

FERGUS M. T. RYAN OP
Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, Roma
ORCID 0000-0003-1595-7991

**Resurrecting the ambo:
Monument of Paschal Memory and Eschatological Hope
Part II**

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

Abstract

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.

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

Abstrakt

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 amfony 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, zmartwychwstanie, Ewangelia, czytania biblijne, *legium*, *analogium*, *lectorium*, pulpit, misterium paschalne, eschatologia.

In the first part of this article, we reviewed the liturgical practices of the Latin church on the eve of the Second Vatican Council concerning special places and structures for the proclamation of sacred scripture during the celebration of the Eucharist. This review touched on the varieties of uses in the Roman rite – those of the dioceses of Lyon and Braga, those of the religious Orders, the Dominicans, Carmelites, Carthusians, Norbertines, Cistercians, and the special arrangements for pontifical liturgies – and in the Ambrosian and Mozarabic rites. While many of these uses and rites employed structures for the ritual proclamation of scripture, it was difficult to consider them all descendants of the medieval ambo. The liturgical movement before the Council, the Council itself and the earliest documentation arising from *Sacrosanctum Concilium* displayed an interest among interested parties in re-establishing some form of structure for the proclamation of passages from sacred scripture during the liturgy, but the initial steps were rather reserved. In this, the second part of the article, we shall find a growing confidence in Church documentation having more to say about the theological and ritual significance of the ambo which has consequences for its design and placement.

1. Stage two in restoring the ambo in the Roman rite

Beginning in the late 1980s, the Roman dicastery competent for liturgical matters promulgated texts which were more expressive when treating of the ambo than the previous liturgical books. We find in these later documents a second stage in the restoration of the ambo to the liturgy of the Roman Church, although we should note that the third typical edition of the Roman Missal, published after these documents, did not continue the trend.

1.1. Concerning worthy celebration of the Paschal Triduum

If one were to seek a significant development in the church's description of the ambo, a rupture of sorts, it would be in the typical edition of the Lord's Passion, that is for the chanting of the account of the passion during Holy Week.¹ In the *praenotanda* we find a very clear, albeit implicit, direction against the ministers using the ambo for the proclamation of the Lord's Passion: *Ad cantum Passionis ponuntur in plano presbyterii tria legilia nuda.*² The recommendation for three ministers, not mentioned in the typical editions of the liturgical books following the Second Vatican Council, was made the year previous to the publication of *Passio Domini Nostri Iesu Christi* in a circular letter from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.³ The document touching on the celebration of Easter and the entire period of Holy Week strongly recommended the proclamation of the Passion on Palm Sunday by three readers:

Historia Passionis peculiari sollemnitate gaudet. Consulendum est ut cantetur vel legatur more tradito, scilicet a tribus qui partem Christi, partem historici et partem populi assumunt. Passio proferatur aut a diaconis vel presbyteriis, aut illis deficientibus, a lectoribus; quo in casu, pars Christi sacerdoti reservari debet.

Haec proclamatio Passionis fit absque luminaribus, absque incenso, sine salutatione populi et sine signatione libri; tantummodo diaconi petunt benedictionem sacerdotis, ut alias ante Evangelium.

*Expedit ut, in bonum spiritale fidelium historia Passionis integre legatur et lectiones quae eam praecedunt ne omittantur.*⁴

Regarding Good Friday, *Paschalis sollemnitatis* maintained the same emphasis upon proclaiming the Passion in what it called the traditional fashion, although omitting any explicit reference to lecterns or ambo:

¹ Congregatio pro Cultu Divino. 1989. *Passio Domini Nostri Iesu Christi. Editio typica*. Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

² *Cantus Historiae Passionis. Praenotanda 2*, in *Passio Domini Nostri Iesu Christi*, vi. See also EDIL n. 321, § 6319.

³ Congregatio pro Cultu Divino. 1988. "Litterae circulares de festibus paschalibus praeparandis et celebrandis *Paschalis sollemnitatis* (16 ianuarii 1988)". *Notitiae* 259: 81–107. See also EDIL n.306.

⁴ *Paschalis sollemnitatis* 33. See also EDIL n.306, § 6064.

Historia vero Passionis Domini secundum Ioannem canitur vel legitur eodem modo quo dominica praecedente (cf. n. 33).⁵

The significance of these indications for our study of the ambo is simply recalling the older customs of proclamation without signs of festivity and joy: incense, lights, greeting the people, signing and kissing the book. Neither *Ordo lectionum Missae* nor the Lectionary had suggested the account of the Lord's Passion be proclaimed by three ministers⁶, although some regional lectionaries had.⁷ The indications of *Paschalis sollemnitatis* prepared the way for the typical edition of the proclamation of the passion in 1989 which established a clear division between the ministers' chanting of the Lord's Passion at three uncovered lecterns and the place or structure of the ambo.

1.2. Concerning worthy proclamation of the Gospel at Mass

What might be easily be considered, albeit mistakenly, a first typical edition of the *Evangeliarium*, in the year 2000, is the most significant step in an overt de-

⁵ *Paschalis sollemnitatis* 66. See also EDIL n.306, § 6097.

⁶ Cf. *Dominica in palmis de passione Domini*, in *Lectionarium. I*, 608–644; *Feria sexta in passione Domini*, in *Lectionarium I*, 659–667.

⁷ The following lectionaries, published in the immediate aftermath of the typical edition, included rubrics for dividing the text into three voices: 1970. *The Roman Missal. Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI. Lectionary for Mass. English Translation Approved by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See. Revised Standard Version. Catholic Edition*. Collegeville (MN): The Liturgical Press, 59–68.77–81.258–266.391–399; 1969. *Leccionario reformado según los decretos del Concilio Vaticano II y promulgado por S.S. el Papa Pablo VI. Dominical y Ferial. II. Ciclo B*. Madrid: Varias editoriales litúrgicas, 86–92.105–110; 1971. *Leccionario reformado según los decretos del Concilio Vaticano II y promulgado por S.S. el Papa Pablo VI. I. Ciclo A*. Madrid: Varias editoriales litúrgicas, 83–90.103–109; 1970. *Die Feier der Heiligen Messe. Lektionar. Band II. Lesejahr C, Herausgegeben im Auftrag des Bischofskonferenzen Deutschlands, Österreichs und der Schweiz und des Bischofs von Luxemburg, Die Schriftlesungen für die Sonn- und Feiertage des Kirchenjahres*. Einsiedeln und Köln-Freiburg und Basel-Regensburg-Wien-Salzburg-Linz: Benziger-Herder-F. Pustet-St. Peter-Veritas, 88–100.112–118; 1971. *Die Feier der Heiligen Messe. Lektionar. Band I. Lesejahr A, Herausgegeben im Auftrag des Bischofskonferenzen Deutschlands, Österreichs und der Schweiz und des Bischofs von Luxemburg, Die Schriftlesungen für die Sonn- und Feiertage des Kirchenjahres*. Einsiedeln und Köln-Freiburg und Basel-Regensburg-Wien-Salzburg-Linz: Benziger-Herder-F. Pustet-St. Peter-Veritas, 114–127.139–145. The German volume for Year B, published in 1969, had not included indications for the three voices, however: 1969. *Die Feier der Heiligen Messe. Lektionar. Band II. Lesejahr B, Herausgegeben im Auftrag des Bischofskonferenzen Deutschlands, Österreichs und der Schweiz und des Bischofs von Luxemburg, Die Schriftlesungen für die Sonn- und Feiertage des Kirchenjahres*. Einsiedeln und Köln-Freiburg und Basel-Regensburg-Wien-Salzburg-Linz: Benziger-Herder-F. Pustet-St. Peter-Veritas, 89–100.113–119. The one-volume lectionary for England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, did not include division into three voices: 1969. *Lectionary. Order of Readings for Use at Mass. According to the Order of Readings Promulgated by His Holiness Pope Paul VI. Using the Jerusalem Bible Version of Scripture. Approved for use in the churches of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland*. London-Dublin-Melbourne: Collins, 145–155.163–164.

velopment of thought since the Second Vatican Council with respect to the ambo.⁸ The book's brief *Praenotanda* interpret the significance of the ambo in an explicit fashion in a single article:

*In Missa cum populo celebranda lectiones semper ex ambone proclamandæ sunt, loco excelso et stabili et exposito et decoro, dignitatem verbi illinc proclamati evocanti, iconismate Sancti Sepulchri et nudi tumuli illius, unde verbum vitæ annuntiat.*⁹

With this short text we find for the first time – in a liturgical book from the Apostolic See – such an explicit reference to the resurrection of the Lord and the liturgical proclamation of sacred scripture, the word of life, when treating of the ambo. The article recalls the ambo is iconismatic of the Holy Sepulchre – where the Lord's body was buried – and the empty tomb – from which the Lord rose from the dead.

The sepulchre and the tomb are, of course, the same thing. The four canonical Gospels employ two terms for the place where the Lord's body was buried, and from which he rose. One means simply a burial place: τάφος.¹⁰ The second suggests

⁸ Cf. 2000. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti oecumenici concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum, Ioannis Pauli Pp. II cura recognitum. Evangeliarium pro diebus praesertim dominicis e festis iuxta editionem typicam alteram Ordinis lectionum Missae exaratum*. Roma: Art'È. It is a legitimate question to ask whether the book is in fact a typical edition. Maurizio Barba, an official of the Congregation for Divine Worship, in presenting the *praenotanda*, termed the volume an *editio peculiaris*, pointing out that the *Ordo lectionum Missae* is the true typical edition liturgical book from which lectionaries are prepared for local churches. Cf. Maurizio Barba. 2001. "I Praenotanda dell'Evangelario Latino". *Rivista liturgica* 88.3: 474. The tome received a decree from the then prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship, Cardinal George Medina Estévez, which also called the book an *editio peculiaris* which the dicastery desired especially, collaboration with a private publishing house, for the Jubilee Year 2000. The volume was approved for liturgical use. Cf. *Evangeliarium*, 5: "Quod occasione Magni Iubilæi adimplere cupiens, Congregatio de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum prædicti Evangeliorum libri seu Evangelarii peculiarem editionem lingua Latina exarare et concursu virorum artis typographicae peritorum omni præcellentia edere curavit. Quam editionem, vigore facultatum huic Dicasterio a Summo Pontifice IOANNE PAULO II tributarum, nunc approbat, ut in usum liturgicum assumatur". Still, the instruction from the Congregation for Divine Worship on translating liturgical texts, *Liturgiam authenticam*, listed the volume among typical editions of liturgical books: Congregatio pro Cultu Divino. 2001. "Instructio quinta ad executionem Constitutionis Concilii Vaticani Secundi de Sacra Liturgia recte ordinandam de usu linguarum popularium in libris liturgiae romanae edendis *Liturgiam authenticam* (28 martii 2001) 110". *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 93: 719. *Liturgiam authenticam* listed the *Passio Domini nostri* in the same article n.110 on the following page. See also Emmanuele Borsotti. 2013. "Il ritorno dell'evangelario a partire dal Concilio Vaticano II: alcune realizzazioni significative". *Rivista liturgica* 100: 108. The *Evangeliarium* was not mentioned in EDIL vol. 4, but the *Praenotanda* were printed in the original Latin text in the journal *Rivista liturgica*: 2001. "I Praenotanda dell'Evangeliarium". *Rivista liturgica* 88: 460–466. Likewise, a Spanish *Enchiridion* omitted reference to the *Evangeliarium* of 2000: Andrés Pardo. Ed. 2019³. *Documentación Litúrgica. Nuevo Enquiridion. De san Pio X (1903) al papa Francisco (2019)*. Burgos: Monte Carmelo.

⁹ *Praenotanda* 21, in *Evangeliarium*, 9; in *Rivista liturgica* 88. 2001, 464.

¹⁰ Mt 28:1 τὸν τάφον - to the burial/grave/tomb/sepulchre.

a memorial, monument, also for placing the dead: μνημεῖον. The latter is employed more frequently in the Gospel accounts of the empty tomb.¹¹ Actually, τάφος is used just once in the Gospel accounts (Mt 28:1) while μνημεῖον is employed for all remaining sixteen instances. The Vulgate follows this use of vocabulary, employing “monumentum” with its memorial significance for μνημεῖον and “sepulcrum” for τάφος. Finally, the Benedictus antiphon for Easter Sunday Lauds in the Roman rite employed “monumentum”: *Et valde mane, una sabbatorum, veniunt ad monumentum, orto iam sole, alleluia.*¹²

The article of the *Evangeliarium's Praenotanda* which we have been considering occurs within the document's third chapter. That chapter treats of the proclamation of the Gospel during the celebration of Mass, and so the emphasis of the article is clearly upon the Gospel. It is entirely appropriate, then, that when speaking of the ambo with respect to the Gospel passage, emphasis should be placed upon its role in recalling the Lord's resurrection.

Part of the final phrase of this article from the *Praenotanda* of the *Evangeliarum unde verbum vitae annuntiat* is found at the beginning of the first epistle of John:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life – the life was made manifest and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us – that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.¹³

Citing from the Johannine epistle recalls not only who the word of life is – Jesus Christ – but also the eternal origin of he who came into the world, whose identity

¹¹ Mk 16:2 τοῦ μνημείου - to the monument; Mk 16:5 εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον - into the monument; Mk 16:8 ἀπὸ τοῦ μνημείου - out of the monument; Mt 28:8 τοῦ μνημείου - away from the monument; Lk 24:1 ἐπὶ τὸ μνημεῖον - to the monument; Lk 24:2 ἀπὸ τοῦ μνημείου - from the monument; Lk 24:9 ἀπὸ τοῦ μνημείου - from the monument; Lk 24:12 ἐπὶ τὸ μνημεῖον - to the monument; Jn 20:1 εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον - to the monument; Jn 20:2 ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου - out of the monument; Jn 20:3 εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον; Jn 20:4 εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον - to the monument; Jn 20:6 εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον - into the monument; Jn 20:8 εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον - to the monument; Jn 20:11 πρὸς τὸ μνημεῖον - outside/near the monument; Jn 20:11 εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον - into the monument.

¹² Cf. 2015. *Officium Divinum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum, Ordo cantus Officii. Editio typica altera.* Città del Vaticano: Typis Vaticanis, 68; 2020. *Antiphonale Romanum secundum Liturgia Horarum ordinemque Cantus Officii dispositum cura scriptorii paleographici Solesmensis praeeparatum. In dominicis et festis. I. Ad laudes matutinas cum invitatoriis.* Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, 155–156. Hesbert's collection of office antiphons shows the use of the same expression also: René-Jean Hesbert. Ed. 1968. *Invitatoria et Antiphonae*, n.2728. (Corpus Antiphonalium Officia, 3). Roma: Herder, 211.

¹³ 1 John 1,1-4. RSV translation.

was made manifest and was seen by the epistle writer, the life who is eternal. The addition of *verbum vitae* to the article recalls, certainly, the Lord's resurrection and the moment of the proclamation of the Gospel as an announcement, or rather an *anamnesis* of that event, but also brings out the broader significance of the Christ's origin, identity, mission on the one hand, and the believers' incorporation into the risen Christ with a view towards the general resurrection and eternal life.

In the previous article of the *Praenotanda* we find an interpretation of the procession to the ambo as signifying the coming – the *Adventus* – of Christ:

*Processione vero antecedi potest, quæ adventum Christi significat alloquentis omnes, quos Ecclesia in nomine eius congregat.*¹⁴

While emphasising the paschal characteristics of the ambo and the association with the proclamation of the Gospel passage at Mass, it seems peculiar that the paschal chant *Alleluia* receive no mention in the *Praenotanda*. Ambroos Verheul's comprehensive article on the *Alleluia* in the Eucharistic celebration emphasises the eschatological aspect of the expression over the paschal one, not entirely omitting reference to the latter, however.¹⁵ The eschatological aspect, of course, makes the paschal one less a historical recollection and more a looking forward to its fulfilment in the future, and this might be a suitable justification for omitting the additional paschal element in the preceding chant.

We mentioned earlier the Italian edition of the Book of Blessings promulgated in 1992. In the section for the blessing of a new ambo the Italian text had additional material added to it. The first sentence of the first article had added: "since the moment Christ, conqueror of death, and with the power of the Holy Spirit, rolled back the stone from the sepulchre".¹⁶ Then, one of the additional articles indicates the Order of Blessing should be celebrated, in so far as possible, during the season of Easter.¹⁷ The *Benedizionale* sought to recall that the proclamation of the Word of God is the word of Christ, risen from the dead. The Italian book did not take the

¹⁴ *Evangeliarium. Praenotanda 20.*

¹⁵ Cf. Ambroos Verheul. 1995. "La place et la signification de l'alléluia dans la célébration eucharistique". *Questions liturgiques / Studies in liturgy* 76: 42–58.

¹⁶ "da quando il Cristo, vincitore della morte, con la potenza del suo Spirito ha rovesciato la pietra dal sepolcro", *Benedizione di un nuovo ambone 1238.*

¹⁷ "This rite, which should be celebrated as far as possible during the Easter season, can be inserted in the celebration of Mass or even in a celebration of the word of God". "Questo rito, che per quanto possibile è opportuno celebrare nel Tempo di Pasqua, si può inserire nella celebrazione della Messa o anche in una celebrazione della parola di Dio", *Benedizione di un nuovo ambone 1239.* The translation into English is ours.

next step, found explicitly in *Praenotanda* the Book of the Gospels in 2000, which was to indicate the monument which is the ambo also serves to recall the sepulchre of Christ's burial and the tomb from which the Lord rose. Meanwhile, an English language edition of the *De Benedictionibus* from 1989 translated the term "ambo" with "lectern", indicating an understanding of the structure certainly less developed or less informed than that manifested by the Italian *Benedizionale*.¹⁸

In the same year as the promulgation of the *Evangeliarium* an extract from the third typical edition of the Roman Missal (in preparation), was published.¹⁹ Some minor changes were made to the texts concerning the ambo which may be summarised as emphasising its unique role in the Eucharistic celebration, the need for an immovable construction and for its use to be limited. The General Instruction's third chapter insisted the readings be proclaimed from the ambo at celebrations with the people: *In celebratione Missae cum populo, lectiones semper ex ambone proferuntur*.²⁰ This insistence upon using the ambo for the readings appeared first here rather than in the Book of the Gospels since the latter appeared later, although in the same year. The obligation for using the ambo, always, in Masses with the people, had not been in previous editions of the General Instruction, although as mentioned earlier it was included in the second edition of the *Ordo lectionum missae*.²¹ While the priest would preside over the Prayer of the Faithful from the chair, the intentions would usually be announced from the ambo:

Est sacerdotis celebrantis precationem a sede moderari.

[...]

*Proferuntur de more ex ambone aut ex alio loco convenienti, a diacono vel a cantore vel a lectore, vel a fidei laico.*²²

¹⁸ *Order of Blessing for a New Lectern*, in 1989. *The Roman Ritual revised by decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and published by authority of Pope John Paul II. Book of Blessings approved for use in the dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and confirmed by the Apostolic See.* Collegeville (MN): The Liturgical Press, 434.

¹⁹ 2000. *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum Ioannis Pauli PP. II cura recognitum, Institutio Generalis, Ex editio typica tertia cura et studio Congregationis De Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum excerpta.* Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana. See also EDIL n. 412.

²⁰ IGMR2000 58. See also EDIL n.412, § 8963.

²¹ Cf. OLM 1981 16. See also EDIL n.244 § 4072.

²² IGMR2000 71. See also EDIL n.412, § 8976.

In preparing the celebration of Mass, the lectionary should be prepared at the ambo, it said.²³ The lector approaches the ambo for reading from the lectionary already in place before Mass: *Lector vero ad ambonem pergit, et ex lectionario ibi iam ante Missam posito proclamat.*²⁴ The Gospel book is taken in procession to the ambo from which the passage is read:

*Tunc Evangeliarium, si est in altari, accipit et, praecedentibus ministris laicis, qui thuribulum, et cereos deferre possunt, ad ambonem accedit, Evangeliarium parum elevatum deferens. Astantes ad ambonem se convertunt, singularem reverentiam erga Evangelium Christi manifestantes.*²⁵

*In ambone sacerdos aperit librum.*²⁶

In the absence of a reader, the priest himself would proclaim the readings from the ambo: *Si non adest lector, sacerdos ipse omnes lectiones et psalmum profert, stans in ambone.*²⁷ The priest could preach standing at the chair, or in the ambo itself: *Sacerdos, stans ad sedem vel in ipso ambone, vel, pro opportunitate, in alio loco idoneo, profert homiliam.*²⁸

Finally, the minister announcing the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful could do so from the ambo:

*Dicto symbolo, sacerdos stans ad sedem, manibus iunctis, brevi monitione fideles invitavit ad orationem universalem. Deinde diaconus, vel cantor vel lector vel alius ex ambone aut ex alio loco convenienti, intentiones versus populum proponit, populo pro sua parte suppliciter respondente.*²⁹

Describing the celebration of Mass with the assistance of a deacon, the same indications are given with respect to the ambo. Going to proclaim the Gospel, the deacon: *Deinde Evangeliarium, quod laudabiliter super altare collocatum est, facta altari inclinatione, sumit et ad ambonem pergit librum parum elevatum deferens,*

²³ IGMR2000 118.b. See also EDIL n.412, § 9023.

²⁴ IGMR2000 128. See also EDIL n.412, § 9033.

²⁵ IGMR2000 133. See also EDIL n.412, § 9038.

²⁶ IGMR2000 134. See also EDIL n.412, § 9039.

²⁷ IGMR2000 135. See also EDIL n.412, § 9040.

²⁸ IGMR2000 136. See also EDIL n.412, § 9041.

²⁹ IGMR2000 138. See also EDIL n.412, § 9043. This article is found within the description of Mass without a deacon but mistakenly mentions the deacon's role. The error was corrected in the finalised text printed in the third typical edition of the *Missale romanum* in 2002.

*praecedentibus thuriferario cum thuribulo fumigante atque ministris cum cereis accensis.*³⁰

In describing the role of the reader, the ambo is mentioned as the place for the readings to be read: *Lectiones, quae Evangelium praecedunt, ex ambone legit.*³¹ At Mass without a congregation, that is to say at which only one server assisted, the readings could also be done at the ambo: *Lectiones, quantum fieri potest, ex ambone vel ex pluteo proferuntur.*³²

In the chapter on the design of churches, the description of the ambo was amplified with respect to those of the earlier editions, although without reference to the tomb:

*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 ordinati et lectores a fidelibus bene conspici et audiri possint. Ex ambone unice proferuntur lectiones, psalmus responsorius atque praeconium paschale; item proferri possunt homilia et intentiones orationis universalis seu orationis fidelium. Ambonis dignitas exigit ut ad eum solus minister verbi ascendat. Convenit ut novus ambo benedicatur, antequam usui liturgico destinetur, iuxta ritum in Rituali Romano descriptum.*³³

In the final text of the General Instruction published within the typical edition of the *Missale Romanum* of 2002, reprinted in 2008, only two changes were made to these texts on the ambo and were of little concern.³⁴ The first simply removed the reference to the deacon in a section which described Mass without a deacon in any case (n.138) and so was just correcting an error within the document; the second simply dropped the qualification *laudabiliter* regarding the placement of the book of the Gospels upon the altar (n.175).³⁵

³⁰ *IGMR2000 175*. See also EDIL n.412, § 9080.

³¹ *IGMR2000 196*. See also EDIL n.412, § 9101.

³² *IGMR2000 260*. See also EDIL n.412, § 9165.

³³ *IGMR2000 309*. See also EDIL n.412, § 9214.

³⁴ Cf. 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; 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.

³⁵ *IGMR2002 138.175*, in *MR2002*, 47.52; *IGMR2008 138.175*, in *MR2008*, 47.52.

The third edition of the *Missale romanum* restored the practice of announcing, after the Gospel at the Day Mass of the solemnity of the Lord's Epiphany, the date of Easter and other movable feasts.³⁶ A rubric accompanying the notated text of the Announcement of the Date of Easter directs the announcement to be made by a deacon or cantor from the ambo: *In Epiphania Domini, cantato Evangelio, diaconus vel cantor ex ambone, e vetusto Ecclesiae sanctae instituto, pronuntiat festa mobilia anni currentis iuxta hanc formulam.*³⁷ The association of the ambo with the *Annuntio paschae festorumque mobilium*, the latter employing the *Exsultet's* musical tone³⁸, constitutes renewed emphasis upon the ambo's paschal significance. While this change in the Missal does not concern the ambo directly, it is a felicitous restoration which draws further attention to the symbolic and ritual meaning of the monumental structure.

The expanded discourse on the ambo from the year 2000 in article n.309 of the General Instruction also concerned keeping the ambo for its intended purpose of proclamation of the Word of God. There was nothing contained in this article in the General Instruction, nor in earlier articles of the same document, nor in the note from the Roman dicastery, which paralleled the theological interpretation of the ambo expressed explicitly in the *Evangeliarium* promulgated in the same jubilee year and implicitly in the *Passio Domini Nostri Iesu Christi* of 1989.

1.3. Literature which recalls the symbolic significance of the ambo

A search for literature mentioning the increasing emphasis upon the paschal significance of the ambo is wont to be fruitless, but a growing body of commentary on the symbolism as well as the medieval iconographic expression of ambones can be found largely in Italian. This body of literature, focussed upon historical evidence rather than present practice or church discipline, is due in the first place to the research of the Sicilian Crispino Valenziano who has also researched and documented the ambones of the Italian peninsula.³⁹ Valenziano's own publications, and those who rely upon him, have brought largely to an Italian readership the paschal significance of the

³⁶ *MR2002*, 175; *MR2008*, 175.

³⁷ *MR2002*, 1247; *MR2008*, 1247.

³⁸ See Alberto Turco. 2011. *Cantus Recitativi* (Antique monodiae eruditio, 6). Verona: Edizioni Melosantiqua, 152–162.

³⁹ For a brief consideration of Valenziano's contribution, see Daniel P. McCarthy. 2021. *Verbum ac Spiritus: duplici de munere praesidendi coetui orationemque dirigendi. Word and Spirit: on the double role of presiding in the assembly and directing the prayer.* Farnborough: St Michael's Abbey Press, 34–36.

ambo.⁴⁰ What this literature overlooks, however, is any reference, where it would have been possible, to either the *Passio Domini nostri* of 1989 or the *Evangeliarium* of 2000. An exception to the reliance on Valenziano, while including the symbolic significance of the ambo, is Radek Tichý's work on the proclamation of the Gospel at Mass in the West which mentions the *Evangeliarium*, the 1984 *Caeremoniale's* treatment of the Epiphany Announcement and the 1983 *Ordo lectionum Missae's* qualifying raised place.⁴¹ An exception to overlooking entirely the *Evangeliarium* and the *Passio Domini nostri* is the Italian translation of a German introduction to liturgical

⁴⁰ Crispino Valenziano. 1978. "L'ambone: icone spaziale della Resurrezione". *La Vita in Cristo e nella chiesa*. Mensile di Liturgia 27.5: 11–25; Henry Moore, Gert Kreytenberg, Crispino Valenziano, 1993. *L'ambone del Duomo di Pisa*. Pisa: Cassa di risparmio di Pisa. Crispino Valenziano. Ed.; Crispino Valenziano. "L'Aula – L'Ambone". in Crispino Valenziano. 1995. *Architetti di chiese*. Palermo: L'Epos, 167–226; Crispino Valenziano. "Ambone e candelabro. Iconografia e iconologia", in Silvano Maggiani. Ed. 2005. *Gli spazi della celebrazione rituale* (Bibliotheca "Ephemerides Liturgicae". Subsidia, 133). Roma: CLV-Edizioni liturgiche, 67–125; Crispino Valenziano. "Liturgical Architecture", in Anscar J. Chupungco. Ed. 2000. *Handbook for liturgical studies. V. Liturgical Time and Space*. Col legeville (MN): The Liturgical Press, 381–396; Crispino Valenziano. "L'Aula – L'Ambone", in Crispino Valenziano. 2005. *Architetti di chiese*. Bologna: Dehoniane, 131–170; Crispino Valenziano. "L'ambone: aspetti storici", in Goffredo Boselli. Ed. 2006. *L'ambone. Tavola della parola di Dio. Atti del III Convegno internazionale, Bose, 2–4 giugno 2005* (Liturgia e vita), Magnano: Edizioni Qiqajon, 87–96; Paolo Tomatis. 2011. *L'ambone: spazio liturgico della parola* (Quaderni dell'ufficio liturgico diocesano-Torino, 21). Cantalupa (TO): Elle Di Ci; Cosma Capomaccio. 1993. *Monumentum resurrectionis ambone e candelabro per il cero pasquale: iconografia e iconologia del monumento nella cattedrale di Sessa Aurunca*. Sessa Aurunca; Cosma Capomaccio. 2002. *Monumentum resurrectionis: Ambone e candelabro per il cero pasquale: iconografia e iconologia del monumento nella cattedrale di Sessa Aurunca (Caserta)* (Monumenta Studia Instrumenta Liturgica, 22). Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana; Cosma Capomaccio. "Il presbiterio, l'altare e l'ambone", in Salvatore Esposito. Ed. 1995. *Gli spazi della celebrazione liturgica: III Convegno Regionale di Pastorale liturgica Nola, 13-14 ottobre 1995*. Napoli: Torre del Greco, 57–82; Massimo del Pozzo. "Considerazione 'sub specie iusti' dell'ambone: lo spazio proprio ed esclusivo della parola", in Massimo del Pozzo. 2010. *Luoghi della celebrazione 'sub specie iusti': altare, tabernacolo, custodia degli oli sacri, sede, ambone, fonte battesimale, confessionale*. (Pontificia Università della Santa Croce – Monografie Giuridiche, 39). Milano: Giuffrè, 231–267; Vincenzo Gatti. "Programmi iconografici e architettura liturgica", in Ephrem Carr. Ed. 2001. *Architettura e arti per la liturgia: Atti del quinto congresso internazionale di liturgia, Roma, Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, 12-15 ottobre 1999* (Studia Anselmiana, 131 – Analecta, 13). Roma: Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, 143–167; Ambrogio Malacarne. "L'ambone", in Ambrogio Malacarne, Raffaella Balsdassari. 2011. *Gli spazi liturgici della celebrazione rituale* (Imago, 3). Siena: Cantagalli, 131–160; Andrea Baciarlino. "Gli architetti contemporanei di fronte all'architettura liturgica", in *Architettura e arti per la liturgia*, 191–213; Klaus Peter Dannecker. "Der Ambo: Überlegungen zur Entwicklung, Gestalt und Bedeutung eines liturgischen Ortes", in Pacik Rudolf, Redtenbacher Andreas. Edd. 2007. *Protokolle zur Liturgie: Veröffentlichungen der Liturgiewissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft Klosterneuburg*. Würzburg: Echter, 31–49, published later as: Klaus Peter Dannecker. 2011. "Der Ambo: Überlegungen zur Entwicklung, Gestalt und Bedeutung eines liturgischen Ortes". *Heiliger Dienst* 65: 90–104. The latter, in the Germanophone context, relies heavily on Valenziano. Fernando López-Arias. 2018. *Proyectar el espacio sagrado. Qué es y cómo se construye una iglesia*. Pamplona: EUNSA-Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 176, limits itself to a treatment of the paschal significance of the ambo using the following words: "El ambon es el lugar del anuncio de la buena nueva de la Resurrección de Cristo. Puede representar simbólicamente la tumba abierta del Salvador".

⁴¹ Radek Tichý. 2016. *Proclamation de l'évangile dans la messe en occident. Rituauté, histoire, comparaison, théologie* (Studia Anselmiana, 168 – Analecta Liturgica, 34). St. Ottilien: Editions of Sankt Ottilien, 56–58.

studies which lists both editions of the Lord's Passion and the *Evangeliarium*.⁴² The book's brief presentation on the ambo, or rather to what it terms *the place of proclamation*, made no reference to the symbolic meaning nor to the two aforementioned liturgical books.⁴³ The original German, even in a later edition, maintained its focus upon liturgical books for Germany, and so overlooked the *Evangeliarium* and the *Passio Domini nostri*⁴⁴, referencing an article in *Heiliger Dienst* from 2011 which also overlooked much of the material we are bringing to light here.⁴⁵

1.4. The ambo in the other Western rites after Vatican II

1.4.1. The rite of the Dominicans after *Sacrosanctum Concilium*

The Dominican Missal of 1965 made slight changes to its rubrics in order to accommodate *Inter Oecumenici* in 1964 and the *Ordo missae* with its *Ritus servandus* the following year. The articles in *De officio ministrorum altaris in missa maiori*, the equivalent of the Roman *Missa sollemnis*, were changed slightly to include the preference for an ambo for the readings. For the epistle we read: *ad locum, in quo Epistola legenda est: in ambone, si adsit, vel ad cancellos versus populum*.⁴⁶ For the Gospel: *Evangelium autem cantatur vel legitur in ambone, si adsit, vel ad cancellos versus populum*.⁴⁷

The directions found in the previous Missal of 1933 to sing the Epistle facing the altar, the Gospel facing North-East, and the possibility to employ an alternative place for the readings on Sundays and other feast days were excluded from the 1965 Missal. Additional rubrics at the end of the *De officio ministrorum* provided more generally for celebrations with the people, recalling the preference for the readings (both Old Testament and Epistle) to be sung or recited in an ambo or at the rails of the presbytery: *Convenit ut Lectiones et Epistola cantentur aut legantur a lectore seu ministro idoneo in ambone vel ad cancellos*⁴⁸). Were it to fall to

⁴² Adolf Adam, Winfried Haunerland. 2013⁷. *Corso di liturgia*. Brescia: Queriniana, 61.

⁴³ Adam, Haunerland, *Corso di liturgia*, 397.

⁴⁴ Adolf Adam, Winfried Haunerland. 2018¹¹. *Grundriss Liturgie*. Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 70–80.

⁴⁵ Dannecker, "Der Ambo", 90–104.

⁴⁶ *De officio ministrorum altaris in missa maiori. Ad Epistolam. 7*, in 1965. *Missale iuxta ritum Ordinis Prædicatorum: auctoritate Apostolica approbatum reverendissimi patris Aniceti Fernandez eiusdem Ordinis Magistri Generalis iussu editum*. Romae: Ad Sanctae Sabinae, xlvi.

⁴⁷ *De officio ministrorum altaris in missa maiori. Ad Evangelium. 10*, in *MSOP1965*, xlvi.

⁴⁸ *Normae generales in missis cum populi participatione celebratis servandae 6.a*, in *MSOP1965*, xlix.

the priest celebrant himself to proclaim the Gospel, he was to go to the ambo or the rails of the presbytery to do so: *celebrans accedit at infimum gradum altaris [...] deinde pergit ad ambonem vel ad cancellos ad Evangelium cantandum vel legendum.*⁴⁹ Were the celebrant to read all the readings before the Gospel, he was once more instructed to do so in the ambo or at the presbytery rails: *Deficiente vero lectore seu ministro idoneo, ipse celebrans legit vel cantat etiam Lectiones et Epistolam in ambone vel ad cancellos.*⁵⁰ In the absence of an ambo, however, the celebrant could even proclaim the readings from the altar, but facing the people: *Si tamen non habetur ambo, aut magis opportunum videtur, celebrans potest omnes lectiones etiam ex altari proferre versus ad populum.*⁵¹ The additional rubrics followed the Roman *Ordo missae* of 1965 with respect to the homily and the Prayer of the Faithful.⁵² The arrangements of the details concerning the ambo suggests a hurried preparation of the final text of the 1965 Dominican Missal and incomplete redaction of a coherent text rather than a complete volume tidied up carefully before printing. As noted earlier, the Dominican Order went on to adopt the reformed Roman books beginning in 1969.

1.4.2. The rite of the Anglican Ordinariates

Corporate reception of Anglicans into full communion with the Catholic Church has included permissions to maintain English customs, including strictly post Reformation customs of England, and so it is of interest here to consider the use of the ambo in a new liturgical context.⁵³ The first Anglican Prayer Book approved by the Apostolic See for the first groups of Anglicans/Episcopalians received into full communion with Rome beginning in 1980, contained few rubrics and so is not helpful for finding indications on the presence of an ambo or lectern, nor on how the scripture readings were to be read in liturgical celebration.⁵⁴ For a treatment of the

⁴⁹ *Normae generales in missis cum populi participatione celebratis servandae 6.b*, in *MSOP1965*, 1.

⁵⁰ *Normae generales in missis cum populi participatione celebratis servandae 6.c*, in *MSOP1965*, 1.

⁵¹ *Normae generales in missis cum populi participatione celebratis servandae 6.d*, in *MSOP1965*, 1.

⁵² *Normae generales in missis cum populi participatione celebratis servandae 7–8*, in *MSOP1965*, 1.

⁵³ See Hans-Jürgen Feulner. 2013. “Anglican Use of the Roman Rite? The Unity of the Liturgy in the Diversity of Its Rites and Forms”. *Antiphon* 17.1: 31–72.

⁵⁴ 2003. *The Book of Divine Worship being elements of the Book of Common Prayer revised and adapted according to the Roman Rite for use by Roman Catholics coming from the Anglican tradition. Approved by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the United States of America and confirmed by the Apostolic See*. Mt. Pocono (PA): Newman House. The material was originally approved by the Apostolic See in 1987. See 1987. *Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy. Newsletter: National Conference of Catholic Bishops* 33.3: 1. The latter was printed in 2004. *35 years of the BCL Newsletter*. Washington (DC): The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1047.

preparation of liturgical books in the Anglican tradition see the article by Bishop Stephen Lopes.⁵⁵ Pope Benedict XVI established a number of Ordinariates to facilitate a more significant reception of clergy and laity from Anglican communities while offering them also an ecclesial structure with their own Ordinary.⁵⁶ A few years later came the promulgation of a number of liturgical books, all in English, for use by members of the various Ordinariates in different parts of the world, including a Missal.⁵⁷ While the Ordinariates' Missal contained the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, including the variations of the corresponding Bishops' Conferences of England and Wales, Scotland, the United States of America, and Australia⁵⁸, an additional rubrical document for the Ordinariates alone was included and which is of interest to our topic.⁵⁹ This document addressed the question of the place for the proclamation of the scripture readings as follows:

In the celebration of Mass with a congregation, the readings are usually proclaimed from the lectern, or, where it is the custom, the Gospel may be proclaimed from another suitable place in the sanctuary, from the pulpit, or from the midst of the congregation.⁶⁰

There are several elements to note in this brief article. First is that there is no mention of an ambo. This might be explained by the practice, until the reception of the third typical edition of the Roman Missal in English, of frequently translating the Latin word *ambo* with lectern⁶¹, in spite of the General Instruction in the

⁵⁵ Steven J. Lopes. 2015. "A Missal for the Ordinariates: The Work of the Anglicanae Traditiones Interdicasterial Commission". *Antiphon* 19.2: 116–131. See also Andrew Burnham. "Divine Worship: The Missal and "the Liturgical Books Proper to the Anglican Tradition" (*Anglicanorum Coetibus*, Art. III)", in Uwe Michael Lang. Ed. 2017. *Authentic liturgical renewal in contemporary perspective: proceedings of the Sacra liturgia Conference held in London, 5-8 July 2016*. London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 155–170. On page 167, Burnham describes Lopes's article as "an account of the unpublished *Ratio* that guided the commission, as the missal was prepared".

⁵⁶ Benedictus XVI. 2009. "Constitutio Apostolica Qua Personales Ordinariatus pro Anglicanis conduntur qui plenam communionem cum Catholica Ecclesia ineunt *Anglicanorum Coetibus* (4 novembris 2009)". *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 101.12: 985–990.

⁵⁷ 2015. *Divine Worship. The Missal. In accordance with the Roman Rite. The Celebration of Holy Mass for use in the Personal Ordinariates established under the Apostolic Constitution Anglicanorum coetibus*. London: Catholic Truth Society.

⁵⁸ *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, in *Divine Worship 2015*, 11–118.

⁵⁹ *Rubrical Directory*, in *Divine Worship 2015*, 119–131.

⁶⁰ *Rubrical Directory 23*, in *Divine Worship 2015*, 125.

⁶¹ For example, the following provide examples of "ambo" being translated with "lectern" or "ambo or lectern": *General Instruction of the Roman Missal 80b.272*, in 1974. *The Roman Missal revised by decree of the Second Vatican Council and published by authority of Pope Paul VI. Official English Texts*. Dublin: Veritas, xxxix.lxviii; in 1982. *Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979. Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts*. Collegeville (MN): The Liturgical Press, 490.519–520; *General Introduction*

Ordinariate Missal rendering it correctly into English with ambo.⁶² The other places referred to in this rubrical document are part of the Anglican tradition which we have considered earlier, including the option to proclaim the Gospel in the middle of the liturgical assembly.

For the Easter Proclamation, it is a rubric about the thurifer which is informative: “The thurifer then goes to stand by the lectern at which the Easter Proclamation will be sung”.⁶³ Later in the Ordinariate’s Missal we find that the Announcement of the movable feasts be from the ambo, with no alternative location suggested.⁶⁴

The Ordinariate liturgy, while incorporating references to an ambo for readings from scripture and the proclamation of the Date of Easter and dependent festivals, seems imbued with the spirit of variety which has characterised the Anglican Communion since the time of Queen Elizabeth I (reigned 1558–1603), and made somewhat more diverse with the Oxford movement of the nineteenth century and the liturgical movement during the century following. For a tradition born in the midst of greater emphasis upon direct contact with sacred scripture, especially in liturgical celebration, a more significant and articulated ritual and discursive emphasis may be developed.

We might consider briefly the introduction to the (Anglican) Church of England’s Gospel book from the chairman of that ecclesial community’s liturgical commission, bishop of Salford, David Stancliffe, since the Ordinariates’ liturgy comes from the same tradition.⁶⁵ Stancliffe wrote:

In the celebration of the Eucharist and other sacraments, the Book of the Gospels rather than the lectern is the equivalent focus to the table and the gifts in the first part of the liturgy. It is because a minister (traditionally the Deacon) brings in the Book of the Gospels at the start of the liturgy that the assembly stands to acknowledge Christ’s coming to his people. The same is true of the procession with the Book of the Gospels to the place where the gospel is read. In many churches, that is in the centre of the assembly, and bringing the Gospels from the altar table to the middle of the people is the

33, in 1981. *The Roman Missal revised by decree of the Second Vatican Council and published by authority of Pope Paul VI. Lectionary. I. Proper of Seasons. Sundays in Ordinary Time. Revised Edition approved for use in the dioceses of England and Wales, Scotland, Ireland.* London-Dublin: HarperCollins-Geoffrey Chapman-Veritas, xxv.

⁶² *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal* 58, in *Divine Worship 2015*, 34.

⁶³ *The Solemn Vigil of Easter*, in *Divine Worship 2015*, 395.

⁶⁴ *Appendix 10. The Proclamation of the Date of Easter and of the Moveable Feasts on Epiphany*, in *Divine Worship 2015*, 1070.

⁶⁵ 1998. *The Book of the Gospels. Revised Common Lectionary in NRSV. Principal Service Lectionary of the Church of England.* London: Geoffrey Chapman.

church's vivid way of proclaiming that 'the Word was made flesh, and lived among us; and we have seen his glory.'⁶⁶

Stancliffe points out a significant difference between table (Catholics would say *altar*) and (lectern) ambo, the former being worthy of veneration, the latter not. It is the book of the Gospels which is given reverence and, as such, does not need absolutely to be carried to the ambo to fulfil its purpose: to have the Gospel proclaimed from its pages. The bishop of Salisbury interprets this employing the words of the Gospel according to John which summarises the incarnation, mission, manifestation and experience of the mystery of Christ. Stancliffe is, of course, interpreting a ritual practice likely invented for reasons other than those given by his Johannine interpretation. Those reasons were in all probability for adding a dramatic element, moving away from the communion table and closer to the people. Stancliffe's observations on the primacy of the book with respect to the ambo, and his contrasting altar and ambo, are shared by other commentators. We will consider those in section four.

1.4.3. The rite of the Carthusians after Vatican II

In responding to the call of Vatican II to update liturgical books, the Carthusian Order has continued to demonstrate its tendency to simpler forms of celebration, including its use of the ambo.⁶⁷ In the *Praenotanda* of its post-conciliar Missal it indicated that a lectern (*legile*) would take the place of the ambo for the Gospel, *Exsultet* and the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful, while a reading desk (*lectorium*) was to be in the body of the church, between the choir stalls, for other readings:

De ambone et lectorio.

45. *In sanctuario est legile, quod locum ambonis tenet, e quo Evangelium atque praeconium paschale proclamantur. Ex ambone a diacono proferri possunt intentiones orationis universalis.*

⁶⁶ David Stancliffe, *The Book of the Gospels*, in *The Book of the Gospels 1998*, ix.

⁶⁷ For the temporary liturgical changes including the 1981 Carthusian Missal, see Hansjakob Becker. 1990. *Die Kartause. Liturgisches Erbe und konziliare Reform. Untersuchungen und Dokumente* (Analecta Cartusiana, 116.5). Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, especially the Order of mass on pages 239–296. For a review of the principles of reform for the Carthusians, see Hansjakob Becker. "Cartusia numquam reformata quia numquam deformata. Liturgiereformen bei den Kartäusern in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart", in Martin Klöckener, Benedikt Kranemann. Edd. 2002. *Liturgiereformen. Historische Studien zu einem bleibenden Grundzug des christlichen Gottesdienstes. Teil 1: Biblische Modelle und Liturgiereformen von der Frühzeit bis zur Aufklärung* (Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen, 88.1). Münster: Aschendorff, 325–345.

46. *In medio autem aulae ecclesiae, inter choros, est lectorium e quo proferuntur lectiones. Ibidem a lectore proferri possunt intentiones orationis universalis.*⁶⁸

This indication corresponds almost exactly with the pre-Conciliar rubrics which had the Gospel proclaimed within the presbytery and the other readings in the middle of the monks' or nuns' choir. This arrangement is made clear in the indications to prepare the Gospel book and other lectionary in the ambo and *lectorium* respectively:

Item parentur:

[...]

b) *in ambone: Evangeliarium; iuxta ambonem: stola pro diacono;*

c) *in lectorio (cf. n.46): Lectionarium.*⁶⁹

The indication regarding the deacon's stole is another practice maintained, that is the deacon entering the presbytery only for brief moments of ministry and on each occasion donning the stole: *Diaconus stolam tantum induit ad Evangelium proclamandum et ad Communionem sub specie vini distribuendam.*⁷⁰

At this point we may note that while we observed the *legile* was to take the place of the ambo, elsewhere the Missal nevertheless employs the word ambo which is distinct from the *lectorium*, such as for the celebration of conventual Mass which we just examined, and the following indications for the Easter Vigil:

*Cum venerit ad sanctuarium diaconus cereum paschalem deponit super candelabrum iuxta ambonem paratum.*⁷¹

[...] *diaconus annuntiat ex ambone præconciium paschale.*⁷²

*Peracto silentio monachi sedent et lector ad lectorium vadit.*⁷³

The *Ordo missae* demonstrates the same approach towards the ambo and the *lectorium*:

[...] *Lector in lectorio profert lectionem*⁷⁴,

⁶⁸ *Praenotanda 45–46*, in 2021. *Missale Cartusiense*. La Grande Chartreuse, 10.

⁶⁹ *Praenotanda 63*, in *Missale Cartusiense 2021*, 12.

⁷⁰ *Praenotanda 54*, in *Missale Cartusiense 2021*, 11.

⁷¹ *Vigilia Paschalis in nocte sancta*, in *Missale Cartusiense 2021*, 153.

⁷² *Vigilia Paschalis in nocte sancta*, in *Missale Cartusiense 2021*, 154.

⁷³ *Vigilia Paschalis in nocte sancta*, in *Missale Cartusiense 2021*, 157.

⁷⁴ *Ordo missae 10*, in *Missale Cartusiense 2021*, 229.

[...] *Diaconus stans in ambone, manibus insertis, dicit: Dominus vobiscum.*⁷⁵
*Si oratio universalis habenda est, [...] deinde diaconus in ambone, vel lector in lectorio, intentiones proponit.*⁷⁶

The post-Conciliar Carthusian rite seems indeed to have responded to the general trend of restoration of the ambo. Previous to the council, it had referred to the structure for the proclamation of the Gospel during conventual Mass as a *lectorium*, even *lectorium evangelii*. The adoption of the expression *ambo* can be considered the first stage; the use of the *legile* in place of an ambo not only for the Gospel, but also for the Proclamation of Easter, the *Exsultet*, emphasises indeed a specific place for two ritual moments more closely related to the Lord's resurrection. In fact, the Carthusian rite has adopted the paschal fire, paschal candle, and *Exsultet*, only since the Second Vatican Council, admittedly in a more sober form than that found in the *Missale romanum*.⁷⁷

Returning briefly to the revised Carthusian *Ordo missae* we read concerning the deacon's proclaiming the Gospel passage at Mass:

Conventus acclamat: Gloria tibi, Domine.
*Omnes se signant et inclinant modice. Verbum Vitæ diaconus proclamat manibus insertis, presbyter autem manibus iunctis auscultat.*⁷⁸

The use of *Verbum Vitæ* in this rubric recalls, as it did in the *Evangeliarium*, not only the Lord's resurrection in connection with the proclamation of the Gospel reading at Mass, but also the broader significance of the Lord's identity, mission, and the faithful's expectation to share in eternal life after the general resurrection.

While before Vatican II, at the Carthusian celebration of conventual Mass, the scripture readings before the Gospel had been read in the monastic choir without concern for a physical structure, a *lectorium* or reading desk is now required in choir which maintains the custom of the non-Gospel readings being proclaimed outside the presbytery. The details of the new Carthusian Missal which we have examined here reflect the Carthusian desire for simplicity in their liturgical practices

⁷⁵ *Ordo missae 13*, in *Missale Cartusiense 2021*, 229.

⁷⁶ *Ordo missae 15*, in *Missale Cartusiense 2021*, 231.

⁷⁷ *Sollemne initium Viligiæ seu Lucernarium*, in *Missale Cartusiense 2021*, 153–157.

⁷⁸ *Ordo missae 13*, in *Missale Cartusiense 2021*, 229. The expression is already present in Order's Statutes of 1975, in book seven on the Eucharistic Liturgy: "Proclamationem sancti Evangelii, quod est Verbum Vitæ, manibus iunctis auscultate": *De Liturgia eucharistica 49,9*, in BECKER, *Die Kartause Liturgisches Erbe und Konziliare Reform*, 75.

while responding positively to the authority of the Church in restoring an ambo for the Gospel and for the *Exsultet*. In a certain sense, the Carthusian option for simplicity, separating the place for the Gospel and *Exsultet* from that for the other scripture readings, has brought even greater emphasis to a distinct place associated with recalling the Lord's resurrection than the mainstream Roman rite has, albeit without the qualification of being a raised place nor recalling symbolically the empty tomb.

1.4.4. The rite of Zaïre

A use for the dioceses of Zaïre, or the Democratic Republic of Congo, was developed in the 1970s and 1980s and culminated in the promulgation of a Missal and accompanying book in 1989.⁷⁹ Being strongly based upon the *Missale romanum* of the time, the distinctive elements were few in number, including regarding the ambo. The liturgical books, in French, speak of *The enthronement of the Gospel*. The ritual consists in showing the book of the Gospels to the people, announcing the Word, which was made flesh and dwelt among us, and to which the people respond with an acclamation, and bringing the book of the Gospels in procession to ambo where the pericope is then proclaimed:

Le prêtre ou le diacre qui va proclamer l'Évangile répand au moment opportun l'encens sur la braise ardente, soit dans l'encensoir, soit dans le vase disposé près de l'autel. Puis, incliné devant l'autel, il dit la prière de purification. Il prend l'Évangélique sur l'autel et va demander la bénédiction au prêtre célébrant. Puis, escorté par les céroféraires et précédé par l'annonciateur, il montre l'Évangélique aux fidèles, qui acclament le Verbe fait chair avant d'entendre sa parole. On chante alors l'Alléluia ou un autre chant d'intronisation, pendant que la procession s'organise vers l'ambon.⁸⁰

The solemn and simple rites both have the minister who will read the Gospel says *Mes frères et soeurs, le Verbe de Dieu s'est fait chair*, which is then followed by the response of the people *Il a demeuré parmi nous. Écoutons-le*.⁸¹ Then the Order

⁷⁹ Conférence Episcopale du Zaïre. 1989. *Missel romain pour les diocèses du Zaïre: ordinaire, rite solennel, rite simple*. Kinshasa: Éditions du Secrétariat Général; Conférence Episcopale du Zaïre. 1989. *Supplément au Missel Romain pour les diocèses du Zaïre. Présentation de la liturgie de la Messe*. Kinshasa: Éditions du Secrétariat Général.

⁸⁰ *Présentation générale de la liturgie de la messe pour les diocèses du Zaïre 12*, in *Missel romain pour les diocèses du Zaïre*, 76.

⁸¹ *La liturgie de la messe*, in *Missel romain pour les diocèses du Zaïre*, 90.121.

of Mass indicates *Alors le peuple chante l'Alléluia ou un autre chant d'intronisation* with the simple rite saying an *acclamation d'intronisation*.⁸² The emphasis here regarding the Gospel reading is the incarnation and the presence of the Lord among his people in time leading to an invitation to listen to him. Secondly, the procession with chant leads to the enthronement of the Gospel at the ambo.

The enthronement of the Gospel strikes one immediately, even if only by the name of the rite itself, as an element worthy of at least brief discussion. The bishops of Zaïre / Congo offered an interpretative key to the peculiar elements of the use of Zaïre in the volume accompanying Missal. It discussed the enthronement of the Gospel in a single article among three particular elements (the announcer or commentator, the request for a blessing by each reader, the enthronement):

c) L'intronisation de l'Évangile

*97. Dans nos milieux, un personnage ne prend pas la parole sans qu'au préalable[l] e l'attention du public ait été attirée sur sa personne ou sur son intervention. C'est là d'introniser en quelque sorte et donner un crédit à sa parole (à son intervention). Dans la liturgie chrétienne, le Christ prend la parole au milieu de l'assemblée. En effet, « il est là présent dans sa parole, car c'est lui qui parle tandis qu'on lit dans l'Église les Saintes Écritures » (Sacrosanctum Concilium, n° 7). Il importe que l'assemblée chrétienne acclame le Verbe fait chair avant de l'entendre parler. Voilà qui explique le rite de l'intronisation de l'Évangile.*⁸³

The document continues considering the oral nature of communication in the cultural context of the Congo where expressive sonority, repetitions of words, use of imagery which strikes the imagination, are particularly present. The enthronement of the Gospel is an example of the Roman rite adapted to include verbal elements from the oral culture.⁸⁴

The development of this part of the Roman rite for the dioceses of Zaïre does not seem particularly concerned with the themes associated with the ambo which we have been considering in this article. In point of fact, the ambo is barely mentioned at all in the relevant parts of the Zairean books. However, the surrounding texts and gestures interpret the place and use of the ambo: Christ will speak to his people, he is the Word of God made flesh.

⁸² *La liturgie de la messe*, in *Missel romain pour les diocèses du Zaïre*, 90.121.

⁸³ *Présentation de la liturgie de la messe 97*, in *Supplément au Missel Romain pour les diocèses du Zaïre*, 18.

⁸⁴ *Présentation de la liturgie de la messe 98*, in *Supplément au Missel Romain pour les diocèses du Zaïre*, 18–19.

1.4.5. The Ambrosian rite after Vatican II

The reform of the Ambrosian rite arising from the Second Vatican Council was on the one hand relatively slow and on the other quite dependent upon the Roman rite. For example, a complete Missal was produced only in 1976. An experimental Ambrosian Order for Holy Week and Easter Week was published in 1972 in both Latin original and Italian translation.⁸⁵ The only detail of interest for us here is in maintaining the ambo by the deacon for singing the *Exsultet*.⁸⁶ The single Good Friday liturgy – the Ambrosian tradition had maintained two: one to commemorate the Lord’s passion, the second in the evening to commemorate the burial – had yet to receive the reading of the Passion; the minister for the Universal Prayer on Good Friday was directed to read the intentions from the ambo.⁸⁷

The first edition of the Ambrosian Lectionary of 1976 did not focus upon the ambo at all.⁸⁸ The two-volume Ambrosian Missal published in Italian the same year did, however, include references to the ambo as the normative place for the proclamation of the readings.⁸⁹ The *Principi et norme per l’uso del messale*, or *Principles and norms for the use of the missal*, mentioned the lectionary should be prepared upon the ambo⁹⁰, the ministers proclaim the various readings at the ambo⁹¹, the homily could be at the ambo⁹², the priest could direct the prayer of the faithful at the ambo⁹³, the deacon would ordinarily announce the intentions of the prayer of the faithful at the ambo.⁹⁴ The chapter on the arrangement of the church included the same text on the ambo which was found in the Roman Missal’s General Instruction,

⁸⁵ 1972. *Messale ambrosiano: Settimana Santa. Ottava di Pasqua. Edito per ordine del Sig. Cardinale Giovanni Colombo Arcivescovo di Milano (ad experimentum). Versione eseguita sul testo latino approvato “ad interim” dalla S.C. per il Culto Divino il 9 marzo 1972. Prot. n. 372/72.* Milano: Centro Ambrosiano di Documentazione e Studi Religiosi.

⁸⁶ *Messale ambrosiano: Settimana Santa 1972*, 60.

⁸⁷ *Messale ambrosiano: Settimana Santa 1972*, 47.

⁸⁸ 1976. *Lezionario Ambrosiano edito per ordine del Sig. Cardinale Giovanni Colombo arcivescovo di Milano.* Milano: Centro Ambrosiano di Documentazione e Studi Religiosi.

⁸⁹ 1976. *Messale ambrosiano secondo il rito della Santa Chiesa di Milano riformato a norma dei decreti del Concilio Vaticano II promulgato dal Signor Cardinale Giovanni Colombo Arcivescovo di Milano* *. Milano: Centro Ambrosiano di Documentazione e Studi Religiosi; 1976. *Messale ambrosiano secondo il rito della Santa Chiesa di Milano riformato a norma dei decreti del Concilio Vaticano II promulgato dal Signor Cardinale Giovanni Colombo Arcivescovo di Milano* **. Milano: Centro Ambrosiano di Documentazione e Studi Religiosi.

⁹⁰ *Principi e norme per l’uso del messale 81.b*, in *Messale ambrosiano* * 1976, xxvi.

⁹¹ *Principi e norme per l’uso del messale 90.92.96.134.153*, in *Messale ambrosiano* * 1976, xxvii-xxix.xxx.

⁹² *Principi e norme per l’uso del messale 98*, in *Messale ambrosiano* * 1976, xxvii.

⁹³ *Principi e norme per l’uso del messale 101*, in *Messale ambrosiano* * 1976, xxvii

⁹⁴ *Principi e norme per l’uso del messale 135*, in *Messale ambrosiano* * 1976, xxix.

employing the same translation in the Italian Missal of 1973.⁹⁵ The *Rito della messa con il popolo* indicated clearly the ministers were to proclaim the readings from the ambo.⁹⁶ The second volume contained the euchology for the Paschal Triduum. All the readings of Good Friday and the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful were to be read at the ambo⁹⁷, and the deacon, or in his absence the priest celebrant, was to be in the ambo for Easter Proclamation.⁹⁸ We may summarise the arrangements of the 1976 Missal for Milan as corresponding with the Roman Missal.

An updated edition of the Ambrosian Missal, although in Latin, was published in 1981.⁹⁹ Its *Institutio Missalis Ambrosiani* presents the ambo as the normative place for the proclamation of the readings by the ministers and may be used for other parts of the Liturgy of the Word: *Oratione finite, lector ad ambonem pergīt*¹⁰⁰; *Postea, si habenda sit secunda lectio ante Evangelium, lector eam in ambone recitat*¹⁰¹; *Tunc librum Evangeliorum, si est in altari, accipit et, præcedentibus ministris, qui incensum et cereos deferre possunt, ad ambonem accedit*¹⁰²; *In ambone sacerdos aperit librum*¹⁰³; *Si non non adest lector, sacerdos ipse omnes lectiones [...] profert, stans in ambone*¹⁰⁴; *Deinde, [...] fit oratio universalis seu oratio fidelium, quam sacerdos moderatur a sede aut ex ambone*¹⁰⁵; *The deacon [...] librum Evangeliorum, si est in altari, sumit et ad ambonem pergīt*¹⁰⁶; *Lectiones, quae Evangelium præcedunt, in ambone legit*.¹⁰⁷ The chapter on the arrangement of churches

⁹⁵ *Principi e norme per l'uso del messale* 285, in *Messale ambrosiano * 1976*, xl; *Ordinamento generale del messale romano* 272, in 1973. *Messale romano riformato a norma dei decreti del concilio ecumenico vaticano ii e promulgato da Papa Paolo VI*. Roma: Edizioni Pastorali Italiane, xxxiv–xxxvi.

⁹⁶ *Rito della messa con il popolo*, in *Messale ambrosiano * 1976*, 327–329; *Messale ambrosiano ** 1976*, 487–489.

⁹⁷ *Messale ambrosiano ** 1976*, 43. See also *Venerdì santo*, in *Lezionario Ambrosiano 1976*, 455–463.

⁹⁸ *Messale ambrosiano ** 1976*, 55.

⁹⁹ 1981. *Missale Ambrosianum: iuxta ritum Sanctae Ecclesiae Mediolanensis ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Ioannis Colombo Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae Presbyteri Cardinalis Archiepiscopi Mediolanensis promulgatum*. Mediolani: Centro Ambrosiano di Documentazione e Studi Religiosi.

¹⁰⁰ *Institutio Missalis Ambrosiani* 90, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, xxix.

¹⁰¹ *Institutio Missalis Ambrosiani* 92, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, xxx.

¹⁰² *Institutio Missalis Ambrosiani* 95, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, xxx.

¹⁰³ *Institutio Missalis Ambrosiani* 96, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, xxx.

¹⁰⁴ *Institutio Missalis Ambrosiani* 97, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, xxx.

¹⁰⁵ *Institutio Missalis Ambrosiani* 100, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, xxx.

¹⁰⁶ *Institutio Missalis Ambrosiani* 134, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, xxxii.

¹⁰⁷ *Institutio Missalis Ambrosiani* 153, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, xxxiv.

offered the same text found in the Roman Missal's General Instruction.¹⁰⁸ Through the *Liturgia Verbi* within the *Ordo missae* the rubrics recalled repeatedly that the readers, deacon and priest read in the ambo.¹⁰⁹ On Good Friday, all the readings, including the Passion, was to be read at the ambo¹¹⁰, and the minister announcing the prayer intentions was also to do so from the ambo.¹¹¹ At the Easter Vigil, the deacon was to sing the *Praeconium Paschale* in the ambo¹¹², and the readers were to read also in the ambo.¹¹³

The 1976 edition of the Missal was reprinted in 1986 but it need not concern us here.¹¹⁴

The 1990 edition of the Ambrosian Missal, in Italian, maintained almost unchanged the indications to use the ambo as in the 1981 edition.¹¹⁵ The celebration at which the archbishop presides has the archbishop himself proclaim the rather brief reading of the Passion, but from the cathedra.¹¹⁶ Norberto Valli explains how the more ancient Milanese tradition of two distinct celebrations for the Lord's Passion and the burial of his body, having been discontinued after Vatican II, was restored in most recent times through the revised lectionary, and so as late as 2009.¹¹⁷ The

¹⁰⁸ *Institutio Missalis Ambrosiani* 285, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, xlvi; IGMR 272, 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, 77.

¹⁰⁹ *Ordo missae* 7.9.12, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, 477–479.

¹¹⁰ *Celebratio Passionis Domini*, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, 231–232.

¹¹¹ *Celebratio Passionis Domini*, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, 235.

¹¹² *In nocte sancta. Vigilia Paschalis*, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, 243.

¹¹³ *In nocte sancta. Vigilia Paschalis*, in *Missale Ambrosianum 1981*, 247

¹¹⁴ Ferdinando Dell'Oro. 1988. "La 'Ristampa aggiornata' del Messale Ambrosiano del Vaticano II". *Rivista liturgica* 75: 637–712.

¹¹⁵ *Principi e norme per l'uso del messale 90.92.95.96.97.100.134.153.285*. in 1990. *Messale ambrosiano secondo il rito della santa Chiesa di Milano, riformato a norma dei decreti del Concilio Vaticano II, promulgato dal signor Cardinale Giovanni Colombo Arcivescovo di Milano*. Milano: Centro Ambrosiano di Documentazione e Studi Religiosi, xxvii–xxviii.xxx.xli; *Ordo missae*, in *Messale ambrosiano 1990*, 803–805. The *Ordo missae* of 1990 was not divided in the usual fashion with numbered sections. *Celebratio Passionis Domini*, in *Messale ambrosiano 1990*, 227.230; *Vigilia Paschalis*, in *Messale ambrosiano 1990*, 236.240.

¹¹⁶ "Nella celebrazione vespertina del venerdì santo è lo stesso arcivescovo che dalla cattedra, assistito da sei diaconi, rivestito dei paramenti della messa e con la mitra in capo, proclama la lettura della passione, compiendo in tal modo la solenne commemorazione della morte del Signore, così come sarà l'arcivescovo a proclamare nella veglia pasquale l'annuncio della risurrezione". *Principi e norme per l'uso del messale* 360, in *Messale ambrosiano 1990*, L.

¹¹⁷ Norberto Valli. "Le celebrazioni del venerdì santo nelle fonti ambrosiane", in Norberto Valli. 2016. *Il triduo pasquale ambrosiano* (Bibliotheca "Ephemerides Liturgicae". Subsidia, 176). Roma: CLV-Edizioni liturgiche, 79–82.

Liturgy of the Passion was the first of the two to occur¹¹⁸, the evening celebration commemorated the placement of the Lord's body in the tomb.¹¹⁹ The Order of Service for the latter was given in an appendix of the lectionary but gave no indications regarding the use of the ambo.¹²⁰

The revised lectionary, published in several distinct volumes over several years beginning in 2009, contained in the first festive volume (for Advent and Christmas) the *Premesse* which mentioned the ambo.¹²¹ After an initial comment *Nella celebrazione della messa col popolo le letture, per quanto possibile, si devono proclamare dal luogo a tale scopo deputato (ambone o pulpito)*.¹²² Subsequently, as seen in other books, the expression *luogo della proclamazione* will be used. The *Premesse* dedicate three articles to the place of proclamation of the Word of God which focusses mainly on ensuring suitable dignity to the proclamation, ensuring the place is reserved to proclamation and related activities, and including the particular qualification of being a "raised place" also included in the corresponding Roman text. In fact, the three articles of the Ambrosian *Premesse* which we are considering here were almost entirely the same text found in the *Praenotanda* of the Roman rite's *Ordo lectionum Missae*, and in (with the exception of the final phrase) the same Italian translation as the *Lezionario*.¹²³ The difference between the Ambrosian text and the Roman concerns the final phrase of article 33 of the Roman text, n.39 of the Ambrosian document. Whereas the Roman phrase was brief and given as follows in Italian translation – *Si deve pertanto far sì che, secondo la struttura di ogni singola chiesa, l'ambone si armonizzi architettonicamente e spazialmente con l'altare* – the Ambrosian text constituted a significant expansion with respect to the Roman:

¹¹⁸ *Celebrazione della Passione del Signore*, in 2009. *Lezionario Ambrosiano. Secondo il rito della Santa Chiesa di Milano. Riformato a norma dei decreti del Concilio Vaticano II. Promulgato dal Signor Cardinale Dionigi Tettamanzi. Arcivescovo di Milano e Capo Rito. Libro II. Mistero della Pasqua del Signore. Festivo*. Milano: Impresa Tecnoeditoriale Lombarda Libri, 165–173.

¹¹⁹ *Celebrazione vespertina "nella Deposizione del Signore"*, in *Lezionario Ambrosiano. Mistero della Pasqua del Signore. Festivo*, 175–180.

¹²⁰ *Rito della celebrazione "nella Deposizione del Signore"*, in *Lezionario Ambrosiano. Mistero della Pasqua del Signore. Festivo*, 473–474.

¹²¹ 2008. *Lezionario Ambrosiano Secondo il rito della Santa Chiesa di Milano. Riformato a norma dei decreti del Concilio Vaticano II. Promulgato dal Signor Cardinale Dionigi Tettamanzi Arcivescovo di Milano e Capo Rito. Libro I. Mistero della Incarnazione del Signore. Festivo*. Milano: Impresa Tecnoeditoriale Lombarda Libri [= *LezAmb1F*].

¹²² *Premesse 24*, in *LezAmb1F*, xix.

¹²³ *Premesse 39–41*, in *LezAmb1F*, xxii; *Praenotanda 32–34*, in *OLM1981*, xxiii. See also EDIL n.244 §§ 4088–4090; *Ordinamento delle letture della messa*, 32–34, in 2007. *Messale Romano riformato a norma dei decreti del Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II e promulgato da Papa Paolo VI. Lezionario domenicale e festivo - Anno A*. Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 26–27. See also Luigi Francesco Conti, Giordano Monzio Compagnoni. Edd. 2009⁴. *I praenotanda dei libri liturgici*. Milano: Ancora, 147–148.

Tale luogo è denominato ambone.

La norma relativa all'unicità del luogo donde proclamare la parola di Dio non è tassativa, specialmente là dove ci sono "pulpiti" che per la loro importanza artistica e storica non sono stati rimossi in occasione della ristrutturazione dello spazio presbiterale. In questo caso è bene che siano usati come luoghi da cui proclamare la parola di Dio, specialmente quando si tratta del Vangelo della messa solenne e dell'omelia in circostanze di particolare solennità.¹²⁴

The reformed Ambrosian liturgy appears to favour the use of old pulpits for the proclamation of sacred scripture and other texts much more than the reformed Roman rite does, the latter effectively ignoring the structures at least in the typical editions of the liturgical books. It is helpful in this matter to review what Charles Borromeo had to say on ambones and pulpits, which he considers to be structures to remain central, rather unlike the Roman books following the Council of Trent. The saint archbishop of Milan, Charles Borromeo, in his two-volume book on church design and ornamentation, presents, albeit indirectly, the Gospel ambo, or even the single ambo, as somewhere from where the Gospel may be proclaimed in the liturgy and then where the priest would preach to the people:

In unaquaque autem ecclesia Parochiali ubi ambo constitui non possit, unde et Evangelium pronuntiari, et sacra concio haberi possit, suggestus omnino ex tabulis sectilibus, iisque firmioribus, decenti opera, et forma ab eodem Evangelii latere extruatur; unde et Evangelii lectio, et concio sacri haberi queat.¹²⁵

The earlier articles within book one's twenty-second chapter on ambones and pulpits, touching on one or more ambones, made no mention of preaching, but here in this article we have cited regarding likely smaller parochial churches, the ambo is considered also suitable for preaching. Still, the article at hand is concerned with constructing a pulpit when even one ambo was not possible. The pulpit was perhaps easier to fit into a church than an ambo of the kind with which Borromeo was familiar. The saint of Milan doesn't mention here the construction of a pulpit or a place to preach outside of the case of it being impossible to

¹²⁴ *Premesse 39–41*, in *LezAmb1F*, xxii. Tichý remarks on the similarity between the Roman and Ambrosian text but overlooks the substantial difference regarding the use of pulpits with which we are concerned here. See TICHÝ, *Proclamation de l'évangile dans la messe en occident*, 60–61.

¹²⁵ *De suggestu*, in Stefano Della Torre, Massimo Marinelli. Edd. 2000. *Instructionum fabricae et suppellectilis ecclesiasticae libri II Caroli Borromei (1577)* (Monumenta Studia Instrumenta Liturgica, 8). Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 108.

construct an ambo. Of note also is the article on two ambones where it seems the Gospel ambo might be used frequently, but the epistle ambo only on more solemn occasions:

*Item duo pro ecclesiarum magnitudine constitui possunt, unus altius extractus, de quo Evangelium; alter, de quo Epistola, Lectiove sacræ Scripturæ in maioribus Solemnitatibus pronuncietur.*¹²⁶

These indications may serve to interpret the later discussion about ambones and pulpits (using the Latin term *pulpitum*). Borromeo revealed the practice of his time, practices which he encouraged by the publication we are examining here, and we can see even in the liturgical books reformed after the Second Vatican Council the variety in the use of ambones and pulpits, as well as opting for different constructions for celebrations of greater solemnity.

The 2011 edition of the Ambrosian rite's Book of the Gospels mentioned in its *Premesse* the usual practice of the readings and psalms being proclaimed from the ambo, but opened the possibility of employing the pulpit: *Di norma tutte le letture e il salmo si proclamano (o si cantano) dall'ambone. Nulla vieta che, quando si tratta di una liturgia solenne, specialmente il Vangelo venga proclamato (o cantato) dal pulpito.*¹²⁷ This possibility for using the pulpit tends to attenuate the significance of the ambo, which is also mentioned later in the document.¹²⁸ At the vigil Masses of Sunday which the Ambrosian rite has introduced to avoid such *anticipatory Masses* reducing the importance of the Lord's Day, the *Premesse* indicate the preliminary Gospel reading be read from the presiding priest and from the altar:

Nelle celebrazioni vigiliari vespertine della Domenica in forma solenne la Liturgia della parola prevede solo l'Epistola (o la Lettura, in determinati casi) e il Vangelo, essendo premesso sempre un Vangelo della Risurrezione sostituito, dalla II alla VI domenica di Quaresima e nella domenica in Albis depositis, da una Lettura (evangelica) vigilare. È sempre compito di chi presiede proclamare dall'altare il Vangelo

¹²⁶ *De duobus ambonibus*, in *Instructionum*, 106.

¹²⁷ *Evangelario Ambrosiano Premesse. I. Il Vangelo nell'ordinamento festivo della Messa*. 9, in 2011. *Evangelario Ambrosiano secondo il rito della santa Chiesa di Milano riformato a norma dei decreti del Concilio Vaticano II, promulgato dal signor Cardinale Dionigi Tettamanzi Arcivescovo di Milano e Capo Rito*. Milano: Centro Ambrosiano di Documentazione e Studi Religiosi, 19.

¹²⁸ *Evangelario Ambrosiano Premesse. II. L'uso dell'Evangelario*. 17, in *Evangelario Ambrosiano 2011*, 21.

*della Risurrezione o la Lettura vigilare nella liturgia vigilare vespertina della domenica.*¹²⁹

However, it indicates that all readings are proclaimed from the ambo during the Great Vigils, with the possibility of using the pulpit as already mentioned in its article nine: *Nelle grandi Vigilie tutte le letture sono proclamate dall'ambone. Nulla vieta che specialmente il Vangelo venga proclamato (o cantato) dal pulpito.*¹³⁰ This variety in places for proclamation is emphasised with the expression *luogo della proclamazione del Vangelo* used twice in the context of the blessing given to the minister by the celebrant¹³¹, and once more in the description of the procession with the Gospel Book: *luogo della proclamazione.*¹³² The *Premesse* indicate that the book may remain at the place where the Gospel passage has been proclaimed:

*L'Evangelario può rimanere sull'ambone o sul pulpito, là dove il Vangelo è stato proclamato, o può essere collocato sul versante dell'ambone o del pulpito rivolto ai fedeli. Se la sua permanenza sull'ambone o sul pulpito risultasse disagiata, può anche essere affidato in modo dignitoso a un ministro perché sia portato alla credenza o in altro luogo adatto e degno.*¹³³

The suggested variety in practice takes away somewhat from the liturgical and architectonic significance of the ambo in the minds of those who experience the different kinds of celebration in the Milanese tradition. No doubt, the tendency to open up the use of pulpits comes from practices before the Second Vatican Council, but after the high point of the medieval ambo. This can be contrasted with the mainstream of the Roman rite which had largely forgotten the ambo and had largely not replaced it with any other structure. The greater loss of the Roman rite offered greater opportunity for its post-conciliar restoration.

¹²⁹ *Evangelario Ambrosiano Premesse. I. Il Vangelo nell'ordinamento festivo della Messa. 12, in Evangelario Ambrosiano 2011, 19.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Evangelario Ambrosiano Premesse. I. Il Vangelo nell'ordinamento festivo della Messa. 14, in Evangelario Ambrosiano 2011, 20.*

¹³² *Evangelario Ambrosiano Premesse. II. L'uso dell'Evangelario. 20, in Evangelario Ambrosiano 2011, 22.*

¹³³ *Evangelario Ambrosiano Premesse. I. Il Vangelo nell'ordinamento festivo della Messa. 24, in Evangelario Ambrosiano 2011, 23.*

1.4.6. The Mozarabic rite after Vatican II

The Mozarabic rite was reformed following the Second Vatican Council and the books for the Eucharistic celebration – the Missal and the *Liber Commicus* which is the lectionary – were issued in two stages: 1991 for the Proper of Time¹³⁴ and in 1994 and 1995 for the Proper of the Saints.¹³⁵ The books have relatively few rubrics and *Praenotanda* and so we find a reference to the ambo in both volumes of the Missal within the *Ordo Missae* where the deacon is described as going to the ambo for the proclamation of the Gospel: *Diaconus ad ambonem pergit, ministris cum incenso et cereis eum comitantibus*.¹³⁶ This Spanish rite seems not to have given the ambo a great degree of consideration and merely follows the surrounding (Roman) liturgical practice of providing somewhere convenient for the proclamation of sacred scripture in a context of greater consideration for the faithful gathered for the liturgy.

2. Theological questions arising from liturgical proclamation of scripture

While relatively reticent about the ambo itself, Roman church authority has made a certain number of theological statements about the liturgical proclamation of sacred scripture during the celebration of the sacred liturgy, especially when speaking of the Eucharistic celebration. These statements appear especially in the *Praenotanda* of the *Ordo lectionum Missae* and in commentaries upon it and are relevant to the design, ornamentation, placement and use of the ambo.¹³⁷

2.1. God's works of the past are presented as new

The *Praenotanda* juxtapose the proclamation of scripture with liturgical celebration emphasising that in the present celebration the great works of God are interpreted as mysterious realities.¹³⁸ While the Church is built up and grows through listening to God's Word proclaimed, it is in the meeting of the Word and liturgical

¹³⁴ *Missale Hispano-Mozarabicum* *. Toledo 1991; *Missale Hispano-Mozarabicum. Liber Commicus* *. Toledo 1991.

¹³⁵ *Missale Hispano-Mozarabicum* **. Toledo 1994; *Missale Hispano-Mozarabicum. Liber Commicus* **. Toledo 1995.

¹³⁶ *Ordo missae 12*, in *Missale Hispano-Mozarabicum* * 1991, 65; in *Missale Hispano-Mozarabicum* ** 1994, 41.

¹³⁷ *Praenotanda OLM*, in *Ordo lectionum Missae 1981*, xii–xlix. See also EDIL n. 244.

¹³⁸ *Praenotanda OLM* 7. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4063.

celebration which literally has the assembly listen to a proclamation of that word and take part in prayers and rites which make present the wonderful deeds of God. It is a question of *anamnesis* which permits the people of God, gathered to recall those wonderful deeds, to benefit once more.¹³⁹ The paschal mystery of Christ especially is the object of this anamnesis and the source of grace for the people, as we shall see.

2.2. God speaks to his people

Emphasising that the liturgical proclamation of scripture presents God's past work as current, the *Praenotanda* expand this to insist that it is God speaking now to his people through the inspired record of his works.¹⁴⁰ As with the written record in the liturgical books, so with the minister who assists in carrying the words to the ears of the faithful, but those words are God's message for the assembly.

2.3. Christ himself proclaims his Gospel

The *Praenotanda* go a step further in saying that Christ, the incarnate Word of God, is present in his word, carrying out his saving work.¹⁴¹ These same ideas are found in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*¹⁴², the General Instruction of the Roman Missal¹⁴³, and the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the tenth century. The medieval book recalls *Evangelium autem legitur, in quo Christus ore suo loquitur populo*¹⁴⁴ and *Accedente enim ipso Christo, id est evangelio, baculos dimittimus, quia humano auxilio non egemus*.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁹ DANNECKER, "Der Ambo", 103 treats of this question, although briefly.

¹⁴⁰ *Praenotanda OLM* 4. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4061.

¹⁴¹ *Praenotanda OLM* 4. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4060.

¹⁴² *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 7.33. See also EDIL n. 1 §§ 7.33.

¹⁴³ *IGMR2002*, 12.

¹⁴⁴ Cyrille Vogel, Reinhard Elze. Edd. 1963. *Le Pontifical Romano-germanique du dixième siècle. Le texte. I. (nn. I-XXVIII)*, 94, 18 (Studi e testi, 226). Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 334.

¹⁴⁵ *Le Pontifical Romano-germanique du dixième siècle* 94, 23.

2.4. Christ is the centre and fulness of all scripture

The Church considers the whole of scripture to speak of Christ, not only the New Testament, but also the Old albeit in a different fashion.¹⁴⁶ The *Praenotanda* reference the Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, on this matter.¹⁴⁷ It is not simply a revelation of God that is in question, but the fulness of that revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, in his incarnation and paschal mystery. While the liturgical proclamation recalls and makes present God's saving works, all those works point to the final work in Christ's mission.

2.5. Listening to the Gospel as high point of the Liturgy of the Word

Considering especially the liturgical arrangement of the readings, their order and manner of proclamation, the *Praenotanda* recalls that the Gospel reading is the high point of the Liturgy of the Word.¹⁴⁸ The Missal's General Instruction recalls this also.¹⁴⁹ The Gospel reading, or chanting, thus receives great ritual attention with a change in the assembly's posture from sitting to standing, a procession from the altar, lighted candles, extra ministers, reservation to the deacon, incense¹⁵⁰, along with preference for a separate book.¹⁵¹

2.6. Consequences for the ambo

The *Praenotanda* name two consequences arising from the theological points regarding the proclamation of sacred scripture. Noted already is the requirement that the ambo be designed such that the people's attention will rest there during the Liturgy of the Word.¹⁵² This requirement is not so obviously achieved through location or design other than avoiding church layout where the altar is the only place where the people's attention falls easily, such as was desired in the design

¹⁴⁶ *Praenotanda OLM* 5. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4061.

¹⁴⁷ Sacrosanctum Concilium Oecumenicum Vaticanum II. 1966. "Constitutio Dogmatica de Divine Revelatione *Dei Verbum* (18 novembris 1965) 16.25". 1966. Acta Apostolicae Sedis 58: 825.829–830. For article n.25, see also EDIL n. 42 § 493.

¹⁴⁸ *Praenotanda OLM* 13. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4069.

¹⁴⁹ *IGMR2002*, 60.

¹⁵⁰ *Praenotanda OLM* 17. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4073. Article n.74 in the typical edition of the *Cæremoniale Episcoporum*, published 1984, recalls this also.

¹⁵¹ *Praenotanda OLM* 36.113. See also EDIL n. 244 §§ 4092.4169.

¹⁵² *Praenotanda OLM* 16. See also *IGMR* 309. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4072.

of churches in the Counter Reformation which saw the complete absence of amboes and the altar set against the East wall, approached – physically and visually – with a flight of steps and set below a large reredos, often with a rather dominant Eucharistic tabernacle. The second consequence named by the *Praenotanda* is that the ambo should not be a movable lectern, but a raised placed reflecting the dignity of the Word of God.¹⁵³ The Note on the Sunday of the Word of God from the prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Cardinal Robert Sarah¹⁵⁴, recalls these two points.¹⁵⁵ The consequences for the design, ornamentation and placement of the ambo in churches are greater, however, when one takes into consideration the theological points or questions in the *Praenotanda*.

If the liturgical proclamation of scripture is an anamnestic act, as is the Eucharistic celebration with an intense focus upon the altar, then the ambo must have a similar intensity of design and placement. This does not require that it be placed as a kind of “equal” with the altar, but rather that it have a similar kind of design, be constituted of similar materials, size, and so on. The ambo must permit a full deployment of the ritual associated with an anamnestic act. Conversely, the ambo should not permit the proclamation of scripture to be catechetical or pedagogical. The proclamation and listening are for recalling and making present, not for teaching.

Luke Chengalikavil emphasises the parallel between ambo and altar where at the former the Word is proclaimed while at the latter, the Word becomes flesh.¹⁵⁶ As for practical matters, he simply says the ambo should be in (sic) an elected and functional place, in harmony with the other table which is the altar. The unicity of the word of God requires that there should be just one ambo in the liturgical space.¹⁵⁷ Ambrogio Malacarne emphasises the differences between altar and ambo, where the former is a sign of Christ and is venerated as such, the ambo is not although the book of the Gospels is also venerated with a kiss.¹⁵⁸ We have already considered Anglican bishop David Stancliffe’s reflection on the difference

¹⁵³ *Praenotanda OLM* 32. See also EDIL n. 244 § 4088, although the word *valeat* is omitted here between *Denique* and *ad fidelium*.

¹⁵⁴ Robert Sarah. 2020. “Note. The Sunday of the Word of God”. *Notitiae* 597: 109–113.

¹⁵⁵ *Note. The Sunday of the Word of God* 7.

¹⁵⁶ Luke Chengalikavil, “Dedicazione della chiesa e dell’altare”, in 1989. *I sacramenti e le benedizioni* (Anàmnesis, 7). Genova: Marietti, 105.

¹⁵⁷ CHENGALIKAVIL, “Dedicazione della chiesa e dell’altare”, 106.

¹⁵⁸ Ambrogio Malacarne. “L’ambone”, in Malacarne, Balsdessari, *Gli spazi liturgici*, 156–157.

between ambo and altar/communion table, and the primacy of the Gospel book over the ambo.

If God is speaking to his people in the liturgical proclamation of scripture from the ambo, then the design and placement of the latter must emphasise that God is working in the ritual. Already, the vestments and fixed formulae for the ministers, even with set melodies or tones for those formulae, and the design and place of the altar, are familiar liturgical elements, but the ambo in its design and placement should contribute to the impression that the minister does not speak his own words. Rather like the requirement for the ambo to be a place of anamnesis, the requirement that God can be experienced as speaking will cause the ambo to be designed and placed to reduce the impression that individual ministers are addressing the faithful gathered.

Not only does God speak to the people in the scripture readings of the liturgy, but Christ proclaims and is present, especially in the Gospel. While various rituals surrounding the Gospel parallel rituals at the altar, the ambo itself must recall for the liturgical assembly that Christ is speaking and is present in the proclamation of the Gospel. This is really a development of the previous point, bringing out the Christological element. Sodi writes that in the liturgical announcement the *opus redemptionis*, the work of redemption, is realised, and for this to occur Christ is present; this presence “speaks”.¹⁵⁹

The distinct treatment of the Gospel, already mentioned in previous points, is a challenge for the design and placement of the ambo. No longer are multiple ambones or places suggested or required, indeed a single ambo is recommended, but the possibility of different treatment for different classes of readings in the design of new ambones is not ruled out by current ecclesiastical discipline. There is no rule preventing incorporation of different lecterns or places within the same ambo.

While these theological questions, which the Church’s official commentary on the lectionary and on the proclamation of sacred scripture as part of liturgical celebration brings up, raise elements of design and placement which have been frequently overlooked in the literature, the questions are only some of the many others raised in the documentation considered earlier in this article. The other questions, especially from the *Passio Domini nostri* and the *Evangeliarium*, certainly present more consequences for the role – design, ornamentation and placement – of the

¹⁵⁹ Manlio Sodi. “La liturgia della parola tra proclamazione, ascolto e attualizzazione: ‘traditio – traductio – aptatio’”, in Cesare Giraudo. Ed. 2003. *Il messale romano. Tradizione, traduzione, adattamento. Associazione Professori di Liturgia. XXX Settimana di Studio. Gazzada 2002* (Bibliotheca “Ephemerides Liturgicae”. Subsidia, 125). Rome: CLV-Edizioni liturgiche, 108–109.

ambo. They also help to clarify the ones just mentioned and that shall be an object of our conclusion.

Conclusion

Over two parts of this article, we have observed two stages in the restoration of the ambo to normative use in the Roman rite of Mass since the Second Vatican Council. The initial stage occurred with the first documents of the reform (from 1964 to 1981) which largely indicated that an ambo be provided and that its use be reserved for proclamation of sacred scripture as part of the liturgical celebration and possibly for related activities like preaching. The second edition of the *Ordo lectionum Missae* in its *Praenotanda*, in mentioning the ambo is to be elevated, may be taken as an initial hint at future interpretation of the ambo as a monument of the resurrection rather than as a concern for practical matters of the ministers' visibility and bestowing a worthy space for proclamation of the Word of God. The second stage began discreetly in 1989 by requesting that the singing of the Lord's Passion by three ministers, although not its reading without song, take place at three undecorated lecterns as, indeed, had been done for several centuries before the Council. The latter stage came to its culmination, again rather discreetly, with the *Praenotanda* of the or *editio peculiaris* of the Book of the Gospels in the year 2000 and confirmed with even more subtlety by the directive that the announcement of the date of Easter, and related feasts, was to be done from the ambo.

It is not surprising that the initial directives to arrange for an ambo in all churches following the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* resulted in the construction of lecterns and reading desks. Micaela Soranza mentions the ironic construction of enlarged and immovable lecterns and even more, of iconographic redundancy by which, for example, the lectern takes the form of an open book since the earlier documents had called for something more significant.¹⁶⁰ The ambo had all but ceased to be part of Catholic culture by the opening of the Second Vatican Council. The *Cæremoniale Episcoporum* made references to using the ambo at pontifical solemn Mass as a possibility. The rubrics of some religious orders which required an ambo or the remnant of an ambo to be employed, or at least explicitly facilitated its use, were not well known outside those institutes of consecrated life

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Micaela Soranzo. 2001. "Lo spazio del 'santuario'". *Rivista liturgica* 88: 565.

who followed them in their churches. Other Western rites presumed or preferred the use of an ambo, or lectern, or similar.

Being aware of the second stage in the restoration of the use of the ambo in the ordinary form of the Roman Rite of Mass provides us with an opportunity to understand more deeply the theological and symbolic significance of the structure itself. The work by Cosma Capomaccio would be very helpful in this regard even though it examines a single example of an ambo.¹⁶¹ Its treatment of the imagery found decorating an ambo (peacocks, Jonah and the whale, lions, eagle for the lectern) and more structural elements (monumental build, steps, paschal candle stick, cavity recalling the empty tomb) is helpful in coming to a much more profound understanding of the liturgical monument. Following an improvement in comprehension, dialogue with architects and artists can begin in order to work towards new designs for ambones suitable to our age and region.

Keener understanding of the ambo and of the eschatological significance of the proclamation of the Gospel reading at Mass will inevitably lead to observing the connection with the altars of our churches, themselves too monuments of Christ's paschal mystery albeit with slightly different emphases. The altar, anointed with chrism, place of the liturgical offering of the Saviour's sacrifice, is where the Church "does this" in memory of the Lord "until he comes". The ambo, monument of the resurrection, is where the Lord comes to the sound of the paschal and eschatological shout "Praise-ye Yah" (*Alleluia*) in anticipation of his *adventus* but still recalling for the assembly the historical accuracy of our faith in his resurrection and inviting us to recount the wonderful deeds of his saving work.

The return of the ambo to daily ritual use in the Roman rite is also an invitation to place the paschal mystery of the Lord more explicitly in the centre of our churches, in the centre of our liturgical celebration and in the living out of the faith: Christ who died, rose, ascended and will come again in glory. The design of so-called *versus populum* altars has not necessarily been successful in this regard, despite attempts at new designs being largely correctly motivated by those genuinely concerned.¹⁶² While the same criticism can be made of ambo design, we must be conscious that, generally speaking, less has been understood, by pastors and architects, about the ambo than about the altar. Perhaps studying the two monuments of the Lord's paschal mystery together, the principal elements

¹⁶¹ Cf. Capomaccio. 2002. *Monumentum Resurrectionis*.

¹⁶² For directionality at the altar, see Fergus M.T. Ryan. 2021. "Celebratio sursum ad Dominum: priest and people at the altar". *Questions liturgiques / Studies in Liturgy* 101.1: 117–138. DOI: 10.2143/QL.101.1.3289408.

of church interiors, will provide a way forward in improving the design of Roman rite churches in the future.

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FERGUS RYAN is an Irish Dominican friar, doctor in sacred liturgy, invited lecturer at the Pontifical Liturgical Institute, Rome.

fergus.ryan@anselmianum.com