

The Crucible of Formation: The Theological Milieu wherein Giants Grew

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The first four decades of the twentieth century are an age marked by the confluence of various theological currents. It was during these eventful, albeit often silent, years that the great giants influencing the later theological development preceding, during and following the Second Vatican Council received their academic formation. This study will not focus on any of the four authors commemorated in this book. Such details will be explored in the other papers of this volume. Nor does this study analyse the specific formation received by any of the theologians in question in the 1920s and 1930s. Much has already been written – books, articles and dissertations on the early years of Rahner, Congar, Lonergan and von Balthasar. The aim of this study is to set the co-ordinates.

This study will seek to give a bird's eye-view of certain more conspicuous aspects of the theological milieu during the period which spans the pontificate of Leo XIII right down to that of Pius XI. The confluence mentioned above consists mainly of the encounter between two contrasting currents – on one hand, the Neo-Scholastic revival, especially in the wake of Leo XIII's landmark encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (1879), and on the other, the theological *Ressourcement*, especially the Liturgical

Movement. This interesting and stimulating context indeed turned out to be an effective crucible in the formation of the future giants to whose lasting memory this book is dedicated.

Setting the Scene

The genesis of the Scholastic revival can be traced back to the early decades of the nineteenth century. Yet 1879 signals the moment when this movement was given its highest and most official ecclesiastical backing. This new situation radically influenced the theological scene. This is evident from a close investigation of some of the more important theological texts in use after 1879, such as those by Franzelin, Billot and Garrigou-Lagrange. Using present-day standards, the decades in question are characterised by a certain degree of stagnation in theology. Any departure from the official Thomistic framework was treated with suspicion. Yet, despite such a rigid situation, these years turned out to be the gestation period of an important movement. The first half of the twentieth century is marked by the Return to the Christian Sources Movement. This *ressourcement* consisted in the rediscovery of the early Christian sources which had, by and large, been forgotten. This wave led to a re-appreciation of Scripture and a new interest in the riches offered by patristic and early liturgical sources.¹

The Liturgical Movement was particularly prominent. It was born within the context of a monastic revival in Europe. A number of Benedictine monasteries became centres of a new understanding and appreciation of the liturgy. This movement was given a valuable impetus by a number of rather modest, albeit courageous, liturgical reforms carried out by Pope Pius X². Yet, one cannot talk about the Liturgical Movement without recalling its chief exponents who in several ways laboured, even at the cost of sacrifice and misunderstanding, to attain long-desired dreams: Guéranger, Beauduin and Casel, and the monasteries of Solesmes, Maria Laach, Maredsous, Mont-César and Beuron, all renowned for their refined degree of liturgical intensity. The endeavours of the Liturgical Movement are intimately interwoven with the return to the patristic sources and the revival of Scripture studies.

If we return to the theological manuals mentioned previously, for instance those in the field of sacramental theology, we immediately realise that the Scholastic

1 Cfr Walter Kasper, "The Council's Vision for a Renewal of the Church", in *Communio* 17 (1990) 481-485.

2 Cfr Roger Aubert, "The Reform Work of Pius X", in *History of the Church*, IX, edited by H. Jedin - J. Dolan, Burns & Oates, London 1981, 409.

presentation is markedly christological, ontological and predominantly concerns the individual benefits reaped by Christians in their desire for salvation. In other words, the emphasis is on the reception of grace by the individual. The sacraments are signs of the action of the glorified Christ, and so, they are efficacious signs of grace. This is fundamental, yet, these truths are to be complemented by the pneumatological, the ecclesiological and the orthopractical dimensions.

This study seeks to show that although there may be periods which may outwardly appear as being static or stagnant, they too have a role to play in the history of theology. Although comparable to the meanders in a river, these situations helped theologians outside the mainstream of the prevailing current in their quest to seek new panoramas. Such developments and processes are never absent in theology because "through the centuries, thinking men and women have questioned, seeking either to challenge a belief and a theology which they did not share, or to penetrate to a deeper understanding of Christian tradition and belief which they treasure[d]"¹.

The Publication of *Aeterni Patris*

Several authors consider *Aeterni Patris* as "the starting point of the Scholastic Revival"² in philosophy and theology. Others prefer to situate the encyclical within a process which owes its origins to a movement present in the early decades of the nineteenth century. In support of this latter trend of thought, Cardinal Dezza asserts that the encyclical was the spontaneous consequence of a gradual process in Catholic thought, a process which had its origins during the first half of the

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- 1 William A. Van Roo, *The Christian Sacrament*, *Analecta Gregoriana* 262, Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Roma 1992, 24.
 - 2 Gerald A. McCool, "The centenary of *Aeterni Patris*", in *Homiletic & Pastoral Review* 79:4 (1978-79) 8. Cfr Joseph De Finance, "I grandi temi dell'enciclica" in Benedetto D'Amore (a cura di), *Tommaso d'Aquino nel I centenario dell'enciclica 'Aeterni Patris'*. Atti del convegno organizzato a Roma dalla Società Internazionale Tommaso d'Aquino e dalla Pontificia Università 'S. Tommaso d'Aquino', Roma 15-16-17 novembre 1979, Società Internazionale Tommaso d'Aquino, Roma 1981, 49; G. Filograssi, "Il commento del card. Francesco Ehrle all'enciclica *Aeterni Patris* di Leone XIII", in *La Civiltà Cattolica* 106:4 (1955) 661. Filograssi reviews Ehrle's commentary on the encyclical. This highly-praised commentary had been published in 1880, and was re-published in 1954 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the encyclical. *Aeterni Patris* is here described as "un punto di partenza, per collegare l'insegnamento di oggi a quello del secolo XIII e dell'Aquinato."

nineteenth century. After 1850, this process then matured at a more rapid pace as a result of the doctrinal controversies and debates which had then arisen.¹

Leo XIII advocates "the right use of philosophy"²; he praises the contribution of the Scholastics who "diligently collecting, and sifting, and storing up ... [the] works of the ... Fathers"³ helped in "confirming the dogmas of Catholic faith and confuting heresies."⁴ The Pope praises the methods adopted by the Scholastic theologians in their reflection, and asserts that they left a mark on future theological formulation because of their strong and firm philosophical foundations which he contrasts with "a lame and imperfect or vain philosophy."⁵ St Thomas Aquinas is praised from different angles⁶ and his method strongly recommended. Referring indirectly to the existent movement which was already attempting a revival of Aquinas and his whole system, Leo XIII asserts that

"with wise forethought, therefore, not a few of the advocates of philosophic studies, when turning their minds recently to the practical reform of philosophy, aimed and aim at restoring the renowned teaching of Thomas Aquinas and winning it back to its ancient beauty."⁷

Continuing to praise Aquinas⁸, Leo describes his contribution as the "purest streams of wisdom"⁹ containing "wholesome doctrine ... in conformity with the teaching of the Church".¹⁰ The Pope concludes by exhorting bishops to restore the "golden wisdom" of St Thomas, and to do their utmost to propagate it, in order to defend the faith against erroneous teaching; this can be attained by "carefully

1 Cfr Paolo Dezza, *Alle origini del neotomismo*, Archivum Philosophicum Aloisianum 1, Fratelli Bocca Editori, Milano 1940, 13.

2 Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter on the Restoration of Christian Philosophy, *Aeterni Patris*, §2 [Use will be made of the English text of the encyclical as published in Claudia Carlen, *The Papal Encyclicals, 1878-1903*, McGrath Publishing Company 1981, 17-26.]

3 *Ibid.*, § 14.

4 *Ibid.*, § 15.

5 *Ibid.*, § 16.

6 Cfr *ibid.*, §§ 17-23.

7 *Ibid.*, § 25.

8 Cfr De Finance, "I grandi temi dell'enciclica", 53.

9 *Aeterni Patris*, § 26.

10 *Ibid.*, § 28.

selected teachers [who] endeavour to implant the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas in the minds of students, and set forth clearly his solidity and excellence over others."¹

The negative reactions to the encyclical were not few in number. Leo XIII was accused of being instrumental in promoting a "stagnation restricting the development of future thought or even ... a political move in the tradition established by Pius IX."² Leo's stance was seen by others as representing a minority movement which had arisen in Italy, as a reaction to Kantianism, Hegelianism and other philosophical schools which were not favourably accepted by the Catholic position.³ Even certain Catholic circles failed to appreciate the Pope's intentions.⁴ The Catholic press did not remain passive. It staunchly defended the principles called for by the Pope in *Aeterni Patris*. This is evident in the literary style and form of expression used in a series of articles which appeared in the Jesuit periodical *La Civiltà Cattolica*, between August and November 1879.⁵

The Theological Climate Prior to the Encyclical's Publication

Throughout the nineteenth century, the publication of theological manuals was at its height. The aim of this theological method was the presentation of Catholic doctrine in a way that it could be studied and learned by those in preparation for the priesthood. It is very much akin to the apologetic method which had been created to counteract the erroneous doctrines of the Reformers of the sixteenth century. Furthermore, the manualistic framework consisted of long series of so-called theses.⁶ A notable example which amply illustrates this way of formulating theological reflection is Giovanni Perrone (1794-1876), an Italian Jesuit who taught dogmatic theology at the Collegio Romano (the Gregorian University) over a thirty-

1 *Ibid.*, § 31.

2 J. Derek Holmes, "Some English Reactions to the Publication of *Aeterni Patris*", in *The Downside Review* 93 (1975) 270.

3 Cfr Marcia L. Colish, "St Thomas Aquinas in Historical Perspective: The Modern Period", in *Church History* 44 (1975) 445.

4 Cfr Holmes, "Some English Reactions", 270-271.

5 Cfr "Cronaca Contemporanea", in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, serie X: vol. xi (23 agosto 1879) 617-639; "La regola filosofica di Sua Santità Leone P.P. XIII proposta nella enciclica *Aeterni Patris*", in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, serie X: vol. xi (9 settembre 1879) 657-672; serie X: vol. xii (9 ottobre 1879) 165-183; serie X: vol. xii (22 ottobre 1879) 272-290; serie X: vol. xii (6 novembre 1879) 425-443; serie X: vol. xii (25 novembre 1879) 529-547. Also cfr Roger Aubert, "Le contexte historique et les motivations doctrinales de l'encyclique '*Aeterni Patris*'", in D'Amore, *Tommaso d'Aquino*, 25-27, 36.

6 For a schematic illustration of a 'thesis' from a theological manual, cfr Carlo Rocchetta, *Sacramentaria Fondamentale*, Edizioni Dehoniane, Bologna 1990, 347.

year period from 1824 to 1853. He was also rector of the Collegio (1853-1855) and was one of the theological experts at the First Vatican Council (1869-1870). His nine-volume work *Praelectiones theologiae dogmaticae*, published between 1835 and 1842, reached its 34th edition in 1888, while his *Compendium*, published in 1845, reached its 47th edition in 1892. The accent was put on the proofs obtained from Scripture and the Fathers, and in so doing, countered any rationalistic tendencies.¹

The Tübingen School

The contribution given by the Tübingen School was to have remarkable influence on later theological reflection, especially in the twentieth century.² Yet, this new approach to theology was treated with suspect and diffidence. It sought to offer fertile theological reflection in the light of the richness of Scripture, the Fathers and speculative thought. The main exponents of the Tübingen School were Johann Sebastian von Drey (1777-1853) and Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838). Möhler contributed towards a renewal in ecclesiology, especially in his work *Die Einheit der Kirche* (Tübingen, 1825). He talks of the Church as a living reality. Another exponent of the German theological milieu in this period is Matthias Joseph Scheeben (1835-1888), noteworthy for his book *Die Mysterien des Christentums* (Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1865). Scheeben treats the fundamental dogmas of the faith as 'mysteries'.

Reference has already been made to a Scholastic revival in the decades which preceded the publication of *Aeterni Patris*. In part, this revival can be traced back to German Catholic thinkers, such as Joseph Kleutgen (1811-1883) and Albert Stöckl (1832-1895). Kleutgen is often held to be the mind behind the restoration of the use of the Scholastic method in German philosophical and theological quarters. This was part of his attempt to stem the tide caused by the doctrines of Georg Hermes (1775-1831), Anton Günther (1783-1863) and Jakob Frohschammer (1821-1893). By presenting afresh the tenets of a Catholic-based philosophy - especially against Kant, Hegel and Schelling - he contributed to a revival in Scholasticism, especially in the light of Suárez. During the First Vatican Council, he was the theological consultor to the bishop of Paderborn., and was involved in the drafting of the conciliar constitution *Dei Filius*. In 1878, he was called to Rome to lecture in dogmatic theology at the Gregorian University. It is also said that he was

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- 1 Aubert has the following comment on Perrone: "... non si distinse tanto per la sua opera scientifica, quanto per la volgarizzazione e polemica di fronte agli errori dell'epoca." Roger Aubert, *Storia della Chiesa*, XXI/1: *Il pontificato di Pio IX (1846-1878)*, Editrice S.A.I.E., Torino 1970, 298.
- 2 Cfr Franco Arduzzo et al., *Introduzione alla teologia contemporanea*, Società Editrice Internazionale, Torino 1972, 10-11.

deeply involved in the drafting of *Aeterni Patris*.¹ Nicknamed 'Thomas redivivus', Kleutgen's contribution is highly valuable in that he was able to apply the doctrine of the Scholastics to the debates of his time.²

Scholasticism in early Nineteenth-Century Italy

Frederick Copleston agrees with Padre Dezza's opinion mentioned above, and asserts that "it is not quite accurate to say that Leo XIII inaugurated the revival of Thomism. What he did was to give a powerful impetus to an already existing movement."³ There is plenty of evidence which sheds light on the activities of this movement. Carlo Rocchetta refers to the valuable contribution given by Italian thinkers such as Gaetano Sanseverino (1811-1865), Matteo Liberatore (1810-1892), Luigi Taparelli d'Azeglio (1793-1862)⁴, Giovanni Perrone (1794-1876), the brothers Domenico (1790-1880) and Serafino Sordi (1793-1865), and Vincenzo Buzzetti (1777-1824) whom Dezza calls the father of the Neo-Thomist revival in the city of Piacenza.⁵ Others see the encyclical within its historical context. Within this latter context, *Aeterni Patris* is understood as an affirmation of the Ultramontane movement and a move towards centralisation by Rome in philosophical and theological reflection, indeed an effort to curb "flirtations with modern philosophy on the part of Catholic theologians."⁶

The Spread of Neo-Scholasticism after *Aeterni Patris*

Following the publication of *Aeterni Patris*, one encounters –in the decades which follow –a widely-spread movement in philosophy and theology whose guiding light is scholasticism. This revival has had several effects. Copleston notes that the

1 Cfr Fernand van Steenberghen, "Les thomistes en dialogue avec la pensée moderne", in D'Amore, *Tommaso d'Aquino*, 152.

2 Cfr Roger Aubert, "Le contexte historique", in D'Amore, *Tommaso d'Aquino*, 15, 17, 21.

3 Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, VII, Burns and Oates, London 1963, 388-389. Cfr Id., *A History of Philosophy*, IX, Search Press, London 1975, 250; Aubert, *Storia della Chiesa*, 301.

4 Padre Dezza states that Taparelli "domina il primo periodo della restaurazione scolastica che comprende la prima metà dell'ottocento e può chiamarsi il periodo della preparazione." Cfr Dezza, *Alle origini del neotomismo*, 14.

5 Cfr Rocchetta, *Sacramentaria fondamentale*, 351; Giovanni Bortolaso, "San Tommaso e l'enciclica 'Aeterni Patris'. VIII Congresso tomistico internazionale (Roma 8-13 settembre 1980)", in *La Civiltà Cattolica* 131:4 (1980) 67; Dezza, *ibid*.

6 Colish, "St Thomas Aquinas in Historical Perspective", 445. Cfr Holmes, "Some English Reactions", 269-270.

movement led to the formation of what he calls "a party-line, a kind of philosophical orthodoxy" ¹, useful in defending the faith against thinkers who were considered to be more broad-minded and ready to accept other philosophical positions. A more positive point which ensues in the light of the scholastic revival is the fact that the rediscovery of long-forgotten texts and schemes led to a vast amount of solid philosophical reflection.

Even though one may conclude that plurality in philosophical and theological endeavour had become a dead letter within Catholic academic circles, Copleston insists that "at no time indeed was Thomism as such imposed on Catholic philosophers in a way which would imply that it was part of the Catholic faith." ² Yet one should keep in mind that certain academic circles –and these were not few in number! –did attempt to present Thomism as the only method suited to Catholic theology. Different personalities and different schools in this period exercised varying influence, depending on their way of presenting Thomism, their attitude to their listeners and their reactions to other systems of thought. Dezza states that the scope of Neo-Thomism was not the mere repetition of the doctrine of Thomas and his contemporaries. It was intended to embrace a thorough re-examination of its principles with the aim of appreciating its original beauty – a splendour which had unfortunately been buried under countless commentaries and sometimes imprecise interpretations of the original texts. Dezza holds that the vast richness of Scholastic philosophy and theology was to be presented in a manner understandable to modern man. ³

The Impetus given by Cardinal Mercier

One of the more important figures in the return to Scholasticism is Cardinal Désiré Joseph Mercier (1851-1926). ⁴ At the publication of *Aeterni Patris* in 1879, Mercier had already been teaching philosophy at the Malines seminary in Belgium for two years. Within a few years, he was to become the first incumbent to the newly-established chair of Thomistic philosophy at Louvain. In 1888, Mercier founded

1 Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, IX, 250.

2 Ibid.

3 Cfr Dezza, *Alle origini del neotomismo*, 13-14; Arduzzo et al., *Introduzione alla teologia contemporanea*, 11-12.

4 Cfr Abelardo Lobato, "Tomismo y antitomismo a lo largo de cien años", in D'Amore, *Tommaso d'Aquino* 106; Roger Aubert, "Il risveglio culturale dei cattolici", in Elio Guerriero - Annibale Zambarbieri (a cura di), *Storia della Chiesa*, XXII/2: *La Chiesa e la società industriale (1878-1922)*, Edizioni Paoline, Milano 1990, 211-213.

the Philosophic Society of Louvain, and in 1894, this society started publishing the philosophical quarterly *Revue néoscholastique de philosophie*. These are just some of his more important endeavours. Mercier's name is also linked to the correct interpretation of *Aeterni Patris*. As indicated previously, the scope of this encyclical had been often misinterpreted, both by those who faithfully adhered to its recommendations, as well as by those who rejected its proposals. A superficial reading of the encyclical, on the one hand, or a staunch approach, on the other, leads one to think that the document calls for "a return to the letter of thirteenth-century thought and ... sanction[s] ... a particular philosophical doctrine."¹ This is iterated in an article which appeared in *The Tablet*, less than three weeks after the publication of the encyclical. One reads that *Aeterni Patris* was not calling for the supremacy of Thomistic doctrine over other equally valid positions, but what was being recommended was rather Aquinas's method, his "philosophandi ratio".² It is in this light that one can better appreciate Mercier's contribution, namely the re-presentation of Thomistic philosophy in harmony with the latest developments in modern scientific reflection.

Other Exponents of the Neo-Scholastic Movement

Another important personality in the revival of Scholasticism was Maurice De Wulf (1867-1947). He promoted this academic movement by indicating the essence of Scholasticism to his students at Louvain (where he taught for forty-six years), rather than restricting himself to a cosy framework provided by a collection of data and facts. Other names inextricably bound with the Scholastic revival include Sertillanges, Garrigou-Lagrange, Billot, Maréchal, and more recently, Gilson and Maritain. With Joseph Maréchal (1878-1944), a Belgian Jesuit, one encounters the development of the so-called 'transcendental Thomism'. Maréchal asserts that it is in Thomism that the fundamental problems of kantianism find a solution.³ He exerted a profound influence on Rahner's own interpretation of Aquinas. Rahner

1 Alden L. Fisher, "Mercier", in Edwards, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, V, 278.

2 *The Tablet*, new series, XXII (LIV, August 23, 1879) 229-230, as quoted by Holmes, "Some English Reactions", 276. Cfr De Finance, "I grandi temi dell'enciclica", in D'Amore, *Tommaso d'Aquino* 69; Bortolaso, "San Tommaso e l'enciclica 'Aeterni Patris'", 67-68; Bronislaw Dembowski, "Reception of the Encyclical 'Aeterni Patris' in Poland", in *Collectanea Theologica* 46 (1976) [fasciculus specialis] 197. Dembowski distinguishes between two lines of interpretation, namely, *ad mentem Thomae* and *secundum Thomae*.

3 Cfr Antonio Fontana, *Teologi*, Piemme, Casale Monferrato 1994, 157-158.

himself affirms that it was Maréchal who provided him with the foundations of his philosophical insight¹.

The Convergence achieved by Anscar Vonier

The part played by the Benedictine monk, Dom Anscar Vonier (1875-1938) represents a point of convergence between the Scholastic revival in sacramental theology and the Return to Christian Sources movement. In fact, the maturation of his reflections and the publication in 1925 of his work, *A Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist*, coincide with the years when scholars like Romano Guardini (1885-1968) and another Benedictine, Dom Odo Casel (1886-1948) were inaugurating new fields in their rediscovery of theological domains which had long been forgotten or neglected.

The early years of the twentieth century were polarized by various discussions on the nature of the Mass. It is sufficient to mention the works by Maurice de la Taille², a professor at the Gregorian University, and M. Lepin³, a professor at the Lyons Seminary, in order to acquire an idea of the situation then. Vonier explains that the Mass is not a natural sacrifice, but a sacramental sacrifice. In so doing, he goes to the very foundation of the notion of sacrament: he elaborates on the fact that the sacraments are primarily signs – signs of the passion and the glorification of our Lord.⁴ It is only consequent to this fact that sacraments are to be understood as signs of grace. It is also in this light that two inextricable aspects of the sacraments are to be seen: namely, that they are acts of worship and means of sanctification.⁵ Vonier's position is very close to that which was being proposed by Casel, in his *Mysteriengegenwart* theory. This theory affirms that Christ's mysteries are present during the celebration of the sacraments. Furthermore, these mysteries

1 Cfr William V. Dych, *Karl Rahner*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1992, 5.

2 Mauritio De La Taille, *Mysterium fidei*, (Gabriel Beauchesne, Parisiis³ 1931. The two previous editions had been published in Paris in 1921 and 1924.

3 M. Lepin, *L'idée du sacrifice de la Messe d'après les théologiens depuis l'origine jusqu'à nos jours*, Gabriel Beauchesne Editeur, Paris 1926.

4 Cfr Colman E. O'Neill, "I Sacramenti", in Robert Vander Gucht - Herbert Vorgrimler (diretto da), *Bilancio della Teologia del XX Secolo*, III, Città Nuova Editrice, Roma 1972, 268; David N. Power, *Unsearchable Riches: The Symbolic Nature of Liturgy*; Pueblo Publishing Company, New York 1984, 181.

5 Cfr Anscar Vonier, *A Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist*, Burns, Oates & Washbourne, London 1925, 46-47; Rocchetta, *Sacramentaria fondamentale*, 354; Leeming, *Principles of Sacramental Theology*, 307-310.

are not only symbolically represented, but they "are made present truly, actually, and effectively."¹

Even though Vonier's more important contribution concerns the sacrament of the Eucharist, the role he played in the development of a renewed environment in theological reflection on the sacraments is not to be underestimated. In fact, "in a refreshing retrieval of Thomas's teaching on sacramental signification, Vonier argued for the ecclesial dimension of sacrament and for the notions of liturgy and banquet in speaking of [the] Eucharist. Though this seems commonplace now, a comparison of Vonier's work with the usual sacramental tracts of the manuals will confirm this theologian's unique contribution at the time."²

The Return to the Christian Sources Movement

The Return to the Christian Sources Movement was to exercise its influence both while Rahner, Congar, Lonergan and von Balthasar were receiving their academic formation, as well as during the years that followed. Involved as they were in teaching or within a university setting or by keeping themselves up to date with what was then being published, they all came in touch with this new springtide in the life and mission of the Church. Achille Triacca extrapolates the birth of the Liturgical Movement to the monastic revival whose origins can be identified with the efforts of Dom Guéranger (1805-1875) at Solesmes and the Wolter brothers at Beuron in the mid-nineteenth century. Triacca holds that this revival constitutes the immediate point of departure of the Liturgical Movement.³ On the other hand, Burkhard Neunheuser suggests that the birth of the Movement can be said to coincide with a conference held in the Belgian city of Malines in 1909 (September 23-26)⁴. Nonetheless, he also recalls the important contribution offered half a century earlier

1 Leeming, *ibid.*, 309.

2 Regis A. Duffy, "Sacraments in General", in Francis Schüssler Fiorenza - John P. Galvin (ed.), *Systematic Theology*, II, Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1991, 201.

3 Cfr Achille M. Triacca, "Odo Casel e il movimento liturgico", in *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 101 (1987) 158.

4 Burkhard Neunheuser asserts that at this Congress "il movimento liturgico cessa di essere una corrente per così dire, sotterranea, e all'improvviso si apre una via in superficie, mostrandosi di colpo visibile e riconoscibile agli occhi di tutti." Burkhard Neunheuser, "Movimento Liturgico", in Domenico Sartore - Achille M. Triacca (a cura di), *Nuovo Dizionario di Liturgia*, Edizioni Paoline, Roma² 1984, 911. Cfr "Le cinquantenaire du mouvement liturgique", in *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales* 40 (1959) 195-202; O. Rousseau, "Autour du jubilé du mouvement liturgique. 1909-1959", in *ibid.*, 203-217; Roger Aubert, "Le congrès de Malines de 1909", in *ibid.*, 222-237.

by Dom Guéranger, and by Pope Pius X, at the beginning of the twentieth century. He states:

"Though we recognize the fundamental importance of Abbot Guéranger of Solesmes and the reforming work of Pope St Pius X, the actual beginning of the modern Liturgical Movement is now rightly to be the Conference of Malines, together with the suggestions of G. Kurth and especially of Dom Lambert Beauduin. The Conference resulted in immediate reforms in Belgium, from where they spread also to other countries, especially to Germany, where they were carried through particularly in the characteristic apostolate of the Abbey of Maria Laach." ¹

It is during this eventful period that one also encounters the 'Liturgical Weeks' (*Semaines liturgiques de Louvain*) ² held at the Abbey of Mont-César, as from 1910, and the profound reflections and the 'Theology of Mysteries' proposed by Dom Odo Casel (1886-1948). Casel's contribution was indeed far-reaching; one can also appreciate the new and breath-taking vistas he proposed for sacramental theology. Furthermore, the influence exercised by the monasteries of Maria Laach, Beuron and Maredsous was very significant. Some of the more important personalities who in different ways generously lent their talents to the Liturgical Movement, include Dom Columba Marmion (1858-1923), Dom Ildefons Herwegen (1874-1946) and Romano Guardini (1885-1968).

The results attained by the Liturgical Movement cannot be fully appreciated unless one recalls the contemporary contribution offered by the return to the Scriptural and Patristic sources, and the indirect influence of the Ecumenical Movement ³, especially after the early 1920s. This *ressourcement* or *retour aux sources* is identifiable in the research and writings of scholars such as Lucien Cerfaux (1883-1969), Marie-Dominique Chenu (1895-1990), Henri de Lubac (1896-1991)⁴ and Stanislas Lyonnet (1902-1986).⁵ The 'return to the Scriptures' has yielded a positive influence with regard to the endeavours of the Liturgical Movement. Geoffrey Wainwright asserts that, as a result of this rediscovery, "the whole range of God's mighty acts comes to expression in many new anaphoras. Eschatological and

1 Burkhard Neunheuser, "Masters in Israel: V. Odo Casel", in *The Clergy Review* 55 (1970) 194.

2 Cfr B. Capelle, "Développement des Semaines liturgiques belges (1927-1940)", in *Les Questions Liturgiques Paroissiales* 40 (1959) 238-242.

3 Cfr Triacca, "Odo Casel e il movimento liturgico", 158; Colman E. O'Neill, "I Sacramenti", 263-264, 274; Kasper, "The Council's vision for a renewal of the Church", 481-485.

4 Cfr Van Roo, *The Christian Sacrament* 77-81; Avery Dulles, *The Craft of Theology*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin 1992, 92.

5 Cfr *ibid.*, 92, 121.

pneumatological themes have reappeared in liturgies from which they had almost vanished." ¹

The 'return to the Fathers' brought about an appreciation of valuable texts which proved very relevant to a deeper understanding of the theology of the sacraments. A reading of the mystagogical catecheses of Ambrose, John Chrysostom and Cyril of Jerusalem proved to be very revealing, and helped to grasp the richer significance of Christian initiation. ² These waves of rediscovery led to a renewal in ecclesial awareness. It is within this process that "the liturgical movement provided a praxis ecclesiology ... at the same time that it invited the whole community to assume a more active and aware role in liturgical celebrations." ³ This ecclesial awareness has been accompanied by new ecumenical experiences. The Liturgical Movement, especially in more recent decades, has gone beyond denominational boundaries, and has helped to forge new relations between Christians. ⁴

Pope Pius X and the Early Attempts at Liturgical Reform

It is held that "the first significant reforms in the area of liturgy since the Council of Trent were owed to Pius X." ⁵ This is an important statement, especially when one considers that the impetus came from the Pope himself. Pope Pius X's influence led to the launching of the liturgical renewal ⁶ outside the monasteries where it had already been active for some decades. In November 1903, only a few months after his election, Pius X published the *motu proprio Tra le sollecitudini*; although this document dealt with church music ⁷ (it encouraged the propagation of Gregorian chant), its influence was to be more far-reaching than ever expected. In fact, this document is described as the "charter of the liturgical movement." ⁸ It can be seen as a first step in a new direction ⁹; this can be affirmed especially after noting

1 Geoffrey Wainwright, "The Understanding of Liturgy in the Light of its History", in Cheslyn Jones - Geoffrey Wainwright - Edward Yarnold (ed.), *The Study of Liturgy*, SPCK, London 1978, 504.

2 Cfr *ibid.*, 504-505.

3 Duffy, "Sacraments in General", 201.

4 Cfr Wainwright, "The Understanding of Liturgy", 506.

5 Aubert, "The Reform Work of Pius X", 407.

6 Cfr O'Neill, "I Sacramenti", 263.

7 Cfr Silvio Tramontin, *Un secolo di storia della Chiesa: Da Leone XIII al Concilio Vaticano II*, II Edizioni Studium, Roma 1980, 185.

8 Cfr Aubert, "The Reform Work of Pius X", 407.

9 Cfr Tramontin, *Un secolo di storia della Chiesa*, 186.

the vast strides which were made during Pius X's pontificate (1903-1914) with respect to the liturgy and the celebration of the sacraments. At the root of this renewal, one encounters Pius X's "acute pastoral judgement and his love for the Church's most authentic traditions."¹ His efforts proved to be a consolation and a consolidation: a consolation to the untiring efforts of the pioneers in the field of liturgical renewal because, until then, their efforts were, for the most part, unnoticed and unappreciated. At the same time, the Pope's interventions would prove to be a consolidation of all the earlier efforts which had been made and a source of encouragement leading to more courageous steps in the field. The historian Roger Aubert affirms that

"from the perspective of the second Vatican Council, they [Pius X's liturgical reforms] may seem rather modest, but they required a certain measure of courage and, in any case, provided the first, not insignificant guideline for the great liturgical awakening of the twentieth century."²

One of the pioneers in this liturgical awakening at the beginning of the twentieth century was Dom Lambert Beauduin – a man whose efforts were to enjoy the full support of Pius X.

The Contribution of Beauduin

Dom Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960), a Benedictine monk at the abbey of Mont-César in Belgium, responded to Pius X's exhortations for a more active participation in the celebration of the liturgy. Beauduin's rallying call was one of active participation in the liturgy. His aim was that the Christian faithful could be led to participate actively in the celebration of the sacraments only if they were able to understand what was taking place. This led Beauduin to publish a small missal for the people, as well as a review bearing the name *La vie liturgique*. The latter became *Les Questions Liturgiques*, and eventually *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales*.³ In

1 Irénée Henri Dalmais, *Introduction to the Liturgy*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1961, 171.

2 Cfr Aubert, "The Reform Work of Pius X", 409.

3 Cfr Pierre Jounel, "From the Council of Trent to Vatican Council II", in Aimé Georges Martimort, *The Church at Prayer*, I, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota 1986, 74; Cyprian Vagganini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, The Liturgical Press; Collegeville, Minnesota 1976, 836, note 42; Pierre M. Gy, "Le liturgie occidentali", in Pierre Grelot et al., *Liturgia e vita*, Marietti, Torino 1980, 57; Tramontin, *Un secolo di storia della Chiesa*, 188.

these publications, Beauduin also showed interest in the theological aspect of the liturgy.¹

Following the Malines Congress (*Congrès national des œuvres catholiques*) of 1909, Beauduin started to organize yearly liturgical conventions, the so-called 'Liturgical Weeks', whose success gained momentum until the outbreak of World War I. In this initiative, he was encouraged by Cardinal Mercier.² It is significant to note that Beauduin's insistence on active participation was a reaction to various parallel devotions which had arisen through the centuries. These devotions emphasised the individual's personal meditation and relationship to God, and served to alienate the faithful from the celebration of the Mass. Beauduin saw individualistic piety as an obstacle to his endeavours. Consequently, his call to active participation helped to sow the seeds for an ecclesial understanding of the celebration of the sacraments.³ He presented his convictions - already publicly expressed at the mentioned Malines Congress and at the annual Liturgical Weeks of Mont-César - in *La piété de l'Église. Principes et faits*, a booklet published in 1914. The move towards an ecclesial frame of mind can be seen in Beauduin's definition of the liturgy as "the worship of the Church", the emphasis being on its public nature.⁴ Beauduin asserts that the glorious and resurrected Lord lies at the centre of the liturgical celebration. The communitarian nature of the celebration occupies an important place in Beauduin's reflections.⁵ Dom Beauduin offers an illustration and an example of the manner in which the monastic revival which had started in the mid-nineteenth century proved instrumental in creating a liturgical renewal within these same monastic centres. This renewal eventually went beyond the walls of these monasteries and spread like wildfire within the Church.

Other Pioneers within the Liturgical Movement

Dom Columba Marmion (1858-1923), an Irishman, had been ordained a diocesan priest in 1881. In 1886, he became a Benedictine monk at Maredsous in Belgium. In 1899, he was one of the founders of the monastery of Mont-César at Louvain, where he was made prior. In 1909, he returned to Maredsous, this time as abbot.

1 Cfr Vagaggini, *ibid.*, xxii, note 10.

2 Cfr Aubert, "The Reform Work of Pius X", 412.

3 Cfr Tramontin, "Un secolo di storia della Chiesa", 188.

4 Cfr Lambert Beauduin, "Essai de manuel fondamental de liturgie", in *Les Questions Liturgiques* 3 (1913) 56-66. On page 63 of this essay, Beauduin discusses the "caractère social de la liturgie".

5 Cfr Salvatore Marsili, "La liturgia, momento storico della salvezza", in Burkhard Neunheuser et al. (a cura di), *Anàmnesis, I: la Liturgia, momento nella storia della salvezza*, Marietti, Torino 1974, 75-76.

A pioneer of the Liturgical Movement, he is the author of *Le Christ vie de l'âme* (1914) and *Le Christ dans ses mystères* (1919). One of Marmion's more important contributions is his reflection on the centrality of the celebration of the Eucharist to ecclesial life and to an authentic Christian spirituality.¹ An important theme is the intimate relationship linking together the celebration of the sacraments to one's everyday life. The titles of the first two chapters of Marmion's *Le Christ dans ses mystères* are indeed revealing: (1) The Mysteries of Christ are our Mysteries; (2) Our contact with the Mysteries of Jesus.²

Dom Ildefons Herwegen (1874-1946) was abbot of Maria Laach from 1913 to 1946. He was involved in an encounter with a number of young German intellectuals who had organized a meeting in the monastery with the scope of deepening their faith. He was convinced that bringing them to experience a firm liturgical formation would be of great help to them. Herwegen was right. The group not only found what it was searching for, but also increased in number.³ From 1918, he directed the series *Ecclesia orans*, and in 1931, he founded the Benedictine Academy for Liturgical and Monastic Research.

Born at Verona, Romano Guardini (1885-1968) was brought up at Mainz in Germany, where his father was the Italian consul. He received a German cultural formation. Ordained a priest in 1910, he was involved in pastoral work and later, in intense academic activity, first in Bonn, then at Berlin⁴ where he held the new chair of *Katholische Weltanschauung*.⁵ Guardini possessed an eclectic personality: he was a philosopher, a theologian and a phenomenologist; he interested himself in psychology and in literature. His written repertoire is very vast, and runs into a hundred books and hundreds of articles on themes which range from history, literature and philosophy to ecclesiology and liturgy to Christian phenomenology and anthropology.

One of the themes which is more relevant to the subject of this study is his exposition on the spirit of the liturgy. In fact, this is the title of one of his first books, *Vom Geist der Liturgie*, published in 1918. This work inaugurated the series entitled *Ecclesia orans*, mentioned above. Other important works by Guardini include *Vom*

1 Cfr Fontana, *Teologi*, 159-160.

2 Cfr Columba Marmion, *Christ in His Mysteries* (Sands & Co; London - Glasgow³ 1939) xvii, 3-31.

3 Cfr Tramontin, *Un secolo di storia della Chiesa*, 189.

4 Cfr Arduoso, *La teologia contemporanea*, 286; Battista Mondin, *Dizionario dei teologi*, Edizioni Studio Domenicano, Bologna 1992, 286-287.

5 It is not easy to translate this term. It can be described as 'Catholic world vision' or 'cosmovisione cattolica'.

Sinn der Kirche (1922), *Der Herr* (1937) and *Das Wesen des Christentum* (1939). After the publication of the book *Sacred Signs* (1927), historians and theologians have stressed the important role of signs in the liturgy.

Guardini soon became the herald of the Liturgical Movement in Germany.¹ During his pastoral work, he was deeply involved in the German youth movement (*Jugendbewegung*).² At Burg Rothenfels, Guardini and his youth group held their liturgical celebrations in a particularly intense manner, especially on the occasion of liturgical solemnities. In fact, Guardini's name is associated with the so-called 'community Mass' (*Gemeinschaftmesse*). While abiding by all the liturgical laws of the day, he endeavoured to realize the active participation he longed for in the celebration of the Eucharist.³

Another aspect which was developed by Guardini was the celebrative aspect of the liturgy. Departing from an anthropological perspective, he based himself on the idea of 'play' and the theory of '*homo ludens*'⁴, and so developed the idea of 'liturgical playfulness'.⁵ His emphasis on the unique and absolute centrality of the historic person of Christ had been preceded by his discovery of the real and live encounter with Christ during the celebration of the liturgy. Since the liturgical celebration is an epiphany of God, each celebration has Christ at its centre, because Christ is the personal revelation of God.⁶

Guardini complements this conviction with a personalist-communitarian vision of the Church, whose members are united together through mysterious yet real interpersonal bonds.⁷ Guardini remains famous for his prophetic emblematic phrase: "The Church is coming to life in the souls of men."⁸ The life-giving action of the Holy Spirit in the lives of human beings is another important feature developed by

1 Cfr Burkhard Neunheuser, "Il movimento liturgico: panorama storico e lineamenti teologici", in Id. et al. (a cura di), *Anàmnesis, I: la Liturgia, momento nella storia della salvezza*, Marietti, Torino 1974, 22, note 6.

2 Cfr Dalmais, *Introduction to the Liturgy*, 172.

3 Cfr Neunheuser, "Movimento liturgico", 912.

4 Cfr Rocchetta, *Sacramentaria fondamentale*, 518.

5 Cfr Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 321, note 25; Romano Guardini, "The playfulness of the liturgy", in *Communio* 21 (1994) 105-114.

6 Cfr Mondin, *Dizionario dei teologi*, 290.

7 Cfr Arduoso et al., *La teologia contemporanea*, 289.

8 "... il risveglio della Chiesa nelle anime." Romano Guardini, *Il senso della Chiesa*, Morcelliana, Brescia 1960, 17.

Guardini.¹ The characteristic shift portrayed by Romano Guardini is therefore from an individualistic and private attitude in the celebration of the sacraments to one which is outward-looking, community-oriented and ecclesial. The Church, he asserts, refers to "us in faith"²; the Church, in a nutshell, can be described as: "Eines ist und Alles."³

With regard to the Eucharist, Guardini states that those who are participating in its celebration enter into a direct relationship with the meta-historic existence of Jesus. This also takes place during the liturgical celebration of the other sacraments. For Guardini, this is the most intimate element experienced in the liturgy. It is an encounter with the Redeemer. This encounter with the Lord is not a historical repetition, but rather, a real and actual re-presentation.⁴ During the liturgical action, Christ is present; his life, death and resurrection are present in a real, pneumatic manner. He is present among those who are gathered in his name; he is eaten by them and abides in them.⁵ The centrality of the Mystery of Christ in its fullness is made accessible to all who participate in the celebration of the liturgy.

Another notable exponent of the Liturgical Movement was another German Benedictine monk. Odo Casel was born in 1886 at the German city of Coblenz-Lützel. After a year of classical studies at Bonn, he decided to embrace the religious life. In this radical decision, he had been influenced by the Benedictine monk, Dom Ildefons Herwegen, a man who was also to be involved in the Liturgical Movement. He entered the Benedictine Abbey of Maria Laach, in the Rhineland, where he professed in 1907. At Sant'Anselmo in Rome, he wrote a doctoral dissertation on the Eucharist according to the teachings of St Justin. Returning to Germany in 1913, Casel went to Bonn, where he brilliantly defended another thesis, this time in the field of classical philology, entitled *De philosophorum Graecorum silentio mystico*. Back to his monastery at Maria

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- 1 Cfr Mario Farrugia, "Guardini", in René Latourelle - Rino Fisichella (diretto da), *Dizionario di Teologia Fondamentale*, Cittadella, Assisi 1990, 536-537; Mondin, *Dizionario dei teologi*, 293.
 - 2 Romano Guardini, *Vom Leben des Glaubens*, Matthias Grünewald Verlag, Mainz 1935, 152. Here, Guardini states: "Kirche" ist das 'Wir' im Glauben; der Zusammenhang, die Gemeinschaft der Glaubenden. Kirche ist das glaubende Gesamt."
 - 3 Romano Guardini, *Vom Sinn der Kirche*, Matthias Grünewald Verlag, Mainz 1933, 33.
 - 4 Cfr Burkhard Neunheuser, "Mistero", in Domenico Sartore - Achille M. Triacca (a cura di), *Nuovo Dizionario di Liturgia*, 876-877.
 - 5 Cfr Romano Guardini, *L'essenza del cristianesimo*, Morcelliana, Brescia 1949, 55-56. The following quotation from the indicated pages helps to clarify the point: "L'intero essere e la vita di Gesù costituiscono una tale realtà pneumatica ... Credere ed essere battezzato significa però inserirsi in questo atto [sua esistenza pneumatica] e rispettivamente accoglierlo in sé. Significa il morire pneumatico-reale dell'uomo vecchio e il risorgere dell'uomo nuovo ... Così si origina la relazione: noi in Cristo; Cristo in noi."

Laach, he proceeded with his research, his chief area of interest being the notion of 'mystery' in the liturgy. It was his previous academic formation in Rome and in Bonn - especially his two theses and all that this effort entailed - that provided Casel with the foundations necessary for his later endeavours. The confluence of the research he carried out in the completion of the two theses is summed up by Neunheuser as follows: "the theology of the Fathers, especially their doctrine of the Eucharist and divine worship, is based on Graeco-Latin antiquity as the *Sitz im Leben* of the early Christian liturgy and the whole still developing liturgy of the Church."¹

An initial judgement of Odo Casel would situate him or contextualise him within the tide of the German Liturgical Movement between the two World Wars.² A series of more recent evaluations on Casel have seen it more appropriate to situate his contribution within a context which transcends the German milieu; other opinions consider whether one can talk of a connection between Dom Casel's and Dom Guéranger's contributions.³ At the same time, one must bear in mind what Triacca calls the 'humus' which immediately preceded Odo Casel, as well as the milieu in which his formative experience thrived. The various prevailing currents present at the end of the nineteenth century and the initial decades of the twentieth century have been described previously. It is sufficient to recall, on one hand, the confluence between the monastic and the intellectual formation which Casel received under the influence of the abbot of Maria Laach, Dom Ildefons Herwegen, and on the other hand, the philosophical and theological environment which Casel imbibed. This led Casel to be, first and foremost,

"a formidable catalyst between the various trends which characterised the ecclesial life of his time. With the subtlety of a genius, he brought together the more relevant and sweeping elements, and in line with his positive and historical orientation, he channelled them in a direction which was then understood to be

1 Neunheuser, "Masters in Israel", 196.

2 This can be illustrated by what A. Gozier wrote twenty years after Casel's death: "L'œuvre de dom Casel demande à être replacée dans le mouvement liturgique allemand et dans l'ecclésiologie germanique de l'entre-deux-guerres." (André Gozier, *Dom Casel*, Collection théologiens et spirituels contemporains 6, Fleurus, Paris 1968, 25.

3 Cfr Achille M. Triacca, "Odo Casel e il movimento liturgico", in *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 101 (1987) 154; André Gozier, "Dom Casel: un disciple de Dom Guéranger?", in *Revue d'Histoire de la Spiritualité* 51 (1975) 311-321; Id., "La somme liturgique de Dom Guéranger a-t-elle été écrite? (ou L'influence de Dom Guéranger sur la 'Mysterienlehre' de Dom Casel)", in *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 19 (1978) 42-58.

counter to the prevailing currents of thought: his was a theologico-liturgical orientation." ¹

Casel can be described as one of the most refined and profound exponents of the Liturgical Movement. What characterises his valuable contribution is his insertion of a firm theological 'wavelength' within the liturgy. ² He succeeds in bringing together within a healthy symbiotic relationship his philological research, his love for the Fathers and his interest in the celebrative aspect of the liturgy. He also draws water from other wells: the richness of the oriental liturgies, and the contribution of the giants of theology, like Aquinas. Furthermore, it should always be borne in mind that Casel's point of departure is the Bible. ³

Casel's research and reflection led him to develop the idea of ritual as the sacramental presence of Christ's saving work. He had already made an allusion to this idea both in his doctoral dissertation on Justin as well as in his work, *Das Gedächtnis des Herrn in der altchristlichen Liturgie* (*The Commemoration of the Lord in the Early Christian Liturgy*), published in 1919. Three years later, Casel presented his now-famous theory in complete form in the book *Die Liturgie als Mysterienfeier* (*The Liturgy as the Celebration of Mysteries*). A further elaboration of his theory, including the necessary scientific foundations and presuppositions, was published in the *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* (*Yearbook for Liturgical Science*), "admittedly one of the great liturgical standard works of the time"⁴, which he himself edited between 1921 and 1941.

The principal contribution of Casel is his so-called 'theology of mysteries', that is, the theology of the Mystery of Christ as this is realised in the celebration of the mysteries of the liturgy. ⁵ It is in this light that Casel's contribution to the

1 "... il Casel è prima di tutto un catalizzatore formidabile delle istanze presenti nel vissuto ecclesiale del suo tempo. Con l'acutezza del genio, egli ne coglie le virtualità più vive e trascinatrici e, secondo le sue inclinazioni storico-positive, le coinvolge verso una 'direzione' che constitui dapprima un 'andare contro corrente': la direzione teologico-liturgica." Triacca, *ibid.*, 159.

2 Cfr *ibid.*

3 Cfr Burkhard Neunheuser, "La théologie des mystères de Dom Casel dans la tradition catholique", in *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 94 (1980) 302; O'Neill, "I Sacramenti", 263-264; Triacca, "Odo Casel e il movimento liturgico", 164-165; Rocchetta, *Sacramentaria fondamentale*, 360.

4 Neunheuser, "Masters in Israel", 195. Since 1951, the *Jahrbuch* has borne a different title, *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft*.

5 Cfr Neunheuser Burkhard, "In memoria di Dom Odo Casel. Il centenario della nascita: 27 settembre 1886-1986", in *Notitiae* 22 (1986) 369; O'Neill, "I Sacramenti", 269.

field of sacramental theology can be better appreciated. Neunheuser¹ states that "whatever we may think of the details of his work, he was one of the most important theologians of the whole period of liturgical renewal from 1918 till his death; indeed, his influence has remained active long after it..."²

Although the theory of Casel quickly became popular within the field of the nascent German Liturgical Movement, it soon encountered opposition. In fact, a heated controversy arose.³ In the long run, this controversy was to prove providential to Casel, because the answers to his opponents led him to elucidate and to clarify certain aspects of his theory. There were sections which he even thought of correcting, and so presented them in a more suitable manner. This long process led Casel to calmer waters: the opposition to his theory eventually disappeared, and most of his ideas were accepted.⁴ This situation is evident from his own writings, as well as in the publications of his contemporaries. In fact, by the time of the publication of Pius XII's encyclical on the liturgy, *Mediator Dei* (1947), it is legitimate to state that a certain degree of consensus had been reached. In fact, a careful analysis of the text of the encyclical shows that it includes some of the chief tenets proposed by Casel.⁵

Conclusion

As we have seen towards the beginning of this paper, Scholastic theology is characterised by a framework which is decisively ontological, christological and individualistic. The Neo-Scholastics, as has been pointed out, did not seek originality in their reflections and presentation. Their guiding principle was one of fidelity to the Tradition handed down to them by the great mediaeval masters. A positive feature which can be noted is their systematic way of presenting their reflections. Referring to the analysis of the texts of Franzelin, Billot and Garrigou-Lagrange, one can appreciate that they sought clarity and accuracy, although this could be tedious

1 Achille Triacca affirms that B. Neunheuser and V. Warnach "in pratica sono i migliori conoscitori, commentatori e approfonditori" of Casel's thought. (Triacca, "Odo Casel e il movimento liturgico", 163, note 37).

2 Neunheuser, "Masters in Israel", 194.

3 An objective description of the polemic was undertaken by Th. Filthaut in his book *Die Kontroverse über die Mysterienlehre*, J. Schnell'sche Buchhandlung; Warendorf Westfalia 1947. Cfr Neunheuser, "In memoria di Dom Odo Casel", 369; Id., "Masters in Israel", 195.

4 Cfr Triacca, "Odo Casel e il movimento liturgico", 163.

5 Cfr Tramontin, *Un secolo di storia della Chiesa*, 189; Neunheuser, "In memoria di Dom Odo Casel", 369; Bouyer, *Life and Liturgy*, 89.

at times. One of the weaknesses of the Scholastic approach was that no dialogue was attempted with different views and positions.

The frame of mind which has been described is in sharp contrast with the patristic style of doing theology. Patristic theology is orthopractical, pneumatological and ecclesiological. This offers a contrast not only between the patristic mystagogical catecheses and the mediaeval *summae*, but also between the post-*Aeterni Patris* theological manuals and their contemporaries from the Tübingen school.

The period which has been studied in this paper is one characterised by the confluence of various streams within theology. As we have seen, the Neo-Scholastic position possessed official ecclesiastical backing. On the other hand, Möhler and Scheeben, noteworthy exponents of the Transalpine school, presented a renewed way of doing theology. The return to the patristic schemes flowed simultaneously with the intense liturgical life which animated a number of revived monastic centres. One of the characteristic features of this period of confluence is the bringing together of the qualities which belonged to each of the various streams we have mentioned. Rather than a replacement of the Scholastic framework (which remained valid and useful), it would be better to talk of complementing it with the perspectives derived from the patristic, liturgical and scriptural sources. Today, one can rightly affirm the prophetic nature of the assertion made by Guardini in 1921, at the beginning of his academic career: "A process of incalculable importance has begun – the Church is coming to life in the souls of men".¹ Rahner, Congar, Lonergan and von Balthasar not only witnessed this process. They first-handedly experienced it, and even more so enhanced it. The momentum they provided would have far-reaching consequences. We are the lucky recipients of this living theological heritage. It is our duty to pass it on to our contemporaries and to future generations.

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¹ Guardini, *Il senso della Chiesa*, 17: "Si è iniziato un processo di incalcolabile portata: il risveglio della Chiesa nelle anime".