lack of a vital dimension to Catholic life” in their churches, Vatican II accepted that the Charismatic Renewal could offer impetus to their churches.²¹⁷

From Africa, the Bible Reading Association in Ghana remark that until the influence of the Renewal, there was no freedom in the older churches to “express Christian joy by rhythmic clapping, dancing, or singing in Ghanaian style”.²¹⁸ The African Christians reacted spontaneously to the “cold and undemonstrative” forms of Western liturgy which had been introduced by the missionary churches.²¹⁹

²¹⁴ Kilian Mc Donnell (ed.), *Presence, Power, Praise: Documents on the Charismatic Renewal, Vol. II*, p. 385.

²¹⁵ Tom Smail, “The Cross and the Spirit: Towards a Theology of Renewal”, in *Charismatic Renewal: The Search for a Theology*, p. 49.

²¹⁶ Peter Hocken. “Charismatic Movement”, in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 166.

²¹⁷ Magrath, O.P., *Introduction to Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church: Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference*, p. 7.

²¹⁸ See Bittlinger and Felber, “Responses of the Churches”, in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal*, p. 45.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

In December 1979, the group who had originally met in Schwanberg met for a second time, this time in Nidelbad, near Rüsclikon, Switzerland, in order to determine the programme details for the long-awaited conference scheduled to be held at Bossey.

A Consultation was thus held on “The Significance of the Charismatic Renewal for the Churches” at Bossey, Switzerland from 8 – 13 March 1980. The Hope Reformed Church from Canada expressed its expectation that the upcoming conference would address itself to the ecumenical implications that the Charismatic Renewal would have for the WCC. “Will institutional ecumenism benefit from charismatic ecumenism?”, they asked. Convinced that this would be the case, they believed that ongoing spiritual renewal was necessary for further progress toward Christian unity.²²⁰ Therefore the question was raised: what can the ecumenical movement learn from the Charismatic Renewal? The papers and reports of these consultations were edited by Arnold Bittlinger in *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal (1981)*.

When Hollenweger expressed his concern at the consultation, that the WCC had not from the beginning been interested in the Charismatic Renewal, Phillip Potter countered by saying that the impression that was given, that the WCC had only recently become interested in the Charismatic Renewal, as opposed to the

²²⁰ Ibid., p. 57.

Roman Catholic Church which has been involved earlier, was not true.²²¹ He believed that the ecumenical movement was in fact also a charismatic renewal and has from the beginning been involved in such issues. Defending his belief, he referred to Edinburgh 1910 where the evangelization of the world was viewed as a manifestation of God's Spirit to send out people in the world as witness to all the nations. He also mentioned the Life and Work movement, which later became part of the WCC, which arose out of a chaotic situation in Europe, especially after World War I. People were filled with a deep sense that the Holy Spirit was calling God's people to be gathered together in a new Pentecost for renewing society and the nations. He also recalled the Faith and Order movement, who under the leadership of Charles Brent, went to the Phillipines to do missionary work. Brent was convinced that the call to mission work was a call to unity in the Spirit. Potter lastly brought to mind the World Council of Christian Education, that was motivated by the conviction that God gave his Spirit to everyone to offer themselves for the life of the Body of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. All these movements which became ultimately part of the WCC, had their foci on the Holy Spirit. Potter, however also confessed with sadness that at the time of the birth of the WCC in 1948, the "gift and presence of the Holy Spirit was not very evident in the speeches in Amsterdam in 1948".²²² Apparently over the years, the situation had not changed much. Potter further acknowledged that when he looked at the

²²¹ Potter, "Charismatic Renewal and the World Council of Churches", in *Ibid.*, p. 81.

²²² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

way in which the ecumenical movement expressed itself theologically, there has been a deep lack of the work of the Holy Spirit in Christian life.²²³

Potter commended the Renewal on their achievement of drawing people of different communions together – precisely what the WCC also attempted to do.²²⁴ He furthermore conceded that the Renewal had helped the WCC to gain a new self-understanding.²²⁵ It was also apparent for him that the Charismatic Renewal corroborated the goals of the ecumenical movement. He made the remark that people suddenly exploded out of their confessional boxes and patterns and prayed with each other. Their new-found freedom let them break through the rules of worshipping and witnessing together.²²⁶ These experiences allowed the people to grow in themselves, a virtue that the renewal endorsed and practised themselves. Heavy emphasis was laid on participation, in particular the participation by the laity. It was thus obvious that the member churches of the WCC needed the Charismatic Renewal for their own renewal.²²⁷

Potter also gratefully acknowledged that the Charismatic Renewal had provided a link between the Protestant churches, the conservative Evangelicals, the Roman

²²³ Ibid., p. 83.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 79.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 86.

²²⁶ Bittlinger and Felber, “Responses of the Churches” in Ibid., p. 41.

²²⁷ Potter, “Charismatic Renewal and the World Council of Churches”, in Ibid., p. 86.

Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches.²²⁸ It was obviously the goal of the ecumenical movement to unite the many churches in one structured body. It was encouraging therefore, that the Renewal seemed to have promoted a closer unity between the different ecclesiastical strands. While the churches from the Reformed tradition tended to be very Christological, the Orthodox had always given a much more Trinitarian approach to their faith, with a great deal of accent to the Holy Spirit and to the eschatological goal.

In the Report of the Consultation on the Charismatic Renewal, the observation was made that the Charismatic Renewal had added new and significant ecumenical experience to the people of God, and that this development should be taken very seriously.²²⁹ The report recommended that church leaders needed to move more forcefully on unity concerns. It was, however, mindful of the fact that unity was essentially a matter of heart and spirit, a fruit rather than a means to renewal. This unity was the gift and calling of the Holy Spirit to the Church. The Report envisaged that the work that was done at the consultation would be continued by the sub-unit on Renewal and Congregational Life within the WCC and to “receive that which the Charismatic Renewal can offer in the service of its aims and to offer the renewal its resources of contact, dialogue, expertise and prayer.”²³⁰

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 79.

²²⁹ See the “Report of the Consultation on the Significance of the Charismatic Renewal for the Churches” in Ibid., p. 205.

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 206.

The delegates at the Bossey Consultation were of the opinion that the Charismatic Renewal had immense meaning for the churches. For them, the Renewal offered encouraging evidence of the presence of the Spirit that Jesus promised. The fact that many churches had revitalizing experiences was testimony to this. In their worship, they experienced sincerity, spontaneity, freedom and a joy as they praised together. Through the Renewal, opportunities arose for the emergence of lay leadership. The warmth that people experienced contributed to a new sense of community. Their rejuvenated spirits made them become more aware of the importance of evangelism, mission and witness.²³¹

2.12. CONCLUSION

It is apparent that spiritual renewal has since the 1960's appeared in a variety of forms with the Charismatic Renewal as its conveyer. The Renewal, as Charles Hummel accurately remarked, has arrived "in a shape as unexpected as it was unplanned, and as controversial as it is powerful".²³² No wonder, he said, that it stirs reactions ranging from enthusiastic welcome to perplexity and even violent rejection.

The factors that prompted the Charismatic Renewal, are indicative of a continuous need for spiritual renewal. Circumstances always arise which make

²³¹ Ibid., p. 204.

²³² Charles Hummel, *Fire in the Fireplace: Contemporary Charismatic Renewal*, p. 16.

people despondent. In their despondency, they are seeking for something to grab to. Such was the charismatic renewal for those who experienced spiritual hunger.

For some, the spiritual renewal may have been just to 'go with the flow'. For others, it may have been a true and personal spiritual renewal – a renewal which edified their lives – that fed their worship.

In conclusion: it befits us to end with the apt description of Cardinal Suenens of the Charismatic Renewal, which he referred to as something 'inexpressible'.

This Renewal is experienced as a release of the latent potentials of the Spirit whose desire is to lead each one of us to the full realization of his own vocation, be this lay or religious. It is a new and more developed awareness of our true Christian identity which only faith can reveal to us; and which brings alive this faith, giving it a new reality and an awakened eagerness to spread the Gospel.²³³

²³³ Cardinal Suenens, *A New Pentecost?*, p. 81.

CHAPTER THREE

INCULTURATION IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

3.1. Introduction

“Worship must be both authentic to the gospel and Christian tradition, and relevant to life. In the quest for authenticity, the relationship between worship and culture is of particular importance”.²³⁴ With this statement, the Consultation at Ditchingham affirmed the significance of taking culture into consideration in our daily worship of God.

In the endeavour of the WCC to unite the churches worldwide in one ecumenical body, they had among many other challenges, to confront this question: how do we proclaim Christ faithfully in the different cultures in the world? Hence, during the latter part of the twentieth century, inculturation became a discussion point in the ecumenical movement that received much attention. Even the Roman Catholic Church had the subject of inculturation on their agenda during the Second Vatican Council. The arguments on liturgical adaptation at Vatican II have provoked many studies on the concepts of inculturation, accommodation, adaptation, incarnation and contextualization, as these apply to the spread of the

²³⁴ See “Towards Koinonia in Worship: Report of the Consultation” in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, Faith and Order Paper No. 171, ed. by Thomas F. Best and Dagmar Heller, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1995), p.12.

gospel.²³⁵ The renewal of the liturgy was a priority for Vatican II; hence the Council took it as “the first subject of discussion and promulgated in 1963 the first conciliar document on the sacred liturgy – *Sacrosanctum Concilium*”.²³⁶ According to Ariarajah, the celebration of the liturgy in local languages and the recommendation to adapt it to local situations set off a whole process of officially supported indigenization and inculturation within the Roman Catholic Church.²³⁷

According to Stauffer²³⁸, it is apparent that the relationship between culture and Christian worship is of ecumenical interest because the questions, the issues, the dynamics are shared across confessional lines.²³⁹ The core of Christian worship, its Jewish roots, and its development in the early Church, is shared across confessional and cultural lines.²⁴⁰ For this reason, liturgy and culture will remain a continuous discussion point on the ecumenical agenda. It is not only the liturgy that is affected by culture and the process of inculturation, but also spirituality.

²³⁵ See “Foreword” by David N. Power in *Celebrating Jesus Christ in Africa: Liturgy and Inculturation*, F. Kabasele Lumbala, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), p. ix.

²³⁶ See Ariarajah, S. Wesley, *Gospel and Culture: An Ongoing Discussion within the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 31.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ S. Anita Stauffer is a Lutheran pastor from the United States and Secretary for Worship and Congregational Life of the Lutheran World Federation.

²³⁹ See the chapter on “Christian Worship: Toward Localization and Globalization” by Stauffer in *Lutheran World Federation Studies: Worship and Culture in Dialogue: Reports of International Consultations, Cartigny, Switzerland, 1993 & Hong Kong 1994*, ed. by S. Anita Stauffer, (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 1994), p. 8.; See also her follow-up article, “Worship: Ecumenical Core and Cultural Context”, in *Lutheran World Federation Studies: Christian Worship: Unity in Cultural Diversity*, ed. by S. Anita Stauffer, (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1996), pp. 7 – 22.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

Hence liturgy and culture will always be a challenge to one another, and this will ultimately affect spirituality.

This chapter will investigate how inculturation was attended to in the ecumenical movement. We will look at how liturgy and inculturation affected one another and the consequent transformative role that both further played on each other. But first, it will be useful to give an account of the origin of inculturation and how it is understood.

3.2. The Origin of inculturation

According to John Waliggo, inculturation can be traced back to biblical history.²⁴¹ He mentions that Christianity had from the beginning passed through various stages of inculturation. First, it moved from the Jewish to the Greek cultures and also to the Roman cultures.²⁴² Stauffer, like Waliggo, also traces inculturation back to apostolic times. She observes that since then, Christians have examined and critiqued the cultures in which they lived, making decisions about which cultural elements could be adopted and adapted, transformed and reinterpreted, for their worship.²⁴³

²⁴¹ See his article “Inculturation” in the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, ed. by N. Lossky et al, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002), p. 571.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ See S. Anita Stauffer, “Worship and Culture: Five Theses”, in *Studia Liturgica*, Vol 26, No. 2, 1996, p.323-4.

Inculturation seems to be first operative early in liturgy as well as church architecture.²⁴⁴ There have always been endeavours by the Christian Church to contextualize its worship life. Stauffer also makes mention of the fact that the early church avoided those cultural elements which would contradict or undermine the Gospel.²⁴⁵ By way of example she refers to many Roman or Greek initiation rites and meal practices which were not adapted for Christian liturgical use. Even in the fourth century, she says, when special places for Christian worship began to be built, Greek and Roman temples were rejected as the prototype.²⁴⁶

From the 16th century onwards, many Christian missionaries of European origin became less willing to be truly incarnated within the cultures and worldviews of non-Europeans.²⁴⁷ Many of them “clothed” the gospel in their culture and delivered it as if it was one package. It was during the second half of the 20th century, especially after the attainment of political independence in many African countries, that the inculturation movement reasserted itself. In Africa as well as Asia, the indigenization of the local churches and the movement for cultural independence gained momentum.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 324.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Waliggo, “Inculturation”, in *Dictionary of Ecumenical Movement*, p.571.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

Endorsing the biblical origin of inculturation, Anscar Chupungco, a leading world scholar in liturgical inculturation, makes the interesting remark that the process of inculturation can, from a theological viewpoint, be regarded as a “consequence of the mystery of the incarnation”.²⁴⁹ He believes that the incarnation of Jesus as the Son of God is the paradigm or model of inculturation. He argues that just as Christ became human and bound himself with the culture and tradition of his people, so it is the duty of the church to “extend the incarnation in time and space”.²⁵⁰ This, Chupungco adds, can be achieved by incorporating appropriate components of human culture in its preaching, worship, and mission to humanity.²⁵¹ In order to accomplish this, Christ’s message may be embedded in the cultures and traditions of the people. Understood in this light, Chupungco believes, inculturation becomes not just an option: it should actually be compulsory.²⁵² Stauffer totally endorses Chupungco’s belief when she states that liturgical contextualization is not a luxury for the Church. She firmly believes that it must be done in and by churches all over the world.²⁵³

3.3. Defining Inculturation

²⁴⁹ Chupungco, “Liturgical Inculturation and the Search for Unity”, in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, Faith and Order Paper No. 171, ed. by Thomas F. Best and Dagmar Heller, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1995), p. 57.

²⁵⁰ Ibid

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Stauffer, “Worship and Culture: Five Theses” in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 332.

Over the years, many theologians, in grappling with the concept of inculturation²⁵⁴, have provided us with their understanding of it. Thus far we have only talked about inculturation without dwelling on its meaning. It would be helpful then at this point, to gain clarity on different aspects of inculturation. According to Waliggo, etymologically, inculturation means the “insertion of new values into one’s heritage and worldview”.²⁵⁵ This process, he said, applies to all human dimensions of life and development.

In the modern Christian world, inculturation indicates the shift which takes local cultures and their values “as the basic instrument and a powerful means for presenting, reformulating and living Christianity”.²⁵⁶ Within this process, effective dialogue between Christianity and local cultures is carried out. Chupungco refers to John Paul 11, who basically concurred with Walligo in defining inculturation as “an intimate transformation of the authentic cultural values by their integration into Christianity and the implantation of Christianity into different human cultures”.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁴ Stauffer preferred to use the concepts contextualization or localization. She mentioned that Geoffrey Wainwright first used the term localization in his article “The Localization of Worship”, in *Studia Liturgica*, Vol. 8, 1971, p. 26-41. Stauffer suggested that these terms are broader than the word inculturation. She gave the example that in church architecture, contextualization is concerned with topography, climate, and indigenous building materials, as well as cultural forms and design motifs. For further reading on this, see her article “Worship and Culture: Five Theses”, in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 326.

²⁵⁵ Waliggo, “Inculturation”, in *Dictionary of Ecumenical Movement*, p.571.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Anscar Chupungco, “Liturgical Inculturation and the Search for Unity”, in *So We Believe, So We Pray*, p. 57.

For Michael Gallagher, inculturation is only a recent word for something that is actually very old.²⁵⁸ He affirms the view that Christianity, from its beginning, embraced the process of taking faith to the people at grassroots level. Faith has to meet with culture. Hence Magoti, in accordance with Gallagher, believes that inculturation is a never-ending process by which “faith and culture constantly interrogate one another” for the benefit of both.²⁵⁹

Giving further clarity on the process of inculturation, Magoti concurs with Roest Crolius whose opinion is that the inculturation of the church is the integration of the Christian’s experience into the culture of a people.²⁶⁰ According to Crolius, it happens in such a way that this experience not only expresses itself in elements of this culture, but becomes a force that animates, orients, and innovates this culture. In this process, a new unity and communion is created where the culture as well as the church universal are enriched.²⁶¹ Inculturation, therefore, becomes the sincere effort to make Christ and his liberative message better understood by people of every culture, locality and time.²⁶² To sum up, in the words of the Report on the Consultation at Ditchingham:

²⁵⁸ See his article, “Inculturation” in *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. by Philip Sheldrake, (London: SCM Press, 2005), p. 366.

²⁵⁹ See Evaristi Magoti’s article “Charismatic Movements in the Context of Inculturation”, in *Charismatic Renewal in Africa: A Challenge for African Christianity*, p. 92.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.94

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² Waliggo, “Inculturation”, in *Dictionary of Ecumenical Movement*, p.571.

Inculturation is a form of creative activity accountable to both received liturgical tradition and the actual praxis of the church as well as to the integrity of culture; it tends towards the unity of churches in essentials of faith; and it serves as an instrument of evangelization. Cultural diversity of local churches expresses the richness of the entire koinonia. Their worship mirrors the unity and catholicity of the church. At the same time, inculturation enhances the koinonia of local churches across confessional lines by bringing about a close cultural resemblance among them in worship.²⁶³

3.4. Inculturation in the Ecumenical Movement

Up till the New Delhi Assembly in 1961, very few churches from the third world formed part of the WCC. Welcoming many churches from Africa, Asia and Latin America to the WCC at this particular Assembly, the importance of inculturating the Christian faith was realized. As a result, the following questions were posed and attended to:

What then does it really mean to be a Christian Asian or African today at this particular time? What is involved in being the local manifestation of the universal church within the context of present-day rapidly changing Asian or African society? What responses are Christian individuals and churches making to the varying pressures of their environment? How can

²⁶³ Best and Heller (eds.), *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, pp. 12-13.

they be helped to make a more effective witness, and what can all the churches learn from their distinctive experience?²⁶⁴

It was also imperative for the New Delhi report to nullify any indication of the equation of Western culture with Christian culture. Thus it stated:

The assumption that Western culture is *the* culture, and that therefore “Christian culture” is necessarily identified with the customs and traditions of Western civilization, is a stumbling block to those of other traditions.²⁶⁵

The report also asserted that no culture is static and that all cultures undergo changes.

After New Delhi, inculturation was discussed at many ecumenical gatherings. At the Faith and Order commission meeting in Louvain in 1971, one section dealt with “The Unity of the Church and Differences in Culture.”²⁶⁶ Nothing significant was discussed here, beyond merely identifying the study areas that needed examination. The World Mission conference in Bangkok in 1973 deliberated on

²⁶⁴ *Evanston to New Delhi, 1954 – 1961: Report of the Central Committee to the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, p. 62.

²⁶⁵ *The New Delhi Report – The Third Assembly of the WCC*, p. 98. This point was re-emphasized at the Nairobi Assembly where cultural imperialism was blatantly rejected. The assembly responded to the question whether there was a specific Christian culture. The response stated: “The question is pertinent and loaded with the cultural imperialism associated with missionary history... Christian experience affirms that *no culture is closer to Jesus Christ than any other culture*. Jesus Christ restores what is truly human in any culture and frees us to be open to other cultures... He offers us liberation from attitudes of cultural superiority and from self-sufficiency. He unites us in a community which transcends any particular culture.” See David M. Paton, ed., *Breaking Barriers, Nairobi 1975 Official Report of the Fifth Assembly* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1976), p. 78,

²⁶⁶ Ariarajah, S. Wesley, *Gospel and Culture: An Ongoing Discussion within the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 31.

the topic of “Culture and Identity”. In this debate, questions were asked such as “What makes a person Christian and what makes a person African?”, and “What does it mean to be an African Christian?”.²⁶⁷ It was at the WCC’s fifth assembly at Nairobi in 1975 that the discussion on inculturation gained momentum, partly due to the fact that the meeting was in Africa and that the assembly reflected a growing cultural diversity within the church. Ariarajah therefore remarked that Nairobi denoted the culmination of a particular entry point into the inculturation debate.²⁶⁸ The Assembly emphasized the fact that cultural diversity was a blessing and should thus be preserved. It was also reiterated that the church should deal with its own cultural plurality in ways that built community.²⁶⁹

Inculturation was also addressed at two consultations that were organized at Bossey. The one that was held from 16 – 22 June 1979 had as its theme, “Christ, Liturgy and Culture”.²⁷⁰ According to Van der Bent, this meeting was mainly for African and Asian theologians. Three years later, a conference in preparation for the Vancouver Assembly was held from 25 – 31 March 1982 with its focus on “Local and Ecumenical Dimensions of Worship”. The following three basic dimensions were discussed: the confessional dimension, the cultural dimension and the contextual dimension.²⁷¹

²⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 29.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 33.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ See Ans van der Bent, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns: Sixteen Documentary Surveys*, p. 184.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

At the sixth WCC assembly at Vancouver in 1983, a section on “Witnessing in a Divided World” had a sub-section on “Culture: the Context of our Witnessing”. Here it was again reiterated that the gospel needed to strike roots in each culture and that worship and life had to draw inspiration from culture.²⁷² However, after Vancouver, it seemed that the WCC had considerable difficulty in dealing with the issue of inculturation.²⁷³ As Ariarajah mentions, the discussions have been going around in circles. Even at the seventh Assembly at Canberra, no provision was made for substantive discussion on inculturation within the formal agenda of the assembly. It only became part of the assembly’s life as the result of two presentations which were different, yet interrelated. The first presentation was by the Aboriginal people²⁷⁴ of Australia who recalled the story of the colonization of Australia. In their demonstration, they showed how the missionaries who presented the gospel to them, “completely rejected and disregarded the cultural and spiritual heritage of aboriginal peoples”.²⁷⁵

Ariarajah emphasizes the importance of the fact that the physical presence and direct challenge of the Aborigines made gospel and culture at Canberra a living

²⁷² Ibid., p. 34.

²⁷³ Ibid., pp. 44 – 45.

²⁷⁴ The word “Aboriginal” was used in Australia to describe its indigenous people as early as 1789. It soon became employed as the common name to refer to all Indigenous Australians. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous_Australians. Ariarajah mentions that the culture of the Aborigines had been on the receiving end of negative aspects of the missionary movement. See Ibid., p. 46.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 46.

reality that had to be encountered. He mentions that the Aboriginal people held a traditional ceremony to give permission to the WCC general secretary to hold the assembly on their land. Ariarajah describes the ceremony as follows:

The ceremony, held in the worship tent, was preceded by an invitation to all participants to pass through smoke (from burning green leaves) as a sign of purification for worship. As Aborigines danced in traditional costume around the altar and invited people to pass through smoke, much that would have been rejected outright as “paganism” in an earlier period was being presented to some four thousand people gathered from all Christian confessions and cultures as authentic Christian practice.²⁷⁶

As many people would not have understood the ceremony, the Aboriginal Anglican bishop, Arthur Malcolm, felt it necessary to explain all the rituals to them. However, during and after the assembly, numerous people still found it difficult to accept certain aspects of the Aboriginal presentations as part of the Christian faith.²⁷⁷ However, the Aboriginal demonstration undoubtedly prompted many to think (or think again) about the importance of localizing the Christian faith.

The second presentation, which many regarded as very controversial, was delivered by Prof. Chung Hyun-Kyung from Korea. As part of the opening address, she recited a litany that invoked, among other spirits, the spirit of indigenous people of the earth, victims of genocide during the time of

²⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 46 – 47.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 47.

colonialism, freedoms fighters who died in the struggle for liberation of their people, etc.²⁷⁸ Her dramatic invocation, to quote it at length, was as follows:

My dear sisters and brothers, welcome to this land of the Spirit. We are gathered here together today to be empowered by the Holy Spirit for our work of renewing the whole creation. Let us prepare the way of the Holy Spirit by emptying ourselves. Indigenous People of Australia take their shoes off on Holy Ground. When an Australian Aboriginal woman, Anne Pattel-Gray, came to my church in Korea to preach she took off her shoes honouring our Holy Ground. Returning her respect for my people and land, I want to take off my shoes honouring her and her people's Holy Ground. For many Asian and Pacific people, taking off shoes is the first act of humbling ourselves to encounter the Spirit of God. Also in our Christian tradition God called Moses to take of his shoes in front of the burning bush to get on the Holy Ground – so he did. Do you think you can do that too? I would like to invite all of you to get on the Holy Ground with me by taking off your shoes while we are dancing to prepare the way of the spirit. With humble heart and body, let us listen to the cries of creation and the cries of the Spirit within it.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁸ See the full litany in her speech, which was also the theme of the Seventh Assembly, "Come Holy Spirit, Renew the Whole Creation", in *PCR Information: Reports of the Statements relating to PCR from the WCC Seventh Assembly, Canberra 1991*, No. 29, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), pp. 82 – 83.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

Ariarajah recalls that some people were fascinated by Chung's presentation, seeing it as an authentic exposition of the meaning of the Spirit which was both contemporary and contextual. Wainwright mentions that the speech of Chung received favourable comments from what he refers to as the "bureaucratically entrenched Liberal Left".²⁸⁰ Others, however, were perturbed by it, and her presentation did not escape of criticism. The Orthodox Church referred to her presentation as "syncretistic and a paganization of Christianity".²⁸¹ Elaborating on this criticism, Robin Boyd mentions that critics pointed out that she should rather have Christianized the culture and not paganized Christianity.²⁸² Wainwright is of the opinion that the controversy provoked by Prof. Chung's address brought inculturation to the fore as a theme that needs continuous discussion in Christian theology.²⁸³

In August 1994 a group of liturgists, theologians, church musicians and ministers from most of the major Christian traditions around the world, gathered at the seat of an Anglican community of Sisters at Ditchingham, near Norwich, England. This meeting was arranged by the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC with the intention of discussing the role of worship within the search for

²⁸⁰ See Wainwright, *Worship with One Accord: Where Liturgy and Ecumenism Embrace*, p. 257.

²⁸¹ See Tissa Balasuriya, "Liberation of the Holy Spirit", in *The Ecumenical Review*, Vol. 43, No. 2, April 1991, p. 202.

²⁸² See his article, "Come, Holy Spirit!" and we really mean "Come!", in *The Ecumenical Review* Vol. 43, No. 2, April 1991, p. 181.

²⁸³ See Wainwright, *Worship with One Accord: Where Liturgy and Ecumenism Embrace*, p. 257.

Christian unity.²⁸⁴ At the consultation, four issues were discussed of which inculturation was one.²⁸⁵ The meeting explored how worship expressed the universal faith in cultural forms appropriate to each particular place. Participants realized that it was a complicated process which involved both respect for local cultures and, where necessary, their critique. However, the meeting noted anew the role of inculturation in worship as a powerful force for local unity. The view was held that the different local churches tended to grow together in adopting local cultural forms to express the universal Christian faith.²⁸⁶

Hitherto the story was told of how inculturation was attended to in the ecumenical movement. What follows now is a discussion of ways to inculturate the liturgy.

3.5. Liturgical inculturation

There is no area of Christianity that can be considered outside the scope of inculturation. Inculturation extends to the totality of Christian life and doctrine.²⁸⁷ But it was in twentieth-century theology where the liturgy was the

²⁸⁴ Together with the Letter and Report from the consultation, a full documentation of the event, including all the written sources which directly undergirded and nourished the reflections, were put together in the book, *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*.

²⁸⁵ The three other issues were: the notion of the *ordo*, i.e. a “common ordering and scheduling of the most primary elements of Christian worship; the lifting up of ways in which worship is already actively “fostering the search for unity”; the question of how Faith and Order itself can attend to issues of worship in relation to unity, and how the dimension of worship can be brought into its own life and its work for the unity of the church. For further discussion on these issues, see Best et al, “Introduction” in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. x-xi.

²⁸⁶ See Best et al, “Introduction” in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. xi.

²⁸⁷ Waliggo, “Inculturation”, in *Dictionary of Ecumenical Movement*, p.572.

area of the churches' life in which the question of inculturation was the most discussed, because it affected the worship of the Church more than any other part of church life.²⁸⁸

At the outset, it is worthwhile to be cognisant of the requirement that Power holds when engaging with liturgical inculturation. He believes that it is vital that, when integrating liturgical traditions and cultural traditions, there first needs to be an openness to all that is other to one's own tradition.²⁸⁹ He advises that we need to have a critical judgement on the extent to which historical forms of Christian worship have respected that which is authentically human.²⁹⁰ Heeding Power's advice in dealing with liturgical inculturation, Best et al are clear that inculturation in worship is how worship expresses the universal faith in cultural forms appropriate to each particular place.²⁹¹ In line with this understanding, Chupungco states that liturgical inculturation is first a dialogue²⁹² between liturgy and culture.²⁹³

²⁸⁸ Geoffrey Wainwright, "Christian Worship: Scriptural Basis and Theological Frame", in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, ed. by Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, (Oxford: University Press, 2006), p. 26.

²⁸⁹ See his "Foreword" in *Celebrating Jesus Christ in Africa: Liturgy and Inculturation*, p. ix.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ See Best et al, "Introduction", in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. xi.

²⁹² Elaborating on the notion of dialogue, Chupungco mentions that it is carried out in the contexts of "the three components of culture". Values, patterns and institutions are, according to Chupungco, the things with which the liturgy holds dialogue. He explains values as "principles which influence and direct the life of a community". Apparently, they form the community's basic behaviour towards religious, political and ethical realities. He mentions family or community spirit, leadership and hospitality as some of the prominent values which dialogize with Christian worship. He furthermore describes patterns as the typical way members of a community form concepts, articulate thoughts in language and how they celebrate various aspects of life. As an

Defining liturgical inculturation, Chupungco describes it as a process whereby pertinent elements of a local culture are integrated into the worship of a local church.²⁹⁴ In this regard, integration means that culture can influence “the way prayer texts are composed and proclaimed, ritual actions are performed, and the message expressed in art forms”.²⁹⁵ Integration can further mean that “local rites, symbols, and festivals, after due critique and Christian reinterpretation, become part of the liturgical worship of a local church”.²⁹⁶ Stauffer suggests that the following questions can be attended to in helping the cultural richness of a local community to be reflected in their worship:

What are the thought patterns and linguistic styles that could help shape how prayers and sermons and liturgical texts are written? How can the cycles of the church year be related to natural seasons in different parts of the world? What aspects of indigenous music might find their way into hymns and other music in the Church? What is beauty in a given cultural

example of this, he refers to the language pattern of the Romans from the fifth to the seventh century. This language pattern which was characterized by rhetoric, deeply influenced the corpus of the Roman liturgical formularies. Likewise, Chupungco continues, the ritual pattern of ancient Rome known for its sobriety and practicality left a noticeable mark on the Roman liturgical *ordo*. Lastly, Chupungco describes institutions as “society’s traditional rites of passage from birth to death.” This includes initiatory rites, the rites of marriages and parenthood, death and funerals. Celebrations to mark the passing of seasons or the anniversary of memorable historical events are also seen as part of the institutions. See Chupungco, “Liturgical Inculturation and the Search for Unity”, in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. 57 - 58.

²⁹³ Ibid. , p. 56.

²⁹⁴ Chupungco, “Two Methods of Liturgical Inculturation”, in *Lutheran World Federation Studies: Christian Worship: Unity in Cultural Diversity*, ed. by S. Anita Stauffer, (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1996), p. 77.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

context, and how does it relate to a sense of the Holy? What aspects of the aesthetics, the artistic styles, the symbol-systems, the architectural prototypes in a given culture could be reflected in the rooms in which Christian worship takes place? What gestures and postures from the culture can be meaningfully and appropriately incorporated into Christian worship? What are the cultural manifestations of gathering into community, of offering hospitality, of expressing reverence in the presence of the transcendent God?²⁹⁷

The community can integrate their culture into worship through responsible responding to the above questions and in this way express its identity in the acts of worship and liturgy. Magoti holds that the medium through which the community expresses its faith must be related to the culture of the place.²⁹⁸ This, according to Magoti could not be found in some churches. He is critical especially of the mainline churches where he perceives the liturgy to be “overly concerned with rubrics, order and authenticity that appears to be sterile, rigid and unconcerned with the daily events in people’s lives”.²⁹⁹ The worship in these mainline Churches was more influenced by the Churches of the Western World. According to Power, the Western churches have not been so successful in

²⁹⁷ Stauffer, “Worship and Culture: Five Theses” in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 326.

²⁹⁸ Magoti, “Charismatic Movements in the Context of Inculturation” in *Charismatic Renewal in Africa: A Challenge for African Christianity*, p. 101.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

allowing the “remembrance of Christ to find cultural resonance in their own acts of worship”.³⁰⁰

Anita Stauffer provides us with further insights in this context by making us aware that the dynamics between worship and culture involve several balances. First, she says, Christian worship must be both authentic and relevant. For her, this implies the balance between being faithful to common Judaeo-Christian roots, and being meaningful in each given culture.³⁰¹ It is a matter of how to locate worship on “the axis of ecumenical Christian tradition and local culture”.³⁰²

Stauffer further argues that what gives balance to authenticity is relevance.³⁰³ Questions need continually to be asked as to how Christian worship can be profoundly meaningful to people in a given culture. How can the historic and ecumenical core of worship be ‘clothed’ in such a way that people in any particular culture can relate to it? How can liturgy, church music, and the visual environment for worship be both truly Christian and true to any other culture on earth?³⁰⁴

³⁰⁰ See his “Foreword” in *Celebrating Jesus Christ in Africa: Liturgy and Inculturation*, p. xiv.

³⁰¹ Stauffer, “Worship and Culture: Five Theses” in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 325.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

Stauffer points out the potential dangers that lie at both extreme ends of the authenticity-relevance continuum.³⁰⁵ On the authenticity end, she mentions the danger of worship becoming culturally irrelevant and meaningless. Pertaining to relevancy, she highlights the danger of worship becoming captive to a given culture. Such worship can become isolated from the ecumenical church. At worst, it can be syncretistic, through becoming detached from Christian roots. A healthy balance is thus necessary to be maintained.³⁰⁶

A balance needs also be preserved between what Stauffer refers to as the Christocentric and the anthropocentric.³⁰⁷ This means on the one hand that the Church strives to make Christian worship meaningful in the world's variety of cultures, to people in their variety of needs. This endeavour requires considerable pastoral attention to people and their cultures. On the other hand, Stauffer advises that we must never lose sight of the crucial fact that we worship Christ, the crucified and risen One; we do not worship ourselves or our cultures.³⁰⁸ Although it is imperative that worship be culturally relevant, we must at the same time not forget that Christ should be at the center, otherwise, Stauffer cautions, we will lapse into idolatry.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 327.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

While we should respect what is honest and noble in every culture, not everything that we find good in a culture can be assimilated into the liturgy. Hence Chupungco remarks that cultural elements should be beyond doctrinal or moral reproach.³¹⁰ Inculturating the liturgy is not merely a process of taking certain cultural elements and inserting them into Christian worship without understanding what those elements mean in their own cultural context.³¹¹ There are limits to inculturation set down by the liturgy itself. According to Chupungco, these are principles or requirements that emerge from the nature and purpose of the liturgy.³¹² In the end, Chupungco adds, inculturation should not cause the fragmentation of the church nor of its worship. What it should strive for, Chupungco continues, is to “allow variations in the cultural expression of the same liturgical tradition and praxis, not departure from these”.³¹³ In this way, inculturation will be the faithful translation into different but suitable cultural values, patterns, and institutions of what the churches have received from the apostles. Hence, in concluding this point, Chupungco believes that this inculturation will not break unity nor will it introduce practices that will be foreign to the gospel message.³¹⁴

³¹⁰ Chupungco, “Liturgical Inculturation and the Search for Unity”, in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. 58.

³¹¹ Stauffer, “Worship and Culture: Five Theses” in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 328.

³¹² Chupungco, “Liturgical Inculturation and the Search for Unity”, in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. 58.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

To ensure that inculturation is successfully implemented, it is crucial that an in-depth study of the particular culture is conducted before elements from it are imported into worship.³¹⁵ For this reason Best and Heller suggest that a study be done on the local cultures with their values, patterns and institutions, and how they can suitably be integrated into Christian worship after due consideration and critique.³¹⁶ Chupungco cautions that those who are not familiar with the tradition of their church and its practices are bound to render an immense disservice to the liturgy and to inculturation.³¹⁷ Therefore he reminds us that the liturgy is a “sacred action which cannot be reduced to a socio-cultural activity. It is an ecclesial gathering of the priestly people who respond in faith to God’s gracious call.”³¹⁸

It will be sensible, as Stauffer points out, endorsing Best and Heller, to adapt cultural elements for liturgical use only after thorough anthropological and theological examinations have been done.³¹⁹ To summarise this point: In order to engage productively in the process of liturgical inculturation, the received traditions and actual praxis of the churches need to be examined to see how they

³¹⁵ Stauffer, “Worship and Culture: Five Theses” in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 328.

³¹⁶ See “Towards Koinonia in Worship: Report of the Consultation” in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. 15.

³¹⁷ Chupungco, “Liturgical Inculturation and the Search for Unity”, in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. 58.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.59.

³¹⁹ Stauffer, “Worship and Culture: Five Theses” in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 328.

relate to those of the other churches of the Christian koinonia.³²⁰ In this process, authentic inculturation translates culturally what each of the churches has received and nurtures. New liturgies will not necessarily be created as a result of this, but liturgical texts and rites could be grafted on the culture of the local worshipping community. This will pave the way towards diversity of cultural expression in the unity of traditions and praxis.³²¹

The beauty of authentic liturgical inculturation is that it leads to mutual enrichment. In this process, an indigenous culture is evangelized when coming in contact with the gospel message that the church proclaims during worship. This evangelization, according to Chupungco, results from the critique made by the gospel on the culture, a critique that implies the “correction of defective values or even outright rejection of ideas and practices that by their very nature are incompatible or inconsistent with the gospel message”.³²² Evangelization furthermore results from the “incorporation of cultural elements into the liturgy”.³²³ On the other hand, Christian worship itself is enriched by the culture it embraces. Chupungco makes special mention of how the sacraments of

³²⁰ See “Towards Koinonia in Worship: Report of the Consultation” in *So We Believe, So We Pray Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. 15.; See also Chupungco, “Liturgical Inculturation and the Search for Unity”, in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. 58.

³²¹ Chupungco, “Liturgical Inculturation and the Search for Unity”, in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, p. 61.

³²² *Ibid.*, p. 56.

³²³ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Baptism and the Eucharist have been enriched through the process of liturgical inculturation.³²⁴

In discussing the theme “Worship and the Oneness of Christ’s Church” at the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order in Montreal, it was held that just as faith finds its own ways of expression in worship, so the mission of the Church also involves indigenization, a process of becoming rooted in the culture of the people.³²⁵ This process ought to take place “normally and most authentically where Christian faith and worship possess the maturity and vitality to appropriate and convert prevailing cultural forms for the service of Christ”.³²⁶ In this way, the report said, Christian worship not only takes root in the culture but also converts it to Christ, and so shares in the reconciliation of the whole creation to God. The report also stated that the focus should not be so much on adapting worship to the local culture. It reiterated the earlier caution of Stauffer that we must not forget that Christ is at the centre and that culture itself must be transformed. Hence in the process of inculturation, the report put the emphasis more on conversion than accommodation.³²⁷ This, however, does not take away the fact that Christian worship can best feed the spirituality of a people if it is localized. For this reason, the challenge of liturgical inculturation will always be

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Geoffrey Wainwright, “Ecumenical Convergences”, in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, ed. by Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, (Oxford: University Press, 2006), p. 738.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Ibid.

“celebrating the Christian mystery in such a way as to exhibit both the true sense of having the saving action and the authentic cultic sense” of a given local people.³²⁸ During this “confrontation”, Egbulem says, it is not simply a matter of what the Gospel does with a certain culture, but what the Gospel and culture do with each other in the continuous process of encounter and mutual embrace.³²⁹ As Chupungco puts it:

There must be reciprocity and mutual respect between liturgy and culture. Culture has also its categories, dynamics and intrinsic laws. Liturgy must not impose on culture a meaning or bearing that is intrinsically alien to its nature. Authentic inculturation respects the process of trans-culturation whereby both liturgy and culture are able to evolve through mutual insertion and absorption without damage to the identity of each.³³⁰

3.6. Responses of Asian and African Churches to Inculturation

Already with the formation of the East Asia Christian Conference (EACC) in Bangkok in 1949, it was claimed that “the Christian message may be made more challenging if it is presented in close relation to the special needs of the human situation in any given time, and also if it adopts and utilizes certain values in the traditional culture of each people”.³³¹ Churches were encouraged to “engage in a

³²⁸ See Nwaka Chris Egbulem, “Mission and Inculturation: Africa” in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, ed. by Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, (Oxford: University Press, 2006), pp. 682 – 683.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Quoted in Ibid., p. 684.

³³¹ *The Christian Prospect in Eastern Asia, Papers and Minutes of the East Asia Christian Conference Bangkok, Dec. 3-11, 1949*, (New York: Friendship Press, 1950), pp. 118-119.

much more thorough study of the language, literature, music, art, and social structure of their peoples, so that they may know more clearly where those are used, adapted or rejected for the service of the gospel”.³³²

Ten years later, when the EACC met for its inaugural assembly in Kuala Lumpur, the importance of inculturation was further emphasized. It was here argued that “serious consideration should be given to indigenization, understood as relating the gospel to local culture, religious ideas and rapidly changing social situations”.³³³ This assembly called especially for the inculturation of worship.

Ariarajah remarks that a similar development in Africa was taking place with the independent churches beginning to realize their own contribution to ecumenical life. At their meeting in Ibadan in 1958, the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) already regarded the topic of inculturation as important enough to have it as a discussion point on their agenda. At that meeting, consensus was reached that the church cannot give a Christian content to every African custom. However, delegates firmly believed that the church throughout Africa had a “very rich contribution to make to the life of the world church”.³³⁴ This was due to the fact that the church in Africa would be enriched by the wealth which African culture could bring to it. The Conference encouraged the churches to study

³³² Ibid.

³³³ See Ariarajah, S. Wesley, *Gospel and Culture: An Ongoing Discussion within the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 12.

³³⁴ Ibid.

traditional African beliefs so that the positives could be preserved for the inculturation of the gospel.³³⁵

Five years later, at their First Assembly at Kampala in 1963, the AACC was critical of the fact that, during the missionary period, foreign liturgies, hymns and rites had been imported to Africa, thus stifling indigenous spirituality. They were of the opinion that prefabricated and imported liturgies reflected particular cultural traditions and could not be used without revisions.³³⁶ Many of the liturgies that were imported by the missionaries were judged to be unsuitable to the African situation. It was further felt that “there are certain emotional depths in the African which these liturgies can never reach. And their unsuitability is due principally to the fact that they did not grow out of the life of a living church in Africa. They are not the result of the yearning of the church’s soul for the living God, not a natural means of communion between Christ and His Church”.³³⁷ Thus, according to the AACC, any liturgy which has this defect is bound to be a source of frustration to the worshipper. It was also stated that the fact that the African Church had put up with these foreign liturgies, was not an indication that these liturgies were acceptable.³³⁸

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ See Ans van der Bent, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns: Sixteen Documentary Surveys*, p. 177.

³³⁷ *Drumbeats from Kampala: Report of the First Assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches, held at Kampala, April 20 – 30, 1963*, (London: Lutterworth, 1963), pp. 35 – 36.

³³⁸ Ibid.

Being attentive to the significance of inculturation, the Assembly of the EACC in Bangkok in 1964 reiterated the view that the Christians of Asia should live more consciously within “the cultures of their own peoples”.³³⁹ Delegates expressed the view that even much of the familiar might be abandoned – a kind of “self-emptying which will be both painful and dangerous”.³⁴⁰ They believed, however, that the Spirit would ultimately show “how the faith may be restated in the idiom of the indigenous cultures, in forms of community life where death becomes luminous and in actions relevant to the needs of contemporary society”.³⁴¹

Ariarajah recalled how Asian thinkers through imagery described how the gospel was brought to Africa and Asia: “The Gospel had been brought to the nations as a plant, with the pot being the Western culture. This may have been inevitable. But now the plant must be transferred into Asian and African soil, so that it might strike deep roots and draw nourishment from it”.³⁴² It was thus the task of the churches in Asia and Africa to see to it that the plant grew big in their soil.³⁴³

³³⁹ See Ariarajah, S. Wesley, *Gospel and Culture: An Ongoing Discussion within the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 13.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Ariarajah, S. Wesley, *Gospel and Culture: An Ongoing Discussion within the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 13

³⁴³ As an example of this, Prabhakar mentions how, in rural congregations of South India, worshippers sit on the floor. In their worship of God, they sing Indian music and use Indian musical instruments. Although this may be superficial ways of rooting worship in their culture, Prabhakar feels that these are important aspects of expressing their association to their cultural heritage. As a further example of how the “plant” was taken out of the “western pot” and planted into Asian soil, he recalls the following: “Once I was invited to celebrate the holy eucharist in a rural congregation near Bangalore. The congregation belongs to the Church of South India (CSI) and has been using the CSI liturgy of the eucharist since it became a part of the church. To my pleasant surprise, all the congregational responses found in the liturgy, including the Lord’s prayer and the creed, were sung by the congregation, not to Gregorian chant or an Anglican chant,

3.7. Conclusion

All of the arguments surrounding inculturation and liturgy, have embedded in it the fact that liturgy is always celebrated locally because it goes together with a local church. It also takes place in local speech, in “the midst of the gifts and the problems of local cultures and traditions, reflecting its light on local needs”.³⁴⁴ Lathrop reaffirms that the inculturation of the liturgy is one of the oldest traditions of the church. He mentions, by way of example, that it was found already in “the making of the Christian sacraments out of the meals and washing rites of late-antique Judaism and continues in the extensive influence on Christian worship exerted by Hellenistic mysteries, imperial buildings and court rituals, and the adoption of new languages”.³⁴⁵ This kind of inculturation, Lathrop argues, must continue. It ought to carry on in each new place, treasuring and transforming cultures new and old, dominant and threatened. It must go on, for worship to be of continuous relevance.

but with a purely Indian tune, with an accompaniment of harmonium and tabla. Here I felt that the liturgy could be authentically Christian and culturally relevant without the fear of being syncretistic.” Prabhakar explains that the harmonium is an Indian version of a miniature organ, which is normally used to accompany the singers and assist them to maintain the musical line and correct harmonies. The tabla is a percussion instrument of two drums. See Prabhakar’s article, “The Church of South India Liturgy of the Eucharist: Authenticity and Relevance”, in *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship*, pp. 77 – 79.

³⁴⁴ See Gordon Lathrop, “The Water that Speaks: The Ordo of Baptism and its Ecumenical Implications” in *Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism*, Faith and Order Paper No. 184, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999), p. 24.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

CHAPTER FOUR

SECULARIZATION IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

4.1. Introduction

Not only were the 1960's well-known for the impact that the Charismatic Renewal started to have on the ecumenical movement, it was also during this time that the ecumenical movement also began to address the impact that secularization was having,³⁴⁶ especially on the worship life of the churches within the movement. How were Christians to pray and worship? This question was asked with growing urgency. In their traditional form at least, prayer and worship had become a problem in many Churches. Churches were searching for new forms of worship, that the present generation could participate in with conviction, so that worship would not be "something imposed from the past whose meaning is forgotten".³⁴⁷ Reforms were being proposed and introduced and all kinds of experiments were being conducted in the hope of providing opportunities for new forms to emerge.

³⁴⁶ People outside the ecumenical movement already tried to make sense out of the process of secularization. In 1959, university lecturers gathered at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, to examine the process of secularization in the various disciplines of the university namely philosophy, physical science, sociology, and the humanities. They did this in an effort to discern the form of Christian responsibility and theological insight with relation to them. See the article of Charles West, "Secularization", in *the Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, ed. by N. Lossky et al., (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002), p. 1034.

³⁴⁷ See "Worship Today: Report on the Consultation 'Worship in a Secular Age'", in *Study Encounter*, Vol. VI, No. 3, 1970, p. 129

It was during this time when churches were wrestling with new forms of worship during a time of change, that two liberal Protestant theologians started to address the subject of secularization “as something to be endorsed” with their publications, *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel* (Paul van Buren, 1963) and *The Secular City* (Harvey Cox, 1965).³⁴⁸ The WCC took up the challenge that secularization put on the worship life of churches: they organized two consultations in consecutive years with the theme “The Worship of God in a Secular Age”. The first was at Taizé, France, from 2 – 6 September 1966 and the second at Delemont, Switzerland, from 14 – 18 July 1967.

The outcome of these consultations was then presented to the WCC Assembly which took place the following year (1968) at Uppsala. Addressing the question of secularization was not an easy task; in fact, it was a difficult undertaking, partly because the churches differed in their traditions of worship, and ecumenical discussion of these differences was far from being concluded.³⁴⁹ It was therefore not expected that the fourth Assembly would reach a common mind on the problems of worship. However, the Assembly certainly did help to introduce new aspects of the theme of worship into ecumenical discussion. One contributory factor in this regard was the “experience of the clash of old and new forms of

³⁴⁸ See Geoffrey Wainwright, “Ecumenical Convergences” in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 739.

³⁴⁹ *Worship Today: Report on the Consultation ‘Worship in a Secular Age’*, in *Study Encounter*, p. 129.

worship” at the Assembly itself.³⁵⁰ The customary practice regarding worship at ecumenical conferences was challenged from different angles. New experiments were tried during worship, with not everyone at ease with it. It is recalled that a certain amount of impatience amongst the delegates was evident.³⁵¹

Nevertheless, it was reported that the atmosphere at the Fourth Assembly was not hostile to the concept of secularization. The Official Report of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches states that secularization can also be viewed in a positive sense.³⁵² In regard to worship, it can mean the “constant re-expression of the Church’s liturgy and language in the culture in which it lives”.³⁵³ According to the Report, secularization does not imply the denial of God. Instead, the Assembly expressed the view that Christians needed to bring the concerns of the world before God in worship.

Then again, not everybody was unperturbed by the discussion of secularization at the Assembly. Firstly, severe tension was experienced between those whom Wainwright referred to as “the secularizing radicals” and “the heavenly conservatives”.³⁵⁴ Secondly, protest was voiced against too much emphasis on secular theology by the Western theologians. Representatives from countries of

³⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 130.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² See *The Uppsala Report: Official Report of the Fourth Assembly of the WCC: Uppsala July 4 – 20, 1968*, ed. by Norma Goodall (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1968), p. 79.

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Wainwright, “Ecumenical Convergences” in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 749.

the East felt that their problem was rather how to relate Christian worship to the religious traditions of Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam, which were more prominent in their countries.³⁵⁵ Their reaction implied that secularization was not yet a priority in the Eastern world.³⁵⁶ However, the fourth Assembly decided that a continuation on the subject of worship and secularization was necessary, hence it was agreed that the Commission on Faith and Order would organize a consultation on the theme.³⁵⁷

As secularization had now become a growing burning issue, Faith and Order did not take long to proceed with research into and discussion of it, because a vital point of the Church's life had been touched, something which needed further examination. Immediately after the Uppsala Assembly, proceedings were under way to organize a consultation the following year at Geneva. Efforts were made to assemble as many people as possible, representing a wide spectrum of views on the subject. The theme, "Worship in a Secular Age" was then discussed from 8 – 13 September 1969.

³⁵⁵ See Ans van der Bent, "The Concern for Spirituality: An Analytical and Bibliographical Survey of the Discussion within the WCC Constituency" in *The Ecumenical Review*, Vol. 38, No.1 (Jan 1986), p. 105.

³⁵⁶ The delegates from Japan, China and India at the conference for university teachers in 1959 indicated however that secularization was quite prominent in their religious contexts. See Charles West, "Secularization", in the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 1034.

³⁵⁷ Lukas Vischer, "Preface", *Studia Liturgica*, Vol. 7, Nos. 2-3 (1970), p. 1.

At the consultation, presenters attempted to respond to the Assembly's request that the crisis of worship³⁵⁸ be analyzed and the churches be guided regarding the way forward³⁵⁹. It was not expected from the 1969 consultation to produce an agreed statement, but rather to identify and deliberate on the major issues in the present situation. The presenters and participants had the challenge to earnestly apply their minds and to come up with relevant suggestions on how worship

³⁵⁸ According to J. G. Davies, the association of the words secularization and worship pointed in the first instance to a crisis of worship. He said that this crisis was intensified by another factor comprehended under secularization as social differentiation. Explaining this, Davies said that social life was very different nowadays than in medieval Christendom, due to the process of urbanization. Medieval Christendom was integrated with a civilization based largely upon agriculture and village units. The village was a social unity, Davies said – a “territorial area of restricted dimensions within which everyone knew everyone else.” People worked, lived and played within these boundaries, so much so that there was an “unavoidable interchange which promoted interest in other people, over and above any utilitarian project in which they may have been engaged.” In this situation, worship was the occasion when those who knew one another gathered and strengthened the ties that bound their already existing community. The Sunday worship service became an important occasion for leaving the residences and encountering fellow villagers. Time spent before and after worship bolstered inter-personal contacts and conversation. It is this pattern of life and worship that favoured stability, respect for tradition, and allowed for the development of primary relations.

Conversely, in the modern urban situation, “specialization and diversification lead to the dispersal of man's (sic) social functions over a very wide area indeed.” In this instance, Davies described that “the husband goes to work in one quarter, the wife may shop in another, the children may go to school in a third, while the family as a whole will seek entertainment elsewhere.” The effect is that in such a residential area, personal relations may be non-existent. Hence, without direct and sharing of interests and ideas, there exists no local community within which anyone can be integrated. As such, relations between fellow citizens become less and less primary. The demise of the village and the neighbourhood-based community meant that worship “can no longer be understood in terms of the gathering of a pre-existing village type community.” Worship then loses its communal dimension and its essential basis in inter-personal relations. See Davies, “Secularization and Worship”, in *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, ed. by J.G. Davies (London: SCM Press LTD, 1972) p. 343.

Pertaining to the crisis of worship, Bosch, recalled how an American scholar once said, “We have got half a millennium of homework to do, merely to be able to grasp the dimensions of the present crisis. In the seventeen generations since the sixteenth century, western civilization in all its aspects – industrial, technological, urban, religious, political and cultural – has been repeatedly wrenched by a succession of social and cultural revolutions that took place while liturgical evolution – which should have responded to them vigorously – stood still... Even though worship is being transformed at a pace that would have been unheard of just ten years ago, its new forms are frequently productive of too little and too late. This is at the core of the crisis we face at present in the Church in general, especially in the area of worship.” See Yvonne Bosch, *The Worship of God in a Secular Age: Comments on Section V*, in *Study Encounter*, Vol. IV, No. 2, 1968., p. 83.

³⁵⁹ Lukas Vischer, “Preface”, in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 2.

could be meaningful even in a secular age. As Vischer puts it, “the tenor of the ecumenical discussion on worship has changed considerably...Earlier concerns over modes and ways of worship have changed to the more radical question as to whether worship is possible at all”.³⁶⁰

4.2. Searching for a definition

In the section, “The Worship of God in a Secular Age”, which was prepared for the Fourth Assembly, it was stated that secularization was the “process of man’s (sic) emancipation from idolatry of anything in the created order or of his own ideas”. This process “sets man (sic) free to be responsible for the shape of his own future and that of the world. He refuses to absolutize any authority or structure in the created order, and insists on maintaining an open view of the future”. This process, the section stated furthermore, “need not imply the denial of God, though it may often involve revolt against religious structures that have become absolute and enslaving”.³⁶¹ Moreover, the section declared that while the churches in their practices of worship wish to affirm the reality and existence of God, they have often done so – though perhaps not deliberately – at the expense of the reality of humanity and the world.³⁶² “Through such distortions”, the section maintained, the churches have “provoked denial of the reality of God”.³⁶³ In the light of these facts, the section concluded then that secularization, when

³⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 1.

³⁶¹ *Drafts for Sections: Prepared for the Fourth Assembly of the WCC: Uppsala, Sweden* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1968), p. 98.

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ Ibid.

properly understood, could “recall us from our distortions to true worship, which affirms the reality of God, of man (sic) and of the world”.³⁶⁴

Attempting to conceptualize the title “worship in a secular age”, the consultation began by asking whether this title was really the right starting point for the discussion.³⁶⁵ According to the report on the consultation, the title had been chosen by the Assembly “to make it clear from the outset that we live in a changed world and that, because of this, worship in its traditional form is called into question”.³⁶⁶ Discussion therefore, was not to drift off into general considerations, but to focus on the topic.

Almost all the presenters at the 1969 consultation then, as part of their presentation, dealt with the understanding of the secular age, of how it could be defined and what characterized it. Some attempted to define secularization as follows: For Vilmos Vatja, secularization meant “liberating the cultural life from domination by the Church”.³⁶⁷ Raymundo Panikkar considered secularization to be the “ever recurrent human process which is to be found time and again in

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Some participants at the consultation summed up their misgivings about linking “worship” and “secular” as follows: “(a) it is impossible to use the term ‘secular’ in the ecumenical movement in an agreed connotation; (b) the term is ambiguous and therefore open to misunderstanding, (c) it is a relative concept in so far as it is always used as an antithesis to a presumed earlier, non-secular age; (d) it raises additional problems and (e) fails to focus on the real problem.” See *Worship Today: Report on the Consultation ‘Worship in a Secular Age’*, in *Study Encounter*, p. 131.

³⁶⁶ *Worship Today: Report on the Consultation ‘Worship in a Secular Age’*, in *Study Encounter*, p. 130.

³⁶⁷ Vilmos Vatja, “Worship in a Secularized Age”, in *Studia Liturgica*, Vol 7, Nos.2-3 (1970), p. 74.

almost all cultures and in a very profound and steady way in our own cultural situation, by which the sphere of the sacred, identified with the non-temporal, is reduced more and more until it tends to disappear altogether”.³⁶⁸

Scholars outside the consultation also grappled with the question of secularization. Their definitions furthermore help us to get a relatively comprehensive understanding of what is meant by secularization. Charles West agrees with Panikkar that secularization is a process which in essence effects changes in human thought and action. It is therefore not a world-view. Martyn Percy considers the term ‘secularization’ to be a deeply debated and highly contested concept. His view is that secularization refers to the decline of religion particularly in the Western world during the latter part of the 20th century. This decline, he says, reflects the “proportion of their time, energy and resources that people devote to religious concerns”.³⁶⁹ J.G. Davies seems to be in agreement with Percy in his argument that human beings entered a secular universe with secularization. In this universe, nature and society are explained in terms of themselves. The result, according to Davies, is that within the secular universe, “religion loses the functions it exercised previously in the sacral universe”, whereas in a sacral universe, the “functioning of nature and society is explained in terms of the divine”.³⁷⁰ This implies furthermore that in the sacral universe,

³⁶⁸ See his article “Secularization and Worship” in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 33.

³⁶⁹ Martyn Percy, “Secularization”, *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. by Phillip Sheldrake, (London: SCM Press, 2005), p. 570.

³⁷⁰ See J.G. Davies, “Secularization and Worship”, *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, p. 343.

humans are at the mercy of nature, i.e. they are dependent upon it and cannot control it. In this sense, nature seems to be “superior and sovereign”, while humans come across as weak and helpless. In this powerlessness and dependency, humans then have to seek divine assistance in order to survive.

In agreement with Panikkar, William Crockett explicates that secularization describes a “social process which has been going on pragmatic in western society since the period of the European Enlightenment³⁷¹, the result of which has been to separate all the major spheres of public life from the religious influence and church control”.³⁷²

The renowned German theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, touched on this subject more than two decades prior to the time when the Ecumenical Movement started to address it and long before it became a much-discussed topic. In a letter which he wrote to his best friend Eberhard Bethge, while being incarcerated, he said that secularization described for him a movement “towards the autonomy of man

³⁷¹ The Enlightenment is a name given by historians to an intellectual movement that was predominant in the Western world during the 18th century. The thinkers of the Enlightenment were strongly influenced by the rise of modern science and by the aftermath of the long religious conflict that followed the Reformation. They were furthermore committed to secular views based on reason or human understanding only, which they hoped would provide a basis for “beneficial changes affecting every area of life and thought”. For a more elaborate discussion on the Enlightenment, see the essay on “18th Century European Enlightenment” at <http://www.cyberessays.com/History/23.htm>. Accessed 04/07/2009.

In the European Enlightenment, secularization came to stand for “emancipation from the overruling power of God Himself”, who was till then assumed to have full control of everything in the universe. It was in a sense a “lay revolt against clerical domination, and the denial of the existence of God was often an effective weapon against the influence of the priest.” See *Drafts for Sections: Prepared for the Fourth Assembly of the WCC: Uppsala, Sweden 1968*, p. 103.

³⁷² See his article, “Christianity and Culture in Modern Secular Society”, *Studia Liturgica*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (1990), p. 28.

(sic),” in which he “would include the discovery of the laws by which the world lives and deals with itself in science, social and political matters, art, ethics and religion”.³⁷³ Bonhoeffer also used the phrase “world come of age”³⁷⁴ in reference to a secularized world. In another letter of 30 April 1944, he told Bethge that he grappled with a few questions pertaining to the Christian identity in the world that had come of age, and he was seriously looking for answers to it. He

³⁷³ See Charles West, “Secularization”, *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 1032.

³⁷⁴ This is a phrase that comes from the philosopher, Immanuel Kant, it refers to a historical process that included stages like the Reformation, the Enlightenment, new discoveries, the shift from faith to reason. In the world that has come of age, decisions in life realms are no more based on reference to God, but reason. In fact, in a world that has come of age, everything seems to get along without God. As in scientific field, so in human affairs generally, “God is being pushed more and more out of life, losing more and more ground.” See Bonhoeffer quoted in Fant, *Bonhoeffer: Worldly Preaching: A Controversial New Look at a Great Theologian*, (New York; Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers, 1975), p. 81. Wüstenburg described further that in a world that has come of age, the world has become conscious of itself and the laws that govern its own existence have grown self-confident in what seems to be a strange way. God is being pushed out of the spheres of our knowledge and life. God ultimately became just a stopgap for the incompleteness of our knowledge. See Ralf Wüstenburg, *Religionless Christianity: Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s Tegel Theology*, p. 57. Furthermore, in a “world come of age”, God is no more at the centre of life. Human beings rely on their own strength and knowledge. It surprises therefore that Bonhoeffer wanted religious Christians to become world-come-of-age Christians. In simple terms, this would mean people who live for God but also for the world. Bonhoeffer articulated it as follows: people who live “before God, with God, without God”. See Rasmussen and Bethge, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer – His Significance for North Americans*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), p. 67. In the letter of 21 July 1944 to Bethge, Bonhoeffer explained further what he meant when saying that Christian needed to become world-come-of-age. First he said that “world come of age” means that the world has become mature. In reference to this, he used the word “this-worldliness” which he defined as follows: “By this-worldliness I mean unreservedly in life’s duties, problems, successes and failures, experiences and perplexities. In so doing, we throw ourselves completely into the arms of God, taking seriously, not our own sufferings, but those of God in the world – watching with Christ in Gethsemane. That, I think, is faith; that is *metanoia*, and that is how one becomes a man (sic) and a Christian.” See Fant, in Fant, *Bonhoeffer: Worldly Preaching: A Controversial New Look at a Great Theologian*, p. 80. Hence, according to Bonhoeffer, only by “this-worldliness” can we exist for one another and not in isolation.

Regarding worship, Bonhoeffer wanted worship in a “world come of age” to be nonreligious worship for religionless Christians. This sounds as if Bonhoeffer wanted religion to be untied from Christianity. But then he differentiated between “religious consciousness” and “world-come-of-age consciousness”. According to Bonhoeffer, people with a “religious consciousness” use God to explain the unexplainable while people with a “world-come-of-age consciousness” employ reason. The implication for a “religious consciousness” is that God is situated and thus experienced in the unknown. For the “world-come-of-age consciousness”, God is situated in the known. For the former, it implies that as the known increases, God is farther and farther removed from the centre of life and pressed outward to the boundaries. See Rasmussen and Bethge, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer – His Significance for North Americans*, p. 66.

concerned himself with the question of what a church, a community, a sermon, a liturgy, and a Christian life meant in a world that he referred to as religionless.³⁷⁵

Bonhoeffer's wrestle with the concept of secularization brought him also to the question of how we speak about God –without religion, i.e. without the temporally conditioned presuppositions of metaphysics, inwardness, and so on. “How do we speak (or perhaps we cannot now even ‘speak’ as we used to) in a ‘worldly’ way about ‘God’? In what way are we ‘religionless-worldly’ Christians, in what way are we the *ek-klesia*, those who are called forth, not regarding ourselves from a religious point of view as specially favoured, but rather as belonging wholly to the world? In that case Christ is no longer an object of religion, but something quite different, really the Lord of the world. But what does that mean?”³⁷⁶ At the heart of all these questions, Bonhoeffer asked about the place of worship and prayer in a religionless situation. Bonhoeffer was clearly already making us aware that we need to address the question of worship and secularization.

³⁷⁵“Religionless Christianity” was Bonhoeffer’s expression of Christian faith divorced from those elements which comprised his understanding of religion, i.e. individualism, metaphysics, a limited sociological province of life, God of the gaps. Bethge disliked the term “religionless Christianity” because of the false impression it conveys and rather prefers to speak about “nonreligious interpretation”. According to Bonhoeffer, “religionless Christianity” did not mean that the church would lose her own Christian identity. Hence he was also concerned with the Christian’s identity in the world. For further discussion on this, see Clyde Fant, *Bonhoeffer: Worldly Preaching: A Controversial New Look at a Great Theologian*, pp. 78-9.

³⁷⁶ See Bonhoeffer’s letter of 30 April 1944 to Eberhard Bethge, in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Letters and Papers from Prison* (An Abridged Edition), ed. by Eberhard Bethge, (London: SCM Press, 1981), pp. 89 – 90.

All the above in a sense implied that secularization had at least to do with moving away from the religious and the decline of religious influence in the world, especially in the West. The report of the consultation at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey in 1959, confirmed this view: secularization is “the withdrawal of areas of life and thought from religious – and finally also from metaphysical – control and the attempt to understand and live in these areas in the terms which they alone offer”.³⁷⁷

A shift in people’s thoughts and lives developed which was indicative of a lesser dependency upon religion and religious thought. Van Buren, who preferred to speak about “secularity” rather than “secularization”³⁷⁸, concurred when he described five shifts that took place in the process of secularization, i.e. permanence to change, universal to particular, unity to plurality, absolute to relative, passivity to activity³⁷⁹. These shifts in values brought about new tendencies in priorities which then brought about new directions in human consciousness³⁸⁰. It is these changes that affected the worship of the churches in

³⁷⁷ Charles West, “Secularization”, *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 1032.

³⁷⁸ For Van Buren, secularization is a process in history and secularism is an attitude of mind. This is for him a dichotomy which can be misleading because, for him, it assumes a separation of how people think from how they live and shape their experience. In the light of present knowledge, he viewed this as quite indefensible. To be safe, he preferred to speak of secularity, “as both a way of thinking and a way of shaping experience, for our way of thinking (secularism?) is inseparably connected with how we experience, act in, and give shape to our world (secularization?)”. See his article, “The Tendency of our Age and the Reconception of Worship”, in *Studia Liturgica*, Vol. 7, Nos. 2 – 3 (1970), p. 4.

³⁷⁹ For further reading on this, see *Ibid.*, p. 4 – 5.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

the 1960's, and it is to this crisis that the ecumenical movement through the Commission on Faith and Order wanted to respond to.

4.3. The relevance and meaningfulness of worship in a secularized world

It was clear that secularization was a process that could not be stopped by religions, but that religions rather needed to find ways to become meaningful in the situation. Through consultations and workshops, the ecumenical movement endeavoured to search for ways in which Christians, through their worship, could be of relevance in a secularized society. Was there still place for Christian worship in a secularized society? Karl Muller answers this with an emphatic “yes”, because for him, the question of worship is the question of the Christian life. To live in this world is worship, because it is an “all-embracing function of life”.³⁸¹

Panikkar argues that if worship is something with a universal value, i.e. not tied to a particular form of culture or religion – in other words, if worship is a constitutive human dimension – then it must have some meaning in a secularized society and this meaning has to be rediscovered³⁸². In the same way secularization which exists as a historical situation (process) should come to grips with one of the “most widespread phenomena of the culture of all times, i.e. worship”.³⁸³ For worship then to maintain its rightful place in a secularized

³⁸¹ Karl Muller, “Living Worship”, in *Studia Liturgica*, Vol 7, Nos.2-3 (1970), p. 86.

³⁸² Panikkar, “Worship and Secularization”, in *Studia Liturgica*, Vol 7, Nos.2-3 (1970), p. 29.

³⁸³ Ibid.

world, an encounter as well as dialogue with the process of secularization is inevitable.

Was there a need for modern forms of worship? Charles Davies, one of the presenters at the 1969 Consultation believed that finding modern forms of worship would not solve the problem.³⁸⁴ Although the rest of the presenters agreed that there was a need for imaginative creativity and the modernization of liturgical forms, there was general consensus that the crisis could not be finally solved by adaptations.³⁸⁵ J.G. Davies went further and called for a reformulation of the meaning and function of worship in the light of secularization. His opinion was that the forms of worship that had been inherited, were rooted in the view that worshippers withdraw from the secular world and enter into a sacred world.³⁸⁶ This kind of worship wanted nothing to do with the secular world. Such worship is a special religious activity which is performed in special holy buildings. The fact that it is separated from the world, has put worship in a crisis. According to Davies, the passage from the sacral to the secular universe renders those liturgical forms which were created within and for the sacral universe meaningless and without relevance within the new context of existence in the modern world.³⁸⁷ Vatja endorses this view in his argument that the nature of the crisis also lies in the fact that those who go to Church and participate in worship

³⁸⁴ See his article, "Ghetto or Desert: Liturgy in a Cultural Dilemma", in *Studia Liturgica*, Vol. 7, Nos. 2 – 3, (1970), p. 10.

³⁸⁵ Lukas Vischer, "Preface", *Studia Liturgica*, p. 2.

³⁸⁶ Davies, "Secularization and Worship", in *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, p. 343.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 342.

accept worship as merely traditional and something beyond question.³⁸⁸ Everything new or different would make them uncomfortable. Hence worship needed modern forms, but it would seem necessary, in the search for relevance and meaningfulness, for these boundaries to be continuously extended.

4.4. The search for “secular worship”

If modern forms of worship would not fully solve the crisis situation, what would then be the alternatives to redeem worship and give it a rightful place in the secular world?

Worship must not be divorced from the world. It must include an expression of responsibility for the world. Worship can only fulfil its function when it consciously takes place in the world.³⁸⁹ To live in this world as a Christian, is worship, Muller said. Worship which does not include being sent out into the world has lost its meaning. Van Allmen emphasized this missionary element, by saying that in order to be able to reach the world into which God sends the Church, the latter must become secularized.³⁹⁰ Mission would therefore compel the Church to undertake a “constant process of secularization”.³⁹¹ In this process, the question needed to be asked concerning “what old forms must be discarded

³⁸⁸ Vatja, “Worship in a Secularized Age”, in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 72.

³⁸⁹ Worship Today: Report on the Consultation ‘Worship in a Secular Age’, in *Study Encounter*, p. 136.

³⁹⁰ Prof. J.J. van Allmen contributed to the discussion on secularization at the Fourth Assembly of the WCC. See *The Uppsala Report 1968: Official Report of the Fourth Assembly of the WCC: Uppsala July 4 – 20*, ed. by Norma Goodall, p. 75.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

and to what changes must the Church submit in order to move forward from a medieval form of secularization” to a form of secularization adapted to the contemporary age, where the Church reaches out to the world.³⁹² In reaching out to the world, the Church accepts the reality of the world.

The Church which is being sent out into the world, starts to worship in this world, because worship needs to be an event which is always related to the world as it takes place in the secular.³⁹³ As such, there should be no fundamental difference between the worship on Sunday and the service of Christians outside the worship service.³⁹⁴ What needed attention, was what should be the form of such worship. Muller himself suggested that a major shift should take place, where worship was not primarily about preaching, praying and singing; in a secular world, it should be more about loving, hoping, serving and suffering, in the certainty that the presence of the Lord makes the impossible possible.³⁹⁵

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Miroslav Volf is of the opinion that the sacrifice of praise and the sacrifice of good works are two fundamental aspects of the Christian way of being-in-the-world. These two sacrifices are two constitutive elements of Christian worship: “Authentic Christian worship takes place in a rhythm of adoration and action.” Adoration and action are two distinct aspects of Christian worship, each valuable in its own right. In elaborating this viewpoint, Volf said that the purpose of action is not merely to provide material support for the life of adoration, as the purpose of adoration is not simply to provide spiritual strength for the life of action. When we adore God, we worship him by enjoying his presence and by celebrating his mighty deeds of liberation. When we are involved in the world, we worship God by announcing his liberation, and we cooperate with God by the power of the Spirit through loving action. See Volf, “Worship as Adoration and Action: Reflections on a Christian Way of Being-in-the-World” in *Worship: Adoration and Action*, ed. by D.A. Carson, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1993), pp. 207-8.

³⁹⁵ Muller, “Living Worship”, in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 86.

To serve one's neighbour is worship, because worship is the "incarnation of love for the world for the sake of man (sic) and his freedom".³⁹⁶ Hence worship will always take place in the secular and knows no sacral or profane spheres. This worship extends beyond mere cultic activity, and it is this, Muller said, which the world wanted as it was searching for Christ. He however cautioned, however, that the worship of everyday life was permanently in danger of failure, because it entailed the acts of faith and love, and measured by the standards of the world, "faith and love are absurd and constitute a scandal".³⁹⁷ Convinced that this is what worship required, he then proclaimed that worship in life was always the "sacrifice of one's own life, the only sacrifice which counts before God".³⁹⁸ This kind of worship which was involved in life, would always preserve its relevancy.

Like Muller, J.G. Davies also believed that the secular cannot be rejected, but that the church should use the secular as the starting point in the creation of meaningful worship in a secularized world. For Davies, worship had to be redefined as an activity which emanates from life in the world.³⁹⁹ In fact, it should be a celebration of that life. Secular worship should then have a festive character which is based upon world involvement. One's everyday existence is then worship. This worship is "an encounter with the divine and expresses and makes explicit the unity of sacred and the secular by showing how the holy is a

³⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 88.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 89.

³⁹⁹ Davies, "Secularization and Worship", in *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, p. 343.

dimension of the whole of life”.⁴⁰⁰ The life of the Christian worshipper should then portray this unity and not retreat from the secular.

Raymundo Panikkar’s opinion is that if worship is to have any meaning at all for the life of the modern person, all traditional forms must first be relegated to the private sector of human life in order to allow for an enlightenment and a liberation from traditional forms of worship.⁴⁰¹ In the second place, he says, secular forms of worship must be found which will be able to express the crux of worship in the very realm of the secular.⁴⁰² This kind of worship needs to have a direct influence on the life of the people to be of any relevance.

Consistent with his line of argument, and in agreement with Muller and Davies, Panikkar also embraces the fact that worship cannot be disconnected from ordinary human life because it forms an integral part of life itself.⁴⁰³ These two corollaries are interconnected. On the one hand, Panikkar says, “worship has to permeate ordinary human life and, on the other, real human life has to make worship alive and significant”.⁴⁰⁴ The symbiosis is a crucial and important one.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ Panikkar, “Secularization and Worship”, in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 45.

⁴⁰² Ibid., p. 51.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

Understanding what Muller, Davies and Panikkar say, it becomes clear that worship, to sustain its relevancy, has to have a direct bearing on the life of the people. It cannot avoid the secular. Panikkar goes so far as to say that only secularization could save worship from being meaningless.⁴⁰⁵ He therefore implies that secularization is a necessary process for the sustenance of relevancy in worship. The draft section on “The Worship of God in a Secular Age” affirms the necessity of secularization for meaningful worship in arguing that the process of secularization may have been God’s way of “recalling us to authentic worship”.⁴⁰⁶ It states that “because God took upon Himself the realities of the world in a concrete and particular human existence that processes have been released in history which have now resulted in secularization”.⁴⁰⁷ When God therefore recalls humanity to true worship, we need to “lay ourselves open to God in, through and beyond the world, and not apart from it”.⁴⁰⁸ True worship needs to wrestle with reality, because separation from reality distorts worship. “In every height and every depth of our so-called secular experience there may be a ‘beyond’ to recognize, and this is done only by integrating all experience in worship and being worshipful in all experience”.⁴⁰⁹ Taking this point to its logical conclusion, the section states that “for the sake of living worship and for the sake of worshipful living”, humanity must be open to all realities such as science,

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 28.

⁴⁰⁶ *Drafts for Sections: Prepared for the Fourth Assembly of the WCC: Uppsala, Sweden*, p. 98.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 104.

technology and culture.⁴¹⁰ It aptly argues that if we are not open to the energies of the world, we shall not be able to keep adequately in touch with reality to be open to the energies of God, for it is these which give fulfillment to the energies of the world.⁴¹¹

Assuming this line of argument, secularization would then not extinguish worship, but would definitely play a significant role in moulding it to be ever relevant.

The 1969 Consultation on “Worship in a Secular Age” made it thus very clear that worship cannot exist on the “transcendental plane”.⁴¹² It had to infiltrate human life in the secular world. Hence secular worship could be possible without losing Christ in the process. The challenge is to have forms of worship that are sufficiently flexible to adapt to new circumstances and to remain relevant to the present, as well as true to the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁴¹³

4.5. Further developments in addressing secularization

After 1969, there were two other occasions where the subject of secularization was touched on. Firstly, at a meeting of the Commission on Faith and Order at Louvain in August 1971, where a study report on “Worship Today” was presented.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ Ibid., p. 105.

⁴¹² This was in particular the view of Panikkar, but was also affirmed by the other presenters.

⁴¹³ Muller, “Living Worship”, in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 89.

The report was a further attempt to deal with the relevance of worship in a secularized society. Issues that were addressed in the report were the following: a) Worship in a secular age; b) how “today” can be described in relation to worship; c) whether it is possible in the present situation to worship meaningfully; d) where the starting point for the renewal of worship is; e) reforms that are needed; f) the crisis of worship cannot be solved by reforms; g) conclusions for the ecumenical movement.⁴¹⁴ The conference at Louvain recommended that the “Faith and Order Secretariat should collect from many churches and areas examples of forms and styles of worship which are proving especially creative and enriching in relation to the life and activity of the Church in the contemporary world”.⁴¹⁵

Four years later, in 1975, a workshop on spirituality was held in England at Windsor Castle from 8 – 17 May. According to Van der Bent, this workshop traced the discussion on worship from the Fourth Assembly to the consultation on “Worship in a Secular Age” in Geneva in 1969, as well as the Faith and Order Conference which was held at Louvain in 1971. The participants who were involved in experimental worship at the St. George’s Cathedral in Windsor Castle were faced with this challenging question: what opportunities were there for the youth to bring the real struggles and problems of daily life into worship?⁴¹⁶

⁴¹⁴ See Van der Bent, “The Concern for Spirituality: An Analytical and Bibliographical Survey of the Discussion within the WCC Constituency” in *The Ecumenical Review*, p. 106.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., p. 107.

After this consultation, there is no clear indication how this crucial question of worship and secularization further developed within the ecumenical movement. There seem to have been no further consultations or workshops devoted to this important theme. Wainwright remarks that secularization eventually fell out of fashion.⁴¹⁷ Although he is not clear as to precisely when this started to happen, he indicates that even those theologians who initially endorsed secularization had somehow lost interest in it.

4.6. Conclusion

The fact that there were subsequently no major workshops and consultations on the theme of worship and secularization, does not mean that the topic was exhausted. Even if we have no record of discussions on this theme at international level, the further secularization of the world would always have posed challenges to the worship life of churches in the ecumenical movement. Hence it is possible that denominations or Synods could have addressed this theme at their level. For Muller, worship will remain a conversation with God and with the world, which includes “announcement and confession, listening, asking and answering, in an event which affects the whole of life and sets it in motion”.⁴¹⁸ Therefore, he said, worship will always “undeniably demands

⁴¹⁷ Wainwright, “Ecumenical Convergences”, in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 740

⁴¹⁸ Muller, “Living Worship”, in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 90.

concrete expression”. Whether it be secularization or globalization⁴¹⁹, or whatever processes that will arise in the future, worship will need to express it anew in such circumstances.

⁴¹⁹ Globalization essentially signifies the “heightened political, economic and cultural interaction between societies globally.” Such interaction means that boundaries of time and space are weakened through the effect of instant communication and rapid travel. For further discussion and more referencing on globalization, see Paul Avis, *A Church Drawing Near: Spirituality and Mission in a Post-Christian Culture*, (London & New York: T & T Clark LTD, 2003) pp. 62 – 64.

CHAPTER FIVE

BAPTISM, EUCHARIST AND MINISTRY (BEM) IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

5.1. Introduction

For a major part of the twentieth century, worship has become one of the main points on the agenda in the life of the ecumenical movement. As the liturgical movement⁴²⁰ gained momentum since the 1950's, many churches became

⁴²⁰ The term 'liturgical movement' denotes the phenomenon of recovering the centrality of worship in the life of the 20th century churches. This movement had antecedents in attempts at liturgical reform and renewal during the Enlightenment, and particularly in the 19th century. One example is the Anglo-Catholic revival that brought a renewed interest in liturgical sources as well as theology and led to a renewal of liturgical life in many Anglo-Catholic communities. But it was only in the 20th century that the Liturgical Movement gained momentum particularly in the Roman Catholic Church. It actually started off with a speech by the Benedictine monk Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960) at the Catholic Lay Congress in Malines, Belgium, in 1909. This conference signalled the inauguration of the Liturgical Movement. The movement was first seized upon by intellectuals and university students but, later, it won ground among a large number of parishes. The concerns of the Liturgical Movement also fell on fruitful ground in many non-Western countries, where the churches had long suffered under the alienation between traditional Roman Catholic liturgical life and the worshipping community. See Teresa Berger, "Liturgical Movement", in *A New Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, ed. by J.G. Davies, (London: SCM Press, 1986), p. 616.

One of the movement's basic insights was the rediscovery of the active role of the congregation in worship. The conference of 1909 realized that active participation by the people in the liturgy was the best means of nourishing and deepening the spiritual life.

The Liturgical movement was not anti-traditionalist and aimed at renewal rather than revolution. It was concerned with the situation in the church and how that situation might be changed to bring about a better future. It sought to recall the members of the church to active involvement in the liturgy of the church. It strove for a living worship service in which the whole church could take part actively and with understanding, as the wellspring of a renewal of Christian life and mission.

While it was the Reformers of the sixteenth century who laid much emphasis on lay participation, it is the Roman Catholic Church of the 20th century which discovered the value of lay participation. The irony is that the Reformed Churches need to learn now from the Roman Catholics and in particular from the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy which was adopted at Vatican II with its elaborate discussion on the need for the laity to participate in worship. However, the Liturgical Movement has not been confined to the Roman Catholic Church. The Reformed churches also had their liturgical pioneers, both in theology and in praxis, in the 19th century and in the 20th century: Eugène Bersier, Wilfred Monod and then the Taizé community in France, Richard Paquier and Jean-Jacques van Allmen in Switzerland, the Mercersburg movement in the US, William D. Maxwell, and the Iona community in Scotland. Although the movement originated in the Roman Catholic Church, it spread to almost every other church. At

conscious of an unexpected degree of common ground in their understanding and practice of worship. But as worship constitutes the heart of church life, it is also there where the divisions among the churches become immediately and painfully evident.⁴²¹ David Peterson⁴²² underlines this unfortunate fact in holding the view that any discussion of worship will give rise to a lively debate⁴²³, sometimes with detrimental effects.

In the Reformed tradition, baptism and the eucharist are considered to be the two sacraments that take a central place in Christian worship. Together with ministry, these two essential elements of worship are highly regarded and were the concern of the ecumenical movement since its beginnings.

In this chapter, we will focus on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM), with reference to its role and existence within the life of the ecumenical movement and the particular influences it had on liturgy and spirituality. By doing so, we will study its origin and process, the theological underpinnings of the three aspects of BEM, its developments and reception by the churches within the ecumenical movement.

the present time, the Liturgical Movement is an integral part of the Ecumenical Movement. For an elaborate discussion of the Liturgical Movement, see Jacobus Bezuidenhout, *The Renewal of Reformed Worship through Retrieving the Tradition and Ecumenical Openness*.

⁴²¹ See Thomas Best and Dagmar Heller, "Introduction" in *Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism*. Faith and Order Paper No. 184, ed. by Thomas Best and Dagmar Heller, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999), p. 1.

⁴²² See his article "Worship in the New Testament" in *Worship: Adoration and Action*, p. 51.

⁴²³ In such conversations, disagreements on worship can be heated, reflecting denominational traditions or individual preferences as Bezuidenhout points out in his unpublished Masters dissertation (UCT, 1999). He holds further that dissension can also reveal profound theological differences about the nature and significance of Christian liturgy.

5.2. BEM

5.2.1. *The Process*

Since the early stages of the work of the Faith and Order, BEM have been on its agenda. The statements on baptism, eucharist and ministry were the end result of a process that took more than fifty years of study, deliberation, dialogue and debate. The process started with the first Faith and Order Conference at Lausanne in 1927. The report that emanated from this conference already devoted two different sections to the topic of the “ministry of the church” and “the sacraments”.⁴²⁴ However, at that time, no one was thinking in terms of a convergence document.⁴²⁵

After many years of ecumenical dialogues and discussions, it was felt that an adequate agreement and convergence had been reached on questions which are central both to the divisions between the churches and to the common life in unity which they seek.⁴²⁶

⁴²⁴ *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982 – 1990: Report on the Process and Responses. Faith and Order Paper No. 149*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990), p. 7.

⁴²⁵ BEM and Spirituality: A Conversation with Brother Max Thurian, in *The Ecumenical Review*, Vol. 38, No. 1, (Jan 1986), p. 29.

⁴²⁶ *Faith and Renewal: Reports and Documents of the Commission on Faith and Order, Stravanger 1985, Norway, 13 – 15 August 1985*, Faith and Order Paper No. 131, ed. by Thomas F. Best, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986), p. 70.

The Lima document⁴²⁷ was indeed the fruit of studies and dialogues over decades. Four world conferences (Lausanne 1927, Edinburgh 1937, Lund 1952, Montreal 1963) and ten plenary meetings of the Faith and Order Commission (from Chichester 1949 to Lima 1982, taking in on the way the meeting in Bristol 1967 and Accra 1974 which were important stages in the evolution of the Lima document) signpost the course of its history.⁴²⁸

Although discussions were held after Lausanne, no formal documents were produced. At the Lund Conference, Baptism and Eucharist were discussed, but not at length. What the Conference did, however, was to “set forth the Christological principle which determines the theological understanding of Church and Sacraments”.⁴²⁹ Studies on Christ and the Church proceeded with “vigor and fruitfulness” in the 1950’s with the focus more on Baptism than Communion. According to Nelson, important and stimulating writings on Christian initiation were produced as a result of these studies.⁴³⁰

With no convergence documents as yet, as Lazareth and Thurian indicate, a start had to be made with written texts that could articulate the doctrinal convergences of the churches throughout the history, first of the Faith and Order movement,

⁴²⁷ BEM is generally referred to also as the Lima text or Lima document.

⁴²⁸ *Churches respond to BEM: Official responses of the “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry” text, Vol.1*, Faith and Order Paper 129, ed. by Max Thurian, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986), p. 2.

⁴²⁹ See Robert Nelson, “BEM: Its History”, in *Ecumenism*, No. 70, June 1983, p. 5

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*

then of the World Council of Churches.⁴³¹ A turning point was reached in the history of ecumenical theology at the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order held in Montreal in 1963, where the desire was expressed to put delegates' converging thoughts down on paper. In fact, the converging thoughts on sacramental theology made it possible to produce a significant report on worship.⁴³² At this conference, a report on "The Meaning of Baptism" which was published as part of *One Lord, One Baptism* (1961) was acclaimed.⁴³³ Nelson mentions also that it was in 1963 that the "first harvest" of the Second Vatican Council in the renewal of liturgy became available. Previously the studies and reports of Faith and Order had been virtually free from Roman Catholic influence. Now, in the words of Nelson, the "new stage of ecumenism had begun and remains irrevocable".⁴³⁴

After Montreal, at the Faith and Order Commission meeting in Bristol in 1967, the search for doctrinal convergences increased with urgency. Nelson recalls that a new optimism was felt. It was at Bristol that the Faith and Order delegates started to speak of "the emerging ecumenical consensus" on Eucharist.⁴³⁵ This resulted in a first draft on the Eucharist which was to be produced soon after

⁴³¹ William Lazareth and Max Thurian, "Introduction", in *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, ed. by Max Thurian, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1983), p. xv.

⁴³² See Robert Nelson, "BEM: Its History", p. 5.

⁴³³ Geoffrey Wainwright, "Ecumenical Convergences", in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, ed. by Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 743.

⁴³⁴ See Robert Nelson, "BEM: Its History", p. 5.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*

Bristol.⁴³⁶ At a meeting in Geneva in 1970, a draft statement on baptism was produced, and this was followed with a statement on ministry at a meeting in Marseille in 1972.

Between 1972 -74, study committees were formed to draft, criticize and redraft the three statements on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry.⁴³⁷ These three statements were submitted as a draft text to the Faith and Order Commission at Accra, Ghana, in 1974 under the title *One Baptism, One Eucharist, and a Mutually Recognized Ministry*.⁴³⁸ The draft text attempted to find a common basis, especially in the section on baptism and eucharist, on which the confessionally divided traditions could agree. The material was discussed and revised and later presented to the Fifth Assembly of the WCC which met at Nairobi in 1975. A mandate was here given for the distribution of the text for the churches to study.⁴³⁹ An overwhelming response was received when over a hundred churches from around the world, representing almost every ecclesiastical tradition, returned comprehensive and meaningful comments. The subsequent progression of these texts was monitored by a group of theologians, which in 1977 became the Steering Group on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁶ Lazareth and Thurian, "Introduction", in *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, p. xiv.

⁴³⁷ Robert Nelson, "BEM: Its History", p. 5.

⁴³⁸ Wainwright, "Ecumenical Convergences", in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 744.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ Lazareth and Thurian, "Introduction", in *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, p. xv.

These contributions were then carefully examined at a consultation in 1977 in Crêt-Bérard.⁴⁴¹

This discussion (steering) group met again in 1978 in Bangalore and for a last time in Lima where the document was finalized.⁴⁴² Between the Plenary Commission meetings, a steering group on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry did further work on drafting the document, especially after September 1979, under the presidency of Frère Max Thurian of the Taizé Community.⁴⁴³

The Faith and Order Commission was again mandated by the World Council's Central Committee (Dresden 1981), this time to transmit its finally amended document (the Lima text of 1982) to the churches, along with the request for their official response, as a crucial step in the ecumenical process of reception.

This work was not accomplished by the Faith and Order Commission alone. Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry were examined in many ecumenical dialogues. These interchurch conversations, bilateral and multilateral, proved to be complementary and mutually beneficial.⁴⁴⁴

5.2.2. Its completion and presentation

⁴⁴¹ *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Faith and Order Paper No. 111, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1982), p. viii.

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

In January 1982, on the authority of the Central Committee of the WCC, over 100 theologians recommended unanimously to send out an agreed statement on “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry” to the churches for study and official response. These biblical scholars and doctrinal experts came from more than thirty countries and they represented amongst others, the following major Christian church traditions: Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Old Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed, Methodist, United, Disciples, Baptist, Adventist and Pentecostal.⁴⁴⁵

When the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC completed its work on the BEM text in January 1982 in Lima, Peru, no one foresaw the interest which the BEM statement would evoke in the Christian community. No one envisaged the impact which it would have within and among churches of such diverse historical origins and such varying traditions. This fruit of many years of ecumenical discussions has become the most widely distributed, translated, and discussed ecumenical text in modern times.⁴⁴⁶

This statement best describes the end of this particular part of this journey. This expression makes the excitement and jubilation of that time tangible for future generations. Many received BEM with astonishment because it was truly a remarkable ecumenical achievement. It was regarded as unprecedented in the modern ecumenical movement that theologians of such widely different

⁴⁴⁵ William H. Lazareth, *Growing together in Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: A Study Guide*. Faith and Order Paper No. 114, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1982), p. 4.

⁴⁴⁶ *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982 – 1990: Report on the Process and Responses*. Faith and Order Paper No. 149, p. vii.

traditions should be able to speak so harmoniously about baptism, eucharist and ministry.⁴⁴⁷ This convergence was celebrated amidst the awareness of the diversity in theological thought and liturgical practices.

The Faith and Order Commission now presents this Lima text (1982) to the churches. We do so with deep conviction, for we have become increasingly aware of our unity in the body of Christ. We have found reason to rejoice in the discovery of the richness of our common inheritance in the Gospel. We believe that the Holy Spirit has led us to this time in the ecumenical movement when sadly divided churches have been enabled to arrive at substantial theological agreements. We believe that many significant advances are possible if in our churches we are sufficiently courageous and imaginative to embrace God's gift of Church unity.⁴⁴⁸

With these words, the BEM document was presented to the different churches in the ecumenical movement. The churches were asked to engage with the text in order to respond in meaningful ways.⁴⁴⁹ It was expected that this document would reach even the people at local church level. It was important that every member church and their extensions should feel part of this remarkable achievement and highlight in the life of the ecumenical movement. Every

⁴⁴⁷ BEM, p. ix. See also the article of Geoffrey Wainwright, "Introduction to Liturgies of the Eucharist" in *Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration*, ed. by Max Thurian & Geoffrey Wainwright, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1983), p. 99.

⁴⁴⁸ Lazareth, *Growing together in Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: A Study Guide*. Faith and Order Paper No. 114, p. 4.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

member church needed to celebrate this occasion with meaningful participation and constructive feedback. It would help the cause of the Commission if the churches could respond to matters such as the following: “The extent to which your church can recognize in this text the faith of the Church through the ages; the consequences your church can draw from this text for its relations and dialogues with other churches; the guidance your church can take from this text for its worship, educational, ethical, and spiritual life and witness”.⁴⁵⁰

Thus far the story has been told about the process to get BEM launched, and used by the churches. What follows is an attempt to discuss the theology of Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry.

5.3. Baptism

5.3.1. Its meaning

For every Christian, baptism is the “portal into a new life in Christ: a new life lived in relationship with Christ within the body of Christ, in a local Christian community set within the context of the worldwide church”.⁴⁵¹ From this clear and helpful perception of Best and Heller, we can draw the conclusion that baptism is not only a matter for individuals or particular Christian communities. The fact that baptism concerns the whole church, has affected discussions on the

⁴⁵⁰ BEM, p. x.

⁴⁵¹ See Best and Heller, “Introduction”, in *Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism*, p. 3. The actual BEM document also emphasizes this point by reiterating that baptism unites the baptized with Christ and His people.

ecumenical implications of baptism to become central in recent years. “Through our common baptism”, as Best and Heller argue, “we are all brought into Christ, and this forms the basis of our ecumenical engagement with one another: because Christ has claimed us we are all brought into Christ, whatever our theological, ecclesiological, historical, cultural, social, ethnic and economic differences may be”.⁴⁵² Best and Heller continue by stating that Christ’s claim precedes all earthly sources of both identity and difference, to all the “principalities and powers” of this world, to all the “factors within and without the churches which threaten to divide us from one another and to prevent our claiming our birthright to be *one* in Christ Jesus”.⁴⁵³ Moreover, Best and Heller believe that since Christians are all incorporated into the crucified and glorified Christ, nothing can separate them from one another.⁴⁵⁴ This understanding, one can conclude, ought to compel Christians to pursue an ecumenical relationship, because we are one through our baptism in Jesus Christ. Baptism, thus, is an ecumenical act.⁴⁵⁵ This ecumenical character implies also that it is celebrated only once. BEM emphatically states that “baptism is an unrepeatable act” and that “any practice which might be interpreted as ‘re-baptism’ must be

⁴⁵² Ibid.

Many Churches accept nowadays that baptism is baptism into Christ, and not into a denomination. Hence, one becomes a Christian through baptism and not a Methodist or Congregationalist, etc.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ BEM and Spirituality: A Conversation with Brother Max, in *The Ecumenical Review*, p. 31.

avoided”.⁴⁵⁶ Endorsing this belief, Thurian states that baptism is always catholic wherever it is celebrated and it should never be repeated”.⁴⁵⁷

In trying to broaden our understanding of baptism, the Lima text provides us with a relatively elaborate and enlightening description of the meaning of baptism. Together with views of other scholars, the five points can be explained as follows:

1) Participation in Christ's death and resurrection

Baptism means participating in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁴⁵⁸ By baptism, Christians are immersed in the liberating death of Christ where their sins are buried, where, the “old Adam” is crucified with Christ, and where the power of sin is broken. Thus those baptized are no longer slaves to sin, but free, as the image of death also suggests the sign of baptism as a forgiveness of sin. According to Louis Wiel, the connection between death and the forgiveness of sin is seen in baptism as “the effective sign of death to self-centred life, the purification of that sinful self and a rebirth to a life centred in God and offered in service to others”.⁴⁵⁹ Fully

⁴⁵⁶ BEM, p. 4.

Moltman also shares BEM's view of baptism as an unrepeatable action. But Moltman supports this by linking baptism with the Lord's Supper. Both baptism and Lord's Supper are “eschatological signs” for Moltmann. Baptism is the eschatological sign of “starting out” and the Lord's Supper is the eschatological sign of “being on the way.” The former is the unrepeatable “sign of grace” and the latter is the repeatable “sign of hope.” See Harold Hatt, “Baptism as a liberating event: the witness of C.C. Morrison, Jurgen Moltmann, and BEM”, in *Mid-Stream*, Vol. xxvi, No. 1, Jan 1987, p. 27.

⁴⁵⁷ BEM and Spirituality: A Conversation with Brother Max, in *The Ecumenical Review*, p. 31.

⁴⁵⁸ BEM, p. 2.

identified with the death of Christ, they are buried with him and are raised here and now to a new life in the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁴⁶⁰ To speak of baptism as a participation in the death and resurrection of Christ is to speak of the profound identification which exists between Christ and each member of his Body.

2) Conversion, pardoning and cleansing

The baptism which makes Christians partakers of the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection involves confession of sin and conversion of heart.⁴⁶¹ The New Testament underlies the ethical implications of baptism by representing it as an ablution which washes the body with pure water, a cleansing of the heart of all sin, and an act of justification (Hebrews 10:22).

3) The gift of the Spirit

God bequeaths upon all baptized persons the anointing and the promise of the Holy Spirit. According to BEM, God then marks them with a seal and implants in their hearts the first part of our inheritance as sons and daughters of God.⁴⁶² The Spirit restores the recipient of baptism to a place in the covenant of God. The work of the Spirit is not restricted to the moment when baptism takes place, i.e. the liturgical moment, but "precedes and follows the rite as well as being articulated sacramentally in the initiatory rite".⁴⁶³ It is the

⁴⁵⁹ Louis Wiel, *Sacraments and Liturgy: The Outward Signs*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher Limited, 1983), p. 69.

⁴⁶⁰ BEM, p. 2.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Louis Wiel, *Sacraments and Liturgy: The Outward Signs*, p. 69.

Holy Spirit who sustains the baptized in the life of faith; hence it is the Spirit who helps us live out our baptism. The latter takes place “within the bond of unity as one people who witness to and serve the one Lord in all parts of the world”.⁴⁶⁴

4) Incorporation into the body of Christ

Christians are brought into union with Christ, with each other and with the worldwide Church. Our common baptism is a basic bond of unity which unites us to Christ in faith. This baptismal unity should be realized in one holy, catholic Church which effects a genuine Christian witness to the healing and reconciling love of God.⁴⁶⁵ Our one baptism in Christ comprises thus a call to the churches “to overcome their divisions and visibly manifest their fellowship”.⁴⁶⁶

5) The sign of the Kingdom

Baptism starts the reality of the new life given in the midst of the present world. It gives participation in the community of the Holy Spirit and is a sign of the Kingdom of God and of the life of the world to come.⁴⁶⁷

Expanding on the meaning of baptism set out above, Gurioan argues that through the act of baptism, the baptized is given a new identity, a new orientation, and a

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁵ BEM, p. 3.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

new goal.⁴⁶⁸ Within this new community and new orientation with a new identity, formation takes place. Therefore, baptism is not simply a rite, but is a life lived to God, which finds completion only at the end, as in the case of Jesus whose baptism reaches its fulfillment on the cross. Hence, baptism has an inevitable connection with growth and formation, for it redirects the life of the baptized towards true maturity.⁴⁶⁹ In this sense, baptism can be seen, apart from other meanings, as the initiation of a process of moral formation.

The above analysis of the meaning of baptism thus entails the story of dying in yourself and resurrection in the Lord, receiving the Holy Spirit, and living a new life with a new identity. This will be done to the glory of God and to the benefit of humankind.

In summary: Baptism is incorporation into Christ, who is the crucified and risen Lord. It marks the admission into the New Covenant between God and God's people.⁴⁷⁰ With this understanding in mind, let us explore what ethical significance is embedded and implied within the rite of baptism.

5.3.2. Ethical significance

Many of the theologians who contributed to the discussion on baptism, refer to the ethical significance of baptism. This view was reinforced at the consultation

⁴⁶⁸ Vigen Gurioan, "Moral Formation and Christian Worship", in *The Ecumenical Review*, Vol. L9, No. 3, (July 1997), p. 381.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁰ BEM, p. 2.

which was held at Faverges.⁴⁷¹ One of the major points presented and affirmed at the consultation was the view that Christian ethics begins in baptism.⁴⁷² Vigen Guroian supported this argument of a definite relation between baptism and ethics with the following statement: “Baptism is a defining and self-constitutive practice of the church which is itself the wellspring of the church’s ethics, much as it gives birth to new Christians, new ecclesial persons and the church itself, the body of Christ in the world”.⁴⁷³ The consultation at Faverges further added that “Christian ethics are those of a community, which is entered, and lived in, through the process of baptism including preparation, an act of water-washing and continued Christian formation”.⁴⁷⁴ Even the BEM document, as interpreted by Guroian, pushed strongly in the direction of re-grounding Christian ethics in liturgy, and in baptism particularly.⁴⁷⁵

Guroian based his arguments on his conviction that “baptism encompasses the entire temporal life-span of a person”. It is beginning and end. This, he continued, asks Christians to recapitulate and assess, revisit and reflect upon their baptisms throughout their lives in order never to forget where they come from and to whom their lives are finally bound and destined. In this way, Guroian

⁴⁷¹ Best and Heller, “Introduction” in *Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism*, p. 5.

⁴⁷² See the “Report of the Consultation at Faverges”, in *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁴⁷³ See his article “On Baptism and the Spirit: the ethical significance of the marks of the church” in *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁴⁷⁴ Best & Heller, “Introduction” in *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴⁷⁵ Vigen Guroian, “On Baptism and the Spirit: the ethical significance of the marks of the church” in *Ibid.*, p. 66.

contended, will the ethics of a Christian become a complete way of life, “a way of being in the world in service to the world and yet belonging entirely to God, and to God alone”.⁴⁷⁶ The consultation at Faverges agreed with the viewpoints of Guroian as the meeting stated that they regarded baptism as “initiation into the community of believers, and as a life-long process of growth in Christian identity and discernment.”⁴⁷⁷ Baptism is a life lived to God, which finds its fulfilment only at the end, as Jesus’ baptism found its fulfilment on the cross.

Guroian continued his argument by making a distinction between the baptism that John performed and baptism in Christ. He argued that John’s baptism was purely of water which effected repentance and the remissions of sins. Baptism in Christ is also with water but also in spirit. This, he referred to as “a mystical and eschatological passage with Christ through death in the new life of the kingdom”.⁴⁷⁸ If we perceive this from a christological viewpoint, he added, this baptism in Jesus is the church’s expression that Christians need to strive to live a Christlike life. Therefore, baptism and Christian ethics begin with the renunciation of all that is evil and a radical turning from any inharmonious existence to a truly new life.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 73

⁴⁷⁷ “Report of the Consultation at Faverges: Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism” in Ibid., p. 75.

⁴⁷⁸ Vigen Guroian, “On Baptism and the Spirit: the ethical significance of the marks of the church” in Ibid., p. 69.

The above arguments thus affirm that Christian ethics begins in baptism. It begins with a new life in Christ. The Faverges consultation agreed that Christian ethics only comes into existence once one has repented and has received forgiveness of sins, and lastly when incorporation is granted by the Spirit into the eternal body of Christ.⁴⁷⁹ The Holy Spirit plays a vital role in this new life. It nurtures and sustains this new life. Therefore, Christian baptism is not only under the sign of the cross, but also of the Holy Spirit. It is important, Gurioan argued, that this pneumatological character of baptism be reflected and acknowledged within a truly trinitarian Christian ethic.⁴⁸⁰

Prior arguments have alluded to the fact that a baptismal ethic is also an ecclesial ethic, not the ethic of the individual alone, but the fruit of the Spirit born within and through the *koinonia* of God's people. Baptismal ethics, which is indeed Christian ethics, is relational, in the sense that its inspiration and aspirations are rooted in the life of the community rather than just the individual.⁴⁸¹ "We are never alone" says Forrester, "but are constantly in solidarity with countless others, who encourage, guide and warn".⁴⁸² As part of the body of Christ, Christians are responsible to and for one another. And it is in baptism that we

⁴⁷⁹ "Report of the Consultation at Faverges: Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism" in *Ibid.* p. 91.

⁴⁸⁰ Vigen Guroian, "On Baptism and the Spirit: the ethical significance of the marks of the church" in *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁴⁸¹ "Report of the Consultation at Faverges: Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism" in *Ibid.* p. 91.

⁴⁸² Duncan Forrester, *The True Church and Morality: Reflections on Ecclesiology and Ethics*, Risk Book Series, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997), p. 53.

experience and enter a fuller unity, a more comprehensive and reconciled community, a more total *koinonia*.⁴⁸³ One's formation is not solely for one's own good, but also for the benefit of the community. The advantages of the new life in Christ must advantage the community.

The significance of the use of water in the act of baptism is that it represents a purification of creation, a dying to that which is negative and destructive in the world, and a cleansing into the beauty of holiness.⁴⁸⁴ Those who are baptized into the body of Christ are made partakers of a renewed existence where they will continually strive for a just order. The baptized will know that their baptism into Christ's death has ethical implications which not only call for personal sanctification, but also motivate Christians to strive for the realization of the will of God in all realms of life (Rom. 6:9, 1 Pet. 2:21 – 4:6). As they grow into the Christian life of faith, baptized believers reveal that humanity can be rejuvenated and liberated.⁴⁸⁵ They have a common responsibility to bear witness to the Gospel of Christ which comes into fruition in the Church and particularly in the world.

5.4. Eucharist

⁴⁸³ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁴ Lazareth, *Growing together in Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: A Study Guide*, p. 39.

⁴⁸⁵ BEM, p. 4.

Max Thurian believes that the celebration of the eucharist is the chief element of the church's worship.⁴⁸⁶ The eucharist, as the BEM document speaks of, includes both the proclamation of the word and the celebration of the sacrament, i.e. the sacramental meal of proclamation and celebration. Accusations have been levelled against the eucharist as emphasizing the sacramental above proclamation. What the Lima document seems to highlight, according to Thurian, is that there is no celebration of the eucharist without a proclamation in one or another form.⁴⁸⁷ To summarize: "The eucharist, word and sacrament, is not just a family meal nor just a fellowship meeting. It is a liturgical and sacramental meal instituted by Jesus following the Jewish tradition of the passover meal". The Lima document urges that this sacramental meal be frequently⁴⁸⁸ celebrated, at least every Sunday.⁴⁸⁹ This (eucharist), it argues, deepens the faith of the Christian⁴⁹⁰.

⁴⁸⁶ Max Thurian "The Lima Document on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry": The Event and its Consequences" in *Churches respond to BEM: Official responses of the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" text*, p. 13.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ It is important to note that the WCC comprises mostly of Protestant churches (of which Lutheran, Reformed, Anabaptist and Anglican form the main strands) and it was the Protestants who deviated from the Roman Catholic tradition of weekly celebration, or every time they gathered. During the Protestant Reformation, it was Calvin who pleaded for weekly celebration of the eucharist, but he was outvoted by the city council of Geneva. The other Swiss Reformers did not show much interest in regular celebration of the eucharist. In fact, Zwingli advocated quarterly observance and thereby broke with what the Reformation was about: the recovery of first century and New Testament worship. The celebration of Holy Communion was an integral part of the worship of the Ancient Church, and for this reason was it frequently celebrated. Thus is it now surprising that a movement (WCC) which is largely Protestant, wants to revert to its roots namely, weekly celebration of the eucharist. Calvin, although he did not get the support from the other Reformers, never swerved from his position on weekly celebrations but was forced into a practice that he abhorred, and which he knew to be completely at variance with the teaching and practice of the New Testament and the Early Church. See the unpublished Masters dissertation of Jacobus Bezuidenhout, "The renewal of Reformed Worship by Retrieving the Tradition and Ecumenical Openness", for an in-depth discussion surrounding the different viewpoints on the eucharist by the main Reformers.

5.4.1. *Its meaning*

J.J. von Allmen, a Swiss Reformed theologian, wrote a book⁴⁹¹ in which he both resumed and supplemented the work pertaining to the eucharist⁴⁹² in the World

⁴⁸⁹ Max Thurian “The Lima Document on “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry”: The Event and its Consequences” in *Churches respond to BEM: Official responses of the “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry” text*, p. 17.

⁴⁹⁰ BEM, p. 16.

⁴⁹¹ The Lord’s Supper (English translation, Lutterworth 1969)

⁴⁹² The reference to the Holy Communion as the eucharist has become the most widely used name ecumenically for the rite which almost all Christian communities believe to have been instituted by Jesus at the last supper with his disciples (1 Cor. 11: 23-25; cf. Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22:14-20). “Eucharist” stems from the Greek word for “thanksgiving” and it specifically refers to the central prayer in the rite, in which God is thanked for the works of creation and redemption accomplished through Christ and in the Holy Spirit. The Eucharist is also referred to as the Lord’s Supper, the divine liturgy, holy communion, the offering and the mass. According to Wainwright, the different names convey to some extent “particular confessional associations, and differences in the understanding and practice of the eucharist have often been a cause, symptom or result of wider doctrinal and spiritual differences among the churches”. Elaborating on his viewpoint, Wainwright gives the example of how, in the 16th century, the differences over the sacrificial character of the eucharist reflected the differences between Catholics and Protestants over the roles of God and the human being in the “achievement of redemption and the appropriation of salvation.”

Bezuidenhout points out that in the Roman Mass, the Lord’s Supper is viewed as a sacrifice, while the Roman Catholics also believe in the transubstantiation of the bread and the wine. Luther fiercely criticized the Roman Church for holding that Christ is present in the sacrament as a sacrifice. He also rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation which claimed that the wine and bread was changed into Christ’s real blood and body (See also A.C. Barnard, *Die Erediens*, 1981, p.29)

Wainwright correctly remarks that differences among the Lutherans, Zwinglians and Calvinists over the presence of Christ at the Lord’s Supper were connected with their differences in Christology as such (see Wainwright, “Eucharist”, in *Dictionary of Ecumenical Movement*, p. 417). Again, for Luther, the sacrament of communion was to be understood as a gracious gift *from* God and not as a sacrifice *to* God. He sharply attacked the medieval view of the sacrifice of the mass, which taught that the Mass was a repetition of the sacrificial death of Christ. But he did not make the mistake of discarding altogether the idea of sacrifice. He transformed it by giving it a truer interpretation. In Holy Communion, Luther declared, Christ is not again offered, because he was offered once and for all on Calvary. Maxwell point out that Luther held the view that we “offer ourselves in fellowship with Him; and we offer a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving as we identify ourselves with him (see W.D. Maxwell, *An Outline of Christian Worship: Its developments and forms*, p. 75). In this sense, Luther argued, the Lord’s Supper is a sacrifice; but it is not a veritable re-enactment of Jesus’ sacrificial death. In Calvin’s view, Christ offers himself to believers in the Lord’s Supper, and in the Supper they find true communion with Jesus Christ. Christ’s presence is authentically manifested and exhibited; Christ is truly present and is presented to us anew. The only issue, as Calvin declared, has to do with the mode of Christ’s presence in the sacrament. Calvin stated emphatically that he did not mean by the real presence

Council of Churches. In this book he sets forth a balanced yet dynamic view of the eucharist, based on the following complementary pairs:

the Supper as anamnesis of Christ and epiclesis of the Spirit, the eucharist as revelation of the limits and the fullness of the Church; communion with Christ and with the brethren, the Supper as bread and life and as sacrifice; the Supper as prayer and as a response to prayer; the eucharist in the rhythm of the Church's mission and worship.⁴⁹³

The views of von Allmen encapsulated mostly what the BEM document says about the meaning of the Eucharist. Let us then briefly explore the meaning of the eucharist by using the BEM document as a starting point while also bringing the thoughts of other scholars to this subject:

a) The eucharist as thanksgiving to the Father

According to the BEM document, the eucharist is first a proclamation as well as a celebration of the work of God.⁴⁹⁴ It is thanksgiving to God for all

of Christ that Jesus Christ was 'locally present', in the sense that his body could be "taken into the hand, and chewed by the teeth and swallowed by the throat" (see Robert Shelton, *A Theology of the Lord's Supper from the Perspectives of the Reformed Tradition* p.262). For Calvin, it was important to affirm that while Christ truly offers himself to us in the Lord's Supper, there is no necessity to bring Christ onto the earth that he may be connected to us – that is, to have true communion with us. To insist on such is to fail to understand the work of the Holy Spirit. The latter makes possible by faith what our minds cannot completely comprehend – namely, that through the power of the Holy Spirit, "that sacred communion of flesh and blood by which Christ transcends his life into us" is attested and sealed in the Lord's Supper. Calvin was quick to acknowledge that the mode of Christ's presence could never be grasped fully by our minds but could be apprehended only in faith. The heart of the debate amongst the Reformers was the real presence of Christ in the sacrament and the interpretation of the words, "this is my body".

⁴⁹³ See the article of Geoffrey Wainwright on "Introduction to Liturgies of the Eucharist" in *Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration*, p. 107.

⁴⁹⁴ BEM, p. 10.

that he has accomplished for humanity in creation.⁴⁹⁵ Thurian⁴⁹⁶ and Tillard⁴⁹⁷ concur in calling the eucharist a sacrifice of praise and of thanksgiving. Thurian goes even further, when he suggests that we can offer the sacrifice of praise in thanksgiving for everything good and beautiful that God has made in the world and humanity. Thus the eucharist is the benediction (*berakah*) by which the Church expresses its thankfulness for all the benefits that humankind receives from God.⁴⁹⁸ Wainwright emphasizes, that in the sacrifice of praise, the emphasis is not so much on the praise, because God can do without it.⁴⁹⁹ The accent falls rather on the offering of ourselves in Christ. He quotes John Chrysostom who wrote that “God does not need anything of ours, but we stand in need of all things from God. The thanksgiving itself adds nothing to God, but it brings us closer to God”.⁵⁰⁰

b) The eucharist as anamnesis or Memorial of Christ

⁴⁹⁵ BEM and Spirituality: A Conversation with Brother Max Thurian, in *The Ecumenical Review*, p. 32.

⁴⁹⁶ See his article, “The Eucharist, Memorial, Sacrifice of Praise and Supplication” in *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, p. 97.

⁴⁹⁷ See his article, “The Eucharist, Gift of God” in *Ibid.*, p. 115.

Tillard also shares with us where the name “eucharist” derived from: “We know from Ignatius, Justin and the Didache that this is an ancient name. A study of the works of Philo shows the connection between this term and the “sacrificial” traditions of the Old Testament; it seems to be derived from the “sacrificial liturgy of the Temple”. More precisely still, it goes back to the OT *todah*, which we know means a laudatory confession of God, a proclamation of the wonders of the divine grace, a glorification of the power at work in salvation” p. 115

⁴⁹⁸ BEM, p. 10.

⁴⁹⁹ See Wainwright, *Worship with One Accord: Where Liturgy and Ecumenism Embrace*, p. 204

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

“The eucharist is the memorial of the crucified and risen Christ, i.e. the living and effective sign of his sacrifice, accomplished once and for all on the cross and still operative on behalf of all humankind”.⁵⁰¹ Thurian agreed also with this in his argument that the word “memorial” is central to the profound meaning and understanding of the eucharist. The memorial, he adds, is not merely a subjective remembrance, but it is a deep liturgical action which actualizes the event of Christ’s sacrifice. The Christian who participates in the eucharist, presents to the Father this unique sacrifice as an offering of thanksgiving. So when the celebrant at the Lord’s table says, “Do this as a memorial of me”, it really means “Do this so that my sacrifice may be present among you and that my Father may remember me on your behalf”.⁵⁰²

The cross is ever present in the eucharist, as Jesus’ deeds for humankind are remembered through the eucharist. The cross, Thurian says, extends the unique and perfect work of Jesus to the whole of humanity through space and time.⁵⁰³ He therefore concludes that the Church meets Christ in the eucharist. One can also argue that it is Christ who meets the Church at the eucharist as it was God through Christ who initiated the event on the cross. Hence the memorial element is created by Christ’s deeds and not by any good of humanity.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid., p. 11.

⁵⁰² Max Thurian, “The Eucharist, Memorial, Sacrifice of Praise and Supplication” in *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* ed. by Max Thurian (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1983), p. 91.

⁵⁰³ Ibid., p. 98.

c) *The Eucharist as Invocation of the Spirit*

The Spirit fulfils the promise contained in the words of institution by making the crucified and risen Christ present in the eucharistic meal. The presence of Christ is undoubtedly the centre of the eucharist, yet it is “the Father who is the primary origin and final fulfilment of the eucharistic event” with the Holy Spirit⁵⁰⁴ who “is the immeasurable strength of love which makes it possible and continues to make it effective. The bond between the Eucharistic celebration and the mystery of the Triune God reveals the role of the Holy Spirit as that of the One who makes the historical words of Jesus present and alive”.⁵⁰⁵ Without the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the repetition of Christ’s words could easily become just a historical account, but in the Spirit, “the eucharist becomes the living manifestation of those words and Christ’s new presence in the midst of his people”.⁵⁰⁶ Hence, Thurian says, the eucharist with its Trinitarian character, is at the very centre of the church’s life.⁵⁰⁷

d) *The Eucharist as Communion of the Faithful*

When the church gathers for eucharist, Christ nourishes the life of the Church. This gathering is at the same time “communion within the body of

⁵⁰⁴ According to Wainwright, the traditional Orthodox insistence on the pneumatological dimensions of the Lord’s Supper has been largely received by the Western churches. He mentions, however, that some Protestant responses continue to question whether the Holy Spirit is appropriately invoked not only on the whole assembly, but more particularly upon the bread and wine. See his discussion on “Eucharist”, in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 419.

⁵⁰⁵ BEM, p. 13.

⁵⁰⁶ BEM and Spirituality, A Conversation with Brother Max Thurian, in *The Ecumenical Review*, p. 32.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

Christ which is the Church. The sharing in one bread and the common cup in a given place demonstrates and affects the oneness of the sharers with Christ and with their fellow sharers in all times and places. It is in the eucharist that the community of God's people is finally manifested".⁵⁰⁸ Hence the ecclesiological dimension of the eucharist includes communion with all the saints and martyrs.⁵⁰⁹ A link is furthermore established between "each local eucharistic celebration" and "the whole church".⁵¹⁰

e) *The eucharist as Meal of the Kingdom*

"The eucharist is the feast at which the Church gives thanks to God for the signs of renewal and joyfully celebrates and anticipates the coming of the Kingdom of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:29).⁵¹¹ Signs of this renewal are present in the world wherever the grace of God is evident and human beings work for justice, love and peace.⁵¹² Lazareth affirms the idea of a sacramental meal. In this meal, he argues that visible signs⁵¹³ in the liturgy together with the signs of renewal communicate to us God's love in Jesus Christ.⁵¹⁴ The eucharist is thus a hopeful event. It ought to renew and energize the Christian to live a faithful and obedient life to the honour and

⁵⁰⁸ BEM, p. 14.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 12.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid., p. 14.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² Ibid.

⁵¹³ This can be understood as the sharing of peace through a greeting (or a hug) which takes place at a certain point during the eucharistic liturgy.

⁵¹⁴ William H. Lazareth, *Growing together in Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: A Study Guide*, p. 49.

glory of the Lord. The eucharist strengthens the Christians to proclaim and manifest God's will in the world. Susan White says that in baptism, Christians put on the 'armour of salvation', whereas in the Lord's Supper, they partake of the spiritual food necessary for the demanding journey of faithfulness.⁵¹⁵ When their sins are forgiven at the table, Christians are given a fresh spiritual vitality to resist the evil temptations.

According to Wainwright the acknowledgement of the eschatological dimension of the Eucharist has found widespread approval, whether the accent be placed on "joy and hope, or on mission and service, or on the anticipation of the *parousia* and the feast of the kingdom".⁵¹⁶ He concludes that the responses of the churches to the section on the Eucharist disclose the same tensions between present realization and future consummation as indeed mark the scriptural and traditional material concerning the End and the eucharist's relation to it.⁵¹⁷

5.4.2. Ethical significance

The BEM document emphasizes that the eucharist extends beyond the liturgical act – it embraces all aspects of life. The eucharist challenges Christians to live reconciled with one another as brothers and sisters in the one family of God. It helps Christians to continuously look for appropriate relationships in social,

⁵¹⁵ Susan White, "Spirituality, Liturgy and Worship", in *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. by Phillip Shelldrake, (London: SCM Press, 2005), p. 45.

⁵¹⁶ See his article on the "Eucharist" in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 419.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

economic and political spheres (Matt. 5: 23). When we share in the body and blood of Christ, all kinds of injustices such as racism and discrimination are challenged in the oneness of Christ. The grace that is bestowed on those at the eucharist penetrates and restores human dignity. Therefore, when people participate in the eucharist and yet do not participate in an ongoing restoration of the human condition and the situation of the world, they behave in a manner inconsistent with the meaning and understanding of the eucharist.⁵¹⁸

The relationship between liturgy and spirituality is again captured in the following viewpoint expressed in the BEM document:

Solidarity in the eucharistic communion of the body of Christ and responsible care of Christians for one another and the world find specific expressions in liturgies: in the mutual forgiveness of sins, the sign of peace, intercession for all, the eating and drinking together, the taking of the elements to the sick.⁵¹⁹

All these manifestations of love in the eucharist are directly related to Christ's own life and testimony as a servant, in whose servanthood Christians themselves participate. This participation, again, extends beyond the liturgical act. This participation in the world (spirituality) is informed and motivated by the eucharist (liturgy). In affirmation, Tillard eloquently summarizes the intrinsic

⁵¹⁸ BEM, p. 14.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

relationship that exists between spirituality (the Christian's life in its totality) and liturgy (acts such as baptism and eucharist) as follows:

For the Christian, the longing for the transformation of the world is inseparable from the lordship of Christ. The responsibility of Christians in the renewal of the world is simply another form of the radical claim engraved in them by baptism and renewed by the eucharist: 'to live for God, in Jesus Christ' (Rom. 6: 10-11), so to act that God's plan for the world may be accomplished, that the event of the Cross and Resurrection may shine in all its radiance.⁵²⁰

The eucharist is the affirmation of fellowship, and because of this, it protests against any injustice.⁵²¹ Taking part in the eucharist has an implied commitment to work for justice and peace. BEM clearly shows the great implications of the eucharist for the church in its relations with the world; it points the way to a spirituality in praxis, within the concrete and often sad realities of our broken world.

Wainwright reminds us of the apostle Paul's exhortation to the Roman Christians: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice to God, which is your reasonable worship" (Rom12:1). There remains, Wainwright continues, a specific and

⁵²⁰ J.M.R. Tillard, "The Eucharist, the Gift of God" in *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, p. 113

⁵²¹ BEM and Spirituality: A Conversation with Brother Max Thurian, p. 32.

positive conduct to which Christians are called to if their praise and thanks are to be acceptable before God.⁵²² Concurring with Wainwright, Gurioan adds that the Lord's Supper has an important formative role, not only in relation to the individual, but also to the community.⁵²³ Therefore, the eucharist may be understood as nourishment for moral growth and formation. The eucharist has an important function of edifying and building up the individual.

Conversely, all our life in this world is meant to be a grateful response to God's gifts in creation and redemption; it will come to appropriate liturgical expression in an ethically responsible eucharist.

5.4.3. Concluding Remarks

From the very beginning of the ecumenical movement, Baptism and eucharist were the subjects of theological discussion. According to Van der Bent, it is recorded that no important Faith and Order conference ever took place without at least some reference to these two sacraments.⁵²⁴ This is testimony of how serious the WCC were about eucharist and baptism, and how earnestly they wanted to have written material on it. The continuing discussion and debates, resulted in what Lathrop calls, the two "widespread and growing fruits of the ecumenical movement: the liturgical convergence on a common pattern of eucharistic celebration reflected in the worship life of many churches, and the

⁵²² Wainwright, *Worship with One Accord: Where Liturgy and Ecumenism embrace*, p. 206.

⁵²³ Gurioan, "Moral Formation and Christian Worship", in *The Ecumenical Review*, p. 374.

⁵²⁴ Ans van der Bent, "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (the 'Lima text')" in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 91.

theological convergence on the meaning and grace of the eucharist represented by the Eucharist section of BEM”.⁵²⁵

Although the responses of the churches to the BEM document will be treated under a separate heading, it is worthwhile to conclude this part on some of the churches’ responses to the Eucharist section here. In the responses, it is apparent that the eucharist was the one element that received the most attention from the contributing theologians.⁵²⁶ This may be due to the diverse stands that divide most of the churches around the understanding of the eucharist. This is how some of the churches responded to the section on the eucharist:

- * “This is the best section of BEM and the richest in content.”⁵²⁷
(United Church of Christ in Japan).
- * “If all the churches and ecclesial communities are able to accept at least the theological understanding and description of the celebration of the eucharist as described in BEM and implement it as part of their normal life, we believe that this would be an important development, and that these divided Christians now stand on a new level in regard to achieving common faith on the eucharist”.⁵²⁸ (Roman Catholic Church)

⁵²⁵ Gordon Lathrop, “Celebrations of the Eucharist in Ecumenical Contexts : A Proposal” in *Eucharist Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy and beyond* ed. by Thomas Best & Dagmar Heller, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), p. 30.

⁵²⁶ This is also my observation. The theological depth exceeds by far those of the other sections.

⁵²⁷ *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982 – 1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, p. 55.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 55 – 56.

BEM was accepted at a meeting where a worship service was held with a special eucharistic liturgy. This liturgy, known as the Lima liturgy, did not emerge out of nothing. Max Thurian, who produced the Lima liturgy, was a key member of the steering group who worked on the BEM document. What emerges in the Lima liturgy, is a direct consequence of the study on the eucharist within BEM.⁵²⁹ Hence Berger contends that “the reception of the Lima liturgy is due to it being an expression of the convergence in the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM)”.⁵³⁰ Wainwright is of the opinion that the success of the section on the eucharist in BEM may have been furthered by the Lima Liturgy.⁵³¹ Because of this importance and link that the Lima liturgy has with BEM, may be useful to discuss it briefly.

5.4.4. The Lima Liturgy

As mentioned before, the Lima Liturgy was drawn up by Max Thurian in preparation for the plenary session of the World Council of Churches Faith and

⁵²⁹ According to Gordon Lathrop, the Lima liturgy is in many ways the fruit of the local, ecumenical life of the community of Taizé, of which Max Thurian was a member. “The text of the Lima liturgy thus represents a local liturgy – from Taizé and from several specific ecumenical gatherings and their common life – which spread more widely in its use, a text which allowed many churches to meet in mutual recognition and koinonia. Because of its origin in the work of these scholars and these monks, this text has become a kind of depository not only of ecumenical insights, but also of many of the fruits of 19th and 20th -century liturgical studies and the liturgical movement”. See his article, “The Lima Liturgy and Beyond: Moving Forward Ecumenically” in *Eucharist Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy - and beyond*, p. 23.

⁵³⁰ Teresa Berger, “Lima liturgy” in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* ed. by N. Lossky et al (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002), p. 694

⁵³¹ Wainwright, “Ecumenical Convergences”, in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 746.

Order commission which was planned to meet in Lima, Peru in 1982.⁵³² It was first used on 15 January 1982 at the closing worship service at the particular plenary commission. The liturgy was presided over by Robert Wright of the Episcopal Church in the USA, with the widest range of concelebrants canonically allowed.⁵³³ The Lima liturgy did not form part of the BEM document, but was solely prepared for the closing worship service of that particular gathering.⁵³⁴ Hence, the “Lima Liturgy is an unofficial text – it was, by intention, never formally voted on or adopted by Faith and Order, nor was it sent officially to the churches, as was BEM itself.”⁵³⁵

Despite the fact that the Lima liturgy was an unofficial document, it was such a well-worked and comprehensive liturgy that it was celebrated at the highest level of meetings within the World Council of Churches, namely the assembly. The sixth assembly of the WCC in Vancouver celebrated the Lima liturgy with much

⁵³² Thurian confesses that when he was asked in October 1981 to prepare the liturgy for the meeting in Lima, he had “considerable reservations”. The idea was that that the liturgy should illustrate the theological results attained in BEM, which was about to be approved. He was at first hesitant to embark on “the adventure of liturgical composition” because for him, a liturgy originates “from the experience of tradition rather than being composed to reflect a particular set of theological ideas”. In the end, he says, he decided “to accept the assignment and to adopt a method that would honour the intention of illustrating the BEM document while also showing all due respect for the liturgical tradition of the church, the people of God’s experience of prayer throughout the ages”. In this venture, Thurian searched traditional liturgical documents for “elements that would correspond to the main points of BEM.” See his essay, “The Lima Liturgy: Origin, Intention and Structure”, in *Eucharistic Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy – and Beyond*, p. 14.

⁵³³ Wainwright highlights the fact that the Catholic and Orthodox members of the Commission, restrained by their own church discipline, did not receive communion. See *Ibid*.

⁵³⁴ Teresa Berger, “Lima liturgy” in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* p. 694.

⁵³⁵ Best & Heller (eds.) *Eucharist Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy - and beyond*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), p. 3.

appreciation; in fact, it was considered a high point of that assembly.⁵³⁶ At this occasion, the liturgy was led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, who was assisted by six ministers representing different church traditions: Lutheran (from Denmark), Reformed (from Indonesia), Methodist (from Benin), Baptist (from Hungary), Moravian (from Jamaica), and the United Church of Canada.⁵³⁷ Between its first celebration (15 January 1982) and the celebration during the sixth assembly (31 July 1983), it was for the second time celebrated at the meeting of the central committee of the WCC on 28 July 1982 where the then General Secretary Philip Potter was the presiding minister.⁵³⁸

The Lima liturgy was adopted and modified for many local ecumenical events worldwide, and, as Wainwright puts it, “its popular reception is at least an indication of the felt need for an instrument whereby a common faith can be confessed, celebrated, proclaimed, and taught together”⁵³⁹; Lathrop says, “the text became a place in which diverse churches could meet each other.”⁵⁴⁰ Wainwright further observes that the widespread use of the liturgy was also a sign that there existed a desire for a common eucharistic liturgy that could be

⁵³⁶ Teresa Berger, “Lima liturgy” in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 694.

⁵³⁷ Max Thurian, “The Lima Liturgy: Origin, Intention and Structure”, in *Eucharistic Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy – and Beyond*, p. 15

⁵³⁸ Wainwright, “Ecumenical Convergences”, in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 764.

⁵³⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁰ Gordon Lathrop, “The Lima Liturgy and Beyond: Moving Forward Ecumenically”, in *Eucharist Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy - and beyond*, p. 63.

employed when doctrinal and ecclesiological circumstances allowed.⁵⁴¹ Teresa Berger also points out that the Lima liturgy has brought forward an “obvious desire among the people of God to see emerging doctrinal convergences become embodied and rooted in the liturgical life of the church.”⁵⁴² Lathrop attributes the widespread use of the liturgy also to the fact that it is an excellent liturgical text.

It needs to be stated that Lathrop did not receive the text without criticism. He raised the following questions pertaining to the content of the liturgy:

“Can the diverse lay and ordained leadership roles, so important to Christian assembly, be more clearly indicated? Might the penitential rite be better placed before the entrance hymn or psalm rather than in the main body of the liturgy itself? Can the kyrie be used as a clear – and, perhaps, more extensive – litany of entrance? Can the collect function more strongly as the prayer of entrance? Can the text itself give some ecumenical attention to lectionary suggestions? Might hymnody play a more important role? Might there be alternate forms for intercessions with the possibility of free and local prayers included? Is the place of the peace in the communion rite really a good choice for ecumenical assemblies? Could the offertory prayers be eliminated, granted the presence of a strong anaphora and, therefore, the absence of the necessity of any further prayer over the gifts? Can the strongly thematic character of the prayer texts be avoided or reduced, yielding more attention to the always central yet

⁵⁴¹ Wainwright, “Ecumenical Convergences”, in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 767.

⁵⁴² Teresa Berger, “Lima liturgy” in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 695.

perpetually changing theme of the scriptures of the day in relationship to our salvation in Christ? In general, could there be fewer words?⁵⁴³

These questions will help any celebrant of the Lima liturgy to adapt it to a particular circumstance. The questions indicate that the Lima liturgy is not stagnant, but that there is a freedom to make changes to the order of the liturgy, provided that these changes are theologically sound and justifiable. Even though Lathrop asked these questions, he believed that the Lima liturgy would enable churches to sit around one eucharistic table. The Lima liturgy is thus not a perfect text, but it provides the churches with “a possible place to meet.”⁵⁴⁴

According to Thurian, the Lima liturgy, which is divided into two main parts, namely the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the sacraments, was to allow as many Christians as possible to participate.⁵⁴⁵ It was also meant to enable ministers from different church traditions to take an active part in the celebration. This was possible due the richness of the liturgy and the dignity that it offers to a worship service. Thurian also drew on a wide range of liturgical resources “in a way that is both respectful of the tradition and open to the future.”⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴³ Gordon Lathrop, “The Lima Liturgy and Beyond: Moving Forward Ecumenically”, in *Eucharist Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy - and beyond*, p. 64

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid. p.64

⁵⁴⁵ See his article, “The Lima Liturgy: Origin, Intention and Structure” in *Eucharist Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy - and beyond*, p. 14.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 3.

Owing to its ecumenical character, the Lima liturgy has led many Christians to a deeper understanding of the Lord's Supper. Many have come to experience it as a liturgical event that is rooted in the life of the church and its tradition. It has engendered lively discussion among liturgists about the form and content of this important eucharistic event.⁵⁴⁷

Despite the positive reception of the Lima liturgy, there were still dividing issues around the Lord's Table. It was therefore expected that churches would attend to the dividing issues.⁵⁴⁸ What the Lima liturgy achieved, was to embody the common understanding of the eucharist held by a wide range of churches such as the Protestants and Anglicans, who generally agree on the theology of the eucharist, and thus could join together at the Lord's table. It further reflects, and has come to symbolize, according to Best and Heller, "the theological convergence among these churches and their resulting ability to come together at the Lord's table. And in this it is a powerful symbol of hope for all Christians."⁵⁴⁹

5.4.4.1. Beyond the Lima liturgy

According to Lathrop, there are matters that challenge ecumenical eucharistic celebrations to go beyond Lima.⁵⁵⁰ Important ones that he mentions are the nature and shape of the eucharistic liturgy and the importance of liturgical

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁹ Best & Heller (eds.) *Eucharist Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy - and beyond*, p. 4.

⁵⁵⁰ Lathrop, "The Lima Liturgy and Beyond: Moving Forward Ecumenically" in *Ibid.*, pp. 24 – 25

inculturation. He describes liturgy as something that is more than a text – it is an event with a shape, the flow of a “communal action which expresses its meanings in gestures and concrete signs as well as in words.”⁵⁵¹ Lathrop argues that the meaning of the liturgy comes to manifestation by the “continual juxtapositions of words and sign-actions”. He explains thus that the liturgy of the eucharist is made up of a word-service which set next to table-service “in order to gather all people into the grace and life of the triune God. More, the eucharist’s word-service sets scripture readings next to preaching and so leads the community to intercessory prayers. Its table-service sets eucharistia, thanksgiving at the table, next to eating and drinking the gift of Christ, and so leads the community to mission.”⁵⁵² It is than around these central and important matters that mission starts off by collecting for the poor, and sending people into the world. The whole action is done by a participating community who take the liturgy as an event, as a preparatory step to the next level, which is mission. In this process, everybody is involved in bringing the body of Christ to expression.⁵⁵³

Lathrop’s arguments that we need to go beyond the liturgy, strengthen the underlying argument of this dissertation: Liturgy affects one’s spirituality. Lathrop’s observations on the shape of liturgy definitely affirm that what happens inside the worship service (liturgy) will influence what happens outside the worship service (spirituality).

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵⁵² Ibid.

⁵⁵³ Ibid., p. 24

While the Lima Liturgy continued to be appreciated, encouragement was given to local gatherings to create their own occasional texts with considerably greater freedom, though with the recommendation that they observe the following “fundamental pattern (ordo) of the eucharistic service”:

GATHERING of the assembly into the grace, love and koinonia of the triune God

WORD-SERVICE

Reading of the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments

Proclaiming Jesus Christ crucified and risen as the ground of our hope

(and confessing and singing our faith)

And so *interceding* for all in need and for unity

(sharing the peace to seal our prayers and prepare for the table)

TABLE-SERVICE

Giving thanks over bread and cup

Eating and drinking the holy gifts of Christ’s presence

(collecting for all in need)

And so

BEING SENT (DISMISSAL) in mission into the world⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵⁴ Wainwright, “Ecumenical Convergences”, in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 747. For a detailed discussion on the structure and contents of the Lima Liturgy, see Max Thurian, , “The Lima Liturgy: Origin, Intention and Structure”, in *Eucharistic Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy – and Beyond*, pp. 14 – 21.

5.5. Ministry

The “Ministry” section of BEM, which addresses the role of the ordained clergy among the congregation, was, according to Thomas Long, the most difficult of the three sections to construct.⁵⁵⁵ Long states that although it may seem strange that Christians found it easier to agree about the more tricky doctrines of baptism and eucharist than they did about the nature and role of the ministry, he wants us to be cognisant of the fact that the “conversation partners” for BEM included Catholics with their long history of popes and cardinals and bishops, as well as Baptists whose clergy are ordained by local congregations.⁵⁵⁶ The spread was rather wide, Long continues, so much so that it was in many ways a wonder and a gift of grace that a common statement on ministry could be produced at all.⁵⁵⁷

The Ministry section begins by reminding us that all Christians are ministers. It is the Holy Spirit that calls people to faith and bestows gifts on them to use in their ministry of witness and service. These gifts may include the gifts of communicating the Gospel in word and deed, the gifts of healing, praying, serving, teaching and learning, guiding and following, gifts of inspiration and

⁵⁵⁵ See Thomas Long, *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship*, (The Alban Institute, 2001), pp. 98-99. Agreeing with Long, Klempa commended the theologians at Lima for the large measure of agreement which they were able to reach on the “thorny question” of the ministry. He highlighted particularly the concluding proposals regarding the mutual recognition of the ordained ministers. See William Klempa, “A Presbyterian Response”, in *Ecumenism*, No. 70, June 1983.

⁵⁵⁶ See Thomas Long, *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship*, pp. 98-99.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

vision.⁵⁵⁸ All members of Christian congregations “are called to discover, with the help of the community, the gifts they have received and to use them for the building up of the Church and for the service of the world to which the Church is sent.”⁵⁵⁹

However, BEM continues by and emphasizing that the church needs ordained clergy. The latter are distinguished from the laity by being set apart for a special service, in most cases, full-time ministry. The Church ordains certain of its members for the ministry “in the name of Christ by the invocation of the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands.”⁵⁶⁰ This act of ordination takes place within a community which accords public recognition to a particular person. It is important to note that the Church has never been without persons holding specific authority and responsibility. The very calling of the twelve disciples as well as other apostles, indicates that, from the beginning, there were differentiated roles in the community.⁵⁶¹ The disciples exercised a specific role in the midst of their communities. After Christ’s resurrection, they were among the leaders of the community. The apostles who were witnesses of the resurrection of Christ had a unique role which is unrepeatable.⁵⁶² There is therefore a difference

⁵⁵⁸ BEM, p. 20. See also 1 Cor. 12: 8 – 10.

⁵⁵⁹ BEM, p. 20.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 30.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., p. 21.

⁵⁶² Ibid.

between the apostles and the ordained ministers whose ministries originated from theirs. The ordained ministry continues the mission of the apostles.

Christ who chose and sent the apostles, continues to choose and call persons to the ordained ministry through the Holy Spirit. BEM states that the ordained ministers fulfil the role of Christ's representatives in the community. Schrottenboer, however, adds that, in the light of the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet.2:9) the ordained ministers can only be described as representatives of Jesus Christ as long as it is clear that they represent Christ in a way that is not in essence different from the way in which any believer is called and gifted to represent Christ.⁵⁶³ Both ordained and laity relate to the priesthood of Christ, as well as to the priesthood of the Church. However, the ordained ministers can rightly be called priests because they fulfill a specific priestly service "by strengthening and building up the royal and prophetic priesthood of the faithful through word and sacraments, through their prayers of intercession, and through their pastoral guidance of the community."⁵⁶⁴ As pastors, under the chief pastor (shepherd), Jesus Christ, ordained ministers assemble and guide the people of God, in anticipation of the second coming.⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶³ See Paul Schrottenboer (ed), *An Evangelical Response to Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1992), p. 15.

⁵⁶⁴ BEM, p. 23.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

The ordained ministers, as well as the laity form part of the believing community who live in relation with each other. On the one hand, the community needs ordained ministers. On the other hand, the ordained ministry cannot exist in the absence of a community, because ordained ministers can fulfil their calling only in and for the community. The ordained minister's task is clearly spelled out in paragraph 13:

The Chief responsibility of the ordained ministry is to assemble and build up the body of Christ by proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, by celebrating the sacraments, and by guiding the life of the community in its worship, its mission and its caring ministry.⁵⁶⁶

The ordained minister thus assumes a holy duty of being a good shepherd (John 10).

The authority of the ordained minister is vested in Jesus Christ (Matt. 28: 18), who has in turn received it from God. This authority is conferred by the Holy Spirit to the ordinand through the act of ordination. Although the ordained person is now in a position of authority, this authority does not belong to him (or her – although this remains one of the most divisive ecumenical controversies). It is rather a gift from God that must be responsibly exercised for the continuing edification of the community in which the minister has been ordained.⁵⁶⁷ Ordained ministers manifest and exercise the authority of Christ in the way that Christ has revealed God's authority to the world. This implies committing their

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 22.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 23.

lives to the communities that they serve because the authority is governed by love.

The Lima text spells out that the ordained ministry should be exercised in a personal, collegial and communal way. It should be *personal*, because the “presence of Christ among his people can most effectively be pointed to by the person ordained to proclaim the Gospel and to call the community to serve the Lord in unity of life and witness”.⁵⁶⁸ It should furthermore be *collegial*, for there is a need for a college of ordained ministers sharing in the common task of representing the concerns of the community.⁵⁶⁹ Lastly, the relationship between the ordained ministry and the community should find expression in a *communal* dimension where the exercise of the ordained ministry is embedded in the life of the community and necessitates the community’s participation in the discovery of God’s will and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁷⁰

All members of the believing community, ordained or lay, are interrelated. The community needs ordained ministers because their presence reminds the community of their dependence on Jesus Christ.⁵⁷¹ The ordained minister needs the recognition, the support and the encouragement of the community. The

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 26.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid., p. 22. See also Ans van der Bent, “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (the ‘Lima text’)” in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 91. as well as Geoffrey Wainwright, Ecumenical Convergences, in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 745.

community and the ordained minister stand in a molding relationship, with the minister taking the initiative.

Ordained ministers, Long asserts, are extremely important to congregational worship and ministry because they serve as a kind of “focal point for the gifts and energies of the whole community.”⁵⁷² The Church, BEM notes, needs “persons who are publicly and continually responsible for pointing to its fundamental dependence upon Jesus Christ, and thereby provide, within a multiplicity of gifts, a focus of its unity.”⁵⁷³ This, Long continues, does not mean that ordained ministers are a special class of spiritual beings. They do not stand above everybody else, but rather stand in the middle, at the center of the circle, and represents all the spiritual gifts that everyone brings to the church. Illustrating this point, Long said that ordained minister are in some ways like the faceted, mirrored globes that revolve in dance halls – they take light from other sources and scatter it around the whole room.⁵⁷⁴ So, as BEM puts it, the ordained ministry “has no existence apart from the community,” and clergy “can fulfil their calling only in and for the community.”⁵⁷⁵ This they do by using their gifts and energies to enhance everybody’s else’s. They serve, BEM states, “to build up the community in Christ and to strengthen its witness.” Ordained ministers are examples of “holiness and loving concern,” and they form a “visible focus of the

⁵⁷² Long, *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship*, p. 99.

⁵⁷³ BEM, p. 21.

⁵⁷⁴ Long, *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship*, p. 99.

⁵⁷⁵ BEM, p. 22.

deep and all-embracing communion between Christ and the members of the body.”⁵⁷⁶

In worship, Long remarks, the ordained minister as leader should seek to relate to the worshippers as Christ relates to them, or as BEM puts it, represent the “deep and all-embracing communion between Christ and the members of the body.”⁵⁷⁷ With their human limitations, ordained ministers as worship leaders, ought to convey the very presence of Christ by their manner, their strength, their calm, their attention to others, their spirit of hospitality, and their willingness to serve.⁵⁷⁸ Their words and actions become, to use the expression in BEM, a model of “the deep and all-embracing communion between Christ and the members of the body.” Long furthermore suggests that the minister should share the leadership of worship with others. BEM states that the pastor’s authority “is exercised with the cooperation of the whole community.”⁵⁷⁹ Within the community, the ordained minister as worship leader has a dual role as both

⁵⁷⁶ BEM, p. 22.

⁵⁷⁷ As an example of this, Long suggested that the ordained minister as worship leader expresses kindness and hospitality, not to show that the minister is a “nice person”, but because this is how Christ greets the community. The minister should also display enthusiasm, energy, passion, and loving concern, again, not to show that the leader is “dynamic” but because this is how Christ relates to others. When the minister conducts worship with a quiet inner calm, a “nonanxious sense of pace and timing and reverence”, it is not to show that the minister is a “really spiritual” person, but because “this is honestly how one who belongs to Christ and serves in Christ’s name discerns the realities of worship.” Long cautions against ministers who make their own “magnetic personalities” the focal point of worship. Worship leaders or ordained ministers, Long asserts, should instead seek to allow the interpersonal dynamics of worship to point always beyond themselves to the relationship between the people and God. See Long, *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship*, p. 100.

⁵⁷⁸ Long, *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship*, p. 101.

⁵⁷⁹ BEM, p. 23.

ordinary member of the assembly and also as representative of Christ. The minister, coming from the gathered body, stands in front of the assembly to assume a new role: to speak and act in the name of Christ. BEM underscores this point in stating that it is Christ who “gathers, teaches, and nourishes the Church. It is Christ who invites to the meal and who presides at it. In most churches this presidency is signified and represented by an ordained minister.”⁵⁸⁰

5.6. BEM: its influences on the churches’ worship

The BEM document and the Lima liturgy, which has been used in churches on many ecumenical occasions after January 1982, have had an impact on the liturgical life of many churches in the ecumenical movement.⁵⁸¹ It also impacted on studies about worship and worship itself. It further led to the revision of forms of worship in numerous churches. There is also evidence that there have been impulses from the Lima document with regard to spirituality and the social-ethical implications of sacraments and worship.⁵⁸² This will be dealt with later in this chapter.

The focus on the theology of baptism and eucharist in BEM, has helped us to regain an awareness of these as acts of worship within the Christian community. According to Best and Heller, we need to realize that the particular meaning of

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid. , p. 22.

⁵⁸¹ *BAPTISM, EUCHARIST & MINISTRY 1982 – 1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, p. 13.

⁵⁸² Ibid.

baptism and eucharist cannot be properly understood outside the liturgical practice in which they are embodied.⁵⁸³

BEM was clearly reflected in much of the work that was done by churches in revising their service books in the 1960s and 1970s. Its influence was also visible in the liturgical revision of some churches in the 1990s, for example, the German-language Lutheran *Erneuerte Agende* and *Evangelisches Gottesdienstbuch*.⁵⁸⁴ The principles of BEM were also evident in service books such as the Church of Scotland's *Book of Common Order* of 1994 which was a revision of the one of 1979, the British *Methodist Worship Book* of 1999 which was a revision of the *Methodist Service Book* of 1975, and the Church of England's *Common Worship* of 2000 after the *Alternative Service Book* of 1980.⁵⁸⁵ In the United States, the Presbyterian *Worshipbook* of 1970 was revised into the *Book of Common Worship* of 1993, and the *United Methodist Book of Worship* of 1992 following various partial texts from the 1970s.⁵⁸⁶

5.7. BEM: its influences on the churches' spirituality

In our working perception of spirituality, it can be put in the framework of what happens beyond the liturgical acts. Ion Bria and others from the Orthodox tradition generally refer to this as the *liturgy after the liturgy*.

⁵⁸³ Best Heller, "Introduction" in *Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism*, p. 2.

⁵⁸⁴ Wainwright, "Ecumenical Convergences" in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 745.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.

First it needs to be mentioned that Gribben, together with Bria and many others, feel strongly that the worship of God and one's engagement in the struggle for peace and justice are not different entities.⁵⁸⁷ Jesus lived it as one; it was humankind that has affected a separation. Jesus' love for His Father and His love for humanity compelled him to both worship God and engage with the realities of life. The liturgical life, therefore, has to nourish the Christian life not only in its private sphere, as Ion Bria remark, but also in its public and political realm. Jesus is the example par excellence in this regard.⁵⁸⁸ The true Christian identity cannot separate personal sanctification from love and service to humanity (1 Pet. 1: 14-15). The needs of the world are not left outside the liturgy. In fact, "the sin and needs of the world are present in the liturgy through the crucified and living Christ, and through the people of God, and are brought to the place of healing, the place where God is worshipped."⁵⁸⁹

Bria expresses his concern about the ethical implications of the Christian faith in terms of life style, social and ethnic behaviour. He suggests that the following questions need to be continuously addressed by the church:

⁵⁸⁷ See his article "Affirmations about Worship in Ecumenical Contexts" in *Eucharist Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy - and beyond*, p. 134.

⁵⁸⁸ Ion Bria, "Witness from the Orthodox Churches: The Liturgy after the liturgy" in *Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration* ed. by Max Thurian & Geoffrey Wainwright, (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983), p. 216.

⁵⁸⁹ Gribben, "Affirmations about Worship in Ecumenical Contexts" in *Eucharist Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy - and beyond*, p. 134.

- What is the ethos of the Church which claims to be the sign of the Kingdom?
- What is the spirituality which is proposed and determined in spreading the Gospel and celebrating the liturgy today?
- How is the liturgical vision which is related to the Kingdom, as power of the age to come, as the beginning of the future life which is in the present life (John 3:5, 6:33), becoming a social reality?
- In what sense does the worship constitute a permanent missionary impulse and determine the evangelistic witness of every Christian?
- How does the liturgical order pass into the order of human existence, personal and social, and shape the life style of Christians?⁵⁹⁰

These questions will help the Christian and the Church to sustain the relation between liturgy and spirituality. Bria believes that the preparation for liturgy starts for Christians as a spiritual journey which affects everything in their lives such as family, properties and social relations. He says that “it reorientates the direction of this entire human existence towards its sanctification by the Holy Spirit.”⁵⁹¹ The Christians who are then renewed by the liturgical acts are now sent into the world to be authentic testimony to Jesus Christ in the world. The mission of the Church thus rests upon the radiating and transforming power of the

⁵⁹⁰ Bria, “Witness from the Orthodox Churches: The Liturgy after the liturgy” in *Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration*, p. 216.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.215.

liturgy. It is a stimulus, to send out the people of God out into the world to confess the Gospel and to be involved in the liberation of humankind.⁵⁹²

An exciting development occurred when BEM neared completion. As the churches grew in unity through their research process, they were eager to know how their understanding and practices of baptism, eucharist and ministry related to their mission in the world and for the renewal of the human community as they seek to promote justice, peace and reconciliation. BEM indeed sparked off a greater passion for participation in the redemptive and liberating mission of Christ through the churches in the modern world.⁵⁹³

5.8. Responses of Churches

5.8.1. Reception process

According to Thurian, when the churches were asked to respond to BEM, they were essentially asked to consider what significance the text could have in “their own relations to other churches, what guidance it could provide for their own life and worship, and what the text meant for the next steps in Faith and Order”.⁵⁹⁴ Hence the churches were expected to evaluate the document on all levels. Gassman contended that it was the churches’ task to judge how far the document reflected their faith through the centuries and where further dialogue was

⁵⁹² Ibid.

⁵⁹³ BEM, p. viii – ix.

⁵⁹⁴ Lewis Mudge, “Convergence on Baptism”, in *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, p. 33.

necessary.⁵⁹⁵ In studying this document, the churches should look for theological perspectives which could enrich their theological thinking and spiritual life.⁵⁹⁶ Thurian describes this as a process of discovering whether, “in all the diversity of our legitimate and enriching confessional traditions, yet confessing the same fundamental faith of our common creed, we are able and willing to work together for the renewal and unity of the churches”.⁵⁹⁷ BEM highlights that the basis of this work is the baptism. It further emphasizes that that it “demands a common view of the eucharist and a mutual recognition of the ministry, with the hope that we may find ourselves one day at the same table of the Lord who imparts to us his word and his body and his blood”.⁵⁹⁸ Thurian envisages that this broad process of reception⁵⁹⁹ will continue even after the churches have formulated their responses.

⁵⁹⁵ Günther Gassmann, “General Introduction” in *Orthodox Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, ed. by Gennadios Limouris and Nomikos Vaporis. Faith and Order Paper no. 128. (Brookline, Massachusetts: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1985), p. 23.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁷ Max Thurian, “The Lima Document on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: The Event and its Consequences”, in *Churches respond to BEM: Official Responses of the “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry” text*, p. 9.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁹ Smit and Naude describes “reception” as an umbrella-term which refers to many aspects and issues. For them, it involves the following questions: “How can local churches and congregations be persuaded to take ecumenical challenges, opportunities, issues, decisions, notions, documents, and initiatives more seriously? When have local churches really received and appropriated these documents and decisions, including those of its own denomination? How can churches accept the decisions and documents of other churches and face common challenges collectively? How can local churches and congregations be effectively involved in the drawing up of these documents and the making of these decisions?” These questions point to the fact that ‘reception’ eventually is concerned with more than merely ‘receiving’ common decisions, documents and initiatives. Smit and Naude made it clear that it concerns the questions of “*how we receive one another*, how we learn to live with one another”, and “how we come closer to one another”. See Smit and Naude, “Reception – Ecumenical Crisis or Opportunity for South African Churches?”, in *Scriptura* 73 (2002), p. 176.

In the response of the Lutheran Church in America towards BEM, it was stated that ‘reception’ includes “all the phases and aspects of a process by which a church makes the results of an

The reception process is a difficult one, because the member churches of the WCC had to deal with the complex question of how far they could receive a document which did not emanate from their own tradition. Precisely because of this, some member churches like the Orthodox viewed BEM with suspicion.⁶⁰⁰ In Western countries like Germany, Britain and the United States, BEM was so well received that it not only became part of daily church life, but was also prominent in the programmes of theological faculties and ecumenical institutes.⁶⁰¹

According to Calivas, the aim of the reception process was to identify BEM's limitations and to clarify its ambiguities.⁶⁰² It further aimed at broadening the theological discussion, and, if need be, to propose formulations that were dynamic, accurate, and consistent with the Apostolic Tradition.

5.8.2. Responses

ecumenical dialogue or statement part of its faith and life." It further maintained that it is a "process which involves all believers, and all parts of the church. See *Official Responses to the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" Text*, Vol. I, ed. by Max Thurian, Faith and Order Paper No. 129, (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1986), p. 28.

The Reformed Church of Scotland emphasized that 'reception' will continue for many years after the initial response. In their response, it is stated that "as churches discern and work out the practical consequences which their responses entail for their relations with other churches, they will be swept mere endorsement of a text: they will enter upon a process of receiving other churches as churches." Quoting from Rom 15: 7: "Receive you one another as Christ also received us", the response held that "reception of this kind is what the ecumenical movement exists to promote." See *Official Responses to the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" Text*, Vol. I, ed. by Max Thurian, Faith and Order Paper No. 129, pp. 88 – 89.

⁶⁰⁰ See Gennadios Limouris, "The Physiognomy of BEM after Lima in the Present Ecumenical Situation", in *Orthodox Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, p. 35.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid.

⁶⁰² See his article, "The Lima Text as a Pointer to the Future: An Orthodox Perspective", in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: A Liturgical Appraisal of the Lima text*, ed. by Geoffrey Wainwright, (Rotterdam, the Netherlands: Liturgical Ecumenical Center Trust, 1986), p. 80.

The BEM document has received exceptionally wide attention from the affiliate churches of the World Council of Churches and beyond. Many churches agreed that BEM was one of the most significant publications of the WCC by then. With a few exceptions, which constitute a minute percentage, all responses applaud the ecumenical achievement represented by *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. Many churches from all traditions responded with highly positive and enthusiastic comments.⁶⁰³ Positive responses were received inter alia from the following bigger church denominations: the Episcopal Church in the USA, the Lutheran Church in America, the United Church of Christ in Japan, The Baptist Church in the USA, the Moravian Church, Seventh Day Adventist.⁶⁰⁴

BEM has stimulated reflection and discussion at all levels of the life of the churches in the ecumenical movement. It encouraged a desire to establish new relations whilst existing relations were deepened.⁶⁰⁵

In the gathered responses, the reply of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon echoed what many others believed:

We, Christians of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, a member of the World Council of Churches since 1961, cannot but praise the efforts of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches for this

⁶⁰³ *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982 – 1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, p. 18.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18 -19.

⁶⁰⁵ Max Thurian, “The Lima Document on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: The Event and its Consequences” in *Churches respond to BEM: Official responses of the “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry” text*, p. v.

detailed statement on ‘Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry’. We praise the persistence with which the Faith and Order Commission has carried on this work since 1927.⁶⁰⁶

In many other responses, this general appreciation is connected with expressions of thanks and congratulations to the Faith and Order Commission for the remarkable achievement. The fact that BEM was produced by theologians from different traditions, testifies to the significance of the document. In this regard, it is befitting to quote the comment of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria:

It is the first time in history of the WCC that delegates of all the Christian denominations have been able to produce together a joint statement of common doctrine, and this proves the value of dialogue within the WCC.⁶⁰⁷

From Asia, the Presbyterian Church in Korea acknowledged with gratitude what BEM meant to them. They appreciated the fact that this theological document was not only significant for its ecumenical worship and witness, but had also helped them with their “ecclesiastical identity”.⁶⁰⁸

⁶⁰⁶ *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982 – 1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, p. 20.

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 24

Whilst the responses to BEM largely included positive appraisals, there was also a need for clarity on some of the issues raised. Hence, an *Inter-Orthodox Symposium* was organized by the WCC Orthodox Task Force and Faith and Order at Boston, United States of America, in June 1985 to address arising questions.⁶⁰⁹

By the middle of 1990, an effort was made for BEM to reach as many people as possible worldwide. This was enhanced by its translation and publication in 35 languages. By then, the Faith and Order secretariat had received responses from 190 churches which included the Roman Catholic Church.⁶¹⁰ The official responses of the churches to BEM are a significant expression of the engagement of the churches, but, as Thurian remarked, they do not indicate the termination of this process.⁶¹¹ They will rather provide additional encouragement for further reflection and discussion.

Twenty-five years after the completion of BEM, a celebratory book, *BEM at 25: Critical insights into a continuing legacy*, was published in 2007. This opened up further debates on the subjects of baptism, eucharist and ministry. Radano points out that the WCC Faith and Order Commission's analysis of the responses to

⁶⁰⁹ Max Thurian, "The Lima Document on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: The Event and its Consequences" in *Churches respond to BEM: Official responses of the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" text*, p. v.

⁶¹⁰ Ans van der Bent, "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (the 'Lima text')" in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 93.

⁶¹¹ Max Thurian, "The Lima Document on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: The Event and its Consequences" in *Churches respond to BEM: Official responses of the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" text*, p. v.

BEM regarded three key issues as especially significant: a) Scripture and Tradition; b) Sacraments and Sacramentality; c) Common perspectives on ecclesiology.⁶¹² On this last point, Radano stated that the responses strongly underlined a need for further study surrounding common ecumenical perspectives on ecclesiology. He pointed out the many responses which “requested that ecclesiology be made a major study in future Faith and Order work”.⁶¹³ This view, he said, was certainly held by the Catholic Church whose response was as follows: “... full agreement on the sacraments is related to agreement on the nature of the church. The sacraments, including baptism, receive their full significance and efficacy from the comprehensive ecclesial reality on which they depend and which they manifest. Nor can the goal of the unity of divided Christians be reached without agreement on the nature of the church”.⁶¹⁴ As a result of responses such as this, Faith and Order opened what Radano calls “a major study on the church”. Documents that resulted from this were *The Nature and Purpose of the Church* (1998), and *The Nature and Mission of the Church* (2005).

5.9. The purpose of BEM

The aim of the ecumenical movement was to unify the different Christian traditions whilst the aim of BEM was to bring those different traditions together

⁶¹² See John Radano, “A ‘Real though incomplete Communion through Baptism’: Ecumenical Developments Twenty-Five Years after Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, in *BEM at 25: Critical insights into a continuing legacy*, ed. by Thomas F. Best and Tamara Grdzeldze, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2007), p. 34.

⁶¹³ Ibid.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 34-5.

to talk about doctrinal differences that had developed in the course of history. BEM was, however, never intended to be a comprehensive dogmatic account to resolve these doctrinal differences.⁶¹⁵ It rather aimed to provide a sound theological foundation for the different strands to reflect upon. As the Report on the Process and Responses stated, “the aim of the text is to be part of a faithful and sufficient reflection of the common Christian tradition on essential elements of Christian communion.”⁶¹⁶ In their reflection, people would grow in their faith as “baptized Christians who long for one and the same eucharist celebrated by communities and ministries reconciled in the church of Christ, visibly gathering all Christians together for a common life and a common witness and service in the world.”⁶¹⁷

It is clear that BEM was neither an Orthodox, nor a Catholic, nor a Protestant document. It is also clear that no confession can recognize itself in it completely. Limouris reiterates that BEM was a convergence text in which the different communities, though still separated, could recognize themselves as part of the apostolic faith.⁶¹⁸

⁶¹⁵ Ans van der Bent, “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (the ‘Lima text’)” in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 92.

⁶¹⁶ *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982 – 1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, p. 7.

⁶¹⁷ Max Thurian, “The Lima Document on “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: The Event and its Consequences” in *Churches respond to BEM: Official responses of the “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry” text*, p. 9.

⁶¹⁸ Limouris, “The Physiognomy of BEM after Lima in the Present Ecumenical Situation”, in *Orthodox Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, p. 36.

The Report on the Process and Responses best describes what BEM embodied and how it has been perceived: It states that there exists

a clear awareness that BEM is the result and an instrument of a broader and ongoing historical process in twentieth-century church history. And there is in most responses an explicit readiness expressed that, whatever the limitations of such a document might be, its contents and purpose must be allowed to challenge one's own teachings and practice and to open it to the richness of the insights and experiences of other churches. Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry is thus seen as a significant result, expression and instrument of the movement towards that unity in faith, sacramental communion and common witness and service in the world to which the churches are called by their Lord and Saviour.⁶¹⁹

5.10. Conclusion

BEM proved to have significant influence in the life of the ecumenical movement. Whilst Faith and Order published also other documents, BEM was by many regarded as the most remarkable and influential. Gassman believes that BEM has inspired endeavours for the renewal of liturgy and of spiritual life.⁶²⁰ The insights that were gained from the Baptism and Eucharist sections, would have been extremely helpful in the pursuit for meaningful worship. Together with ministry, baptism and eucharist are fundamental expressions of the witness and service of

⁶¹⁹ *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982 – 1990: Report on the Process and Responses*, p. 38.

⁶²⁰ Max Thurian, "The Lima Document on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: The Event and its Consequences" in *Churches respond to BEM: Official responses of the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" text*, p. 71.

the Church for today's world and its needs, its concerns and its renewal.⁶²¹ Renewal of both the life of the Church and of the world cannot be separated from the liturgical and sacramental life (baptism and eucharist) of the Church nor from her pastoral responsibility (ministry).⁶²² BEM definitely helped us to see the connection between the sacramental and liturgical life of the churches and their witness and service within the world.

⁶²¹ Calivas, "The Lima Text as a Pointer to the Future: An Orthodox Perspective", in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: A Liturgical Appraisal of the Lima text*, p. 88.

⁶²² Ibid.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1. Synopsis

This study project began to argue in favour of the existence of a crucial link between liturgy and spirituality. Liturgy was mainly defined as the work of the people within the worship service (deriving from the Greek word “leitourgia”), but also as Peter Fink believes, the work of God in the midst of, and within the people. It was noted that the understanding of spirituality has undergone some changes from being first perceived as an aspect of life solely concerned with devotions, prayer and fasting to a more holistic perception that stretches beyond merely devotional life. It became clear that ascetic, religious discipline and social commitment should not be separated because such dichotomies are alien both to biblical teaching as well as to the experiences of congregations.⁶²³ So, it was established that “our favourite distinction between spiritual life and practical life is false”, as Underhill puts it.⁶²⁴ She is convinced that one cannot divide them. “One affects the other all the time”, Underhill said. Hence it was argued that liturgy and spirituality could not be separated; a link existed which kept them inextricably connected.

⁶²³ See Ion Bria, *People hunger to be near to God: Common convictions about renewal, spirituality, community*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990), p. 6.

⁶²⁴ See Evelyn Underhill, *The Spiritual Life*, (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1955), p.31.

The study was confined within the circles of the ecumenical movement and in particular the World Council of Churches, hence a brief history of the latter was given in Chapter One. It was also highlighted that the Faith and Order Commission, which was one stream within the WCC, was responsible for studies such as that undertaken in this piece of research.

It was the objective of this research first to address the connection between liturgy and spirituality. From there the study proceeded to indicate how four factors i.e., Charismatic Renewal, Inculturation, Secularization and BEM impacted on the liturgy, and because of the connection, ultimately also on the spirituality within the ecumenical movement.

Embarking on this, **Chapter Two** found that the Charismatic Renewal spread quite rapidly during the twentieth century. Being not an ecclesiastical tradition, but a renewal movement, it infiltrated a wide diversity of churches, including the mainline Protestant churches as well as the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches. It was also noted that the charismatics put much emphasis on baptism in the Spirit and speaking in tongues, as testimony of being Spirit-filled. The study further noted that the Charismatic Renewal influenced mostly the worship in the ecumenical movement. It was further revealed that the emphasis that was put on the participation of the laity and the positive attitude towards the use of different musical instruments, paved the way for enriching worship experiences and spiritual growth.

Chapter Three noted how inculturation came to the fore in the 1960's and was reflected on by the ecumenical movement. The WCC, striving to be a world-wide movement, had to become sensitive to cultures other than Western. The study revealed that, for liturgy to be meaningful, it had to be localized – Christian worship should be related to the cultures of the world. In this process the challenge remains not to compromise Christian principles.

Chapter Four identified secularization as one of the factors that challenged the relevance and meaningfulness of worship, and thereby attracted the attention of the WCC. The ecumenical movement thought it necessary, because of the immense impact that secularization had on worship at the time, that a special consultation be held. From the discussion, it became evident that secularization had presented new challenges to worship, not so much in producing modern forms of worship, but to move beyond the traditional acts of preaching, praying, and singing, to make worship practical by engaging in the world. The study also underlined the conviction in the ecumenical movement that secularization ought not to be seen as an enemy of worship, but that worship and secularization actually needed each other.

With the discussion of Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, **Chapter Five** revealed that elements within the liturgy always took central place in the ecumenical movement. Since its inception, baptism and the eucharist in particular, were constantly on the agenda. The study found that BEM was such a significant moment in the history of the ecumenical movement that it helped churches in

their own “ecclesiological understanding and practice of Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry in relation to their mission in and for the renewal of the human community, seeking to promote justice, peace and reconciliation to the world.”⁶²⁵

6.2. For liturgy to influence spirituality

Given the impact that the Charismatic Renewal is still having today, it is very clear that the mainline churches cannot take its existence and prevalence lightly. Especially with so much criticism of dullness and emptiness that has been levelled against worship in many churches in the mainline Protestant traditions, the Renewal can be a source of strengthening the worship experiences in the mainline churches.⁶²⁶ It has been documented that the Charismatic Renewal has significantly contributed to a deeper level of worship experience, which was partly effected by a more participatory role by the laity.⁶²⁷ Hence, Potter

⁶²⁵ See Gennadios of Saddima, “Memory Against Forgetting – the BEM Document After Twenty-Five Years”, in *BEM at 25*, p. 161.

Evaluating the reception of BEM after twenty-five years, Best and Grdzeldze suggest that the notable success of BEM stems from three factors. First, they say, is the way in which it changed the terms of the ecumenical discourse: “the criterion was no longer the degree to which ecumenical text represented the position of one’s own church or confession, but rather how faithfully it reflected the faith of the Church through the ages.” Secondly, BEM challenged the churches “to draw specific consequences from the convergence reflected in the text for their relations with other churches.” Third, they point out the breadth of BEM’s appeal; recognizing that “its drafters found a unique combination of theological depth and simplicity of expression,” which meant that the text not only be commended to specialists, but also to persons in all contexts within the churches. This appeal was strengthened, Best and Grdzeldze continue, by the fact that BEM deals with issues which are alive and are existential, in the churches today. These issues are the “reality of a common baptism; the fact of our inability to gather, as one body, at the one table of our Lord; the difficulties we face in recognizing one another’s ministries.” See Best and Grdzeldze, “Preface” in *BEM at 25: Critical insights into a continuing legacy*, ed. by Thomas F. Best and Tamara Grdzeldze, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2007), p. 7.

⁶²⁶ For a discussion on the criticisms levelled against worship in especially the Reformed churches, see James White, *Introduction to Christian Worship* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1990), p. 78.

⁶²⁷ Bezuidenhout points out that one of the critiques (if not the major one) against Reformed worship in particular, was the limited involvement and participation of the laity. Ironically

acknowledged that the freedom in worship allowed the people to grow in themselves. Apart from the inward growth, the charismatic renewal has also effected extraordinary numerical growth in churches over the decades, even in some mainline churches.⁶²⁸

However, not enough emphasis was put on the fact that spiritual growth has to bear fruit in ordinary life. The Charismatic Renewal was criticized for spiritualizing concrete issues. It is commonly known that there were instances

enough, this was one of the reasons for the Protestant break-away from Roman Catholicism, because during the early Middle Ages, certain changes took place in the worship services of the Roman and East Orthodox Churches. The clergy started to conduct the whole service from beginning to end. The congregation became mere listeners. Even the hymns became the sole domain of the deacons and choir, in contrast to worship in the Early Church where the whole congregation participated. The involvement of the laity was dear to the hearts of the Reformers. A clergy-dominated performance before a passive congregation obscures the priestly character of the entire church, says Erickson, who highlights the all-important point that Luther also emphasized: the church as a royal priesthood. In worship, Erickson continues, the identity of the church is most fully revealed. Because the church is a priestly body, its worship ought to be participatory. Participation and involvement, Willimon add, reinforces the belief in the priesthood of all believers.

Despite Erickson's support for participatory worship, he advised that participation should be undertaken knowingly and actively so that the result will be fruitful. To participate knowingly, he said, there must be an ongoing study of the Bible that is based upon an ardent and living love for God's Word. This is a vital ingredient of growth in the Christian faith. It prepares the heart and mind for the worship of God. It is only when one knows the basic tenets of our faith that one can be ready for active participation in worship. Erickson made the important remark that the level of active participation involves deep-seated factors that cannot be ignored. An invitation to more active participation in worship directly challenges current levels of personal faith and commitment to Christ and the church.

Active participation will become fruitful participation. The latter issues forth in mission acts of charity, social justice and world peace. In this sense the liturgy of the sanctuary and the liturgy of life (spirituality) are integral to each other. The purpose of liturgical participation is not simply to perform the liturgy better. Its twofold purpose is the glorification of God and the equipping of Christians with power to carry out the witness and mission of the church in the world. For further reading on participation in worship, see Bezuidenhout, *The Renewal of Reformed Worship through Retrieving the Tradition and Ecumenical Openness*; M. J. Du P. Beukes, "Vernuwing van die Erediens", in *Praktiese Teologie in Suid-Afrika (3): Perspektiewe op die Erediens*, ed. by A.J. Smuts, (Transvaal: NG Kerkboekhandel, 1987); G. D. Erickson, *Participating in Worship: History, Theory and Practice* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox, 1998); William Willimon, *Preaching and Leading Worship: The Pastor's Handbook* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984).

⁶²⁸ A well-known example of this in South Africa is the Moreletapark Dutch Reformed Church in Pretoria, where the congregation experienced massive growth to the extent that they had to build an auditorium-shape church (which seems to be the case with many charismatic churches) that would accommodate a few thousand people at one time.

where social issues were only addressed in prayers and sermons, with little actual involvement advocated. This lack of participation in ordinary life would be in contrast with the underlying thesis of this dissertation that worship inside the church building (liturgy) affects the life outside the church building (spirituality). It is thus evident from this study that many charismatics were not true to the premise that underlies this research project.

In a world that has become increasingly secular, a responsibility rests on the Christian worshipper not to withdraw from the secular into the sacred, but to engage with the secular. Secularization has undoubtedly presented Christians with challenges to find new ways by which worship in churches can lead to Christian obedience both inside and outside the Christian community. The church is in need of worship that would connect with this world. The church is in need of worship that would not be bound to the sanctuary, but that can be experienced outside the church buildings. In this regard, Muller has suggested that worship should be more about loving, serving and creating a just order. This worship outside the boundaries of the sanctuary will stimulate a spirituality that strives to be Christ for a changing and a secular world.

It is precisely here where the charismatic renewal seems to have failed. While it can be applauded for enhancing spiritual depth in worship, it did not take the existential situation of humanity seriously enough. What charismatic worship instills in them, rarely drives them to become involved in a secular world. They need to be reminded of the words of Cardinal Suenens, who expressed the view

that, for charismatics to be true to the gospel, they have to be socially committed, otherwise they will remain truncated Christians who disregard the gospel's commandments.

With regards to secularization, it can be said, in the words of Panikkar, that secularization was a necessary process as it provided an impetus for the church to review the relevance of worship in a secular world, hence to connect what happens inside and outside of the worship service. Secularization was a necessary process in underscoring the relationship between liturgy and spirituality. This relationship was further accentuated by the emphasis on and necessity of inculturating the liturgy. It was the AACC that was critical of foreign hymns and liturgies, which they believed, stifled indigenous spirituality. They were of the opinion that the imported liturgies had to be revised or that the liturgies should arise from their own experience and reflect their particular cultural traditions. Foreign liturgies would not have the same impact on their spirituality as the liturgies that were born from amongst themselves. This necessary process of inculturation has also drawn attention to the relationship between liturgy and spirituality.

Regarding BEM and the underlying thesis of liturgy that affects spirituality: both the sacraments of baptism and eucharist have entrenched in them an implied commitment to a just society.⁶²⁹ Hence they extend beyond mere liturgical acts. It

⁶²⁹ The document on *The Nature and Mission of the Church* highlighted a connection between baptism and Eucharist. It stated that communion that is established in baptism is focused and brought to expression in the Eucharist. It further declared, "Just as the confession of faith and

was Gurioan who highlighted the fact that Christian ethics begins in baptism. It begins with a new life in Christ, a life that is not separated from the realities of this world. In fact, it is a life that strives for the realization of the will of God in all realms of life, including the secular. In the act of baptism, the washing with water speaks of a new birth into a particular kind of life in the world.⁶³⁰

Likewise, the eucharist extends beyond the liturgical act because it embraces all aspects of life. Sharing in the eucharist prepares us to participate in life beyond the devotional. It prepares and mandates us to work for a just world, even in the secular sphere. White stated that the sharing of bread and wine in the eucharist speaks of the Christian imperative to “share the generosity and hospitality of God which we have been offered”, and in the exchanging of the sign of peace, “gestures of reconciliation model the true community of peace and equality.”⁶³¹ As Auden said, the eucharist is the centre from which every form of Christian worship draws its defining characters. In the eucharist, he continued, we see how Christ deliberately chose to integrate into the life of the Christian community those elements which constitute a human family – a common meal, common

baptism are inseparable from a life of service and witness, so too the Mass demands reconciliation and sharing among all those regarded as brothers and sisters in the one family of God and is a constant challenge in the search for appropriate relationships in social, economic, and political life (cf. Mt. 5: 23ff; 1 Cor. 10: 14). Because the Lord’s Supper is the Sacrament which builds up community, all kinds of injustice, racism, estrangement, and lack of freedom are radically challenged when we share in the body and blood of Christ. Through Holy Communion the all-renewing grace of God penetrates the human personality and restores human dignity. The Eucharist, therefore obliges us also to participate actively in the ongoing restoration of the world’s situation and the human condition.” p. 21.

⁶³⁰ See Susan White, “Spirituality, Liturgy and Worship”, in *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, p. 45.

⁶³¹ Ibid.

talk, common service and a common sharing in the joys and difficulties of existence.⁶³² With all these in mind, Wainwright suggest that a creative interpretation of Romans 14:17 may provide a scriptural basis and theological form for the eucharist as the social embodiment of the Christian community. He explicated:

A responsibly celebrated eucharist exemplifies justice because thankful people are welcomed by the merciful Lord into his table fellowship and all together share in the fruits of redemption and in the foretaste of the new heaven and the new earth in which right will prevail (2 Pet. 3:13). The eucharist also exemplifies peace, because reconciled people are there at peace with God and with one another (Matt 5: 23 – 24). The eucharist also exemplifies joy in the Holy Spirit, because the participants “do not get drunk with wine” but rather the cup of blessings conveys to all who partake of it a taste of that “sober inebriation” that the Spirit gives (Eph. 5: 18). Having learned and experienced all this in the paradigm of the Eucharistic meal, the Christian community is committed – in terms of mission – to an everyday witness in word and deed that will give the opportunity for all the material resources of creation and all occasions of human contact to become the medium of that communion with God and among human beings which is marked by justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, and in which the kingdom of God consists. In that line of

⁶³² See W. H. Auden, “The Worship of God in a Secular Age: Some Reflections”, in *The Genesis of the Section V Report of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Uppsala in 1968*, (Paris: Institut Catholique de Paris, 1973), p. 44.

worldly extension, some twentieth century Orthodox theologians too are speaking of “the liturgy after the liturgy”.⁶³³

Affirming this, Smit said “in die nagmaal word hulle gevoed en versterk, deur wat in die aanbidding gebeur ontvang hulle nuwe krag vir elke dag, vir die lewe daar buite, vir die uitleef van hul roeping”.⁶³⁴ He mentioned that “...die aanbiddende gemeente wy hulle self, met alles wat hulle is en het, met hulle tyd, besittings en kragte, in reaksie op die morele ruimte waarbinne hulle tuisgekome het, daaraan om vir hierdie Drie-enige God, en vir sy mense en vir die wêreld te leef en diensbaar te wees.”⁶³⁵

Like Wainwright, Smit also then refers to Orthodox churches who call the involvement of the worshiping community in the world, the “liturgy after the liturgy”.

6.3. The liturgy after the liturgy

The Church is gathered for worship and scattered for everyday life. Whilst in some situations in the witnessing dimensions of worship there must be a “liturgy after the liturgy”, service to the world as praise to God, in other

⁶³³ See Wainwright, “Christian Worship: Scriptural Basis and Theological Frame”, in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, p. 14.

⁶³⁴ See Smit, “Lex orandi, lex credendi, lex (con)vivendi? – Oriënterende inleiding tot liturgie en etiek”, in *NGTT*, p. 901. Andrew Phillips, in his doctoral studies, explored the potential of Holy Communion for spiritual and moral transformation. See A. P. Phillips, *Die Nagmaal as paradigma vir die Christelike etos*, (unpublished doctoral, UWC, 1996).

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 902.

contexts it must be stressed that there is no Christian service to the world unless it is rooted in the service of worship.⁶³⁶

With these words, the Vancouver Assembly also affirmed the Orthodox notion of “the liturgy after the liturgy”. This notion basically implies and affirms the connection between liturgy and spirituality. It asserts that while worship is the central act of the Church, it does not stop there, because worship moulds one for mission, witness and service. It is this link between liturgy and spirituality that this study has attempted to determine. And it was clear that factors such as inculturation, secularization, and BEM contributed to the affirmation of this crucial relationship, this relationship which does not deny the existential realities of this world, but prepares the Christian in worship to be socially committed. A woman in India once shared the story of her circumstances and ordinary life not being addressed in their church’s worship. She told Joan Puls and Gwen Cashmore the following:

I find it painful to attend services at my local church. The worship is so isolated from our actual context. Prayers are said remembering trouble spots in India and in the world, but the sermons and more specifically the eucharist never point to my response as a Christian, to the issue of life and death we have just prayed for. The eucharist is a ritual and the sermons speak irrelevantly of the ‘goodies’ of life after death.⁶³⁷

⁶³⁶ See *Gathered for Life. Official Report of the VI Assembly of the WCC*, p. 112.

⁶³⁷ See Cashmore and Puls, *Clearing the Way: En Route to an Ecumenical Spirituality*. Risk Book Series, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990), p. 1.

This story represents a cry not from only one person, but many more whose everyday lives are unconnected to their worship, who do not experience the connection between liturgy and spirituality, who do not experience the liturgy after the liturgy which Smit so aptly describes as follows: “The liturgy is the continuation of God’s action in the world, and, in turn, God’s action in the world is the continuation of God’s action in the liturgy. In the liturgy we respond in praise and thanksgiving to God’s actions in general. So, too, our response to God’s action in the liturgy is a continuation of our response in daily life, and, in turn, our response in daily life is a continuation of our response in the liturgy”.⁶³⁸

6.4. Conclusion

Linking liturgy and spirituality, the world outside the church must enter the church. Thereby our liturgies can be inculturated, thereby can we develop liturgies that embrace the secular world, where the worship of the gathered community can be carried over into worshipful living because the real test for the Christian is in the sphere of everyday life.⁶³⁹ “The world, life itself, history, the public sphere, must somehow be present in the liturgy”, Smit says, because “Christian liturgy has to do with Christian life.”⁶⁴⁰ What our experiences are in Christian life, must be prevalent in our liturgies, be it recession or even depression, be it unemployment or poverty, or racism or classism, be it child

⁶³⁸ Smit, “Liturgy and Life? On the importance of worship for Christian ethics”, in *Scriptura* 62, p. 270.

⁶³⁹ See Muller, “Living Worship”, in *Studia Liturgica*, p. 90

⁶⁴⁰ Smit, “Liturgy and Life? On the importance of worship for Christian ethics”, in *Scriptura* 62, p. 267.

abuse or human trafficking, all of life, the dreadful and the positives, all need to be engaged with in our liturgies. With the ever-recurring quest for ethical leadership and moral regeneration, liturgy becomes imperative in helping this cause. The issues of public life ought not to be estranged from the church. They should be part of our liturgical life and impact on our spirituality, a spirituality which embraces the fact that we individually and collectively appropriate the traditional beliefs about God, humanity and the world, and express them in terms of our basic attitudes, life-style and activity – all of this to the glory of God.

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