Mass Attendance as a Devotional Practice

An anonymous 17th century illustrated popular "Missal"

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This text was published on the Enid web site on 25 June 2007.[1]

It is now dedicated to the memory of Dr. Trevor Johnson at the University of the West of England, Bristol, who died unexpectedly and was buried on the 4 July. Requiescat in pace!

Sometime in the period between the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 18th century, an illustrated tract in the form of a popular 'Missal' or Mass Book was printed in France or in the southern Netherlands. Presenting the Roman rite of the Mass as an allegory of the Passion of Christ, the scene corresponding to each ritual action is expressed and emotionally interiorized by a devout prayer. This testifies to the difficulty of making a clear and absolute distinction between devotion and liturgy, between individual and community, between the private and the collective. To the owner of the booklet – probably a devout member of a French confraternity of the Guardian Angels - attending Mass meant bringing together these dimensions of religious practice.

From the early middle Ages and until the 20th century laypeople attending Mass were not expected to actually follow the liturgy in the sense of the *actuosa participatio* of Vatican II.[2] Instead Mass attendance was basically a devotional practice, sanctified because it took place in the presence of - and was somewhat connected or even correlated to - the celebration of the holy mysteries. During Mass the congregation was expected to engage in various private prayers and practices, while the prayers proper to the Order of the Mass were said by the celebrant, other clerics at the altar or the altar servers. To some extent celebrants and congregations was engaged in parallel activities. For instance, in 1897, the Vicariate Apostolic of Norway stipulated that the Rosary was to be prayed by the congregations during low Masses on weekdays.[3] Something similar is found in a German devotional tract on the Way of the Cross, published in the end of the 18th century. The title page explicitly mentions that the Way of the Cross is also to be prayed by the devout during Mass; the booklet was *auch bey Anhörung der H. Mess zu gebrauchen*.[4]

To overcome the obstacle represented by Latin to people, who perhaps could only barely read their native language, books began to appear with the prayers of the order of the Mass, *Ordo Missae*, given in both Latin and the vernacular. This happened at least from the 17th century - as we find documented by a Flemish Missal or Mass Book titled

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[1] I am grateful to Fr. Guido de Baere SJ in Antwerp for valuable help in checking the original in the Ruysbroeck Library. I would also like to thank the Ruysbroeck society and the library staff for offering generous access to the collection of *ascetica*.

[2] *Constitutio de sacra liturgia*, 04.12.1963. An important purpose of the constitution was to promote the active participation of the people, *ad actuosam participationem promovendam*, chapter I, art. 30.

[3] See *Kirkelige bekjendtgjørelser for Norges apostoliske vikariat*, No. 5, Kristiania (Oslo) 15 May 1897, p. 27.

[4] Wagner, Georg: *Barockzeitlicher Passionskult in Westfalen*, Münster 1967, p. 276 and fig. 59.

Misse. Haer korte uyt-legginghe, published in Antwerp 1651.[5] Aided by this kind of Mass Books a congregation could actually follow the liturgy prayer by prayer.

Yet, even if such Missals in both Latin and the vernacular were published, most devotions during Mass were private in the sense that they ran parallel to the liturgy, the faithful absorbed in their own prayers. Nevertheless, efforts were made to structure these prayers according to the order of the Mass, which means to configurate the private devotions to what was celebrated at the altar. Indeed, what was going on at the altar was not forgotten, a certain attention to the development of the rite formed a background for individual prayers. Quite often popular Mass Books contained individual prayers to be said devoutly by the faithful at the appropriate time during Mass. In this sense, the private devotions appeared like a simplified parallel, mirroring the liturgical prayers and their focus. The second part of the above mentioned Flemish Mass Book from 1651 has the title *De Heylige Dienst der MISSE, En de CEREMONIEN der Heylige Kercke*. On p. 33 the Eucharistic Prayer is introduced by explaining the silently spoken canon like this: *stil ghebedt van den Priester, onder het welck men sal konnen uyt-wercken de naervolghende Oeffeninghen, passende op het selve Ghebedt des Priesters*, 'the silent prayer of the priest during which people should engage in the following devotional exercises, fitted to this very prayer of the Priest'.

The main intention of the present text is to present some pages and illustrations from a tract, which appears in a copy of a devotional book by the Jesuit father Jacques Coret: *L'ANGE / CONDUCTEUR / DANS LA DEVOTION / CHRETIENNE, / REDUITE EN PRATIQUE / EN FAVEUR / DES AMES DEVOTES / Avec l'Instruction des riches Indulgences, dont / jouissent les Personnes associées dans la / Confrerie de l'ANGE GARDIEN*, published in Nancy 1739. As the title says, the book was on the Gardian Angel and the devotional practices of devout souls (fig. 1).

This particular copy of Father Coret's book is found in the Ruysbroeck Library in Antwerp, with the signature 3062 D 13. The book had obtained its imprimatur in 1681, and was published in a multitude of editions until far into the 19th century. As none of the other editions[6] in the Ruysbroeck Library comprise our tract, it was obviously not part of the book *L'Ange Conducteur*, not even part of the 1739-edition, but the small booklet was probably added to this particular copy of Coret's book when the owner had it bound. This is indicated by a breach in the pagination: after the tract with its illustrated pages 1-48, the main book, *L'Ange Conducteur*, follows on pp. 1-633. Also, the tract does not appear in the table of contents at the end of the book; the table begins with *L'Ange Conducteur dans les Prieres du Matin*. Since the Jesuit's book targeted members of confraternities of the Guardian Angels, a pious member may simply have had our

[5] In the Ruysbroeck library it has the signature 3095 F2.
[6] Cf. inter alia signatures 3062 F 31 (Liege 1689) and 3062 I 9 (Paris 1831).

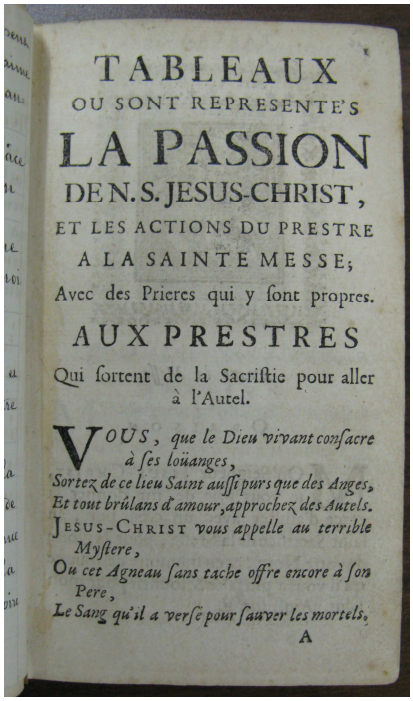
popular 'Missal' bound together with the main text – perhaps with a view to the third prayer given below, where the faithful hopes to be supported in his prayers by his Guardian Angel. In the Baroque era, many of the popular devotional practices belonged to the activities of various confraternities, to a degree where confraternal piety became almost synonymous with popular Counter-Reformation piety. Basically, the devotions of the confraternities focused on the Passion of Christ. By and large Baroque piety was a Passion piety.[7]

Fig 1
Engraved frontispiece to *L'Ange Conducteur*, the edition published in Liege 1689. The engraving is signed 'H. Spierz(?) sc[ulpsit]'. It shows an important function of the Guardian Angel: to assist the Christian in the hour of death. The text below the picture says: 'Holy angel, lovely guardian and friend of my heart, help me and my associates [other members of the confraternity] in my hour of death'.

[7] Cf. Wagner 1967, pp. 248 and 250. In general, see also Chatellier, Louis: *L'Europe des dévots*, (1987), English translation, Cambridge 1989.

The illustrated 'Missal'

Not only for the silence of the Canon Prayer, but for the entire (low) Mass, an illustrated booklet (fig. 2) was printed in French sometime in the 17th century or around 1700. What it did was precisely to provide devout prayers, fitted to the priest's prayers as recommended in the above mentioned Mass Book of 1651.



TABLEAUX
OU SONT REPRESENTE'S
LA PASSION
DE N. S. JESUS-CHRIST,
ET LES ACTIONS DU PRESTRE
A LA SAINTE MESSE;
Avec des Prieres qui y ſont propres.
AUX PRESTRES
Qui ſortent de la Sacriſtie pour aller à l'Autel.

VOUS, que le Dieu vivant conſacre à ſes loüanges,
Sortez de ce lieu Saint auſſi purs que des Anges,
Et tout brûlans d'amour, approchez des Autels.
JESUS-CHRIST vous appelle au terrible Myſtere,
Ou cet Agneau ſans tache offre encore à ſon Pere,
Le Sang qu'il a verſé pour ſauver les mortels,
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Fig 2
Title page of *TABLEAUX / OU SONT REPRESENTÉS / LA PASSION / DE N.S. JESUS-CHRIST, / ET LES ACTIONS DU PRESTRE / A LA SAINTE MESSE.* Below, the title there is an exhortation to priests leaving the sacristy to celebrate Mass, admonishing them to leave it pure as angels and approach the altar burning with love, to celebrate the mystery where the Lamb of God offers His blood to the Father to save all mortals. Thus, Mass is established as a re-enactment of the Passion of Christ.

This present text, then, presents briefly this short tract to be studied further and more comprehensively by others. It amounts to what could be defined as a popular illustrated 'Missal' or Mass Book – even if it does not contain any of the prayers or texts of the Mass.

The quite inexpensive booklet consists of 48 pages in octavo format, and contains two devotions, both accompanied by woodcut illustrations made by an engraver with the initials 'T.B.'; the text is written by an anonymous author. Our interest focuses on the first illustrated text, which is titled *TABLEAUX / OU SONT REPRESENTE'S / LA PASSION / DE N.S. JESUS-CHRIST, / ET LES ACTIONS DU PRESTRE / A LA SAINTE MESSE; / Avec des Prieres qui y sont propres*; 'Pictures in which the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ is shown, and the actions of the priest during Holy Mass, with prayers proper to them'. The

text (pp. 1-37) is illustrated by 36 numbered pictures, *Tableaux de la Passion*, all of them small and rather crude woodcuts, measuring 4,6 x 3,8 cm. (fig. 3) If at all illustrated, this kind of small popular tracts would usually have woodcuts, since books illustrated by woodcuts were cheaper than if illustrated by engravings.[8] The second text (pp. 38-48) is a devotion to the Holy Five Wounds of Jesus, presented in the late medieval tradition, illustrated by five woodcuts.

Fig 3
No. 10 of the woodcuts in the 'Missal'. Above the picture the text says: 'Jesus remains silent and humiliates himself before Herod', corresponding to what is said below: 'As the Priest says in a very low voice *Munda cor meum*, 'Purify my heart'. The prayer *Munda Cor meum ac labia mea* was said *sotto voce* by the celebrant and the deacon before the Gospel was read.

The woodcut numbered 1 on p. 3 in our 'Missal', shows the priest entering the sanctuary. It carries the initials 'T.B.', but it has not been possible to identify the engraver. He may have been one T. Belbrule active in Paris during the reign of Henri III (1551-89), but then again he may as likely be an anonymous 17th or early 18th century engraver from France or the Southern Netherlands.[9] As to the anonymous author, it could be any cleric. Yet, the systematic structure with a certain affinity to the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius

[8] Cf. Duportal, Jeanne: *Étude sur les livres a figures edités en France de 1601 à 1660*, Paris 1914, p. 64.
[9] Cf. v. Heinecken, Heinrich: *Dictionnaire des Artistes*, vol.s II-III, Leipzig 1788/89, reprint New York-London 1970, vol. II p. 383, 'Graveur en bois à Paris'. Another may be Theodor de Bry (or Brie), born in Liége 1528, died in Fankfirt a.M. 1598, see vol. III p. 437. Neither is anything to be found in vol. 3 of Benezeit, E: *Dictionnaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs*, new edition, Gründ 1999.

of Loyola, perhaps indicates a Jesuit author. Also the spirituality of the prayers in the book, based on the contemplations on the Passion of Christ, has a certain Jesuit atmosphere.[10]

The binding of this specific copy of *L'Ange conducteur* must have taken place after 1739, but this says little about the date of our booklet. It could be younger, but most likely it is older than 1739. Perhaps language[11] and pictures in our booklet suggest a print from the 17th century.[12] The title page spells priest in the old way as 'prestre', the other headings in the booklet, however, uses the younger 'prêtre'. This may simply be due to the lack of capital letters with an *accent circonflexe* in the printing office, or perhaps caused by endeavouring to archaize the language in order to heighten its solemnity and embedment in the ecclesial Tradition. It is not easy to date our booklet by its illustrations, which do show a simple sanctuary with a rectangular painting as altarpiece. The pictures do not seem to contain any elements which date them with any certainty, so basically they could belong to the rather wide period between the latter part of the 16th century and the first part of the 18th century. The chasuble worn by the priest has a form which might be dated to anywhere within that period. The candlesticks seem to be of a Renaissance or moderate Baroque form. Nothing in the woodcuts seems particularly Baroque, and there are no traces of Rococo. By and large, one feels inclined to date the woodcuts to sometime in the 17th century. This does not always date the text since older illustrations might have been used, but as the woodcuts are numbered here, they may in this case have been produced *ad hoc* for our modest booklet.

Together texts and pictures render the entire Mass step by step, each prayer to a certain extent mirroring the order of the Roman rite as it appeared after the Council of Trent. This does provide a *terminus post quem* of 1570. The main perspective of this 'Missal', however, continues the medieval concept of Holy Mass as mainly an allegory of the Passion of Christ.[13] In a Catholic prayer book with the title *Geistlicher Blumenkrantz*, published in Münster, Germany, in 1658, a woodcut was used to illustrate *Wie und was gestalt ein Catholischer Christ Mess hören soll*, how and in what frame of mind a Catholic should attend Mass. (fig. 4) The picture shows Christ on a Cross planted in the aorta of the Sacred Heart in whose side wound a human soul lies. The Crucifix is flanked by the

[10] Cf. Wagner 1967 in general, e.g. p. 250.
[11] Only capital letters are used for 'prestre' on the title page, the rest of the pages have 'prêtre' in only small letters.
[12] As for the production and selling of illustrated books in that period, see the general account in Duportal, 1914 op. cit. Booksellers specialized, hence: *Préférerait-on lire les écrits des Jésuites? On les trouvait chez Cramoisy, Bénard* …, ibid. p. 58.
[13] We know of late medieval booklets containing the Passion, e.g. a German luxury booklet with carved and painted ivory leaves, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. 11-1872 and another German booklet from ca. 1460, rather primitive with crude woodcuts accompanied by short texts and prayers in the vernacular; Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, Inv.no. 97-1963. Our booklet is special because the vehicle of the contemplation of the Passion is not primarily a sequence of Passion motifs, but of renderings of the various steps of the Roman Mass.

instruments of the Passion. The disposition of the devout Catholic is pictured as seeking shelter in the Sacred Heart of Christ, the soul hiding in the side wound of His Heart. In doing so the soul literally immerses itself in the Passion of the Lord, that unique salvific event through which mankind is redeemed. The Passion is re-enacted in every Mass, where the self-sacrifice of Christ is remembered sacramentally in such a way that it once again becomes present and effective. Therefore, Holy Mass was truly an allegory of the Passion. Prayerfully to follow and contemplate the parallel progress of Mass and Passion was the right and devout way of attending Mass.

Catholische Gebett. 53

dem Heiligen Geist / lebt vnd regiert von ewigkeit zu ewigkeit / Amen.

Das dritte Capittel.

Wie vnnd was gestalt ein Catholischer Christ Meß hören soll.

DAS gantze Ampt der heiligen Meß wirdt in drey Theil abgetheilet. In die Vorbereitung /

D iij Auff.

Fig 4
Woodcut on p. 53 in the Catholic prayer book *Geistlicher Blumenkrantz*, published in Münster 1658. The picture introduces the third chapter which presents the order of the Mass.

Each page of our booklet contains a heading relating to some part of the Passion. (fig. 5) A woodcut then shows the corresponding rite in the Mass, and a sentence below explains which rite is rendered in the picture. Then a prayer follows, to be said by the devout at that particular moment during Mass – reflecting the thematic focus of the rite. It must be

Jesus est renvoyé d'Hérode à Pilate.

A l'Evangile.

ORAISON.

JEsus-Christ, mon Sauveur, qui ayant été envoyé par Pilate à Hérode, & renvoyé par Hérode à Pilate, voulûtes qu'ils devinssent amis en ce jour là, d'ennemis qu'ils étoient auparavant: donnez-moi le courage de mépriser de telle sorte les desseins des méchans contre moi, que j'en tire toujours quelque avantage pour mon salut; afin qu'en cela je vous imite, ô mon Jesus! mon Sauveur & mon Redempteur. Ainsi soit-il.

Fig 5
One page from the 'Missal' showing the reading of the Gospel corresponding with Jesus being sent back from Herod to Pilate. The faithful asks for the courage not to fear what the schemes of evildoers would do to him, but at all times to be able to make such evil schemes advantageous to his salvation. In this, then, he would imitate Jesus, his saviour and Redeemer.

noted, however, that the correspondence between rite and Passion scene at times seems somewhat arbitrary, arranged in order to follow the ritual more than to visualize an inner accordance between the two. Fig. 5 shows this lack of logic connection between them quite clearly – strangely enough, the prayer below does not in any way mention the listening to the word of God.

As the booklet was clearly intended for a lay audience, it is surprising that the title page contains a text directed to the priests. The function of this text, however, seems to have been to promote the appropriate awe of the ministerial priesthood, and to present the Mass as the very re-enactment of the sacrifice of the immaculate Lamb to the salvation of mankind. A tract like this – and actually 17th and 18th century devotional literature as such - obviously expected a considerable literacy among laypeople. Yet, the main vehicle of the contemplation was the pictures rendering the visible the ritual which formed an entrance to a specific theme or particular part of the Passion. This should now be remembered, meditated upon, contemplated and applied to one's own life. As one could for instance read in a Spanish book from 1701, illustrated with scenes from the Passion, the use of the book ought to be to *visitava y consideraba con*

gran fervor y lágrimas en la memoria de su lastimado Jesús, by the remembrance of the suffering of Jesus behold and reflect on them fervently and with many tears.[14] The octavo format of our booklet made it easy to bring along to church to do just that.

Typical of this popular 'Missal' are the four initial prayers on the pages 2-5, the prayer before Mass with a Crucifix and the prayer when the priest approaches the altar - corresponding to when Jesus proceeded to the Garden of Gethsemane; (fig. 6) the prayer when the priest stands in front of the altar as a picture of how Jesus entered the garden and starts praying - and the prayer accompanying *Confiteor*, the general Confession, corresponding to Jesus sweating blood during His prayer.

Avant la Messe.

ORAISON.

MOn Seigneur JESUS-CHRIST, je vous prie de me donner la grace d'assister avec un cœur pur, au saint Sacrifice de la Messe, pour la gloire de votre Nom, & en mémoire de tout ce qu'il vous a plû faire & souffrir pour mon salut. Ainsi soit-il.

TABLEAUX DE LA PASSION. 3

Jesus va au Jardin des Olives.

Quand le Prêtre vient à l'Autel.

ORAISON.

MOn Seigneur Jesus-Christ, Fils du Dieu vivant, qui dans le tems de votre Passion, avez voulu vous livrer à la tristesse, & avoir le cœur pressé d'une extrême affliction; faites-moi la grace de vous offrir & vous consacrer toutes les peines, tous les ennuis, & tous les déplaisirs de ma vie. Unissez-les, s'il vous plaît, Dieu de mon cœur, à vos souffrances, afin que par les mérites de votre Passion, tous mes maux me soient utiles & salutaires.

Ainsi soit-il.

Math. 6. 2. v. 37.

Fig 6
Pages 2-3 with prayers before Mass and as the priest enters the sanctuary.

The headings read: 'Jesus goes to the Garden of Olives', 'Jesus comes to the garden and starts praying' and 'Jesus prays, prostrate, and sweats blood'. The woodcuts are

[14] Quoted in Portús, Javier & Vega, Jesusa: *La estampa religiosa en la España del antiguo régimen*, Madrid 1998, p. 501.

numbered 1, 2 and 3, showing the priest's entrance with an altar boy, standing in front of the altar and bowing down in front of it. The painting above the altar, the altarpiece as it were, changes from picture to picture, rendering the Passion scene which corresponds to each part of the rite. The first three illustrations show Jesus going to the Garden of Gethsemane, praying and assisted by an angel with a chalice, and praying prostrate on the ground respectively. Below each woodcut, the text explains when the devout should pray the prayer belonging to this moment at Mass - at the same time explaining the illustration. Then, the prayer follows. The introductory prayer and the first three prayers read:

My Lord Jesus Christ, I pray that you give me the Grace to attend the holy Sacrifice of Mass with a pure heart, for the glory of your name and in remembrance of everything that it has pleased you to do and suffer for my salvation. Amen.

"When the priest goes to the altar": *My Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who in the time of your Passion wanted to surrender yourself to sadness and to have your heart weighed down by the greatest sorrow; grant me the Grace to offer and consecrate all the sorrows, pains and worries in my life to you. Conform them, if you please, God of my heart, to your sufferings, that all these hurtful things - through the merits of your Passion - may become useful and beneficial to me. Amen.*

"When the priest begins the Mass" (fig. 7): *Jesus-Christ, my Saviour, Son of the Living God, who wanted that an angel should strengthen you during your prayer which you made to your Father: that - provided this was His will - you should not drink the chalice of suffering. Grant me through your almighty power the Grace to be supported and strengthened in my prayers by my Guardian Angel. Amen.*

Fig 7
The priest begins Mass served by two altar boys. The altarpiece shows Christ praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, corresponding to the priest's very first prayer from Psalm 42: "O God, sustain my cause; give me redress against a race that knows no piety; save me from a treacherous foe and cruel".

"When the priest says the *Confiteor*" (fig. 8): *Jesus Christ, Saviour of the World; if it pleases you, grant that I, when I consider how ardently you prayed to your father, your face to the ground in your anguish in the garden; how your sweat trickled like drops of blood running from your body, grant, then, that I be capable of opening my heart to such a love that I may become totally pierced by it, and that I before you may pour out tears in abundance. Amen*.[15]

Jesus prie prosterné & suë le Sang.

Quand le Prêtre dit le Confiteor.

ORAISON.

JEsus-Christ, Sauveur du monde, faites, s'il vous plaît, qu'en considerant que vous priâtes avec tant d'ardeur votre Pere, le visage prosterné contre terre durant votre agonie au Jardin, qu'il vous en vint une sueur comme des goutes de Sang, qui découlerent de votre Corps, je reçoive en moi un tel épanchement de l'amour qui produisit cet effet inoüi, que j'en sois tout pénetré, & que je répande devant vous une grande abondance de larmes.

Ainsi soit-il.

A iij

Fig 8
A page concerning the *Confiteor*. Such a page may have reminded the reader of the simple and unsophisticated religious emblems, with *Inscriptio*, *Pictura* and *Subscriptio*, a heading, a picture and an explanatory text. The heading mentions a specific scene from the Passion; the picture correlates the liturgy to the scene. The explanatory text shows how the devout by attentively and meditatively following this may awaken the right contrite love.

The introductory prayer displays the disposition with which one should attend Mass, and describes Mass as a re-enactment of the Passion, to keep the memory of it alive in the devout. The second prayer opens the theme of imitation, thereby attaching meaning and, indeed, virtue, to human trials and tribulations by conforming (unissez-les) them to the suffering of Christ. In this as in the fourth prayer the devout articulates a typically Baroque, contrite and highly emotional faith, brought about by contemplating the image of Christ in Gethsemane, interiorly imitating His anguish and pain.

The first prayer reveals the Catholic tradition, and so does the third prayer when it mentions our *bon Ange*, displaying the growing interest in the Guardian Angel at the

[15] My own translations.

time. Nevertheless, first and foremost these heartfelt prayers articulate the emotional approach typical for both Catholic and Lutheran, not least Pietistic, devotional piety[16] in the 17th and early 18th century – as do the other prayers in the book.

To consider the Passion of Christ with great devotion was not primarily a mnemonic activity, but an imitative and contrite devotional practice which should bring the reader/beholder to shed tears of compassion and contrition; *une grande abundance des larmes*, or, as the Spanish book of 1701 put it: *con gran fervor y lágrimas*. However, it must be remembered that our booklet is not primarily a kind of illustrated Passional, but a popular Mass Book, meant to serve a lay person's transformation of the proceedings at Mass into a contemplation of the Passion of Christ and the application of the things considered to his or her personal life.

Liturgy and devotion

The modest tract titled "Tableaux" thus testifies to the fact that the clergy did attempt to conform the devotions during Mass to the *Ordo Missae*, establishing a correlation between the allegory of the liturgical actions described and depictured in the booklet (fig. 9) and the individual pious attachment to them in terms of a personal application.

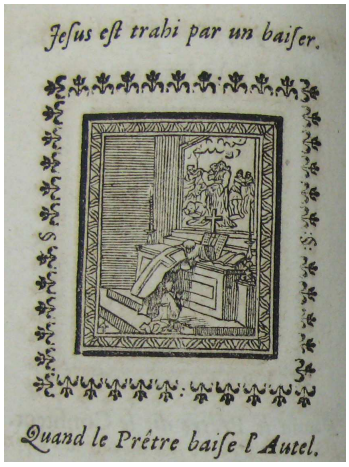

Fig 9
Having said the *Confiteor*, the priest kisses the altar, woodcut no. 4. The altarpiece now shows how Christ was betrayed by a kiss. As the priest bowed down to kiss the altar, he prayed silently the *Oramus te, Domine*, that God might pardon all his sins through the merits of the saints whose relics were placed in the altar table.

[16] On Lutheran Passion piety in the early 18th century, see e.g. v. Achen, Henrik: The Sinner´s Contemplation, in: *Images of Cult and Devotion*, Søren Kaspersen (ed.), Københavns universitet, København 2004, pp. 283-304; and the same: The "Passion Clock" - a Lutheran "Way of the Cross". Reflections on a Popular Motif in Early 18th Century Scandinavian Religious Imagery, in: *Genre and Ritual. The Cultural Heritage of Medieval Rituals*, Eyolf Østrem, Mette Birkedal Bruun, Nils Holger Petersen, and Jens Fleischer (ed.s), København 2005, pp. 119-142. Thus, it is not surprising to find the illustration rendered here as fig. 4 was copied in a Danish Pietist Lutheran single leaf woodcut dating to the mid 18th century, see Clausen, V.E.: *Folkelig grafik i Skandinavia*, København 1973, fig. 35.

To the devotional life of the believer, practices were important or even vital as they articulated, expressed, shaped and fortified his or her faith and piety. Practices were not only a matter of form - 'vessels' containing or expressing piety and devotion - but practices shaped and created piety in a way which makes it difficult to make any clear distinction between form and content, between devotion and devotional practice – difficult even to make a distinction between the spiritual and physical dimension of devotion. Hence, instruments of devotion are not secondary phenomena, but integrated elements of the devotion themselves.

In the same way, the attended liturgy of the Church was not in opposition to this in terms of a collective practice contrasted with an individual practice. Even the practice of individual prayers by books of hours cannot be viewed as expressions of purely private piety, but such practices did encompass collective or community aspects.[17] This would, then, *a fortiori* be the case with the Mass liturgy as well. The illustrations in our booklet showed the Roman rite as the exterior dimension of the liturgy, the altar paintings above the altar pointing to the interior dimension of the liturgy - the prayers, then, expressing how Holy Mass was interiorised as a meditation on the suffering and death of Christ.

Basically, a liturgical practice can only survive as an important element in faith if it also becomes a devotional practice. Even if considering the Passion was not primarily a mnemonic or catechetic exercise, meditation on the account of the suffering and death of Christ was regarded as a most excellent way of enflaming the hearts with love and gratitude towards Him. This most holy of stories was in itself the source of all Christian virtues, as explained by a catechism for the French diocese of Mans, published in 1695: *l'Histoire de la sacré Passion, don't le récit est plus proper à exciter dans les coeurs l'amour et la reconnaissance envers lui, Jésus-Christ, et dans laquelle on peut faire remarquer plus sensiblement des exemples de toutes les vertus Chrétiennes*.[18] In this way each Mass became an hour of catechism - and a devout repetition of things already learned.

Thus, for laypeople every Mass was converted into a private devotion, which did not, however, run freely and arbitrarily, but conformed to the order of the Mass, reflecting this order and its various themes. In this sense our illustrated booklet did indeed serve as an instrument of devotion – of what we may call 'liturgical devotion'. It transposed the structured theological content provided by the Roman rite to a spiritual and emotional level articulated by scenes from the Passion and by fervent prayers. The devout should follow what was going on at the altar and not simply stick to their private

[17] As Eamon Duffy recently has shown concerning the late medieval practice of individual prayer. See Duffy, Eamon: *Marking the Hours. English People and Their Prayers 1240-1570*, New Haven & London 2006, chapter 3, e.g. pp. 56seq.
[18] Ménard, Michèle**:** *Une Histoire des mentalités religieuses aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, Paris 1980, p. 255, quoted from the *Catéchisme diocésain* 1695. The old diocese of Mans was suffragan under the archdiocese of Tours.

devotions. Following the Mass attentively and devoutly, they would recognize what happened from the illustrations (fig. 10), relate it to some specific scene in the Lord's Passion as shown by the headings - and the altarpieces as pictures in the pictures - and finally in a moral and spiritual sense the faithful should apply it on their personal lives – the application described and testified to by heartfelt prayers.

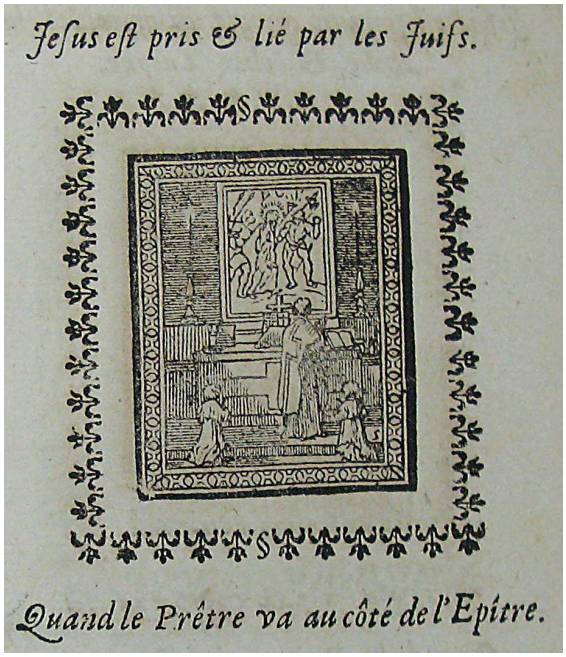

Fig 10
Having kissed the altar the priest goes to the epistle corner (right) to read the Introit proper to the day. The altarpiece shows how Jesus was caught and tied by the Jews.

In the paintings above the altar in each woodcut, one may also see a reference to the Jesuit method of *compositio loci*, as set forth in the *Spiritual Exercises* by Ignatius of Loyola, written in the early 1520s, published in Latin in 1541 with the title *Exercitia spiritualia* and promulgated by Pope Paul III in 1548. Clearly related to late medieval devotion with its roots in the *devotio moderna* of the 14th century, the *compositio loci*, (in Spanish *composición viendo el lugar*),[19] is the inner vision of the devout imagining the scene with all its details - the vision, then, shaping the emotions and prayers. Ignatius wanted the devout to contemplate (*contemplar*) and reflect on (*meditar*) these matters based on envisaging the biblical events - imagining them, visualizing them in all their details in order to be transported there. Examples of such emotional, elaborate and highly detailed descriptions of scenes from the Passion are common in Baroque

[19] It must be remembered that although the original text of *Ejercicios espirituales* was written in Spanish, the *Spiritual Exercises* were not published in Spanish until 1615.

homilies.[20] The *compositio loci* would thus at the same time make the devout present at the scene and make the scene present in the mind of the devout. If the prayer concerns suffering, then one should ask for suffering, tears and pain together with the tortured Christ.[21] From this point of departure, then, the fourth prayer, given above, does exactly that. Mass and Passion seemed to merge.

Reflecting on such an instrument of devotion like our simple 'Missal', we realize the difficulty in upholding a clear distinction between individual piety and the liturgical collective. The border tends to become blurred, the two practices blending, containing a both individual and collective dimension. The order of Mass and the actions of the priest evoked a remembrance or even actualization of the Passion, thereby shaping the individual devotion. It really did matter what the priest was doing at the often distant altar. Yet, the degeneration of lay Mass attendance to merely being in the church when the Holy mysteries were celebrated was a latent risk. Sometimes, gazing at the elevated host at a certain point in time was the only collective act during Mass, since otherwise one was occupied with one's private devotions. Apart from once a year, at Easter time, even communion was mostly spiritual and no external collective action. Acknowledging this problem, proper Mass attendance, therefore, was taught and promoted by the Church through instruments such as our booklet, which served the forming of a 'devout attendance'.

When the liturgical constitution of Vatican II stated that liturgical acts are not of a private nature, and that during the rites of the liturgical community private devotions should always take second place,[22] this should not be understood as a focus entirely on the external or purely collective dimensions of Holy Mass, in terms of an activism or a removal of the individual aspect, as the *quasi* concelebration replaced the former individual devout attendance. In fact, the concept of 'active participation' comprised the internal disposition, the *actuosa participatio* obviously having an interior as well as exterior dimension, none of them to be neglected. Perhaps the main result of the liturgical constitution – reaping the fruits of the Liturgical movement in the previous decades - was that celebration of the Holy mysteries had become a shared experience, merging the order of Mass with the prayers of the faithful. Earlier, at best, the private prayers had reflected the order of Mass as one coherent meditation on the Passion, the liturgy acting as a device recalling the Passion and structuring private devotion accordingly - as our short, illustrated 'Missal' shows so clearly.

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[20] As an example, see Fr. Gabriel Erich in Paderborn, Northern Germany, in the 1740s: *Christ-Catholische in Gottes Wort gegründete Sitten- und Kirchenlehren oder Predigen* … etc.,, III vol.s, Augsburg-Würzburg 1747-49; e.g. vol. II, pp. 148seq.
[21] *Spiritual Exercises* no. 47-48. The Passion is the subject of the exercises in the third week, cf. no. 190seq.
[22] *Constitutio de sacra liturgia*, chapter 1, art. 26: *Actiones liturgicae non sunt actiones privatae* …, and art. 27: … *celebrationem communem … esse praeferendam celebrationi eorundem singulari et quasi privatae*.

Fig 11
Having finished the introit, the priest returns to stand in front of the altar during *Kyrie*. The altarpiece shows how St. Peter renounced Jesus, and the text of *Kyrie*, 'Lord have mercy', does articulate the contrition and repentance of the devout Christian, who – like Peter – had renounced Christ so often and now should weep bitterly.

So, this small booklet titled *Tableaux* etc. shows that it is no simple and straightforward matter to draw a sharp line between private and communal devotion. Even the official liturgy of the Church was meant to instigate private devotion. From the Middle Ages and until the 20th century, attending Mass in the proper way was basically to make it a devotional practice. However, it should obviously not be entirely private, since Mass was attended with others and all shared a common focus point – the priest at the altar. Even the private prayers were shaped, conformed and correlated to the order of the Mass with its external actions as a salvific re-enactment (fig. 11) of the Passion of Jesus Christ. His sacrifice – and indeed every Mass celebrated – was an act *pour sauver les mortels*. Instruments of devotion like our modest 17th century tract with its pictures and prayers served the merger between official cult and private application.

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