

“Full, Conscious and Active Participation”: *Sacrosanctum Concilium*’s Influence on an Eastern Catholic Worship Aid

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July 2013 saw the third printing of *The Divine Liturgy: An Anthology for Worship*.¹ First issued in 2004, the predominantly English-language “pew book” now has a combined print-run of almost 10,000 copies. This does not include the vast number of pirated photocopies of (sometimes large) sections of the book, nor the digital pages (legally) displayed on several websites.

The eve of the tenth anniversary of the *Anthology*’s first printing and the fiftieth anniversary of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*’s promulgation seems an appropriate time to reflect on a pivotal decree’s significant influence on this worship aid.² Sooner or later, as editor-in-chief of the *Anthology*, I was bound to reflect in print on this influence, but I thank the organizers of this Symposium for compelling me to do so now.

¹ Peter Galadza, Joseph Roll, J. Michael Thompson, eds., *The Divine Liturgy: An Anthology for Worship* (Ottawa: Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies, 2004).

² An earlier version of this lecture was delivered in 2013 at the Catholic University of America in Washington during a symposium, “Tradition and Progress,” honoring the fiftieth anniversary of the promulgation of the Second Vatican Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. A modified version was then delivered the following year at the University of St. Michael’s College during the conference, “The Vatican II Decree on the Eastern Catholic Churches, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Fifty Years Later” organized by the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies.

Having referred to my role as editor-in-chief, I should note that in spite of this position I am hardly a blind apologist for everything found between the two covers of this 1,166-page volume. Worship is a corporate reality, and a large book codifying such a collective endeavor will inevitably include items that not even worshipper – not even the book’s editor – is enthusiastic about. However, in sum, I am convinced that the *Anthology* makes a marked contribution to facilitating full, conscious and active participation in worship. And while there are scores of other aspects of the book that I would eventually like to analyze, today I will center my attention on this aspect alone.

Before proceeding, however, several caveats. First, I do not, of course, believe that worship is a book. Thus I do not believe that worshippers should be encouraged to bury their heads in a text. Second, in spite of the *Anthology*’s preference for congregational chant, the ancillary participation of choirs – or the use of more demanding choral pieces – should never be discouraged. Third, the codification of the chants found in the *Anthology* hopefully will not deter the development of a more contemporary North-American musical idiom. I shall return to all of these points – in one way or another – later in my paper.

Full, Conscious, Active Participation

The three key adjectives of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*’s paragraph 14 will each serve – separately – to guide my discussion. I will leave the Latinists to discuss why the English section of the Vatican’s website actually translates our phrase as “fully conscious and active,”³ while the French⁴ and German⁵ renderings on the very same website retain the now standard “full, conscious, and active.” My preference for the latter not only derives from the fact that I began work on my paper be-

³ http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html

⁴ http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_fr.html

⁵ http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_ge.html

fore I noticed the Vatican's distinctive rendering, but also from the fact that, like most Eastern Christians, I tend to see "scripture" as part of "tradition." And certainly in the case of par. 14 of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the triple adjectival phrase has become quite "traditional."

Full Participation

Among the features of an already weighty tome that might strike one as an odd embellishment is the *Anthology's* catechetical and preparatory material (pp. 9–94). Does one really need an examination of conscience, and prescriptions for fasting – not to mention the text of the Sunday Matins gospels and Minor Hours in a book intended for the Eucharist? To begin with the most pedestrian (or should I say "posterior") answer, it seemed that with most Ukrainian Greco-Catholic churches having pews, it might be wise to include material that can be read or perused by worshippers as they sit in anticipation of the service's beginning. Considering what sometimes passes for reading material in church,⁶ this decision does not seem unreasonable. Besides, there was the nudge of tradition. Since at least the Habsburg take-over of Western Ukrainian territories in the late eighteenth century, the Viennese sovereigns' commitment to popular enlightenment has resulted in the regular inclusion of catechetical, and more generally educational, material in Greco-Catholic prayer books.⁷

Turning to a more elevated rationale, certainly Scripture and tradition require that worship be existentially integrated. The bane of liturgy – especially among certain Eastern Chris-

⁶ I remember once entering a church where I was serving several minutes before the Liturgy, and seeing an active parishioner sitting in full view of everyone and ostensibly reading the *Chicago Tribune*.

⁷ Just one example from the Habsburg period would be *Корм Души: Молитвословъ для Мірянъ* (Львовъ: Изданіе Ставропігійського Інститута, 1907), 14–23. An indication of the staying power of such material is the fact that while Orthodox prayer books usually do not contain such catechetical material, one of the few prayer books published by the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine during the Soviet period includes just such material. See *Православний Молитвослов* (Київ: Видання Екзарха України, Митрополита Київського і Галицького, 1968), 216–23.