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**Resurrecting the Ambo:  
Monument of Paschal Memory and Eschatological Hope<sup>1</sup>**

**Part I**

**Zmartwychwstanie ambony:  
pomnik pamięci paschalnej i nadziei eschatologicznej  
Część pierwsza**

Abstract

The use of the ambo during the celebration of Mass with a congregation was restored to the Roman rite in 1964, it seemed after centuries of absence. Limited use of the ambo during Mass, or remains of the ambo such as lecterns, had continued interrupted in some Western rite contexts from the Council of Trent until the Second Vatican Council. The reception of the ambo from 1964 was rather modest with respect to its monumental history and symbolic wealth. This was due, no doubt, to the significance and history of the ambo going un-noted in Roman documentation and liturgical books in the years after *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Renewed emphasis on the significance of the ambo on the part of the Roman dicastery for divine worship appeared in the context of the Roman rite in the late 1980s and once again in the Jubilee year 2000 but seems to have been overlooked in the vast majority of local churches. The author reviews what he considers to be a gradual restoration of the ambo to its medieval heyday while seeing that same restoration as central in placing the celebration of Christ's paschal mystery at the heart of the liturgy renewed after Vatican II.

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to acknowledge the generalates of the Cistercians, the Trappists, the Premonstratensians and the Carmelites (O.Carm.), as well as *La Grande Chartreuse*, for access to the liturgical books of their Orders in the preparation of this paper.

**Keywords:** Ambo, Mass, Resurrection, Gospel, Scripture readings, Lectern, Analogium, Lectorium, Pulpit, Monument, Paschal Mystery, Eschatology.

#### Abstrakt

Używanie ambony w czasie celebracji Mszy św. w zgromadzeniu zostało przywrócone w rycie rzymskim w 1964 r., po – jak się wydawało – nieobecności przez wieki. Ograniczone użycie ambony lub pozostałości ambony, jak lektorium (pulpit), podczas Mszy zostało jednak utrzymane, bez zrywania kontekstu, w niektórych rytach zachodnich od Soboru Trydenckiego aż do Soboru Watykańskiego II.

Postrzeżenie ambony od 1964 r. było skromne w porównaniu z jej monumentalną historią i bogactwem symbolicznym. Ta powściągliwość wynikała bez wątpienia z braku adnotacji w dokumentach rzymskich i księgach liturgicznych po *Sacrosanctum Concilium* o znaczeniu i dziejach ambony. Ponowne podkreślenie znaczenia ambony przez rzymską dykasterię ds. kultu Bożego pojawiło się w kontekście rytu rzymskiego pod koniec lat 80. i kolejny raz w roku jubileuszowym 2000, ale wydaje się, że zostało ono przeoczone w większości Kościołów lokalnych. Autor opisuje to, co uważa za stopniowe przywracanie ambony do jej średniowiecznej świetności, jednocześnie widząc, że ma ono kluczowe znaczenie dla umieszczenia celebracji misterium paschalnego w centrum liturgii odnowionej po Soborze Watykańskim II.

**Słowa kluczowe:** ambona, Msza św., zmartwychwstanie, Ewangelia, czytania biblijne, analogium, lektorium, pulpit, misterium paschalne, eschatologia.

The first instruction for the application of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* invited the use of an ambo, or several ambones, for the proclamation of passages from sacred scripture during the celebration of Mass with the people.<sup>2</sup> The ambones we find today, almost sixty years after *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, are rarely more than large lecterns and do not resemble the monumental structures which recall the empty tomb by their form and iconography which had, admittedly, almost completely disappeared from use by the sixteenth century. We find in the liturgical books promulgated since the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) an increasing inclination to-

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sacra Congregatio Rituum. 1964. "Instructio ad executionem constitutionis de sacra liturgia recte ordinandam Inter Oecumenici (26 septembris 1964) 49". *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56: 889. See also Reiner Kaczynski. Ed. 1975. *Enchiridion Documentorum Instaurationis Liturgicae*. Vol. 1: (1963–1973). Torino: Marietti [= EDIL] n. 12.

wards a theological and symbolic interpretation of the ambo. The gradual change, especially from 1981 to 2000, seems largely overlooked and so the principal aim of this article is to interpret the return of the ambo and the growing confidence in Roman commentary on the significance of the structure in the liturgy.

In the first part of this article will be examined the various kinds of structure for proclaiming the scripture readings in the Western rites of Mass in the decades before Vatican II.<sup>3</sup> While not essential to our purpose, the preliminary review helps establish a context for the return of the ambo within the Roman rite and its uses as well as to compare and contrast the pastoral relevance in the twentieth century with that of the late middle-ages. Then the gradual restoration of the ambo for the Roman rite by the Apostolic See will be traced by an examination of the dicasterial documentation promulgated after *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, with a review of some of the interpretative literature examining the reform.<sup>4</sup> The increasing emphasis upon the ambo and its theological and ritual significance in the liturgical books promulgated after Vatican II, which constitutes the principal object of study of this article, will be taken as an opportunity to review one of the themes of the liturgical reform itself, i.e. positive re-evaluation of the centrality of Christ's paschal mystery in liturgical celebration. We will conclude by highlighting connections between the ambo and the altar as monuments of the paschal mystery whose design and relationship with each other require greater understanding and more sympathetic building projects.

## 1. The ambo at Mass in the Roman rite and other Western rites on the eve of Vatican II

### 1.1. *Cæremoniale Episcoporum & Pontificale Romanum*

The Ceremonial of Bishops published in 1600, the first edition after the Council of Trent (1545–1563), facilitated the use of the ambo, and indeed a simple lectern, for the singing of the Gospel at solemn Mass celebrated by the bishop.<sup>5</sup> In describ-

<sup>3</sup> For a recent and broad review of the Western liturgical traditions in the Catholic Church before and after the Second Vatican Council, see Nathan P. Chase. 2021. "A Frayed Tapestry: The Future of the Western Non-Roman Rites". *Questions Liturgiques / Studies in liturgy* 101: 27–74.

<sup>4</sup> The use of lecterns, *lectoria*, *analogia*, lutrins, pulpits, jubés, and ambones during other liturgical celebrations such as the Liturgy of the Hours, before and after Vatican II, will be omitted entirely here for want of space, but would make an interesting second study.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Achille-Maria Triacca, Manlio Sodi. Edd. 2000. *Cæremoniale Episcoporum. Editio Princeps (1600)* (Monumenta Liturgica Concilii Tridentini, 4). Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana [= *CE1600*].

ing the deacon's duties at solemn Mass, given the option for using a lectern: *cum erit in loco, ubi solet Euangelium cantari, ponet librum apertum in manibus Subdiaconi, vel in legili, aut alias iuxta consuetudinem Ecclesiae, ut in dicto capitulo de Missa solemnī.*<sup>6</sup> In describing the duties of the subdeacon at a bishop's solemn Mass, the Ceremonial mentions the various possibilities according to the presence and use of a lectern, ambo or pulpit:

*Accedit deinde cum Diacono ad lectionem Euangelii procedens manibus iunctis immediate ante illum; et illi legenti Euangelium tenet ambabus manibus librum apertum ante pectus, vel legile manibus tenet, aut adhaeret Diacono, si in ambone, aut pulpito Euangelium legatur, ut in capitulo de Missa solemnī latius explicatur; et si forte Diaconus proferendo aliqua verba Euangelii inclinaret se, aut genuflecteret, librum, vel legile tenens, ipse nullatenus moueter; cum repræsentet legile immobile.*<sup>7</sup>

In the second book of the Ceremonial, the description of solemn Mass includes a variety of possibilities for the place in which both epistle and Gospel might be sung:

*Subdiaconus autem accipiens librum, factisque debitis reuerentiis altari, et Episcopo, comitante ad eius sinistram cærimoniaro, et sibi ipse tenens librum, extra presbyterium a latere sinistro altaris, vel, ubi ita consuetum sit, in ambone cantat Epistolam alta voce.*<sup>8</sup>

*Cum peruenerint ad locum, ubi solet Euangelium decantari, Subdiaconus medius inter dictos ceroferarios tenet librum Euangeliorum apertum ante pectus, vertens renes nonquidem altari, sed versus ipsam partem dexteram, quae pro Aquilone figuratur. Si vero in Ecclesia fuerint legilia, vel ambones, in illis poterit cantari Euangelium; videlicet, si cantabitur in legili, seu pulpito, Subdiaconus stabit post illum, qui panno aureo, vel serico coloris cæterorum paramentorum coopertus, et ornatus esse debet, amplectens ipsum legile, et manibus hinc inde librum tangens. Quod si cantabitur in ambone lapideo, ad quod per gradus ascenditur; prout adhuc in pluribus Ecclesiis,*

<sup>6</sup> *Liber Primus. De Officio Diaconi in Missa solemnī Episcopo, vel alio celebrante. Cap. IX, in CE1600, 36/-44-. See also n. 2 of the same chapter in 1948. Cærimoniale Episcoporum Clementis VIII, Innocentii X et Benedicti XIII jussu editum Benedicti XIV et Leonis XIII auctoritate recognitum editio tertia post typicam. Taurini – Romae: Marietti [= CE1948], 24.*

<sup>7</sup> *Liber Primus. De Officio Subdiaconi in eadem Missa Pontificali solemnī. Cap. X., in CE1600, 44/-52-. See also n. 3 of the same chapter in CE1948, 29.*

<sup>8</sup> *Liber Secundus. De missa solemnī Episcopo celebrante. Caput VIII., in CE1600, 162/-170-. See also n. 40 of the same chapter in CE1948, 121. The latter made no mention of singing the epistle outside the presbytery.*

*iuxta antiquam consuetudinem, huiusmodi ambones reperiuntur; tunc Subdiaconus assistet, et ministrabit Diacono opportuna stans a latere eius dextero; videlicet, porrigens thuribulum, et vertens folia libri Euangeliorum, cum opus erit.*<sup>9</sup>

The last edition of the *Cæremoniale Episcoporum* published before the Second Vatican Council was that of Pope Leo XIII, a 1948 reprinting of which was referenced in the footnotes given here along with references to the 1600 edition. The 1948 reprint gave the same indications as that early seventeenth-century edition; the later text varied only with respect to spelling, the means of indicating references within the document, and the detail about the subdeacon singing the epistle outside the presbytery. Essentially, the references to the use of the ambo remained the same from the first edition after the Council of Trent until the last edition before the Second Vatican Council. The *Cæremoniale* showed no tendency toward either innovation or preferring more elaborate traditions, but was concerned with permitting the use of extant, and ancient, ambones.

The *Pontificale Romanum* of 1961–1962 indicated the announcement of the Date of Easter and movable feasts depending on that date was to be made wherever the Gospel was ordinarily sung, that is in the ambo, or the pulpit, or other place:

*In Epiphania Domini, cantato Evangelio, archidiaconus sive aliquis canonicus vel beneficiatus aut alius, iuxta consuetudinem loci, pluviali paratus, ascendet ambonem vel pulpitem, et ibidem vel in alio loco, ubi cantari solet Evangelium, e vetusto Ecclesiae sanctae instituto publicabit festa mobilia anni currentis iuxta infrascriptam formulam.*<sup>10</sup>

The particularly interesting detail here is the Pontifical's focus on the place where the Gospel is ordinarily proclaimed: *ubi cantari solet Evangelium*. While the volume does not motivate or offer an interpretation of its preference for maintaining a strong association with the place for proclaiming the Gospel, it is surely more than opting for the most worthy or prominent location, since the place for preaching might well fill that criterion. The edition of the Pontifical published after the Coun-

<sup>9</sup> *Liber Secundus. De missa solemnibus Episcopo celebrante, Caput VIII*, in *CE1600*, 164–165. See also nn. 44–45 of the same chapter in *CE1948*, 122.

<sup>10</sup> *De publicatione festorum mobilium in Epiphania Domini*, in 1962. *Pontificale Romanum. Pars tertia et appendix. Editio typica*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 5. See also Manlio Sodi, Alessandro Toniolo. Edd. 2008. *Pontificale Romanum. Editio typica 1961–1962. Edizione anastatica e Introduzione* (Monumenta Liturgica Piana, 3). Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, -313-

cil of Trent had given the same indication and so the rubric just before Vatican II was not a novelty at all but a long-standing idea.<sup>11</sup>

## 1.2. Rite of the Dominicans

In the Missal of the Order of Preachers, or Dominicans, published in 1933, the last edition before the Second Vatican Council, we find that a lectern is used for the scripture readings. Regarding the epistle at major Masses, we read a pulpit set up to face the altar, meaning a lectern rather than a preaching pulpit, and it is employed for holding the epistolary unless a more imposing construction is present and used on Sundays and certain other feast days:

*Dum ultima Oratio dicitur, altero Acolythorum præcedente, Subdiaconus librum Epistolarum ferat, secundum modum supradictum de Evangelio et Missali, super pectus suum reclinatum, ad locum, in quo Epistola legenda est: hic vero semper erit ante gradus prebyterii, super pulpitem ad hoc ibidem præparatum in medio, verso vultu ad altare. In Conventibus autem, in quibus consuevit legi Dominicis diebus, et festis Duplicibus, et supra, in loco eminenti supra pulpitem, servetur consuetudo. Prædictus vero Acolythus, Epistola perlecta, librum, qui sibi traditur Subdiacono, deferat super altare, ponens illum in loco suo.*<sup>12</sup>

For the Gospel we find that a specially prepared pulpit at the Gospel corner of the altar and facing North-East is employed for the singing of the Gospel, again with the possibility of some changes for Sundays and feast days:

*Mox surgat Diaconus, et accipiens ambabus manibus librum Evangeliorum, [...] et sic procedant ad pulpitem, primo Thuriferarius, secundo Ceroferarii, in quorum medio stet qui crucem fert, tertio Subdiaconus cum pulvinari pro Evangelio præparato, ultimo Diaconus, librum Evangeliorum reclinatum supra pectus deferens, secundum modum supradictum. Pulpitem autem erit præparatum ad cornu Evangelii in loco parum eminenti, versus Aquilonem. In Conventibus tamen, in quibus fuerit pulpitem retro chorum, vel alibi in loco superiori, legetur Evangelium super illud Dominicis diebus,*

<sup>11</sup> Manlio Sodi, Achille-Maria Triacca. Edd. 1997. *Pontificale Romanum. Editio Princeps (1595–1596)* (Monumenta Liturgica Concilii Tridentini, 1). Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 539/-544-.

<sup>12</sup> *De officio ministrorum altaris in missa majori 7*, in 1933. *Missale S. Ordinis Prædicatorum auctoritate Apostolica approbatum et Reverendissimi Patris Fr. Martini Stanislai Gillet ejusdem Ordinis Magistri Generalis jussu editum*. Romae: Ordo Prædicatorum, 30.

*et festis Duplicibus, et supra. Postquam autem ad pulpitem pervenerint, Subdiaconus pulvinar libro supponat; ille vero qui defert crucem, et Ceroferarii, unus a dextris, et alius a sinistris ejus, a retro stent ante pulpitem, versis vultibus propriis et vultu Crucifixi ad Diaconum; Subdiaconus vero post Diaconum.*<sup>13</sup>

It is difficult to interpret these support structures for liturgical books as ambones and they likely witness to a simpler tradition rather than the remains of monumental ambones. The term *pulpitem* is not likely to be a preaching pulpit (in French *chaire*, or *chaire de la vérité*), but a lectern of some kind.

### 1.3. Rite of the Carmelites

The Carmelite Missals of 1621 and 1935 (the last edition published before Vatican II) indicated the subdeacon at solemn celebrations of Mass would either sing the Epistle in the prepared place or would be required instead to hold the Epistolary (book of epistle passages) in his own hands: *subdiaconus [...] vadit ad partem Epistolæ contra Altare, et cantat Epistolam in loco præparato, vel tenens Epistolarium ambabus manibus: quam sacerdos submissa voce legit, diacono stante ad eius dexteram.*<sup>14</sup> It seems reasonable to understand the expression *in loco præparato* as also suggesting the presence of some kind of lectern since the place is “prepared”.

As for the deacon singing the Gospel, the Missal simply indicated the subdeacon stood behind the book, without mentioning the lower minister would hold it: *cum [...] subdiacono, procedit ad partem Euangel. contra Altare versus populum, ubi subdiacono stante retro librum, acolythis ad utrumque latus libri et thuriferario ad dextram eius cum thuribulo [...]*<sup>15</sup>, the later edition writing it slightly differently: *cum [...] subdiacono, procedit ad partem Evangelii. contra Altare versus populum, ubi subdiacono stante retro librum, acolythis ad utrumque latus libri et thuriferario*

<sup>13</sup> *De officio ministrorum altaris in missa majori 11*, in *Missale SOP 1933*, 30.

<sup>14</sup> *Ritus servandus in celebratione Missæ sollemnis, col.3*, in 1621. *Missale fratrum carmelitarum Ordinis Beatae Dei Genetricis Mariæ. Capituli Generalis decreto, ad præscriptum Breviarj eiusdem Ordinis Auctoritate Apostolica approbati, restitutum*. Venetiis: Apud Iuntas. The articles of the *Ritus servandus* were numbered in 1935 edition but not the earlier; the pages on which the *Ritus servandus* was numbered in the later edition but not the earlier. *Ritus servandus in celebratione Missæ sollemnis, 14*, in 1935. *Missale Ordinis Fratrum Beatæ Mariæ Virginis de Monte Carmelo auctoritate apostolica approbatum et Revm̃i P. Hilarii M. Doswald totius Ordinis Prioris Generalis jussu editum*. Romæ: Apud Curiam Generalitiam, xxxv.

<sup>15</sup> *Ritus servandus in celebratione Missæ sollemnis, col.4*, in *Missale fratrum carmelitanum 1621*.

*ad dextram ejus cum thuribulo*.<sup>16</sup> The *Cæremoniale Episcoporum*, as we have seen, indicated the subdeacon would certainly stand behind the book were some kind of lectern being used which permitted him to stand there (the space in a stone ambo would not typically permit such, so he was to stand on the deacon's right and assist him from there). In conversation with older Carmelite friars in Italy, they recalled the ordinary practice from before the Second Vatican Council including a movable lectern for the chanting of the Gospel (not for the Epistle) at solemn Mass and the subdeacon standing behind the lectern in question during the Gospel. Like the Dominican practice, the Carmelite rite seems to represent a situation where ambones were not common at all.

#### 1.4. Rite of the Carthusians

The last edition of the *Ordinarium Cartusiense* was published in 1932 and is accessible to researchers as part of the monumental work of James Hogg († 2018).<sup>17</sup> The directions regarding the proclamation of the Gospel in the Carthusian Rite of Mass mentioned the use of a *lectorium (evangelii)*. The celebrant, at his chair, was to listen to the Gospel being chanted and be turned towards the Gospel lectern rather than towards the altar: *reversusque ad cathedram stat versus Lectorium Evangelii, nec vertit se ad Altare, donec Conventus cantum finierit. Quandiu dicitur Evangelium, stat versa facie ad ipsum [...]*.<sup>18</sup> In the case of a Mass for the Dead, the book of the Gospels was to be left upon the *lectorium* and, once the Creed had been intoned, the deacon would return the book to its place (within the *lectorium*):

*Quando tamen Missa pro Defunctis celebratur, non fertur liber osculandus Episcopo, nisi ipse celebret. Quo absente, libroque Evangelii super Lectorium leviter clauso, ac Stola semel circa librum plicata, Diaconus verso vultu ad Altare, dum "Credo" inchoatur, inclinatur cum Conventu ad "Patrem", et mox reversus ad librum claudit eum atque ex integro reposit, Stola prius plicata et suo appensa loco.*<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Ritus servandus in celebratione Missae sollemnis*, 16, in *Missale Ordinis Fratrum Beatæ Mariæ 1935*, xxxv.

<sup>17</sup> James Hogg. 1992–. *The Evolution of the Carthusian Statutes from the "Consuetudines Guigonis" to the "Tertia Compilatio"* (Analecta Cartusiana, 99–100). Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur.

<sup>18</sup> *Ordinarium Cartusiense. Pars I*, 26.16–17, in James Hogg, Alain Girard, Daniel Le Blévec. Edd. 1999. *Ordinarium Cartusiense. Pars I* (Analecta Cartusiana, 99.35). Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, 155.

<sup>19</sup> *Ordinarium Cartusiense 1932*, 29.10, p.190.



In the case of there being no Creed sung the book was returned immediately to its storage place within the *lectorium*: *Quod si "Credo" non canatur, libro post osculum delato in Lectorium, ac leviter tantum clauso.*<sup>20</sup>

It is important to note briefly that the Carthusian rite made no use of the subdiaconate in the liturgy. At conventual Mass, a member of the community – monk or nun – chanted the epistle from the choir stalls and not within the presbytery, and so no lectern was required for the rather simpler way of proclaiming the first reading.

### 1.5. Rite of the Norbertines

Two editions of the Premonstratensian, or Norbertine, Missal printed before the Second Vatican Council, one in 1900<sup>21</sup> and the last in 1936<sup>22</sup>, omit all reference to the use of a lectern or an ambo. However, both editions of the *Ritus servandus in celebratione missae* mention the solemn celebration of Mass just once when treating of the prayers at the foot of the altar, leaving additional details to be described by another book which shall be considered presently.<sup>23</sup> The *Ordo Missae* within the Missal in each case provided rubrics for the singing of the Gospel by the deacon at solemn celebrations of Mass but without mentioning any lectern or ambo.<sup>24</sup> The missing rubrics for solemn conventual Mass are found in the Order's *Ordinarium*, also called its *Cæremoniale*, which was last published in 1949.<sup>25</sup> After describing the singing of the epistle by the subdeacon without any kind of lectern, the *Ordinarium* recommends using the ambo in places where one is present:

*Si vero habentur in ecclesia amboes, Subdiaconus, praecedente vel praecedentibus acolythis, juxta ritum officii, tendit ad ambonem Epistolae. Ibi, facie ad populum verse,*

<sup>20</sup> *Ordinarium Cartusiense 1932*, 29.12, p.191.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. 1900. *Missale ad usum Canonici Praemonstratensis Ordinis jussu et auctoritate Illustrissimi in Christo Patris et Domini Generalis Sigismundi Stary et capituli generalis 1889 editum*. Westmalle: Typis Cisterciensibus.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. 1936. *Missale Praemonstratense jussu et auctoritate illustrissimi in Christo Patris ac Domini Generalis Gummari Crets et capituli generalis 1934 editum*. Mechliniae: Dessain.

<sup>23</sup> *Ritus servandus in celebratione Missae*, 5, in *Missale ad usum canonici Praemonstratensis Ordinis 1900*, xi; *Ritus servandus in celebratione Missae*, 5, in *Missale Praemonstratense 1936*, xv.

<sup>24</sup> *Ordo missae*, in *Missale ad usum canonici Praemonstratensis Ordinis 1900*, 254; *Ordo missae*, in *Missale Praemonstratense 1936*, 267.

<sup>25</sup> 1949. *Ordinarium seu Liber Caeremoniarum ad usum Sacri et Canonici Ordinis Praemonstratensis a capitulo generali anni 1947 approbatus omnibusque sodalibus ejusdem ordinis impositus jussu et auctoritate illustrissimi ac reverendissimi Domini Abbatis Generalis Huberti Noots, S.T.D. Domini Praemonstratensis editus*. Tongerlo: Typis Abbatiae B.M.V. de Tongerlo.

*Epistolam legit, acolythis stantibus extra et infra ambonem, versa facie ad Subdiaconum cantantem.*<sup>26</sup>

For the singing of the Gospel by the deacon it seems to presume there was no lectern of any kind, but then indicated one be used were it present (calling it a *pulpitum*) and, indeed, an ambo would be used for the Gospel were it present:

*Subdiaconus [...] tenet librum Evangeliorum apertum ante pectus, vel stat post pulpitum, si adhibetur, vertus dorsum non quidem Altari, sed versus ipsam partem dextram quae pro Aquilone figuratur. Si cantandum est Evangelium in superiore ambone, ad eum tendant processionaliter; hoc ordine: [...]. Dum cantatur Evangelium, stat Subdiaconus in ambone, a dextris Diaconi, paululum retro eum, junctis ante pectus manibus.*<sup>27</sup>

For the feast of the Purification of Our Lady, the Presentation in the Temple, the subdeacon was directed to sing the epistle while holding a candle in his hand while nothing should prevent him from also holding the book if a lectern was not available to him:

*Subdiaconus cantans Epistolam cereum suum manu teneat, (nisi impediatur tenens librum, si non adhibetur pulpitum).*<sup>28</sup>

We find with the Premonstratensians then a preference for using lecterns or ambones for both epistle and Gospel according to their availability, but taking their absence as more typical.

### 1.6. Rite of the Cistercians

For many centuries, the Cistercian Order, which had from its foundation in 1098 sought a spirit of uniformity among its constituent monasteries, especially in the celebration of the monastic liturgy, also engaged to varying degrees with

<sup>26</sup> *De Missis conventualibus. 6. Ritus Sacerdotis, Diaconi et Subdiaconi ad summam Missam quotidianam, extra pontificale Officium 367, in Ordinarius Praemonstratensis 1949, 101–102.*

<sup>27</sup> *De Missis conventualibus. 6. Ritus Sacerdotis, Diaconi et Subdiaconi ad summam Missam quotidianam, extra pontificale Officium 370, in Ordinarius Praemonstratensis 1949, 102–103.*

<sup>28</sup> *De Festo Purificationis B.M.V. et aliis mensis february festis 873, in Ordinarius Praemonstratensis 1949, 231.*

the Roman liturgy as codified following the Council of Trent.<sup>29</sup> A later reforming movement within the Order, beginning at *La Trappe* in France and initially forming three congregations, becoming in 1892 a new, single Order – that of the Strict Observance – tended towards re-establishing in practice the older forms of the Cistercian liturgy. Various liturgical books indicating how the liturgy was to be celebrated in the communities of strict observance were published beginning after the union of the congregations into an Order, not without some difficulty, but still with an important degree of collaboration between the new Strict Observance and the Common Observance. The publication of the earlier books in the post-union reform were followed by dialogue with the Apostolic See which led in turn to new editions. We consider these, published both before and after contact with the Holy See, as witnesses to revived practices of medieval Cistercian use. Before examining the rubrics extant on the eve of the Second Vatican Council, it is important to recall that the forms of celebration in Cistercian communities were more varied than the typical Roman rite forms, including but not limited to a sung or solemn conventual Mass with the ministry of a deacon but without a subdeacon. This form was called *Missa cum unico ministro*, not to be confused with the present Roman Missal's *Missa cuius unus tantum minister participat*.

The Cistercian rite as presented in the books published between 1908 and Vatican II indicated the use of a lectioner for both Epistle and Gospel at Masses *in cantu*. The Cistercian Missal of 1910<sup>30</sup>, in its *Ritus servandus in celebratione missae* indicates the subdeacon sings the epistle before the step into the presbytery in the middle: *ante gradum Presbyterii contra medium Altaris*.<sup>31</sup> As for the deacon, at the time indicated he goes to the *analogium* and takes the book of the Gospels from it, places it upon the altar, seeks the blessing of the priest, then goes back to the *analogium* with the subdeacon who will then assist when the Gospel is being chanted:

<sup>29</sup> For a good summary of the history of the Cistercian rite, see Gérard Dubois. 1992. "Liturgie Cistercienne". *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique* 93.1: 71–84.

<sup>30</sup> Identical editions for both Common Observance and Strict Observance were produced: 1910. *Missale Cisterciense reformatum juxta decretum sacrorum rituum congregationis diei 3 julii 1869 confirmatum a Pio IX. Pont. Max. auctoritate Reverendissimi D. Amedei de Bie abbatis generalis ordinis cisterciensis editum*. Westmalle: Typographia Ordinis Cisterciensum Reformatorum seu Strictioris Observantiae; 1910. *Missale Cisterciense reformatum juxta decretum sacrorum rituum congregationis diei 3 julii 1869 confirmatum a Pio IX. Pont. Max. auctoritate Reverendissimi D. Augustini Marre episcopi titularis Constantiensis abbatis cistercii necnon abbatis generalis ordinis cist. ref. editum*. Westmalle: Typographia Ordinis Cisterciensum Reformatorum seu Strictioris Observantiae.

<sup>31</sup> *Ritus servandus in celebratione missae. VI. De Epistola, Graduali et aliis usque ad Offertorium 4*, in *Missale Cisterciense cist. ref. 1910*, xvii; *Ritus servandus in celebratione missae. VI. De Epistola, Graduali et aliis usque ad Offertorium 4*, in *Missale Cisterciense ord. cist. 1910*, xvii.

*Interim vero Diaconus, vel circa finem Tractus, accipiens textum Evangeliorum de Analogio, clausum defert reverenter super Altaris medium, facta prius genuflexione ad gradum. [...] Diaconus autem postquam genuflexus dixerit Munda cor meum. super altiorem Altaris gradum surgit, et accepto textu de Altari petit benedictionem a Celebrante iterum genuflexus: ea accepta osculataque illius manu dextra super librum posita, vertens se ad sinistram descendit ad dextram Subdiaconi tenens librum ambabus manibus; genuflectit cum eo et aliis ministris (si adsint) ad gradum Altaris. Tum ipsi praeuntibus vadit ad Analogium contra Aquilonem positum, ubi Subdiacono retro quasi amplexante et tangente hinc inde manibus suis librum apertum, vel si defuerit Analogium, ob oculos tenente, inter Ceroferarios (si adsint) Diaconus dicit: Dominus vobiscum.<sup>32</sup>*

At a sung Mass without deacon or subdeacon, the 1910 Missal indicated the celebrant sing the Gospel at the Gospel corner of the altar.<sup>33</sup>

The 1951 edition of the Cistercian Missal gave the same indications for the Gospel as found in the 1910 edition:

*Interim vero Diaconus, vel circa finem Tractus, accipiens textum Evangeliorum de Analogio, clausum defert reverenter super Altaris medium, facta prius genuflexione ad gradum. Deinde, postquam genuflexus dixerit Munda cor meum. super altiorem Altaris gradum surgit, [...] accipit textum de Altari et petit benedictionem a Celebrante profunde inclinatus: ea accepta osculataque illius manu dextra super librum posita, vertens se ad sinistram descendit ad dextram Subdiaconi tenens librum ambabus manibus; genuflectit cum eo at aliis Ministris ad gradum Altaris. Tum ipsi praeuntibus vadit ad Analogium contra Aquilonem positum, ubi Subdiacono retro quasi amplexante et tangente hinc inde manibus suis librum apertum, vel si defuerit Analogium, ob oculos tenente, inter Ceroferarios Diaconus dicit: Dominus vobiscum.<sup>34</sup>*

<sup>32</sup> *Ritus servandus in celebratione missae. VI. De Epistola, Graduali et aliis usque ad Offertorium 5, in Missale Cisterciense cist. ref. 1910, xvii; Ritus servandus in celebratione missae. VI. De Epistola, Graduali et aliis usque ad Offertorium 5, in Missale Cisterciense ord. cist. 1910, xvii.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ritus servandus in celebratione missae 8, in Missale Cisterciense cist. ref. 1910, xvii & 172; Ritus servandus in celebratione missae. VI. De Epistola, Graduali et aliis usque ad Offertorium 8, in Missale Cisterciense ord. cist. 1910, xvii & 172.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ritus servandus in celebratione missae. Tit. VI. – De Epistola, Graduali et aliis usque ad Offertorium 5, in 1951. Missale Cisterciense reformatum juxta decretum sacrorum rituum congregationis diei 3 julii 1869 confirmatum a Pio IX. Pont. Max. auctoritate Reverendissimi D. Dominici Rogues abbatis cistercii necnon abbatis generalis ordinis cisterciensis s.o. editum. Westmalle: Typographia Ord. Cist. Strict. Obs., xviii.*

Another book, the *Manuale Caeremoniarum*, also provided explicit reference to an *analogium* for the Gospel and a lectern for the epistle.<sup>35</sup> At Mass with a deacon the lectern for the epistle was preferably removed at the conclusion of the reading: *Post epistolam, amovet legile, nisi sit fixum, et revertitur in chorum*.<sup>36</sup> Then the deacon was to place the book of the Gospels upon the *analogium*: *Diaconus perveniens ante analogium textum super illud ponit et aperit*.<sup>37</sup> At festive Mass, the subdeacon was to place the epistolary (book of Epistles) upon the *analogium* in order to chant the reading: *Stans infra gradum in medio contra altare, subdiaconus ponit super super analogium epistolare apertum*<sup>38</sup> and once again a minister is to remove the lectern if possible: *Post epistolam, servitor ecclesiae, missae subminister, legile, nisi sit fixum, amovere*<sup>39</sup>. Then the deacon was to take the book of the Gospels from the *analogium*, if there was one, before asking for the blessing from the celebrant:

*Si non habeatur analogium, dum sacerdos vadit ad medium, ipse accedens ad ministerium accipit textum, et illud reverenter defert et ponit in medio altaris, ut infra*.<sup>40</sup>

*In medio altaris genuflectit cum subdiacono, accedit ad analogium, et textum evangelii clausum accipiens [...]*.<sup>41</sup>

On having received the blessing, the deacon returned to the *analogium* with the book of the Gospels in order to sing the reading: *Genuflectit cum subdiacono, et pergat ad analogium post illum. Stans ante analogium versus aquilonem textum super illud ponit et aperit*.<sup>42</sup>

The description of Solemn Mass also referred to the *analogium* for the chanting of the epistle: *Mox, si non habeatur analogium, accipit [...] e ministerio textum,*

<sup>35</sup> 1948. *Manuale Caeremoniarum in missa et altaris ministerio juxta ritum sacri ordinis cisterciensis servandum: ad usum monachorum strictioris observantiae auctoritate et mandato capituli generalis editum*. Westmalle: Typographia Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorem Seu Strictioris Observantiae [= *Mc1948*]. The first edition had been published forty years previously: 1908. *Manuale Caeremoniarum in missa et altaris ministerio juxta ritum sacri ordinis cisterciensis servandum: ad usum monachorum strictioris observantiae auctoritate et mandato capituli generalis editum*. Westmalle: Typographia Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorem Seu Strictioris Observantiae [= *Mc1908*].

<sup>36</sup> *De missa cum uno diacono* 273, in *Mc1948*, 76; in *Mc1908*, 71.

<sup>37</sup> *De missa cum uno diacono* 281, in *Mc1948*, 79; in *Mc1908*, 74.

<sup>38</sup> *De missa festiva* 356, in *Mc1948*, 119; in *Mc1908*, 111.

<sup>39</sup> *De missa festiva* 357, in *Mc1948*, 120; in *Mc1908*, 112.

<sup>40</sup> *De missa festiva* 358, in *Mc1948*, 121; in *Mc1908*, 113.

<sup>41</sup> *De missa festiva* 359, in *Mc1948*, 121; in *Mc1908*, 113.

<sup>42</sup> *De missa festiva* 365, in *Mc1948*, 124; in *Mc1908*, 116.

*quod, stans infra gradum in cornu epistolæ conversus ad altare [...]*.<sup>43</sup> With respect to the Gospel, there are two articles which mention the *analogium*. The first:

*Omnibus ordinatis, diacono et subdiacono a sinistris ejus prope medium gradus, thuriferario a dextris diaconi, seniore acolytho a dextris thuriferarii, et juniore a sinistris subdiaconi, in eadem linea stantibus ante gradum, diaconus et subdiaconus simul genuflectunt super gradum, alii in plano. Convertentes se versus medium, ne altari tunc terga vertant, accedunt ad analogium.*<sup>44</sup>

The second:

*Præit thuriferarius et sistit ante analogium a dextris; subdiaconus sequitur et, circuiens per sinistram analogii, collocat se retro illud ad librum tenendum [...]. Peruenientes ad locum ubi cantatur evangelium acolythi divertunt hinc et inde ad latera analogii [...]*.<sup>45</sup>

Another book of rubrics, the Cistercian Ritual of 1949, also had some indications for the preparation for Mass and its celebration<sup>46</sup>. Two *analogia* were required in preparing the presbytery (for solemn Masses), one for blessings and the epistle, the second for the book of the Gospels. It is worthwhile reading the two articles:

8. – In eadem parte, infra gradum majoris altaris sint sedilia, stalla ac formæ pro celebrante et ministris missæ conventus; et in medio gradus presbyterii analogium ad benedictiones et epistolam.

9. – In latere sinistro hoc est evangelii, alterum analogium sit in plano presbyterii ad ponendum textum evangeliorum, ipsumque legendum in missa solemnibus; cui propterea decet apponi pallium coloris convenientis.<sup>47</sup>

In the ritual's rubrics for Mass celebrated with one minister, i.e. with a deacon, we find nothing of interest to our study. In the Cistercian Ritual's description

<sup>43</sup> *De missa solemnibus* 408, in *Mc1948*, 151; in *Mc1908*, 141.

<sup>44</sup> *De missa solemnibus* 414, in *Mc1948*, 152; in *Mc1908*, 143.

<sup>45</sup> *De missa solemnibus* 415, in *Mc1948*, 152; in *Mc1908*, 143.

<sup>46</sup> 1949. *Rituale Cisterciense ex Libro Usuum Definitionibus Ordinis et Cæremoniali Episcoporum collectum*. Westmalle: Typis Ordinis [=RitC1949].

<sup>47</sup> *Liber II. De celebratione missarum. Caput Primum. De praeparatione altaris et ministerii*. 8–9, in *RitC1949*, 45.

of Mass celebrated with two ministers, called festive Mass<sup>48</sup>, the book clarifies that the epistle is sung by the subdeacon at the *analogium* while facing the altar: *Tum pergit ad gradum presbyterii, et infra in medio, altari inclinans librumque ambabus manibus apertum super analogium tenens, cantat epistolam versus ad altare.*<sup>49</sup> The ritual recalls the procedure for carrying the book of the Gospels to the altar, the deacon requesting and obtaining the celebrant's blessing followed by the carrying of the book of the Gospels to the second *analogium*.<sup>50</sup> Then we read:

*Tunc sacerdos accedit ad cornu epistolae, ibique stat versus diaconum legentem, subdiaconus collocat se retro analogium, et brachiis extensis quasi ipsum amplexans, ambabus manibus tenet latera "textus", quem diaconus apertum posuit super illud. Vel certe deficiente analogio, "textum" sustinet ambabus manibus, elevatum ob oculos per imam partem tenens. Diaconus vero stans ante "textum" manibus junctis dicit "Dominus vobiscum".*<sup>51</sup>

The description of solemn Mass in chapter eleven depends upon the descriptions just examined for festive Mass, mentioning explicitly the use of the *analogium* for the book of the Gospels.<sup>52</sup>

The Cistercian rites of Mass as we have considered them here are unambiguous in the preference for the *analogium* for the proclamation of scripture readings at celebrations *in cantu*, whether that be for the epistle or the Gospel. Indeed, the rubrics appear to expect the *analogium* to be present in most circumstances. We should recall the complexity in continuity in the Cistercian rite generally and not presume continuity of practice from earliest times to the liturgical books examined. However, the rubrics we examined are surely witnesses to the presence in the Cistercian tradition at various moments in history of some kind of lectern, apart from the altar, for proclamation of sacred scripture during the celebration of Mass.

<sup>48</sup> The distinction between festive Mass and solemn Mass included the use of incense in the latter but not in the former, both having the ministry of deacon and subdeacon. The forms of celebration – with one minister, festive, solemn – were intended to be reflective of the solemnity of the day in the liturgical year and in the liturgical calendar.

<sup>49</sup> *Caput X. Quomodo se habeant sacerdos et ministri ad missas festivas* 9, in *RitC1949*, 67.

<sup>50</sup> *Caput X. Quomodo se habeant sacerdos et ministri ad missas festivas* 11–12, in *RitC1949*, 67–68.

<sup>51</sup> *Caput X. Quomodo se habeant sacerdos et ministri ad missas festivas* 13, in *RitC1949*, 68.

<sup>52</sup> *Caput XI. De missa solemnii* 8, in *RitC1949*, 75.

### 1.7. Rite of the diocese of Lyon

The solemn Mass in the rite of the diocese of Lyon as indicated in the final edition of the complete Missal of Lyon published in 1844 made ordinary use of an ambo at solemn celebrations of Mass for both the singing of the epistle by the subdeacon and of the Gospel by the deacon. The *Ritus servandus* described the rites as follows:

15. His absolutis, vadit ad Ambonem Diaconus per medium Chori cum Ministris, hoc ordine. 1°. Badellus. 2°. duo Acolythy cum Candelabris, vel unicus, si unicus ministret. 3°. Subdiaconus ambabus manibus ante pectus tenens pulvinar Textus. 4°. Thuriferarius continue incensans viam Evangelii; postremo Diaconus Textum defert. Stant universi e Choro, dum transit Diaconus cum Textu vel Missali, aut sedent stallis erectis.

16. Diaconus cantat Evangelium junctis manibus, versa facie ad Septentrionem, sive in Ambone sive in Presbyterio. Cum dicit “Initium” vel “Sequentia”, signat librum in principio Evangelii.

17. Subdiaconus stat pone pulpitem: Ceroferarii hinc inde ad pulpiti latera, ad sese conversi. Thuriferarius vero, stans ante medium Altaris, agitat continuo Thuribulum, et Choro cantante “Gloria tibi, Domine”, Crucem trino ductu incensat, quod etiam facit in fine Evangelii, ita ut absolvantur, quod etiam facit in fine Evangelii, ita ut absolvantur simul Evangelium et Thurificatio.

18. [...] Ubi Textus decantanda Evangelia non contineret, Thuriferarius, antequam ad Celebrantem accedat, sub sinistro brachio Missale defert, quod in pulpito ab eo repositum aperit Diaconus, nisi prius in eodem pulpito fuisset praeparatum. Tunc autem tradit Diaconus Textum Subdiacono, antequam Evangelium incipiat; et reponitur Textus a Subdiacono super Altare Ambonis, cum pulvinari, ex quo Altari, finito Evangelio, accipitur a Diacono, qui eum Subdiacono denuo tradit.<sup>53</sup>

An edition of the Missal was promulgated in 1866 in which only a few elements of the Lyonnese traditions were maintained, but the *Ritus servandus* indicated the proclamation of the readings in a fashion remarkably like the mainstream of Ro-

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<sup>53</sup> *Ritus in Missa Solemni servandus 15–18*, in 1844. *Missale Sanctae Lugdunensis Ecclesiae primae galliarum sedis cum supplemento auctoritate illustrissimi et reverendissimi in Christo patris et domini D. Ludovici-Jacobi-Mauritii tituli Ss. Trinitatis in Monte Pincio S.R.E. Presbyterii Cardinalis De Bonald Archiepiscopi Lugdunensis et viennensis, Galliarum Primatis, etc. ac consensu venerabilis ejusdem Ecclesiae Capituli edito*. Lugduni: Pelagaud, 47, right column.



man practice as found described in the first edition of the *Missale romanum* (1570), i.e., omitting all reference to an ambo or lectern of any kind.<sup>54</sup>

### 1.8. Rite of the diocese of Braga

The rite of Braga is a use of the Roman rite developed when the latter came to be employed in the diocese like in many other parts of the Iberian Peninsula at the beginning of the first millennium. The reforms stemming from the Council of Trent saw the diocesan rite exempted from adopting the missal and breviary, issued by Pope Pius V in 1570 and 1568 respectively, and the use continued until the twentieth century.

The last edition of the Missal of Braga was published in 1924.<sup>55</sup> The preliminary documentation at the beginning of the volume is clear in indicating the use of a *pulpitum* by both subdeacon and deacon in singing their readings at solemn Mass. For the subdeacon:

*§ 1. Circa finem ultimae Orationis, Subdiaconus a Thuriferario accipit librum Epistolarum, et, tenens illum utraque manu supra pectus cum aperture ad suam sinistram, et, facta in medio plani sub infimum gradum genuflexione Altari, continuo redit ad partem Epistolæ, ubi, stans in plano a tergo Celebrantis, aperto libro super pulpitum, contra Altare præparatum, manus extendit in extremitate inferiori libri, et, postquam Chorus responderit Amen, cantat Epistolam.*<sup>56</sup>

For the singing of the Gospel:

*Diaconus [...] vadit cum Subdiacono a sinistris ad locum Evangelii contra Altare versus populum, ubi super pulpito librum Evangeliorum aperit [...] Ubi non erit pulpi-*

<sup>54</sup> *Ritus servandus in celebratione Missæ. VI. De epistola, graduali, et aliis usque ad offertorium, 4–5*, in 1866. *Missale Romano-Lugdunense sive Missale Romanum in quo ritus Lugdunenses ultimi Tridui ante Pascha, Ordinis Missæ et Vigiliæ Pentecostes auctoritate S. Sedis Apostolicæ iisdem ritibus romanis proprio loco substituuntur*. Parisiis – Lugduni: Adrianus Le Clere-Pelagaud, xxix.

<sup>55</sup> 1924. *Missale Bracaraense jussu et auctoritate Summi Pontificis Pii XI recognitum et reformatum et Illm̃i ac Revm̃i Domini Emmanuelis Vieira de Mattos archipresulis Bracaraensis et Hispaniarum Primatis sollicitudine impressum*. Romæ: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis.

<sup>56</sup> *Liturgia Bracaraensis. Sectio VII – De Ritu in Missa solemnī servando. Tit. 8. De Epistola, Graduali et aliis usque ad Offertorium § 1*, in *Missale Bracaraense 1924*, lix.

*tum, Subdiaconus, in loco Evangelii ad Diaconum conversus, ab eo accipit librum Evangeliorum eumque sustinet [...].*<sup>57</sup>

It is difficult to say this *pulpitum* was a pulpit in the ordinary meaning of the English word pulpit which is a structure intended and designed for preaching. The Latin word in the Missal of Braga is more likely to signify a lectern.

### 1.9. Reformed Anglican practice

Consideration of liturgical practice in the reformed communities descended from the sixteenth-century Reformation in England is of interest to our present purpose because in recent decades the Apostolic See has permitted forms of Eucharistic celebration based in large part upon the Anglican, and so both Catholic Sarum (Rite of Salisbury) and Protestant, traditions. The permissions have concerned groups of Anglicans received into full Communion with the Catholic Church since the 1980s.

For several hundred years in the reformed Church of England the scripture readings during liturgical celebration were read from lecterns or pulpits, but practice was indicated more by custom than by rubrics. The nineteenth-century Oxford Movement sought among other things to restore more developed ritual, promoting the use of vestments, incense, etc. However, the movement that so valued ritual promoted the reading of passages from scripture during Holy Communion (the Eucharistic celebration) as was done at Catholic Low Mass, that is near the altar and without employing lecterns. By 1900 this simplified practice had come to dominate even among sister churches in the Anglican communion throughout the world.<sup>58</sup> The modern liturgical movement had an influence on the Anglican churches too. In 1950's North America reading the Gospel in the body of the church during the Eucharistic celebration, rather than from the altar at the far end of the chancel /

<sup>57</sup> *Liturgia Bracarenensis. Sectio VII – De Ritu in Missa solemniter servando. Tit. 8. De Epistola, Graduali et alii usque ad Offertorium § 9, in Missale Bracarense 1924, lx.*

<sup>58</sup> See the following which are from the context of the Oxford Movement. Percy Dearmer. 1899<sup>2</sup>. *The Parson's Handbook containing practical directions both for parsons and others as to the management of the parish church and its services according to the English Use as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer*. London: Grant Richards, 48–49, 150–152; Percy Dearmer. 1907<sup>6</sup>. *The Parson's Handbook containing Practical Directions both for Parsons and others as to the Management of the Parish Church and its Services according to the English use, as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer*. London – Edinburgh – Glasgow – New York – Toronto: Frowde, 61–64, 359–364. Both editions consider the use of a lectern for scripture readings, the later edition giving consideration to a Gospel lectern even just outside the chancel and opposite the pulpit. Regarding the manner of celebration, both suggest the priest would read near the altar, but other ministers would do so closer to the people, using the lecterns available.

presbytery, was introduced and grew in popularity.<sup>59</sup> We should note that at other, non-Eucharistic celebrations lecterns placed nearer the congregation had continued to be employed for the scripture readings. Liturgical reform in the 1970s acknowledged the novel practice of proclaiming the Gospel in the middle of the assembly at Holy Communion. The Prayer Book of the USA Episcopal Church published in 1979 included the central location as a third among three options:

It is desirable that the Lessons be read from a lectern or pulpit, and that the Gospel be read from the same lectern, or from the pulpit, or from the midst of the congregation. It is desirable that the Lessons and Gospel be read from a book or books of appropriate size and dignity.<sup>60</sup>

The return to proclaiming sacred scripture closer to the congregation and from dedicated places and structures was widespread, but the peculiar practice for the Gospel, while popular, was a novelty without evident historical, or liturgico-theological foundation.

### 1.10. The Ambrosian rite

The last edition of the Ambrosian Missal before the Second Vatican Council was published in 1954.<sup>61</sup> Its description of solemn Mass, termed *Missa in cantu quam conventualem vocant*, considered the use of the ambo for the readings as normative, adding the alternative if an ambo was not used. The lector *vadit ad ambone, vel ad medium ante altare, ubi facta Cruci, vel etiam Sacramento debita reverentia, stans versus ad altare, sibi ipsi tenens librum, cantat titulum Lectionis [...]*.<sup>62</sup> The subdeacon *accedit ad ambonem, vel ad cornu Epistolæ in planu chori: ibique, manibus hinc inde positus ad librum ibidem collocatum, conversus ad alta-*

<sup>59</sup> Howard E. Galley. 1989. *The Ceremonies of the Eucharist*. Lanham – Chicago – New York – Toronto – Plymouth (UK): Cowley, 85.

<sup>60</sup> 1979. *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church Together with The Psalter or Psalms of David According to the use of The Episcopal Church*. New York: Seabury Press, 406. The edition this volume replaced did not enter into where the scripture readings were to be read: 1929. *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church according to the use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. Together with The Psalter or Psalms of David*. New York: J. Pott, 70.

<sup>61</sup> 1954. *Missale Ambrosianum juxta ritum Sanctae Ecclesiae Mediolanensis. Editio quinta post typicam*. Mediolani: Daverio.

<sup>62</sup> *Ritus celebrandi missam in cantu quam conventualem vocant*. § 29. *De Lectione, Epistola, et Evangelio*, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1954*, xxxi.

*re cantat titulum Epistolæ*”.<sup>63</sup> Finally the deacon *resumit librum, [...] procedit ad locum, ubi cantandum erit Evangelium, sive locus ille sit ambo, sive planum chori juxta cornu Evangelii*<sup>64</sup>. The relevant parts of the *Ordinarium Missae* omitted any reference to where the readings were to occur.<sup>65</sup> Two useful books which describe the ceremonies of the Ambrosian rite confirm these details were being followed in the earlier part of the twentieth century.<sup>66</sup>

In considering the Ambrosian rite after Vatican II, the importance of Charles Borromeo for the ambo and similar constructions for liturgical celebration and church design before the council will also be treated. For the moment, it seems sufficient simply to note the preference of the Rite of Milan for the use of ambones in the Eucharistic celebration.

### 1.11. The Mozarabic Rite

The limited sources we have for the Mozarabic rite in the modern period before the Second Vatican Council do not enter into the details regarding the use of an ambo.<sup>67</sup>

### 1.12. Concluding remarks on pre-Conciliar uses

While a history of the uses of the Roman rite and the contexts of their celebration is beyond the scope of this article a brief comment is nevertheless helpful, especially with what follows. The rites of the religious Orders – Dominicans,

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., xxxii.

<sup>65</sup> *Missale Ambrosianum 1954*, 215–216.

<sup>66</sup> Vincenzo Maraschi. 1938. *Le particolarità del rito ambrosiano con XVI tavole illustrative fuori testo*. Milano: Istituto di Propaganda Libreria; Giustino Borgonovo. 1953<sup>3</sup>. *Manuale di liturgia ambrosiana ossia Regole e Cerimonie dei sacramenti, del sacrificio e dei sacramentali raccolte ed ordinate in testo unico col direttorio per le feste dell'anno ecclesiastico ambrosiano*. Varese: Tipografia arcivescovile dell'Addolorata.

<sup>67</sup> 1755. *Missale Mixtum secundum Regulam Beati Isidori dictum Mozarabes praefatione, notis, et appendice ab Alexandro Lesleo S.J. sacerdote ornatum*. Romae: Sumptibus Venantii Monaldini Bibliopolae; 1982. *Liber Missarum de Toledo y Libros Místicos*. Vol. 1: *Texto*. Toledo: Instituto de Estudios Visigótico-Mozárabes de Toledo. The *Ordo missae* in the latter, pages 555–579, provides no rubrics specifying where the readings were to be proclaimed. The *Ordo missae* was taken from 1875. *Missae Gothicae et Officii muzarabici dilucida exposito, a D.D. Francisco Antonio Lorenzana, Archiepiscopo Mexicano, et a D.D. Francisco Fabian et Fuero, Episcopo Angelopolitano, Ad usum percelebris Sacelli Muzarabum, in alma Ecclesia Toletana Hispaniarum Primate ab Emmo. Cardinali Ximenez de Cisneros erecti. Editio novissima jussu et aprobatione Illmi. D.d. Santos ab Arciniega, Vicarii Capitularis, huius Archidiaeceseos Gubernatoris, et Archipresbyteri dignitate in hac Ecclesia Primae praediti, facta*. Toleti: Typis Severiani Lopez Fando, 17–51.

Carmelites, Carthusians, Norbertines, and Cistercians – took little interest in other members of the faithful participating in their liturgical celebrations until relatively recent times. Cistercians, and even more so Premonstratensians, struggled for many centuries between those who preferred the Roman liturgy reformed after the Council of Trent, considering it a more perfect and perhaps ancient form of the Roman rite, and those who wished to maintain the particular traditions of their institutes and communities. In the late nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century these two groups sought to restore at least some their liturgical traditions. With the culmination of the liturgical movement in the Second Vatican Council's request for the preparation of new liturgical books to facilitate the active participation of the faithful, the different Orders found their peculiar elements and traditions on the margins of the pastoral spirit of the age, and so most obtained from the Apostolic See permission to adopt the new Roman rite books. While these Orders had often maintained their liturgies hidden from sight behind rood screens, with various forms of structures for the readings, most other churches had, beginning in the fifteenth century, removed rood screens, jubés, choir stalls and ambones, precisely to permit the people to see the simplified ceremonial around the altar. The rites of the religious did not require large ambones for their semi-private celebrations, but their lecterns, etc. seem at least in some cases to have been descendants of the ambones that once permitted the throng of lay faithful to engage with liturgical celebration. The restoration of the ambo from 1964 was due to a similar motivation as that which saw the removal of the ambones beginning in the fifteenth century. Both were intended to facilitate the lay faithful in engaging with the liturgical celebration, but with different priorities and emphasises.

## 2. Restoring the ambo

### 2.1. Towards the Second Vatican Council

The liturgical movement of the twentieth century had included an interest in making the scripture readings of the Mass more significant for the faithful. For example, we find various permissions sought for proclaiming the readings in the vernacular after they had been read in Latin<sup>68</sup>, and even permission granted for Germany for

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<sup>68</sup> See the indult granted for the dioceses of France when doubt existed over the liceity of the immemorial custom of repeating the readings in the vernacular: Carlo Braga, Annibale Bugnini. Edd. 2000. *Documenta ad Instaurationem Liturgicam Spectantia 1903–1963, Pius XII n. 116*. Roma: CLV-Edizioni liturgiche [= DILS] 899. See also Aimé-Georges Martimort. 1958. “Le problème des

one year to substitute readings at Mass on Palm Sunday, at the Liturgy of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday, and at the Easter Vigil with German translations.<sup>69</sup> The liturgies of Holy Week were revised during the pontificate of Pope Pius XII, first with an optional Easter Vigil at night from 1951<sup>70</sup>, then with a completely re-ordered and obligatory series of Holy Week liturgies from 1956.<sup>71</sup> All three versions of the Easter Vigil (1951, 1952, 1956) indicated the Old Testament readings be read *in medio chori* and before the paschal candle, rather like the *Exultet*, although the use of the lectern by readers, that employed by the deacon for the *Exultet*, is presumed rather than indicated explicitly.<sup>72</sup> At celebrations without the ministry of deacon and sub-deacon the use of the lectern by the priest celebrant is indicated from 1952.<sup>73</sup> In all instances since 1951, everyone present is directed to sit and listen to the readings.<sup>74</sup> The typical consideration in these changes concerns priest and people sitting to listen to the Word of God being proclaimed by the ministers and the priest celebrant not quietly reading the same texts. However, the use of the lectern adds greater formality to this liturgical proclamation of sacred scripture and prepares, as it were, for the re-introduction of such ritual form through the ambo following the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* a few years later.

The preparation for the Second Vatican Council included a preparatory commission concerned with the sacred liturgy.<sup>75</sup> In its work of redacting what would

langues liturgiques de 1964 à 1957". La Maison-Dieu 53: 26–27. For similar permission given to the dioceses of Germany: Suprema Sacra Congregatio Sancta Officii. 1959. "Proclamandi, vernaculā a lingua, epistolam et evangelium die 11 februarii, anno 1959 (Prot. Nr. 592/58)". Periodica de re morali canonica liturgica 48: 195–196. See also DILS Ioannes XXIII n. 5.

<sup>69</sup> Sacra Congregatio Rituum. 1959. "Adhibendi linguam vernaculam in hebdomada sancta die martii, anno 1959". Periodica de re morali canonica liturgica 48: 199–200. See also DILS Ioannes XXIII n. 7.

<sup>70</sup> Two versions were published: 1951. *Ordo Sabbati Sancti quando Vigilia Paschalis Instaurata peragitur*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis; 1952. *Ordo Sabbati Sancti quando vigilia paschali instaurata peragitur editio altera cum ordinationibus et rubricarum variationibus per decretum diei 11 ianuarii 1952 approbatis*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis. See also DILS Pius XII nn. 78.81.

<sup>71</sup> 1956. *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae instauratus editio typica*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis. See also DILS Pius XII n. 108.

<sup>72</sup> *Ordo Sabbati Sancti 1951*, n. 15; *Ordo Sabbati Sancti 1952*, n. 15; *De Vigilia Paschali 1956*, n. 15. See also DILS Pius XII n. 78 § 2334; n. 81 § 2418; n. 108 § 2900.

<sup>73</sup> *Ordo Sabbati Sancti 1952*, n. 14a.15a; *De Vigilia Paschali 1956*, nn. 14\*15\*. See also DILS Pius XII n. 81 §§ 2417.2419; n. 108 §§ 2899.2901.

<sup>74</sup> *Ordo Sabbati Sancti 1951*, n. 15; *Ordo Sabbati Sancti 1952*, nn. 15.15a; *De Vigilia Paschali 1956*, nn. 15.15\*. See also DILS Pius XII n. 78 § 2334; n. 81 §§ 2418.2419; n. 108 § 2900.2901.

<sup>75</sup> For archival material of the Preparatory Commission *de sacra liturgia* see: Angelo Lameri. 2013. *La "Pontificia Commissio de sacra liturgia Praeparatoria Concilii Vaticani II". Documenti, Testi, Verballi* (Bibliotheca "Ephemerides Liturgicae". Subsidia, 168). Roma: CLV-Edizioni liturgiche.

become the constitution on the liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, there are clear indications the proclamation of passages from sacred scripture should in the future be experienced in a more significant and direct way by the faithful. Other than seeking the wider use of vernacular languages, the re-introduction of ambones or lecterns was mentioned, as well as the readings being proclaimed facing the people. The text prepared by the preparatory commission with respect to the importance of sacred scripture in liturgical celebration<sup>76</sup> found its reception in *Sacrosanctum Concilium: In celebrationibus sacris abundantior, varior et aptior lectio sacrae Scripturae instauretur*<sup>77</sup>. The preparatory commission's text on the updating of church discipline treating of the design of churches and their internal elements was received in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.<sup>78</sup> The preparatory commission had prepared additional text for each article of the future constitution which it called *Declarationes voti*. In the case of the article at hand, the preparatory commission expressed a desire there be ambones or lecterns in churches for the proclamation of the sacred readings *ut sacrarum scripturarum, immo ipsius Verbi Divini proclamati dignitas ac honor plane appareant*<sup>79</sup>. The motivation expressed is important to note here – dignity and honour of sacred scripture should be apparent – as it is quite reticent with respect to what we are examining in this article. A brief document treating of church design which was in fact an extract from the *Declarationes voti*, was re-circulated among the Council Fathers in October 1963 and included the desire for ambones or lecterns:

7. “*De ambone seu de legilibus*”. – *In ecclesiis aedificandis, ambones seu legilia ad sacras lectiones proclamandas, regulariter ita disponantur, ut sacrarum Scripturarum, immo ipsius verbi divini proclamati dignitas et honor plane appareat.*<sup>80</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Lameri. *La “Pontificia Commissio de sacra liturgia Praeparatoria”*, 608–609.

<sup>77</sup> Sacrosanctum Concilium Oecumenicum Vaticanum II. 1964. “Constitutio de sacra liturgia Sacrosanctum Concilium (4 decembris 1963) 35”. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56: 109. See also EDIL n. 1 § 35.

<sup>78</sup> Lameri. *La “Pontificia Commissio de sacra liturgia Praeparatoria”*, 820–833; *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 128. See also EDIL n. 1 § 38.

<sup>79</sup> Lameri. *La “Pontificia Commissio de sacra liturgia Praeparatoria”*, 824.828–829.

<sup>80</sup> *Excerpta ex “Declarationibus” additis Schemati a Commissione Praeparatoria parato, quae afferuntur ad meliorem intelligentiam quorundam articulorum*, in Sacrosanctum Concilium Oecumenicum Vaticanum II. 1972. *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II. Volumen II. Periodus Secunda. Pars IV. Congregationes Generales LIX-LXIV*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 23. See also Rudolf Pacik. 2017. *Einrichtung von Kirche und Altarraum in den Vor-Fassungen der Liturgiekonstitution*. In *Protokolle zur Liturgie. Veröffentlichungen der Liturgiewissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft Klosterneuburg. Band 7*. Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 59.

Although not included in the council's constitution on the liturgy, the text circulated among the council fathers indicates that the possibility of re-establishing ambones or at least lecterns was in the minds of those involved in the liturgical reform. As mentioned earlier, the following year *Inter Oecumenici* followed through on the matter in preferring the use of ambones for the scripture readings at Mass where it was possible.

Most of the rites which we examined in part two were eventually discontinued shortly after the Second Vatican Council. The Order of Preachers began in 1969<sup>81</sup>, after having published an updated Missal in 1965 which shall be examined presently.<sup>82</sup> The Carmelites followed suit in 1972.<sup>83</sup> The Cistercians also adopted the reformed Roman rite although maintaining customs even in the Order of Mass itself.<sup>84</sup> The Carthusians finalised the reform of their usage or rite in 2021, maintaining many of their traditions.<sup>85</sup> The Premonstratensians declared at their general chapter in 1976 their right to retain their usage and did not request permission to adopt the Roman rite. In practice they have used the standard Roman books in a fashion similar to the Cistercians.<sup>86</sup> After initial work on reforming the rite of the diocese

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<sup>81</sup> The Roman dicastery's indult, Prot. n. 98/69, is mentioned here: *Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino*. 1969. "Decreta circa Ritus et Calendaria particularia. Ordo Fratrum Praedicatorum". *Notitiae* 48: 359, while the full text was published in *Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino*. 1969. "Decreta circa Ritus et Calendaria particularia. Ordo Fratrum Praedicatorum". *Analecta Sacris Ordinibus Fratrum Praedicatorum* 77: 250–251. See also Augustine Thompson. 2011. "Postconciliar Reform of the Dominican Rite Liturgy: 1962–1969". *Antiphon* 15.3: 299–317.

<sup>82</sup> 1965. *Missale iuxta ritum Ordinis Praedicatorum: auctoritate Apostolica approbatum reverendissimi patris Aniceti Fernandez eiusdem Ordinis Magistri Generalis iussu editum*. Romae: Ad Sanctae Sabinae.

<sup>83</sup> The Roman dicastery's Prot. n. 863/72 is mentioned here: *Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino*. 1972. "Decreta circa ritus et calendaria particularia. Ordo Fratrum B. Mariae V. de Monte Carmelo". *Notitiae* 78: 362. See also Giuseppe Midili. 2005. "Il rito carmelitano. *Status quaestionis*". *Ecclesia Orans* 22: 199–208.

<sup>84</sup> Both branches of the Cistercians, on adopting the Roman Missal, together sought and obtained permission to keep some of their traditional practices during Mass. This is noted as the Roman dicastery's Prot. n. 525/71, in *Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino*. 1972. "Decreta circa ritus et Calendaria particularia. Ordo Cisterciensis et Ordo Cisterciensis Strictioris Observantiae". *Notitiae* 69: 12. See also: 1998. *Rituale Cisterciense iuxta Statuta Capituli Generalis sive O. Cist. sive O.C.S.O. necnon Decreta sive generalia sive particularia Sacrae Congregationis de Cultu Divino et disciplina sacramentorum post Concilium Vaticanum II*. Kloster Langwaden: Bernardus Verlag, 43.

<sup>85</sup> 2021. *Missale Cartusiense*. La Grande Chartreuse. I obtained a pdf file of this book by electronic contact with *La Grande Chartreuse*. While the file included the Calendar approved by the Apostolic See along with the protocol number, corresponding with that found in *Congregatio de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum*. 2018. "Concessionibus circa Calendaria. 3. Instituta. Ordinis Cartusienensis". *Notitiae* 595: 102, the pdf file did not include the documentation from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments approving the new Missal which one typically finds at the beginning of such a liturgical book.

<sup>86</sup> See Andrew D. Ciferri. 1978. *The Post-Vatican II discussion of the so-called Praemonstratensian rite: a question of liturgical pluriformity*. Doctoral dissertation. Notre Dame (IN): University



of Braga, in the context of a distinct preference among the clergy and laity of the diocese for the reformed Roman rite, it was decided not to update the rite for use with a congregation. The old books remained untouched, and they were permitted to be used throughout the diocese as they were before the Council, although there was and is little interest in availing of the permission. Priests were permitted to use the old books with a revised lectionary in celebrations without the people.<sup>87</sup> A Portuguese translation of the *Ordo missae* of the rite of Braga was confirmed by the Apostolic See in October 1972.<sup>88</sup>

## 2.2. First steps in restoring the ambo in the Roman rite

The literature treating of the liturgical reform following *Sacrosanctum Concilium* hardly mentions the ambo at all. The commentaries on the various documentation from *Inter Oecumenici* in 1964 to the full edition of the *Missale romanum* in 1970 simply repeat what the documentation states either with respect to ritual use or basic requirements for design: visibility, audibility, offering a dignified place for the ritual proclamation of passages from sacred scripture.<sup>89</sup> The literature did not go far beyond the explicit, yet reticent demands of the Roman documentation.<sup>90</sup> It is necessary then to examine in some detail the references to the ambo in the docu-

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of Notre Dame; Commissio Liturgica Ordinis Praemonstr. 1988. *Thesaurus Liturgiae Praemonstratensis*.

<sup>87</sup> R.B. 1972. “Il rito Bracarense e la riforma liturgica”. *Notitiae* 73: 145–150; Joaquim Félix de Carvalho. 2007. “A Liturgia em Braga”. *Didaskalia* 37.2: 177–183.

<sup>88</sup> Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino. 1972. “Decreta particularia: Bracarensis”. *Notitiae* 76: 355.

<sup>89</sup> Joseph Gélineau. 1966. “Les lieux de l’Assemblée célébrante”. *La Maison-Dieu* 88: 64–82; Paul Cneude. 1969. “L’assemblée”. *La Maison-Dieu* 100: 89–103; Frederick R. McManus. 1965. “The New Rite of Mass”. *Worship* 39.3: 139–165; Pierre Journel. 1970. “Le missel de Paul VI”. *La Maison-Dieu* 103: 16–45; 1983. “La Constitution sur la Liturgie. De sa préparation à sa mise en application. II.”. *La Maison-Dieu* 156: entire issue, especially 164.165.346.347.350–351; 1993. “Les lieux de la liturgie”. *La Maison-Dieu* 193: entire issue, especially Jean Pierre Sodini. “L’ambon dans l’église primitive”. *La Maison-Dieu* 193: 39–51; Ferdinando Dell’Oro. 1964. “La recente ‘Instructio ad executionem Constitutionis de Sacra Liturgia recte ordinandam’”. *Rivista Liturgica* 51: 487–525; Salvatore Marsili. 1964. “Istruzione per l’applicazione della Costituzione conciliare sulla sacra liturgia”. *Rivista Liturgica* 51: 526–569; Robert Gantoy. 1969. “Dove si svolge la liturgia?”. *Rivista Liturgica* 56: 332–356; Carlo Braga. 1970. “Il nuovo ‘Ordo Missae’”. *Rivista Liturgica* 57: 7–17; Annibale Bugnini. 1971. “Il nuovo Messale Romano”. *Rivista Liturgica* 58: 447–455; Ferdinando Dell’Oro. 1971. “La ‘Institutio generalis’ del Messale Romano 1970”. *Rivista Liturgica* 58: 456–495; Léon Legardien. 1983. “Importance de l’ambon dans la liturgie post-conciliaire”. *Questions Liturgiques* 64: 49–55; Fernando López-Arias. 2020. *Corso di teologia e architettura dello spazio liturgico*. Roma: Artemide; Fernando López-Arias. 2021. *El Concilio Vaticano II y la arquitectura sagrada. Origen y evolución de unos principios programáticos (1947–1970)* (Bibliotheca “Ephemerides Liturgicae”. Subsidia, 199). Roma: CLV-Edizioni liturgiche.

<sup>90</sup> Consider the reticence of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* in its theological and liturgical interpretation of the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, more so in fact than the earlier redactions of the

mentation from 1964 to 1970 regarding the Eucharistic celebration in the Roman rite.

### 2.2.1. Transitional changes 1964–1967

We noted earlier that the first instruction for the application of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* invited the use of an ambo at the celebration of Mass with the people:

In Missis cum populo celebratis, Lectiones, Epistola et Evangelium versus populum legantur vel cantentur:

a) in Missa sollemni, in ambone aut ad cancellos;

b) in Missa cantata et in Missa lecta, si a celebrante leguntur aut canuntur, sive ex altari sive in ambone sive ad cancellos, prout magis opportunum fuerit; si vero ab alio leguntur aut canuntur, in ambone vel ad cancellos.<sup>91</sup>

The document took concern that the ambo facilitate the ministers being both seen and heard by the faithful, although without going into how the visibility might be qualified:

*Convenit ut ambo vel ambones habeantur ad sacras lectiones proferendas, ita dispositi ut minister a fidelibus bene conspici et audiri possit.*<sup>92</sup>

The Order of Mass promulgated the following year continued the request for the readings to be proclaimed from the ambo, or from the rails at the edge of the presbytery. It added the requirement that the minister be turned towards the people:

*In Missa sollemni, oratione expleta, subdiaconus librum sumit, ambonem ascendit vel accedit ad cancellos et, versus ad populum, Epistolam cantat vel legit.*<sup>93</sup>

*Accepta benedictione, diaconus cum aliis ministris, incenseo et luminaribus, accedit ad locum ubi Evangelium decantatur [...].*<sup>94</sup>

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text. Fergus M.T. Ryan. 2019. “The *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*: sources, theology and significance for the Roman rite”. *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 133: 234–236.

<sup>91</sup> *Inter Oecumenici* 49. See also EDIL n. 12 § 247.

<sup>92</sup> *Inter Oecumenici* 96. See also EDIL n. 12 § 294.

<sup>93</sup> *Ordo missae 1965* 13, in 1965. *Ordo Missae. Ritus servandus in celebratione missae et de defectibus in celebratione missae occurrentibus. Editio typica*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 10.

<sup>94</sup> *Ordo missae 1965* 13.

*In Missa cantata aut lecta cum populi participatione, [...]. Si vero Evangelium a celebrante cantatur vel legitur, [...], Deinde pergat ad ambonem vel ad cancellos vel etiam ad altare, ibique Evangelium cantat vel legit, ut dictum est. [...] Deficiente vero lectore, seu ministrante idoneo, ipse celebrans in ambone vel ad cancellos Epistolam cantat vel legit, et, si necesse est, etiam cantus post ipsam occurrentes; [...] Potest tamen, si magis opportunum fuerit, omnes lectiones etiam ex altari proferre, sed versus ad populum.<sup>95</sup>*

The homily, it indicated, was to be given at the chair, the altar, the ambo, or the altar rails, the *Credo* was to be begun with the priest at either the chair or at the altar, and for the common prayer (of the faithful) the celebrant was to moderate (preside) either at the chair, or from the altar or in the ambo or at the presbytery rail:

*Post Evangelium, celebrans, ad sedem aut ad altare, vel in ambone aut ad cancellos, homiliam, si facienda est, habet, eaque finita, ad sedem vel ad altare, inchoat, si dicendum est, Credo in unum Deum [...].<sup>96</sup>*

*Deinde [...] fit oratio communis seu fidelium, quam celebrans aut ad sedem aut ex altari aut in ambone vel ad cancellos moderatur.<sup>97</sup>*

The *Ritus servandus* published with the *Ordo missae* in early 1965 also preferred the use of an ambo, at solemn Mass and other forms with a congregation, for the chanting of the scripture readings, offering the presbytery rails as an alternative location:

*Accepta benedictione, diaconus, praecedentibus thuriferario et duobus acolythis cum candelabris accensis, vadit cum subdiacono a sinistris ad ambonem vel ad cancellos.<sup>98</sup>*

*In Missa cantata aut lecta cum populi participatione, convenit ut Lectiones et Epistola cantentur aut legantur a lectore seu ministrante idoneo in ambone vel ad cancellos. [...] Cantus post ipsas occurrentes, [...] a lectore seu ministrante in eodem loco proferuntur.<sup>99</sup>*

<sup>95</sup> *Ordo missae* 1965 14.

<sup>96</sup> *Ordo missae* 1965 17.

<sup>97</sup> *Ordo missae* 1965 18.

<sup>98</sup> *Ritus servandus* 1965 42.

<sup>99</sup> *Ritus servandus* 1965 44.

*Si vero non adest diaconus vel alius sacerdos, Evangelium profertur a celebrante. [...] celebrans accedit ad infimum gradum altaris [...] deinde pergit ad ambonem vel ad cancellos ad Evangelium cantandum vel legendum.*<sup>100</sup>

*Deficiente vero lectore seu ministrante idoneo, ipse celebrans legit vel cantat etiam Lectiones et Epistolam in ambone vel ad cancellos et, nisi a schola vel a populo cantantur aut legantur, addit etiam cantus post ipsas occurrentes.*<sup>101</sup>

The *Ritus servandus* mentions what to do in the absence of an ambo:

*Si tamen non habetur ambo, aut magis opportunum videtur, celebrans potest omnes lectiones etiam ex altari proferre versus ad populum.*<sup>102</sup>

The same document recalls the indication in *Inter Oecumenici* and the *Ordo missae* that the homily is given either at the chair or altar, or at the ambo or presbytery rail:

*Post Evangelium, celebrans, ad sedem aut ad altare, vel in ambone aut ad cancellos, homiliam, si facienda est, habet.*<sup>103</sup>

The celebrant was to moderate the universal prayer from the chair, or the altar, or the ambo or at the presbytery rails:

*Deinde [...] fit oratio communis seu fidelium, quam celebrans aut ad sedem aut ex altari aut in ambone vel ad cancellos moderator.*<sup>104</sup>

In this repetitive presentation of rubrical detail we find a preference for an ambo for the proclamation of scripture and its possible use by the celebrant for preaching and moderating the universal prayer, the chair being preferred for these latter activities. The emphasis of the rubrics was on the one hand moving away from excessive use of the altar found in Low Mass, greater proximity to the liturgical assembly for the proclamation of scripture by preferring the ambo or even the altar rails. The directive to face the people in *Inter Oecumenici*, the only time this is mentioned in

<sup>100</sup> *Ritus servandus* 1965 45.

<sup>101</sup> *Ritus servandus* 1965 46.

<sup>102</sup> *Ritus servandus* 1965 47.

<sup>103</sup> *Ritus servandus* 1965 50.

<sup>104</sup> *Ritus servandus* 1965 51.

the documentation from 1964 forward, makes the concern for both proximity and audibility clearer. The requirement for the minister's visibility went unqualified apart from the directive to face the people which would cease to find a place in future documentation. The precise nature of the reader's visibility while in the ambo has still to receive official comment.

The rubrical changes made in 1967 to the celebration of Mass did not touch these parts of the Mass concerning the ambo.<sup>105</sup>

### 2.2.2. The ambo in the revised books from 1969: Roman Missal and Dedication of a Church

In the first edition of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal we find a similar treatment of the use of the ambo as that found in the provisional documentation from 1964, but with a more substantial treatment of its significance. We find first of all a theological and pastoral outline of the Liturgy of the Word, without mentioning the location of the ministers for the proclamation of the readings, the preaching, etc.<sup>106</sup> In describing the preparations for the celebration of Mass, it is suggested the lectionary be already at the ambo<sup>107</sup>, that lectionary being distinct from the book of the Gospels.<sup>108</sup> In the description of the typical form of Mass, that without a deacon, we find several rubrical references to the ambo. The reader goes to the ambo at the conclusion of the prayer for the first reading: *Oratione finita, lector ad ambonem pergit, et recitat primam lectionem.*<sup>109</sup> If there is a second reading, it is also read at the ambo, *Postea, si habenda sit secunda lectio ante Evangelium, lector eam in ambone recitat*<sup>110</sup>, as is the Gospel reading: *Tunc librum Evangeliorum, si est in altari, accipit et, praecedentibus ministris, qui incensum*

<sup>105</sup> 1967. *Variationes in ordinem missae inducendae ad normam instructionis S.R.C. diei 4 maii 1967*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis.

<sup>106</sup> *Institutio generalis missalis romani* [= IGMR] 1969 33–47, in 1969. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum. Ordo Missae. Editio typica*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 21–24. See also EDIL n. 96 §§ 1428–1442. Also IGMR 1970 33–47, in 1970. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum. Editio Typica*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 35–38; IGMR 1975 33–47, in 1975. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum. Editio Typica Altera*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 35–38.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. IGMR1969 80b. See also EDIL n. 96, § 1475. Same article in IGMR of 1970 and 1975.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. IGMR1969 79. See also EDIL n. 96, § 1474. Same article in IGMR of 1970 and 1975.

<sup>109</sup> IGMR1969 89. See also EDIL n. 96, § 1484. Same article in IGMR of 1970 and 1975, except *Oratione* is replaced with *Collecta*.

<sup>110</sup> IGMR1969 91. See also EDIL n. 96, § 1486. Same article in IGMR of 1970 and 1975.

*et cereos deferre possunt, ad ambonem accedit*<sup>111</sup>. The celebration of Mass with the assistance of a deacon included a simple reference to the deacon proclaiming the Gospel reading at the ambo – *Deinde librum Evangeliorum, si est in altari, sumit et ad ambonem pergit*<sup>112</sup> – and offering the possibility of him announcing the intentions of the Prayer of Faithful from there also: *potest manere in ambone pro oratione universalis*<sup>113</sup> and *Intentiones orationis fidelium, post introductionem sacerdotis, ipse diaconus sive ex ambone sive ex alio loco conveniente profert*.<sup>114</sup> Likewise the subdeacon was to do the scripture readings before the Gospel at the ambo: *Epistolam vel aliam lectionem ante Evangelium in ambone legit*.<sup>115</sup> A careful reading of the Latin texts cited will have noticed the use of the preposition *in* when describing the location of the minister with respect to the ambo, although our descriptions in English overlooked the detail. The minister is *in* the ambo, a description which recalls the ambo is a monumental structure, not simply a lectern “at” which one stands.

The most revealing text on the ambo within the General Instruction was contained in the chapter on the arrangement and decoration of churches. The emphasis of a single article was on the worthiness of a place for the proclamation of the Word of God, a stable ambo to be preferred to a movable lectern, and the use of the ambo to be restricted to those ministers most closely concerned with the liturgy of the Word and thus not cantors, choir directors or commentators:

Dignitas verbi Dei requirit ut in ecclesia locus congruus existat e quo annuntietur et ad quem, inter liturgiam verbi, attentio fidelium sponte convertatur.

*Convenit ut generatim locus huiusmodi sit ambo stabilis et non simplex pluteus mobilis. Ambo, pro cuiusque ecclesiae structura, ita dispositus esse debet, ut ministri a fidelibus bene conspici et audiri possint. Ex ambone proferuntur lectiones, psalmus responsorius atque praeconium paschale; item proferri possunt homilia et oratio universalis seu oratio fidelium. Minus vero congruit ad ambonem ascendere commentatorem, cantorem aut moderatorem chori.*<sup>116</sup>

<sup>111</sup> *IGMR1969* 94. See also EDIL n. 96, § 1489. Same article in *IGMR* of 1970 and 1975.

<sup>112</sup> *IGMR1969* 131. See also EDIL n. 96, § 1526. Same article in *IGMR* of 1970 and 1975.

<sup>113</sup> *IGMR1969* 131. See also EDIL n. 96, § 1526. Same article in *IGMR* of 1970 and 1975.

<sup>114</sup> *IGMR1969* 132. See also EDIL n. 96, § 1527. Same article in *IGMR* of 1970 and 1975.

<sup>115</sup> *IGMR1969* 145. See also EDIL n. 96, at bottom of page 507. Same article in *IGMR* of 1970. The *Missale Romanum* of 1975 was published after the suppression of the subdiaconate and so the article is not part of the 1975 text.

<sup>116</sup> *IGMR1969* 272. See also EDIL n. 96, § 1667. Same article in *IGMR* of 1970 and 1975.

Subsequent editions of the General Instruction maintain the use of the ambo for the readings, responsorial psalm and Easter Proclamation (*Exsultet*), as an option for the homily and the intercessions of the Prayer of the Faithful.<sup>117</sup> The rubrics of the Easter Vigil indicate the *Exsultet* is sung either in an/the ambo or in the pulpit (earlier editions<sup>118</sup>) or in the ambo or at a lectern (third typical edition).<sup>119</sup> There lacks consistency between the General Instruction and the rubrics of the particular celebration regarding the minister's location for singing the Easter Proclamation. Nevertheless, the strong association between the ambo and the *Exsultet* emphasises the paschal significance of the ambo from the earliest editions of the Missal of Pope Paul VI.

From all these indications beginning in September 1964, there is clarity as to the purpose and significance of the ambo with respect to proclamation of the Word of God, its preferable use and then obligatory use through the 1960s. The form of ambo's construction was indicated only in a minimal fashion, notable is the lack of explicit mention of its elevation although it is implied implicitly by the use of the word *ascendere*, while the uses which it should not be put to were quite clear.

The Order of Dedication of a Church promulgated in 1977 includes what one might call a brief rite of inauguration of the ambo in which the bishop presents the Lectionary to the people and specifically to the ministers before the latter go to the ambo for the proclamation of the scripture readings. The bishop says: *Semper resonet in hac aula Dei verbum quod Christi mysterium vobis aperiat et vestram salutem in Ecclesia operetur*.<sup>120</sup> Then follows a simple rubric: *Deinde Episcopus Lectionarium priori lectori tradit. Lectores et psalmista ad ambonem pergunt, afferentes Lectionarium, omnibus aspiciendum*.<sup>121</sup> Since the brief formula of the bishop asks that the Word of God might reveal and proclaim the mystery of Christ and bring about the salvation of God's people, the ritual proclamation of sacred scrip-

<sup>117</sup> IGMR2002 309. This document is not contained in Reiner Kaczynski, Angelo Lameri. Edd. 2018. *Enchiridion Documentorum Instaurationis Liturgicae*, vol. 4: (15.01.1994–4.12.2003). Roma: CLV-Edizioni liturgiche [= EDIL vol. 4].

<sup>118</sup> *Vigilia paschalis 17*, in MR1970, 270; MR1971, 270; MR1975, 270.

<sup>119</sup> *Vigilia paschalis in nocte sancta 19*, in 2002. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum Ioannis Pauli PP. II cura recognitum. Editio typica tertia*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Vaticanis, 341; 2008. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum Ioannis Pauli PP. II cura recognitum. Editio typica tertia, reimpressio emendata*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Vaticanis, 341.

<sup>120</sup> *Ordo Dedicationis Ecclesiae* [= ODE] 53, in 1977. *Pontificale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum, Ordo dedicationis ecclesiae et altaris. Editio typica*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 41.

<sup>121</sup> ODE 53.

ture is brought into a strict relation with the mystery of Christ – incarnation, death, resurrection and return in glory – and its soteriological significance for the people of God.

Ignazio Calabuig comments that the inauguration of the ambo could be called a *dedicatio ambonis* because the rite appears as a dedication of a place that is a sign of the Word of God in two parts.<sup>122</sup> He notes the ostentatious presence of the lectionary in the showing by the bishop and the need for the people to observe the lectionary being carried to the ambo. Then, the second moment is the opening of the book once the (first) minister is upon the ambo, as the prophet Nehemiah did (upon the wooden pulpit). The first reading for the Dedication of a Church even during Eastertide, and Calabuig notes the historical rites of dedication did not have assigned readings from scripture<sup>123</sup>, is always to be the account of Nehemiah reading the law to the people after the return from Exile: Nehemiah 8,1-4a.5-6.8-10. The earlier part of the passage reads:

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Ignazio M. Calabuig. 2000. “The Rite of the Dedication of a Church”. In Anscar J. Chupungco. Ed. 2000. *Handbook for liturgical studies. Liturgical Time and Space*. Collegeville (MN): The Liturgical Press, 369.

<sup>123</sup> The Tridentine usage saw the Mass of dedication celebrated, by the bishop himself or by another priest, after all the ceremonies of dedication or consecration had been completed. The Mass formula was the Common of Dedication of a Church, used on the anniversary, which employed Apocalypse 21:2-5 as the first reading: John’s vision of the new Jerusalem descending from heaven. Cf. *Quo dicto, Pontifex accedit ad sacristiam, sive sacrarium, ubi deposito pluuiiali, parat se ad celebrandum Missam, si voluerit, vel facit per aliquem Sacerdotum in dicto altari consecrato solemniter celebrari. Missa dicitur, ut in Missali, in ipsa die dedicationis Altaris*, in Manlio Sodi, Achille-Maria Triacca. Edd. 1997. *Pontificale Romanum. Editio Princeps (1595–1596)* (Monumenta Liturgica Concilii Tridentini, 1). Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 436/-441-; *Deinde solus Pontifex, acceptis mitra et baculo, accedit cum suis ministris ad sacristiam, ubi, deposito pluuiiali, assumit paramenta albi coloris pro Missae celebratione: præstat enim ipsum Pontificem Missam celebrare, quamvis possit alium quoque sacerdotum ad hoc deputare*, in 1961. *Pontificale Romanum. Pars secunda. Editio typica emendata*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 72. See also *Pontificale Romanum (Monumenta Liturgica Piana 3)*, -240. Regarding the Mass to be celebrated: *Missa de Dedicatione in actu consecrationis ecclesiae vel oratorii est pars totius ritus consecrationis; proinde celebrari debet quoties ecclesia consecratur, etiam diebus quibus reliquæ Missæ votivæ I classis prohibentur. In Missa de Dedicatione in actu consecrationis ecclesiae additur, sub unica conclusione, oratio de Mysterio vel Sancto in cuius honorem ecclesia vel oratorium est consecrata; et nulla alia admittitur commemoratio, ne privilegiata quidem*, in 1962. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini. Editio Typica*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, [41]; in Manlio Sodi, Alessandro Toniolo. Edd. 2007. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini summorum Pontificum cura recognitum. Editio typica 1962. Edizione Anastatica* (Monumenta Liturgica Piana, 1). Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, [41]/-853-. For the text of the Mass formula, see the following editions of the Missal (1570, 1920, 1962): Manlio Sodi, Achille-Maria Triacca. Edd. 2012<sup>2</sup>. *Missale Romanum Editio Princeps (1570) Edizione anastatica, Introduzione e Appendice* (Monumenta Liturgica Concilii Tridentini, 2). Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 607; 1920. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Concilii Tridentini restitutum S. Pii V. Pontificis maximi jussu editum aliorumque pontificum cura recognitum a S. Pio X. reformatum et Benedicti XV. auctoritate vulgatum. Editio typica*. Romae: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, [36]; MR1962, [39]; *Missale Romanum (Monumenta Liturgica Piana 1)* [39]/-851-.



And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the Lord had given to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month. And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden pulpit which they had made for the purpose; [...] And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people; and when he opened it all the people stood.<sup>124</sup>

As the reception of the law was a moment of birth for the post-exilic community, so the proclamation of the Word for the first time from the particular ambo and what Calabuig terms the *dedicatio ambonis* also contribute to the birth of the church (building).

The *Praenotanda* of the second edition of the *Ordo lectionum Missae* from 1981 contained three articles on the place for the proclamation of the Word of God<sup>125</sup>, after indicating its obligatory nature: *Lectiones semper ex ambone in celebratione Missae cum populo proferantur*.<sup>126</sup> It recalled the need for the ambo to be elevated, immovable, and worthy of the Word of God. The reference to elevation is unique here and we will comment on its possible meaning further along. The *Praenotanda* of the *Ordo lectionum Missae* said it should recall that in the Mass there are two tables prepared, that of the Word of God and that of Christ's body, and the ambo should draw the attention of the faithful for the first part of Mass:

<sup>124</sup> Nehemiah 8:1-4a.5. *Revised Standard Version*.

<sup>125</sup> The *Praenotanda* of the first edition of the *Ordo lectionum Missae* published in 1969, and in the first volume of the lectionary in 1970, was a much briefer document than that included in the second edition. The earlier text makes no mention of the ambo at all. *Praenotanda*, in 1969. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum, Ordo lectionum Missae. Editio typica*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, vii–xxv; *Praenotanda*, in 1970. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum, Lectionarium. I. De tempore. Ab Adventu ad Pentecosten. Editio typica*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 17–28. See also EDIL n. 101. The articles added to the *Praenotanda* in the third volume of the lectionary in 1972 added nothing of relevance to our theme. 1972. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum, Lectionarium. III. Pro Missis de Sanctis, Ritualibus ad Diversa, Votivis et Defunctorum. Editio typica*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 708. See also EDIL n. 133.

<sup>126</sup> *Ordo lectionum Missae [= OLM] 1981 16*, in 1981. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum, Ordo lectionum Missae. Editio typica altera*. Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, xix. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4072.

De loco ad verbum Dei proclamandum

*In aula ecclesiae haberi debet locus elevatus, stabilis, congrue dispositus et convenienter nobilis, qui simul respondeat dignitati verbi Dei, clare fidelibus in memoriam revocet in Missa mensam tum verbi Dei tum Corporis Christi parari, optime denique valeat ad fidelium auditionem et attentionem, inter liturgiam verbi, adiuvandam. Ideo studendum est pro cuiusque ecclesiae structura, congruentiae ac coniunctioni ambonis cum altare.*<sup>127</sup>

The second article recalled the need to keep the ambo for its intended use:

Qui ambo convenienter pro sua structura modo stabili vel occasionaliter, saltem diebus sollemnibus, sobrie decoretur.

*Cum ambo locus sit ex quo verbum Dei per ministros annuntiatur, lectionibus, psalmo responsorio et praeconio paschali sua natura reservari debet. Homilia tamen et oratio fidelium ex ambone proferri possunt ex intima conexione harum partium cum tota liturgia verbi. Minus vero congruit ad ambonem alios ascendere, v.g. commentatorem, cantorem aut moderatorem cantus.*<sup>128</sup>

The third article considered design, lighting and audibility matters:

*Ut ambo celebrationibus apto modo inserviat amplius sit, cum aliquando super eum sistere debeant plures ministri. Insuper curandum est ut lectores in ambone sufficienti illuminatione ad textum legendum gaudeant et, pro opportunitate, hodierna instrumenta technica adhibere possint ut a fidelibus commode audiri valeant.*<sup>129</sup>

The second edition of *Ordo lectionum Missae* is relatively recent when discussing the ambo. We shall see in part four, however, that the *Praenotanda*, in discussing the Word of God in liturgical celebration, will suggest some additional considerations for the ambo, albeit indirectly.

The first edition of the *Cæremoniale Episcoporum* published in 1984 recalled the custom of announcing at Epiphany the dates of the movable feasts of the year depending upon the date of Easter Sunday.<sup>130</sup> The text not only associated the ambo

<sup>127</sup> *Ordo lectionum Missae* 1981 32. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4088, although this mistakenly omits the word *valeat* in the first sentence.

<sup>128</sup> *OLM* 1981 33. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4089.

<sup>129</sup> *OLM* 1981 34. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4090.

<sup>130</sup> 1984. *Cæremoniale Episcoporum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatum. Editio typica.* Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 73.

with the proclamation of the date of Easter and related feasts, but also expressly recalled, through the use of the verb *ascendere* (to go up), that the ambo is a raised place:

– *iuxta consuetudinem loci, cantato Evangelio, unus e diaconis, vel aliquis canonicus aut beneficiatus aut alius paratus pluviali, ascendet ambonem et ibidem populo publicabit festa mobilia anni currentis.*<sup>131</sup>

The *Cæremoniale* introduced no novelty but brought renewed attention to the Epiphany custom and its performance in the ambo, omitting the explicit reference to the place where the Gospel was proclaimed, and which had been maintained right up to the final edition of the Pontifical before the Second Vatican Council.

The Book of Blessings, promulgated in 1984, offered two versions for the blessing of a new ambo, one during the celebration of Mass, the other during a celebration of the Word of God.<sup>132</sup> Introducing both rites, the rubrics repeated what had been said before:

*Ambo seu locus e quo verbum Dei annuntiatur, eiusdem verbi dignitati respondere debet et in fidelium memoriam redigere mensam verbi Dei semper esse paratam. Haec vero benedictio tunc tantum impertiri potest cum de vero agitur ambone, qui nempe non simplex sit pluteus mobilis, sed ambo stabilis et sua dignitate conspicuus. Attenta vero cuiusque ecclesiae structura, etiam ambo mobilis, qui tamen vere emineat, muneri suo congruat et affabre sit ornatus, benedici potest.*<sup>133</sup>

The blessing of an ambo during Mass followed that previously described in the Order of Dedication of a Church.<sup>134</sup> In the second celebration offered, the priest introduces the blessing in these or similar words:

<sup>131</sup> *Pars IV. De celebrationibus mysteriorum Domini per anni circulum. Caput I. De tempore Adventus et Nativitatis Domini 240*, in *Cæremoniale Episcoporum* 1984, 73.

<sup>132</sup> *Ordo Benedictionis occasione data auspicandi novum ambonem 900–918*, in 2013. *Rituale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Ioannis Pauli II PP. promulgatum, De benedictionibus. Editio typica, reimpressio*. Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 345–350.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. *Ordo Benedictionis occasione data auspicandi novum ambonem 900*.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. *Ordo Benedictionis occasione data auspicandi novum ambonem 902–907*.

*Huc convenimus, fratres, ad hunc ambonem inaugurandum et in sacrum usum deducendum ut omnibus illius mensae verbi Dei signum appareat quod nostrae christianae vitae primum idque necessarium praebet nutrimentum. Huic celebrationi intentis animis attendamus, Deum nobis loquentem fideliter auscultantes ut eius verba vere sint nobis spiritus et vita.<sup>135</sup>*

Then follows a prayer:

*Deus, qui ex abundantia caritatis tuae ut amicos nos alloqui dignaris, gratiam Spiritus Sancti nobis concede propitius, ut verbi tui dulcedine perfruentes, supereminenti Filii tui scientia impleamur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.<sup>136</sup>*

The second celebration of the Book of Blessings seems less concerned with emphasising the mystery of Christ in contrast to the emphasis of the first option.

The first reading at both the Mass of Dedication and in the second celebration in the Book of Blessings is from Nehemiah 8:2-6.8-10. The passage recounts the reading of the Old Testament Law by Ezra the priest before the assembly of the people, his preaching which ensured the people understood. The responsorial psalm, from psalm 18(19), recalls the law of God as life-giving (the response is adapted from John 6:63). The remaining readings are chosen from the Common of Dedication of a Church and their thematic contact varies considerably.

The Prayer of the Faithful is part of the second celebration of the Book of Blessings. The text recalls Christ as the Word made flesh and asks that, in hearing him, we may be nourished by him. The intercessions ask for the faithful to hunger for God's Word, to be witnesses before the world, be convinced in faith and desirous of doing what is right, be knowledgeable of God and themselves in order to love and serve correctly, and that ministers of God's Word would believe and abide by what they proclaim. Then follows the prayer of blessing for the ambo:

*Deus, qui homines de tenebris in admirabile lumen tuum vocare dignatus es, tibi nos decet gratias agere quia dulci verbi tui pabulo numquam nos esurire permittis, nobisque in hac aula ecclesiae congregatis sermonum tuorum mirabilia continua recordatione declaras. Hic ergo, quaesumus, Domine, vox Filii tui sonet in auribus nostris, ut quae Spiritus Sanctus suggererit fideliter persequentes, verbi tui non auditores tantum sed fervidos mereamur esse factores. Hic verbi tui praeco nes semitas vitae nobis osten-*

<sup>135</sup> *Ordo Benedictionis occasione data auspicandi novum ambonem 908.*

<sup>136</sup> *Ordo Benedictionis occasione data auspicandi novum ambonem 909.*

*dant, quas alacriter percurrentes, Christum Dominum sequamur et vitam consequi possimus æternam. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.*<sup>137</sup>

In this prayer of blessing the ambo we find the same themes as in previous texts such as the Word of God enlightening and directing right behaviour, recalling God's wondrous works. There is nothing explicit regarding the mystery of Christ as mentioned earlier, nor as we shall see presently.

The edition of the Book of Blessings promulgated by the Italian Conference of Bishops in 1992 included an expanded text introducing the blessing of a new ambo.<sup>138</sup> As it appears to anticipate the typical edition of the Evangeliary, we will leave examination of the Italian Book of Blessings to later.

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In reviewing the varieties of ritual practices in the Latin rites before the Second Vatican Council we find very little trace of true descendants of the ambo. The major element is the distinction between places for the different readings – epistle and Gospel – on either side of the presbytery where ambones had been located in the Middle Ages. The twentieth-century liturgical movement popularised the idea of the ambo along with greater appreciation of direct contact with sacred scripture. The earliest period of liturgical reforming, producing the temporary changes and the first editions of the Roman Missal, its lectionary and the Order of Dedicating Churches took the first steps of restoring the ambo universally in the Roman rite, but also in the other rites. In the second part of this article, we will find a growing boldness in Roman documentation in expressing the symbolic and ritual significance of the ambo which has consequences for its design and placement.

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<sup>137</sup> *Benedictio ambonis 916.*

<sup>138</sup> Cf. *Benedizione di un nuovo ambone 1238–1241*, in 1992. *Rituale Romano riformato a norma dei decreti del Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II e promulgato da Papa Giovanni Paolo II. Benedizionale.* Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 190.

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