

Between Two Cultures:  
Fr. Hermann Joseph Untraut (1854-1941) and his Pioneering Efforts in the  
Liturgical Movement in Wisconsin

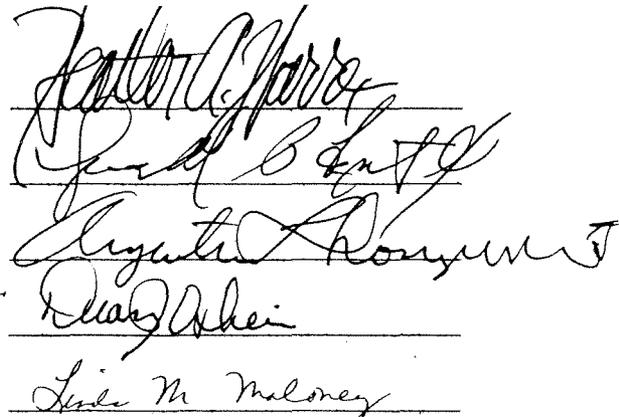
Miranda Gail Henry  
St. Joseph, Minnesota

B.A., Rice University, 1997  
M.A., University of Virginia, 2002

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The image shows five handwritten signatures, each written over a horizontal line. From top to bottom, the signatures are: 1. A cursive signature that appears to be 'John C. ...'. 2. A cursive signature that appears to be 'John B. ...'. 3. A cursive signature that appears to be 'Augustine ...'. 4. A cursive signature that appears to be 'David ...'. 5. A cursive signature that appears to be 'Linda M. Maloney'.

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## Abstract

In 1925, a German American Catholic parish priest from the Diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin, the Rev. Hermann Joseph Untraut (1854-1941), published a book entitled *Die liturgische Bewegung (The Liturgical Movement)*. Based on a series of articles for a German Catholic newspaper, the book described liturgical renewal efforts then underway among some European Catholics and called upon German Catholics in the United States to reform Catholic liturgical practices by encouraging greater lay participation in the public worship of the Church. Probably in large part because it appeared only in German at a time when the language was near extinction in the United States, Untraut's book received little notice in his own day, and scholars of American Catholicism and the liturgical movement have largely overlooked his pioneering efforts. This dissertation examines the life and legacy of this forgotten figure and places him and his work in the context of German American Catholic life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

After an overview of the movement for liturgical reform that emerged first in European monasteries in the 1830s and gradually came to influence parish life and spread to the United States in the 1920s, the dissertation looks at the situation of German American Catholics in the United States in the decades around the turn of the twentieth century. This account draws on the numerous essays Untraut contributed to his German-language diocesan weekly newspaper in the 1880s, commenting on such issues as parochial education, the preservation of the German language, and the importance of German Catholic social organizations.

The remaining sections of the dissertation focus directly on Hermann Untraut. Chapter 3 recounts his biography, from his birth and education in Germany to his experiences as a pastor, chaplain, and supporter of liturgical reform in the United States. Chapter 4 describes the influence three European liturgical pioneers—Joseph Kramp, Pius Parsch, and Valentin Thalhöfer—had on Untraut’s ideas for liturgical renewal. Finally, Chapter 5 provides a close analysis of the theological positions and practical recommendations Untraut advocated in *Die liturgische Bewegung* and includes the first English translations of excerpts from his book.

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For my parents,  
All four of them

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## Introduction

In 1938, just days after his 84<sup>th</sup> birthday, Fr. Hermann Joseph Untraut wrote to his friend Alcuin Deutsch, abbot of St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, "*Ich sehe, die Zeiten haben sich geändert. Ich bin nicht nur alt, sondern auch 'veraltet'*" ("I see that times have changed. I am not only old but also 'obsolete'").<sup>1</sup> By the time he wrote these words, he had spent nearly six decades as witness to and participant in German Catholic life in the United States, and his observation that the times had changed was entirely accurate. When he arrived in America in 1882, an idealistic 27-year-old cleric, eager to take on the challenges of parish ministry among the rapidly expanding German immigrant population, immigration to the United States from Germany was at its peak. Recent immigrants retained strong ties to their homeland and proudly maintained their language and traditions in their homes, communities, and churches. Through his work as a pastor and his contributions to the local German Catholic press, Untraut, a fierce defender of the language and the faith, supported unwaveringly the efforts of his fellow German Catholics to preserve their distinctive identity.

Despite his fervor for the cause, however, Untraut became, after the turn of the century, one of a dying breed. Following a dynamic and successful tenure as rector of Holy Trinity Church in La Crosse from 1893 to 1907, during which time he also wrote dozens of passionate essays for the diocesan German-language weekly newspaper, he was called to serve as pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Eau Claire. Weary from years of

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<sup>1</sup>Untraut to Deutsch, 31 July 1938. St. John's University Archives.

exhausting pastoral duties, he experienced frustration and disappointment during his time at Sacred Heart, where he was plagued by dissent among the congregation, conflict with other local priests, and practical worries about finances and infrastructure. He also surely recognized that, as the flood tide of German immigration slowed and, later, as anti-German prejudice, fueled by the First World War, increased, German American Catholics and their descendants had less and less interest in holding onto the trappings of life in the Old World, especially those, such as language, that inhibited full participation in American life. In his clinging to the mother tongue, which he continued to use even in the last years of his life, and his undiminished devotion to all things German, Untraut was indeed “*veraltet*.”

Nevertheless, though he did not live long enough to recognize it fully, the times were also changing in his favor, and his progressive views on liturgical reform, laid out in his 1925 book *Die liturgische Bewegung*, were anything but obsolete. Despite his discouragement about the poor popular reception of his book, Untraut did witness the first stirrings of a Catholic liturgical movement in the United States and was delighted by the work of Fr. Virgil Michel, O.S.B., and other monks at St. John’s Abbey, who, like Untraut, sought to awaken among American Catholics an interest in greater lay understanding of and participation in the public worship of the Church.

Hermann Untraut was a man both ahead of and behind his time. Although he sensed the need within his church for lay people to become full participants in liturgical worship—a need the Catholic Church itself did not fully address until the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s—he chose to argue this prescient position in the language of the past.

At a time when most German American Catholics were opting for English—the language necessary for social, political, and professional advancement in the United States—while at the same time seeking to maintain some semblance of their ethnic identity by practicing their faith in the time-honored ways of their German Catholic parents and grandparents, Untraut advocated, *auf Deutsch*, radical changes in these familiar ways of being Catholic. His lifelong commitment to the German language—which allowed him access to the liturgically progressive ideas of European Catholics—presented in the end a barrier to his ability to disseminate his views on liturgical reform to German American Catholics, who had changed so much since his arrival in the United States.

\* \* \* \* \*

Hermann Joseph Untraut was born in 1854 and raised in Swabia, a region that became southwestern Germany. His education, consisting of a foundation in the humanities and later specialized studies in theology, dogmatics, and liturgics, took him to Austria and Belgium, as well as Germany, where he prepared for the priesthood at the seminary at Eichstätt. Instruction from such European liturgical luminaries as Placidus Wolter and Valentin Thalhoffer established a basis for his later interest in liturgical reform, and Untraut found particular success in his seminary courses in liturgics.

Untraut immigrated to the United States in 1882, for reasons that remain open to speculation. German immigration to America was reaching its zenith at that time, and many Catholic leaders in the United States welcomed German-speaking priests, so he may have been responding to this need. As a Swabian, he had likely been less affected by the anti-Catholic policies of the 1870s *Kulturkampf* than had Catholics in Prussia and other

northern regions, but he may have believed the United States could offer a more hospitable environment for a Catholic priest. He may also have witnessed the departure of friends and neighbors for the New World and desired to serve these and others immigrants in their new homeland.

Whatever his motivation, Untraut moved to the United States and settled in southwestern Wisconsin, where he became a parish priest in the Diocese of La Crosse. He served German immigrant Catholics in several parishes—Sacred Heart of Jesus in Edson (1883-1888), Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Arcadia (1888-1893), Holy Trinity in La Crosse (1893-1907), and Sacred Heart in Eau Claire (1908-1920)—and he demonstrated a firm commitment to preservation of the German language and culture in his pastoral work and in his writings for the La Crosse diocesan newspaper. He ended his active career as chaplain of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother and St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield, Wisconsin.

In his later years, his interest in liturgical matters, which had begun in Europe and appeared on occasion in his newspaper essays, increased to the point that he authored a book on liturgical reform, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, in 1925. The book catalogued recent European developments which had emerged from a growing desire among some Catholics to encourage lay people to take a more active role in the public worship of the Church. After decades as a parish priest, Untraut had seen the way individual devotional practices, inappropriately secular music, and a lack of liturgical education had left much of Catholic worship devoid of the sense of collective action and purpose which he believed lay at its heart. Drawing on the progressive liturgical ideas of European priests and

theologians, he addressed these perceived problems in his book, which he wrote specifically for German American Catholics.

Soon after he completed *Die liturgische Bewegung*, stirrings of an American liturgical movement emerged at St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, an institution Untraut had visited and whose monks he had befriended. He corresponded with Fr. Virgil Michel, O.S.B., and Abbot Alcuin Deutsch, both strong proponents of the nascent movement, and became an early subscriber to *Orate Fratres* (now *Worship*), the liturgical journal founded by Michel in 1926. During the same period, in his capacity as chaplain of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, Untraut introduced the sisters to the dialogue mass and Gregorian chant, two methods thought to encourage greater participation in worship.



*The Rev. Hermann Joseph Untraut*

Untraut received little reward in his lifetime for his efforts at liturgical reform. His book sold poorly, and few would have imagined that many of the ideas found in *Die liturgische Bewegung* would one day appear in a ground-breaking document of Catholic liturgical history, “The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy” of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Vatican II’s liturgical reforms, which were inspired in part by the work of the liturgical movements in Europe and the United States, belied Untraut’s woeful sense of obsolescence. *Die liturgische Bewegung* had anticipated by decades the official stance of the Catholic Church, and this German-American immigrant priest, who had once thought himself obsolete, had in fact heralded the future course of Catholic liturgical life.

## Chapter 1

### Overview of the Liturgical Movement

The roots of the modern liturgical movement, the organized effort to promote greater understanding of and participation in the public worship of the Catholic Church, date back to the 1830s, when Benedictine monks in France sought to revive the ancient practice of liturgical chant. The movement spread gradually from the monastery to the parish and from Europe to the United States, and it eventually received support from the highest reaches of the Catholic hierarchy.

#### The Catholic Liturgical Movement in Europe

Scholars have disagreed regarding when and with whom the liturgical movement in Europe began, though certain figures recur in most studies of the movement, especially in works which emphasize those Europeans who influenced American liturgical revival. An overview of the European background of the American liturgical movement indicates the significance of such factors as monasticism, as well as the impact of broader intellectual and theological currents on European liturgical pioneers.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Prosper Guéranger and the monastic liturgical movement*

Though unconcerned with some later aims of the liturgical movement—most

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<sup>1</sup>For an account of various isolated cases of earlier interest in liturgical revival—including the story of the only liturgist ever canonized—see J. D. Crichton, *Lights in Darkness: Forerunners of the Liturgical Movement* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996).

notably, full and active participation by the laity—the French monk Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875) has been the subject of scholarly investigation on account of his extensive writings on liturgical matters, including the monumental *l'Annee Liturgique* (1841-1866), and his interest in reviving Gregorian chant. In 1833 he refounded the Benedictine abbey of Solesmes, which had been suppressed in the wake of the French Revolution. As part of the “romantic reaction” that followed the 1815 fall of Napoleon, he supported increased power of the pope over national churches—and thus passionately opposed the neo-Gallican elements in French Catholicism—and sought to revive the spirit of medieval Catholicism.<sup>2</sup> Opposed to “the multiplicity of idiosyncratic and liturgically unsound practices,” Guéranger argued for liturgical conformity based on the Roman Rite, and his work, coupled with the ultramontane trends of his day, resulted in the complete rejection of local liturgies in French dioceses.<sup>3</sup>

Medievalism figured prominently in Guéranger’s desire for liturgical reform. As Louis Bouyer has written, “For Dom Guéranger, to go back to the authentic liturgy meant to go back to medievalism. He and his followers accepted unquestioningly the assumption held by most of their contemporaries that the Middle Ages were the Christian era *par excellence*, and that their civilization and culture provided the outstanding example of the

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<sup>2</sup>Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 572; Lancelot Sheppard, *The People Worship: A History of the Liturgical Movement* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1967), 20; Philip Gleason, *Keeping the Faith: American Catholicism Past and Present* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 24.

<sup>3</sup>William McSweeney, *Roman Catholicism: The Search for Relevance* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1980), 50. For a description of the “condition of anarchy” that characterized French Catholic liturgical life in the early nineteenth century, see R. W. Franklin, “Guéranger and Pastoral Liturgy: A Nineteenth Century Context,” *Worship* 50, no. 2 (March 1976): 148-49.

Catholic ideal incarnated in earthly realities.”<sup>4</sup> Because it had been a highlight of medieval Christian worship, Guéranger championed a return to the practice of Gregorian chant.

Through liturgical reform, Guéranger hoped to counter the extremes of individualism he saw in society and in worship, and some scholars, most notably R. W. Franklin, have argued that the work of Guéranger and his brethren at Solesmes stands as part of “the beginning of a reaction against those who considered religion to be individualistic, moralistic, rationalistic, or nationalistic.”<sup>5</sup> Concerned that extra-liturgical devotions had begun to eclipse public celebration of the mass in the religious lives of Catholics and deploring the prevalence of subjective devotionism, he sought to inspire people to participate in the traditional liturgy rather than pursue individual private devotions.<sup>6</sup> Although much of Guéranger’s liturgical work grew out of a desire to return to an idealized form of worship he believed had thrived in the Middle Ages, his objection to the popularity of private devotions was less a product of ideological adherence to liturgical purity than a logical consequence of an ecclesiology modeled on the Mystical Body of Christ, a guiding principle of Guéranger and early proponents of liturgical reform. Sounding a motif that came to characterize the views of many modern liturgical reformers,

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<sup>4</sup>Louis Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1955), 15; Philip Gleason, “Mass and Maypole Revisited: American Catholics and the Middle Ages,” *The Catholic Historical Review* 57, no. 2 (July 1971): 269.

<sup>5</sup>R. W. Franklin, “Guéranger: A View on the Centenary of His Death,” *Worship* 49, no. 6 (June-July 1975): 324; Joachim Schmiedl, *Marianische Religiosität in Aachen: Frömmigkeitsformen einer katholischen Industriestadt des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 1994), 24; M. Francis Mannion, “Liturgy and the Present Crisis of Culture,” *Worship* 62 (1988): 100. Early students of the liturgical movement also noted Guéranger’s desire for a unified Christian society, as can be seen in Dunstan Tucker’s essay, “The Council of Trent, Guéranger and Pius X,” *Orate Fratres* 10 (Oct. 31, 1936): 538-44.

<sup>6</sup>Franklin, “Guéranger and Pastoral Liturgy,” 158.

Guéranger maintained that private devotions damaged the Church and impeded its ability to address social problems.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to the romantic and medieval elements prominent in Guéranger's efforts, this first phase of the European liturgical movement also featured a strong monastic bent. James F. White called this first chapter in the story of modern liturgical renewal the "romantic liturgical movement" or the "monastic liturgical movement," and R. W. Franklin found the Benedictine influence on this stage so profound "that the nineteenth century liturgical movement was essentially a translation of the Benedictine ideals of work and worship out into the Church at large."<sup>8</sup> While its monastic character gave early stages of the liturgical movement several advantages, including legitimate claims of religious authenticity and the ability to preserve and renew the liturgy at a time when other institutions in the Church were incapable of doing so, monasticism also introduced certain weaknesses, such as a tendency toward archaeologism (the "preservation of ancient monuments" mentality), a preference for aestheticism (understanding the mass as a performance), a failure to recognize the teaching function of the liturgy, and "the danger of keeping the liturgy as the spiritual preserve of a humanly and religiously cultured caste."<sup>9</sup> As other monks and monasteries continued to play prominent roles in leading the later liturgical movement, they sought to overcome these problems by paying greater

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<sup>7</sup>Patrick L. Malloy, "The Re-Emergence of Popular Religion Among Non-Hispanic American Catholics," *Worship* 72 (1998): 2-3.

<sup>8</sup>James F. White, *Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 71; R. W. Franklin, "The Nineteenth Century Liturgical Movement," *Worship* 53, no. 1 (Jan 1979): 12.

<sup>9</sup>Sheppard, *The People Worship*, 23-25.

attention to the parochial and pastoral elements of worship, unlike Guéranger and his fellow Benedictines at Solesmes, who focused more narrowly on the liturgical life of the monastery.

Guéranger's efforts contributed positively to Catholic liturgical life in Europe by stimulating scientific study of the liturgy, inspiring greater interest in the liturgy, and attracting attention to correct liturgical practices.<sup>10</sup> However, his work was not without significant weaknesses, most of which were inherent in the very foundations of his thought. For instance, his romantic assessment of the Middle Ages, which led him to see that period as the golden age of liturgical worship, lacked solid historical grounding. Louis Bouyer pointed out that the research of later liturgists exposed this flaw in Guéranger's approach: "[F]ar from demonstrating an ideal understanding and practice of the Catholic liturgy, the Medieval period in fact paved the way for the abandonment of the liturgy by Protestantism and its final disgrace and neglect in so much of post-Tridentine Catholicism."<sup>11</sup> Guéranger's overly theoretical treatment of liturgical matters also hampered the work of Solesmes, as the projects there lacked a meaningful connection to parish life.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps the greatest fault scholars have found with Guéranger's work, however, was his failure to promote "the fundamental liturgical principle," which is, according to Keith Pecklers, "full and active liturgical participation by the whole

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<sup>10</sup>John R. K. Fenwick and Bryan D. Spinks, *Worship in Transition: The Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 19.

<sup>11</sup>Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety*, 15.

<sup>12</sup>Charles Davis, *Liturgy and Doctrine: The Doctrinal Basis of the Liturgical Movement* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1960), 14. See also Ernest Koenker, *The Liturgical Renaissance in the Roman Catholic Church*, 2d. ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 10.

assembly.”<sup>13</sup> For this reason, although he has usually received at least a brief mention in most studies of the liturgical movement, historians have sometimes hesitated to credit Guéranger with beginning the modern liturgical movement. That honor is often reserved for another Benedictine from another place and another generation.

### *Lambert Beauduin*

Unlike Prosper Guéranger, whose liturgical efforts, while significant, failed to anticipate the future course of liturgical development, Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960) addressed such issues as active participation in worship and lay use of the missal, which became hallmarks of the liturgical movement and eventually influenced the decrees of the Second Vatican Council. In addition, unlike Guéranger’s, Beauduin’s impact on the American liturgical movement was significant and unquestionable.

A monk from the Benedictine community at Mont-César in Louvain, Belgium, Beauduin was, according to Keith Pecklers, the “real founder” of the liturgical movement. His work for liturgical revival included, most notably, a seminal speech, entitled “*La vraie prière de l’église*” (“The True Prayer of the Church”), at the 1909 *Congrès national des oeuvres catholiques* in Malines; a popular little missal, *La Vie Liturgique* (founded 1909); and a highly influential book, *La Piété de l’Eglise* (1914).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Pecklers, “History of the Roman Liturgy from the Sixteenth until the Twentieth Centuries,” in *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: Introduction to the Liturgy*, ed. Anscar J. Chupungco (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 166. See also Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 613. For a reassessment of Guéranger’s views on active participation, see Franklin, “Nineteenth Century Liturgical Movement,” 16-17.

<sup>14</sup>Pecklers, “History of the Roman Liturgy,” 167; Fenwick and Spinks, *Worship in Transition*, 13, 24; Paul B. Marx, *Virgil Michel and the Liturgical Movement* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1957),

Beauduin was a former industrial priest and adopted a practical, pastoral approach to liturgical revival. Although he was a monk, his efforts marked a fundamental shift from a monastic to a pastoral focus in liturgical renewal, and, according to I. H. Dalmais, it was at Mont-César that the “Parochial Liturgical Movement” was born.<sup>15</sup> A more pragmatic view of liturgical reform marked this phase of the movement, and Aidan Kavanagh has observed that such men as Beauduin and the American liturgical pioneer Virgil Michel “were less esthetes and historians than they were practical theologians who concentrated on the realities of Christian living in contemporary society.”<sup>16</sup> For instance, because of his interest in the liturgical life of the laity and his belief that liturgical renewal was the center and starting point of all parish renewal, Beauduin advocated implementation of such concrete reforms as the dialogue mass and vernacular missal, both of which enjoyed the enthusiastic support of later liturgical leaders, as well.<sup>17</sup>

Lambert Beauduin’s influence on the liturgical movement extended far beyond the borders of his native Belgium. Because of his profound impact on the liturgical thought of Virgil Michel, Beauduin’s ideas also shaped the development of liturgical renewal in the United States. When Michel visited Europe in 1924-1925—a trip originally intended to

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<sup>15</sup>I. H. Dalmais, *Introduction to the Liturgy*, trans. Roger Capel (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961), 171; Jozef Lamberts, “The Abbey of Mont-César in Louvain: One Hundred Years Young,” *Worship* 73 (1999): 427; Fenwick and Spinks, *Worship in Transition*, 13.

<sup>16</sup>Aidan Kavanagh, “Spirituality in the American Church: An Evaluative Essay,” in *Contemporary Catholicism in the United States*, ed. Philip Gleason (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 210-211.

<sup>17</sup>Davis, *Liturgy and Doctrine*, 15-16; Sheppard, *The People Worship*, 42-44.

enhance his education in philosophy—he studied liturgy and ecclesiology with Beauduin at Sant’ Anselmo, the international Benedictine college in Rome. Studies of the liturgical revival have consistently emphasized the profound importance of this contact for the future course of the movement in America. In the words of Keith Pecklers, “Michel’s association with Lambert Beauduin was clearly formative. Beauduin’s concerns became Michel’s, and therefore, ultimately became the concerns of the liturgical movement in the United States.”<sup>18</sup>

In particular, Beauduin’s ecclesiology, based on the Pauline model of the Mystical Body of Christ, made a significant impression on Michel and became a guiding principle of liturgical renewal in the United States. Beauduin, as Colman Barry has noted, “stimulated Michel’s interest in the renaissance of sacramental, liturgical piety based on a realization of the nature of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ.” Likewise, Jeremy Hall, a specialist in Michel’s ecclesiology, asserts that Beauduin “was, in all probability, the greatest single influence on Dom Virgil’s understanding of the Church and her mission.” At a time when the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ had received almost no notice in the United States, the relationship between Beauduin and Michel provided an important means for this vital building block of liturgical renewal to come to America.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Keith Pecklers, *The Unread Vision: The Liturgical Movement in the United States of America, 1926-1955* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 22. See also Frederick R. McManus, “American Liturgical Pioneers,” in *Catholics in America, 1776-1976*, ed. Robert Trisco (Washington, D.C.: National Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee for the Bicentennial, 1976), 156; Joseph Chinnici, *Living Stones: The History of Structure of Catholic Spiritual Life in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 178; Marx, *Virgil Michel*, 27, 87.

<sup>19</sup>Colman Barry, *Worship and Work: St. John’s Abbey and University, 1856-1956* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1956), 265; Jeremy Hall, *The Full Stature of Christ: The Ecclesiology of Virgil Michel* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1976), 12; Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 21, 30. See also

*Liturgical renewal at Maria Laach*

Maria Laach, a Benedictine abbey of the Beuronese congregation, contributed significantly to the European and American liturgical movements. Its first Liturgical Week, held during Holy Week in 1914, offered lay people opportunities for learning about and celebrating the liturgy and was a milestone in liturgical renewal. Historian Ernest Koenker has even asserted that “[t]he Liturgical movement as we know it today may...be traced to” this event.<sup>20</sup> Although the monks of Maria Laach directed such projects as the Liturgical Week toward the laity, their most important liturgical work was the academic study of liturgical history and theology, including the publication, beginning in 1918, of the journal *Ecclesia Orans*, which “sealed its identity as the European intellectual leader of serious liturgical scholarship.”<sup>21</sup>

Ildefons Herwegen (1874-1946), head of the community from 1913 and a scholar in his own right, argued from his study of the historical development of the liturgy that Prosper Guéranger and others had erred in their assumption that the Middle Ages represented the golden age of liturgical worship. Louis Bouyer has lauded Herwegen for discovering that the medieval developments “had already begun to overlay the liturgy with fanciful interpretations and developments foreign to its nature.”<sup>22</sup>

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Joseph Bluette, “The Mystical Body of Christ: 1890-1940, A Bibliography,” *Theological Studies* 3 (1942): 261-89.

<sup>20</sup>Koenker, *Liturgical Renaissance*, 12; Chinnici, *Living Stones*, 178; Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 613; Davis, *Liturgy and Doctrine*, 16.

<sup>21</sup>Mark Massa, *Catholics and American Culture: Fulton Sheen, Dorothy Day, and the Notre Dame Football Team* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999), 150.

<sup>22</sup>Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety*, 15; Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 6..

Herwegen uncovered another major failing of medieval liturgical practice, as well, and consequently introduced a concern which many in the liturgical movement came to consider paramount: the subjective or individualistic character of contemporary worship. Bouyer finds this issue, the “turning from an objective kind of piety to a subjective one,” at the very heart of Herwegen’s thought, not only about the liturgy but also, by extension, about the whole of Christian life:

Here, [Herwegen] thinks, is also to be found the root of all subsequent errors, since the true and authentic spirit of the liturgy is forthright objectivity, while that of medieval and post-medieval piety tends more and more to an all-absorbing subjectivism. This tendency goes along with a shift of emphasis from the union of the whole Church with God to an emphasis on the union of the individual soul with Him.

While Herwegen’s liturgical insights came largely from his study of history, the work of another monk of Maria Laach, Odo Casel (1886-1948), emerged primarily from his theological reflections. Casel achieved wide renown for his development of the so-called *Mysterientheologie* or *Mysterienlehre*, which drew on his interpretation of the mystery religions prevalent in the milieu of the early Church. Summarizing Casel’s theology, liturgical historian Theodore Klauser has written, “all liturgical actions, the celebration of the eucharist as well as the rites of the sacraments, the Church’s year as a whole, and each separate festival—are all in essence mysteries (*Kultmysterien*), in the sense in which that term was understood in the ancient world.”<sup>23</sup> Drawing on his knowledge of patristics, Casel revived the traditional understanding of the *anamnesis repraesentatio* (*Gegenwärtigsetzung* or “making present”) of Christ, in which “[b]y a symbolic

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<sup>23</sup>Theodor Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy: An Account and Some Reflections*, trans. John Halliburton (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 25.

representation of the saving work which Christ accomplished historically in the past, it [the mystery of Christ] makes that saving work really present.”<sup>24</sup> According to Casel’s own definition of a liturgical mystery, “The Mysterium is a holy, cultic action in which the redemptive act is rendered present in the rite; since the cultic community accomplishes this rite, it participates in the saving act and through it gains redemption.”<sup>25</sup> Although Casel’s work suffered from an incomplete comprehension of the ancient idea of a “mystery,” his theology of the liturgy as Christian mystery proved important for the liturgical movement, and, as Charles Davis asserted in 1960, “the intuitions and reflexions which he set forth in his many writings...by any estimation must rank among the most significant influences in present-day theology.”<sup>26</sup>

### *Papal interest in liturgical reform*

The liturgical pioneers of the United States relied on the work of all these reformers and scholars from France, Belgium, Austria, and Germany, but they also looked for guidance to the heart of their Church: Rome. Despite a general lack of interest in liturgical revival among Italian Catholics—perhaps because of the nature of Italian popular religion, which tended to deemphasize mass attendance and which Jay Dolan has characterized as “a complex system of magical practices inherited from a pre-Christian

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<sup>24</sup>Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 616-617; Charles Davis, “Odo Casel and the Theology of Mysteries,” *Worship* 34, no. 8 (Aug-Sept 1960): 431-32.

<sup>25</sup>Quoted in Koenker, *Liturgical Renaissance*, 106-107. See also Dalmais, *Introduction to the Liturgy*, 64; Theodore Otto Weld, “The Theology of the Liturgical Renewal,” in *The Liturgical Renewal of the Church*, ed. Massey Hamilton Shepherd, Jr. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 4-6.

<sup>26</sup>Davis, “Odo Casel,” 428.

past and sustained throughout centuries of coexistence with Christianity<sup>27</sup>—the popes of the first decades of the twentieth century—Pius X, Benedict XV, and Pius XI—all supported liturgical renewal with both their words and their actions. Their efforts not only inspired emulation among both European and American Catholics, they also granted to the work of liturgical revival an unassailable legitimacy.

Pius X, pope from 1903 to 1914, inspired considerable activity in the field of liturgical reform, and his influence endured well beyond his death. Two declarations early in his papacy, the 1903 *motu proprio*, *Tra le sollecitudini*, on sacred music, and the 1905 decree on frequent communion, underscored his interest in liturgical concerns. Although the intent of the *motu proprio* was to encourage a revival of Gregorian chant, advocates of the liturgical movement have cited it more frequently as evidence of the pope's desire that people take active part in the mass, as well as of his hope to overcome the individualistic nature of much modern Catholic worship. Lambert Beauduin went so far as to call this document the "magna carta" of the liturgical movement because of its call for greater liturgical participation by the whole Church.<sup>28</sup> According to Godfrey Diekmann, who considered Pius X "the founder of the modern liturgical apostolate" and asserted that the 1903 *motu proprio* and 1905 decree on communion "marked the beginning of an organized liturgical movement in the Church," *Tra le sollecitudini* was a "radical"

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<sup>27</sup>Jay Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1985), 173.

<sup>28</sup>Pecklers, "History of the Roman Liturgy," 167-68. A much later papal document, Pius XII's 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei*, has also been called the movement's "Magna Charta." See Malloy, "The Re-Emergence of Popular Religion," 3.

document for its time, when Catholics were accustomed to an individualistic piety.<sup>29</sup>

Like the *motu proprio*'s call for a return to Gregorian chant, the 1905 declaration on frequent communion indicated Pius X's support for greater lay participation in worship, as well as his interest in a return to ancient practices of the Church. Charles Davis referred to the pope's advocacy of congregational singing and frequent communion, which offered opportunities for lay people to take a more active role in worship, to bolster his claim that the pope and others in the second stage of the liturgical movement, in contrast to the relatively remote and theoretical approach favored by Prosper Guéranger and the Solesmes monks, displayed a "strongly pastoral concern."<sup>30</sup>

Pius X's liturgical interests were a facet of his larger project, "to bring all things to a head in Christ," the motto of his papacy, which he took from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, and they reflected his desire to return the Church to a more traditional piety. The pope recognized that the liturgy had changed over time, and he believed that this change had not always been for the better. According to Godfrey Diekmann's interpretation of Pius's views, when the pontiff "asks for a *return* to the early Christian custom of the faithful 'uniting in the common prayer of the Church and in the solemn liturgical offices,'" he "obviously implies that in the course of time Christian piety had become too separated from the Liturgy, and that this involved a deviation from the true

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<sup>29</sup>Godfrey Diekmann, "The Primary Apostolate," in *The American Apostolate*, ed. Leo Ward (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1952), 32; Godfrey Diekmann, "Lay Participation in the Liturgy of the Church," in *A Symposium on the Life and Work of Pope Pius X, Commemorating the Fortieth Anniversary of his Encyclical "Acerbo Nimis"* (Washington, D.C.: Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, 1946), 142, 144-145.

<sup>30</sup>Davis, *Liturgy and Doctrine*, 14-15. See also Sheppard, *The People Worship*, 11; Dalmais, *Introduction to the Liturgy*, 171.

norm of piety, a devolution: that ‘development’ does not necessarily spell ‘progress’ in the case of spiritual practices.<sup>31</sup> Noting that Abbot Alcuin Deutsch of St. John’s shared Pius X’s hope for a renewal of traditional piety, Colman Barry argued that the pope meant for this renewal to foment a more general revival of Catholic life: “[Pius] said that if the people were well-instructed and celebrated the feasts of the Church in the spirit intended by the Church, there would be a notable revival in faith, piety and religious instruction: the entire life of the Christian would thereby become better and stronger, for the liturgy is the fountainhead of Christian life.”<sup>32</sup>

Whether Pope Pius X truly had such lofty goals for his attempts at liturgical renewal, which included not only the decrees on Church music and frequent communion but also the 1911 bull *Divino afflatu*, mandating reform of the Church calendar and breviary, and whether these efforts met with much success are the objects of scholarly debate. Liturgical historians and theologians have credited him not only with championing the principle of active participation in worship, but also with returning the Church to the ecclesiology of the Mystical Body of Christ and “an understanding of Communion as the sacrificial banquet of the Christian community”—all ideas which became central to the modern liturgical movement.<sup>33</sup> The pope’s enthusiastic support for the work of liturgical renewal also offered leaders of the movement a significant claim to legitimacy; as James

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<sup>31</sup>Diekmann, “Lay Participation in the Liturgy of the Church,” 138.

<sup>32</sup>Barry, *Worship and Work*, 271.

<sup>33</sup>Diekmann, “Lay Participation in the Liturgy of the Church,” 139; Joseph Kramp, *Eucharistia: Essays on Eucharistic Liturgy and Devotion*, trans. William Busch (St. Paul, MN: The E. M. Lohmann Company, 1926), 94.

White has observed, “It was extremely helpful to be able to cite Pius X as authority for a much more participatory approach to the mass.”<sup>34</sup>

Despite these many positive contributions, however, Pius X’s liturgical legacy was not, according to some, the opening salvo in a liturgical crusade culminating in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Historian Roger Aubert, for instance, referred to Pius as “the pope of the Eucharist”—not, significantly, “the pope of the liturgy”—and averred that when Pius called the faithful to more frequent communion, his interest was communion as such, not necessarily in its liturgical context. In Pius’s day, Aubert noted, “eucharistic devotion was concentrated much more on the Host than on the Mass.” Mark Massa, a historian of American Catholicism, has also contended that Pius X’s efforts represented little if any change from the liturgical status quo. Pius was, Massa’s words, “hardly a theological or liturgical innovator in any sense,” though he acknowledged the pope’s future significance for the liturgical movement when he referred to Pius as “this unwitting liturgical prophet.”<sup>35</sup>

Regardless of Pius X’s true intentions, his importance for the liturgical movement also hinges on the extent to which Catholics heeded his calls for reforming Church music and receiving communion more often. Writing in the 1960s, Ernest Koenker showed little optimism about the fate of the *motu proprio*; it “has been much talked about,” he noted, “but most leaders agree that little has been done.”<sup>36</sup> The decree on frequent communion

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<sup>34</sup>White, *Roman Catholic Liturgy*, 84.

<sup>35</sup>Roger Aubert, *The Church in a Secularised Society* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 122, 125; Massa, *Catholics and American Culture*, 150.

<sup>36</sup>Koenker, *Liturgical Renaissance*, 155.

apparently met a similar fate, at least in the United States, as years and even decades later, the reception of holy communion remained “something extra, added to the Mass on certain significant days,” and many American Catholics took communion but a few times annually.<sup>37</sup>

The importance of Pius X’s liturgical work transcended his death, as advocates of liturgical revival relied on it to grant sanction to their efforts, and later popes turned to it for guidance and inspiration.<sup>38</sup> His successors, Benedict XV and Pius XI, have received approving notice from historians for their liturgical interests. Though not liturgical celebrities to the extent that Pius X was, they nonetheless furthered the work he had—whether wittingly or not—put in motion.

Benedict XV, pope from 1914 to 1922, devoted most of his attention to the crisis of the First World War, which left him little time for liturgical pursuits. However, just months prior to his death, he implicitly sanctioned a favorite cause of the nascent liturgical movement, the dialogue mass. In Diekmann’s description, Pope Benedict “gave substantial encouragement to active participation by means of the Dialog Mass when, in September, 1921, he personally celebrated holy Mass in St. Peter’s for 25,000 members of the Italian Catholic Youth organizations, in the course of which the entire huge congregation joined him in reciting aloud, not only the *Credo*, but even the *Pater*

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<sup>37</sup>William Leonard, “The Liturgical Movement in the United States,” in *The Liturgy of Vatican II: A Symposium in Two Volumes*, ed. Jovian Lang, vol. 2 (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1966), 294; Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 52.

<sup>38</sup>Diekmann, “Lay Participation in the Liturgy of the Church,” 151.

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Like his predecessor, Pius XI (1922-1939) approved of the dialogue mass and publically celebrated this type of mass several times.<sup>40</sup> In addition, he shared the views of many liturgical movement supporters on such issues as lay participation in worship and the potential of the liturgy to effect social change. In his 1940 book *Men at Work at Worship: American Joins the Liturgical Movement*, American Jesuit Gerald Ellard described the unfortunate tendency of American Catholics to conform the model of “the ‘mute and silent spectators’ so deprecated by Pius XI.” He also cited Pius’s reference to the “priesthood of the laity,” an idea with important liturgical implications, in the 1928 document *On Reparations*.<sup>41</sup> Finally, Ellard claimed that the dialogue mass ought to cure the ills of “super-individualism” and “form the social conscience,” a phrase he attributed to both Pius XI and Pius XII.<sup>42</sup>

#### The Catholic Liturgical Movement in the United States

The liturgical developments that took place in France, Germany, Belgium, and Italy beginning as early as the 1830s were profoundly important for the history of the liturgical movement in this country, and students of the Catholic liturgical movement in the United States have agreed that its impetus and inspiration emerged from the growing

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<sup>39</sup>Diekmann, “Lay Participation in the Liturgy of the Church,” 152.

<sup>40</sup>Diekmann, “Lay Participation in the Liturgy of the Church,” 154.

<sup>41</sup>Gerald Ellard, *Men at Work at Worship: America Joins the Liturgical Movement* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1940), 8-9, 69.

<sup>42</sup>Ellard, *Men at Work*, 137, 200.

European interest in liturgical renewal. Philip Gleason understood the liturgical movement to be one of several American Catholic reform movements of the 1930s and 1940s that “drew upon European models for inspiration” and “had links with Europe.” Several students of the movement have described the way Americans, particularly Virgil Michel, “brought” or “imported” the movement from Europe, with Paul Marx referring to Michel as “the bridge over which the liturgical movement in Europe came to America.” Some have also noted the resulting “dependence” of the movement in the United States on its European counterpart: “The American liturgical movement, like the American Church, traces its ancestry to Europe...The dependence on European initiative and scholarship would continue throughout the formative years of the American movement until the eve of the II Vatican Council.”<sup>43</sup>

Historians of American Catholicism, particularly those whose work is too broad to allow for detailed analysis of specific topics, rarely devote much attention to the liturgical movement, and they usually limit their treatment of it to a brief mention of the work of Virgil Michel, a priest and Benedictine monk at St. John’s Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota. Influential historian John Tracy Ellis included a short discussion of the liturgical movement in his *American Catholicism*, in which he referred to Michel as “one of the most active of these leaders in the American Catholic liturgical movement.”<sup>44</sup> Other prominent historians of American Catholicism have followed Ellis’s lead, with Philip

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<sup>43</sup>Leonard, “Liturgical Movement in the United States,” 294; Gleason, *Keeping the Faith*, 85; Marx, *Virgil Michel*, 42. See also White, *Roman Catholic Worship*, 80; Barry, *Worship and Work*, 264; McManus, “American Liturgical Pioneers,” 156.

<sup>44</sup>John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 137.

Gleason calling Michel “the principal fulcrum of liturgical reform in this country” and David O’Brien describing how the liturgical movement “had arisen in Europe and come to the United States through Benedictine priests in the Midwest, led by Dom Virgil Michel.” In a recent work investigating connections between Catholics and American culture, Mark A. Massa cited “Michel’s abbey” as a key center of liturgical renewal and an inspiration for the work of other Catholic leaders.<sup>45</sup>

### *The question of origins*

When they consider the important question, “When did the liturgical movement begin in the United States?” historians have routinely endorsed the significance of Michel and St. John’s by citing their efforts as the genesis of the American Catholic liturgical movement. Almost without exception, scholars have agreed that 1926 stands as a key year, and most credit it as the start of the movement. In that year, Michel founded a journal of liturgical studies, *Orate Fratres* (now *Worship*). Inspired by his recent travels to several liturgically progressive monasteries in Europe, Michel hoped this magazine, along with such ventures as a new publishing house, the Liturgical Press, would spark an interest in liturgical revival among American Catholics. Michel’s efforts, according to most students of the liturgical movement, marked the movement’s start on American soil. For instance, Godfrey Diekmann, one of Michel’s colleagues at St. John’s and his

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<sup>45</sup>Gleason, *The Conservative Reformers: German-American Catholics and the Social Order* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), 190; David O’Brien, *Public Catholicism* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 188; Massa, *Catholics and American Culture*, 151. See also Gleason, *Keeping the Faith*, 140.

successor as editor of *Orate Fratres*, wrote in 1952 that the liturgical movement in the United States—which he opined was even in the early 1950s “more a hope than an effective reality”—“can be said to have begun with the magazine *Orate Fratres*, founded in 1926 by the late Dom Virgil Michel, O.S.B.” Frederick R. McManus concurred with the view that Michel deserves primary recognition for his contributions: “The first and perhaps greatest of the pioneers [of the American liturgical movement] was Father Virgil Michel (1890-1938), a monk of St. John’s Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota.” Likewise, in his recent history of the American Catholic liturgical movement *The Unread Vision*, Keith Pecklers supports the choice of 1926 as the starting date for his study by noting that this was the year “when the liturgical movement in the United States was founded.” Studies of the broader twentieth-century push for liturgical renewal have also emphasized the significance of Michel and St. John’s, as evidenced by Lancelot Sheppard’s *The People Worship: A History of the Liturgical Movement*, which observes that “[i]n the United States the liturgical movement owes its origins and much of its later development to the Benedictine monks of St. John’s Abbey Collegeville, Minnesota.”<sup>46</sup>

Less specialized histories, whether of the development of Catholic liturgy or of Catholicism in the United States, have been even more likely to favor Michel as founder of the movement and have generally cited 1926 as its starting point. For example, James F. White, in *Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today*, credits Michel with primary responsibility for importing European liturgical developments to the United States. In a

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<sup>46</sup>Sheppard, *The People Worship*, 35; Diekmann, “The Primary Apostolate,” 34; McManus, “American Liturgical Pioneers,” 155; Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, xiii.

much earlier work—frequently cited in subsequent studies—Ernest Koenker wrote, “The movement in America may be said to have been born with the beginning of *Orate Fratres*, published by the Benedictines of St. John’s Abbey at Collegeville, Minnesota, in Advent of 1925.” Writing for European audiences, scholars such as I. H. Dalmais have also drawn particular attention to Michel and his projects, noting that “[i]n the U.S.A. the pioneer of the movement was the late Dom Virgil Michel, O.S.B.”<sup>47</sup>

### *Early American efforts at liturgical renewal*

Despite this general emphasis on Michel’s work and the year 1926, however, most scholars have also recognized the complexity of the history of liturgical revival and reform in the United States. Indeed, Michel himself hesitated to call St. John’s the source of the liturgical movement, as he was well aware of the numerous precursors to his work and acknowledged that the movement was “bigger than any individual, than any abbey, than any one order, than any large group of men, than the entire body of its promoters throughout the world.”<sup>48</sup> Likewise, many historians temper their assertions about Michel’s “founding” of the American movement with nods in the direction of earlier efforts to awaken greater interest in the liturgy and invigorate liturgical practice among the faithful.

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<sup>47</sup>Dalmais, *Introduction to the Liturgy*, 172; White, *Roman Catholic Worship*, 80; Koenker, *Liturgical Renaissance*, 17. For unknown reasons, the error of dating the start of *Orate Fratres* to 1925 is not uncommon in the literature. See, for instance, Sheppard, *The People Worship*, p. 36, and William O’Shea, S.S., “Liturgy in the United States, 1889-1964,” *American Ecclesiastical Review* 150 (March 1964): 193. Possibly some scholars cite 1925 because Michel returned from Europe in that year and began marshaling forces for a liturgical revival, but the first issue of *Orate Fratres* did not appear until late 1926.

<sup>48</sup>Virgil Michel, “The Apostolate,” *Orate Fratres* 3 (Feb 24, 1929): 123. See also Jeremy Hall, “The American Liturgical Movement: The Early Years,” *Worship* 50, no. 6 (Nov 1976): 473-74.

Several studies have cited, for instance, the remarkable views of John Carroll (1735-1815), the first bishop in the United States, who advocated use of the vernacular (English) in the liturgy. Conceding that "it is also true that there were others, even before Michel, who endeavored to bring about the same change [i.e. liturgical renewal], albeit with varying degrees of success," Pecklers mentioned Carroll's support for the vernacular, as well as the bishop's "Explanation of the Mass," written to assist lay people in understanding liturgical worship.<sup>49</sup> At least one scholar, William O'Shea, deemed John England, the progressive bishop of Charleston, South Carolina, from 1820 to 1844, worthy of mention in an essay on liturgical history since England published the first layman's mass book, a translation of the missal with an exposition of the doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, in the United States.<sup>50</sup>

An additional nineteenth-century development in American liturgical history in which some scholars have found evidence of an early interest in renewal and reform is the 1884 Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. As Paul Marx reported in his 1957 biography of Virgil Michel, the bishops present at the council issued a statement decrying the popularity of non-liturgical prayers which "are anything but literary, and even at times hardly orthodox." Their response, the *Manual of Prayers* published in 1889, was, in Marx's words, "an official prayerbook second to none for content in the whole Catholic

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<sup>49</sup>Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 26. See also McManus, "American Liturgical Pioneers," 155; Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 110; O'Shea, "Liturgy in the United States, 1889-1964," 180; John Tracy Ellis, "Archbishop Carroll and the Liturgy in the Vernacular," *Worship* 26, no. 12 (Nov 1952): 545-52.

<sup>50</sup>O'Shea, "Liturgy in the United States," 180. For discussion of some of England's other unusual ideas, see Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 305-06.

world.” According to Godfrey Diekmann, a significant figure in the American liturgical movement in his own right, if this prayerbook had been as popular as the Baltimore Catechism, another product of the Third Plenary Council, it “would have meant a liturgical movement in America a quarter of a century before such a movement made itself felt in any other country.” In a more recent study of American Catholic spirituality, Joseph Chinnici also called attention to the liturgical interests of the Third Plenary Council, in which he noticed some of the same emphases which would later characterize the modern liturgical movement: “In 1884 the Third Plenary Council published legislation calling for the reform of prayer books and for the revival of Gregorian chant, both changes being designed to encourage the faithful’s more active participation in the liturgy.”<sup>51</sup>

#### *American Catholic liturgical reform in the 1920s*

Many scholars of the liturgical movement in the United States—even those who assert unequivocally that the movement really began in 1926 with Virgil Michel’s work at St. John’s—have also pointed to other American individuals and events in the decade or so preceding the founding of *Orate Fratres* as significant for liturgical renewal in this country. According to Jeremy Hall, these early stirrings of liturgical interest represent the initial stage of this social movement, in which “existing conditions cause widespread dissatisfaction,...[and] spontaneous individual responses sprout up seemingly independently of each other, reflecting a gradual and increasingly pervasive cultural drift—a

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<sup>51</sup>Chinnici, *Living Stones*, 173; Marx, *Virgil Michel*, 76; Diekmann, “Lay Participation in the Liturgy,” 147. See also Diekmann, “The Primary Apostolate,” 41, n. 4.

shift of ideas and values that is as yet vague and indefinite.”<sup>52</sup> For instance, as an example of such an early sign of things to come, John Tracy Ellis mentioned the Pius X School of Liturgical Music, founded in New York in 1916, as providing “further impetus” to the movement.<sup>53</sup>

While Ellis is somewhat unusual in referring to the role of the Pius X School, a number of historians have accorded at least brief notice to some of the Catholics besides Virgil Michel who began to consider the question of liturgical revival in the 1920s and even earlier. In 1925, for instance, two priests from Missouri, Martin Hellriegel and Anthony Jasper, contributed an article to *Central Blatt and Social Justice*, entitled “*Der Schlüssel zur sozialen Frage*” (“The Key to the Social Question”), in which they discussed liturgy and social concerns. Several notable historians, including Marx, Gleason, and Pecklers, have cited this article as an important pre-1926 sign of things to come, particularly because Hellriegel and Jasper anticipated a future distinguishing trait of the American liturgical movement: a preoccupation with the link between the liturgy and practical social concerns.<sup>54</sup> A few years later, Hellriegel summarized the various liturgical movements then gaining ground throughout Western Europe and the United States, and he singled out the efforts of the monks at St. John’s Abbey for special recognition, praising in particular the leadership of Abbot Alcuin Deutsch: “Since 1925 we have had a

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<sup>52</sup>Hall, “American Liturgical Movement,” 472-73.

<sup>53</sup>Ellis, *American Catholicism*, 137.

<sup>54</sup>Marx, *Virgil Michel*, 110. Marx also referred to Hellriegel’s founding of Pax Press in 1924 and his publication of the first dialogue mass booklet in the United States. Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 191; Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 29.

well organized movement, due mainly to the unselfish labors of the Benedictines of St. John's under the leadership of Abbot Alcuin, whom the Lord graced with burning love for the sacred cause and an unusual portion of foresight and generosity."<sup>55</sup>

Another early pioneer of the liturgical movement in the United States, William Busch, has received recognition from some scholars for his pre-1926 efforts, as well as for his later cooperation with Michel. Busch, a diocesan priest at St. Paul Seminary in Minnesota, wrote a letter to the editor of the Jesuit publication *America* in August 1924, in which he noted that the liturgical movement "is making great strides in Europe but is almost unknown in America."<sup>56</sup> On account of this and other evidence of his unusual display of interest in liturgical matters, Marx designated Busch "the proto-evangelist of the liturgical movement in the United States."<sup>57</sup> Likewise, Keith Pecklers, William Leonard, Jeremy Hall, Godfrey Diekmann, and Colman Barry, all refer to Busch's efforts, citing such work as his translation of Joseph Kramp's *Eucharistia* (1925), as well as his eventual close collaboration with Michel, which Pecklers asserts was founded upon their shared "vision of a liturgical movement which, they were convinced, would renew Church life and particularly liturgical life across the United States of America."<sup>58</sup> At least one scholar has gone beyond merely taking note of Busch's work, arguing that the letter to *America*

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<sup>55</sup>Martin Hellriegel, "A Survey of the Liturgical Movement," *Orate Fratres* 3, no. 11 (Sept. 8, 1929): 339.

<sup>56</sup>Quoted in Marx, *Virgil Michel*, 108, and O'Shea, "Liturgy in the United States," 185

<sup>57</sup>Marx, *Virgil Michel*, 109.

<sup>58</sup>Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 26 ff.; Leonard, "The Liturgical Movement in the United States," 295; Hall, *The Full Stature of Christ*, xi; Diekmann, "The Primary Apostolate," 34; Barry, *Worship and Work*, 266-67.

marked the start of the liturgical movement in the United States. In William O'Shea's words, with that 1924 publication, "The movement had begun though no one realized it at the time."<sup>59</sup>

### *German American liturgical pioneers*

Many studies of the American liturgical movement have commented on the striking prominence of German names, including Busch, Hellriegel, and, of course, Michel, among the usual list of "liturgical pioneers." For instance, after cautioning readers that it is inaccurate to assume the American liturgical movement was "a kind of manifestation of German Nationalism, or at best a purely German affair," William O'Shea acknowledged that "it still remains true that the liturgical movement found its first response from German priests and German Catholics [and] the names of the outstanding apostles of the liturgy in America are mostly German names."<sup>60</sup> Despite this recognition, however, American liturgical pioneers whose work began prior to 1926 and who wrote in German have attracted notably scant attention from historians of the liturgical movement, particularly in recent decades.

According to Paul Marx, Bede Maler, a monk of St. Meinrad's Archabbey, a Benedictine foundation in southern Indiana, "wanted to start a kind of liturgical movement at St. Meinrad's years before Michel had come on the scene." To this end, Maler

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<sup>59</sup>O'Shea, "Liturgy in the United States," 185. O'Shea also wrote that Busch's "remarkable address to the seminary section of the National Catholic Educational Association meeting in Pittsburgh turned out to be the first clear formal plea for a liturgical movement" (188).

<sup>60</sup>O'Shea, "Liturgy in the United States," 182. See also White, *Roman Catholic Worship*, 100.

introduced into the United States the Priests' Eucharistic League and edited St. Meinrad's German-language eucharistic monthly, *Paradiesfrüchte*.<sup>61</sup> Taking his cue directly from Marx's account, William O'Shea wrote, "Another pioneer was a German monk of St. Meinrad's Abbey, Bede Maler. As early as 1891, he saw the need of a real liturgical movement and wanted to start one at Saint Meinrad."<sup>62</sup> More recent studies of the American liturgical movement, such as Pecklers's *The Unread Vision*, make no mention of Maler's work.

Over the past four decades, another pioneer of the American liturgical movement—the man Paul Marx named as “the pioneer of the American liturgical movement”—has virtually disappeared from scholarly notice. Hermann Untraut, “a zealous German,” merited mention in some early studies of the liturgical movement in the United States, with Marx lauding his 1925 book, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, for “show[ing] an amazing grasp and comprehensiveness of view for those times.”<sup>63</sup> Again following Marx's lead, William O'Shea offered in his survey of liturgy in the United States from 1889 to 1964 a brief sketch of Untraut's liturgical endeavors, including his contribution of articles on the liturgy to German-American weeklies in the 1880s, his 1901 publication of “a liturgically oriented prayer and hymn book,” his early introduction of the dialogue mass in the United States, and his authorship of *Die liturgische Bewegung*, which “shows a remarkable grasp of the principles involved.” O'Shea concluded by noting that this small

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<sup>61</sup>Marx, *Virgil Michel*, 88. See also Chinnici, *Living Stones*, 147.

<sup>62</sup>O'Shea, “Liturgy in the United States,” 183. See also Barry, *Worship and Work*, 266-67.

<sup>63</sup>Marx, *Virgil Michel*, 87-88.

book sold poorly, "and Untraut remained largely unheard."<sup>64</sup>

The extent to which Untraut's efforts at liturgical renewal have gone unnoticed is really rather remarkable. While he managed to garner a certain amount of attention during his lifetime, including a brief entry in the 1911 edition of *The American Catholic Who's Who* as "contributor to several German Catholic Weeklies...and author and compiler of a number of books of prayer and devotion," and merited an affectionate and appreciative obituary in *Orate Fratres*, mention of his liturgical interests, praised in earlier years as "amazing" and "remarkable," is notably absent from more recent studies.<sup>65</sup>

The extent of this failure to acknowledge—or even be cognizant of—Untraut's work is evident in local histories which are apparently entirely unaware of his prescient attempts at liturgical revival. In his history of the Diocese of La Crosse, honoring its hundred-year anniversary, Gerald Edward Fisher made no mention of this liturgical pioneer who lived and worked in that diocese for several decades. Untraut's name appears only in a long list of clergy on the reproduction of an invitation from Bishop Kilian Flasch to an 1890 retreat for diocesan priests. "Untraut, Hermanus....Arcadia" is one of thirty-six priests Flasch hoped would attend a German vespers service; another thirty-seven were invited to participate in an English service.<sup>66</sup>

Two other local histories, one of Trempealeau County, Wisconsin, and another of

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<sup>64</sup>O'Shea, "Liturgy in the United States," 183.

<sup>65</sup>Georgia Pell Curtis, ed., *The American Catholic Who's Who* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1911), 662; "Fathers Untraut and Winnen, R.I.P.," *Orate Fratres* 15, no. 11 (5 October 1941): 517; Bernard Laukemper, "Father Untraut, the Midwestern Pioneer," *Orate Fratres* 15 (1941): 565-567.

<sup>66</sup>*Dusk is My Dawn: The First Hundred Years of the Diocese of La Crosse, 1868-1968* (La Crosse: by the author, 1969), 46.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Arcadia, Wisconsin, acknowledged Untraut's contributions as a parish priest, but took no notice of liturgical efforts. In his description of the history of the Arcadia parish in the 1917 *History of Trempealeau County, Wisconsin*, Joseph Hauck praised the work of "Rev. J. H. Untraut," pastor from 1885 to 1893. Untraut accomplishments in Arcadia included moving the parish from Glencoe to Arcadia, changing the parish's name to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and establishing "a good parochial school," whose teachers were paid, in part, "from his own penurious income." Hauck's account made no mention of Untraut's interest in liturgical reform.<sup>67</sup>

Perhaps more surprising is the failure of an informal history of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish to recognize the liturgical achievements of one of their early pastors. As part of their parish directory, the parishioners of Our Lady of Perpetual Help produced a parish history in 1976. Giving a broad overview of the parish's development, it included several of Untraut's contributions, such as the move to Arcadia, the renaming of the parish, and the opening of the first parochial school. Again, however, it refers not at all to his liturgical interests.<sup>68</sup>

While these last works, particularly the county and parish histories, do not constitute scholarly projects and thus cannot be read as changing or influencing historians' interpretations of the American liturgical movement, it is nonetheless noteworthy that such

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<sup>67</sup>"Catholic Church in Trempealeau County," in *History of Trempealeau County, Wisconsin*, ed. Eben Douglas Pierce (Chicago: H.C. Cooper, Jr., & Co., 1917), 841. It should be noted that according to the librarian at the Carnegie Public Library in Arcadia, this book was something of a vanity publication, and greater notice in it could be had for a price.

<sup>68</sup>*A Heritage Intact...Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Congregation, Arcadia, Wisconsin: A History and Directory* (Arcadia: privately printed, 1976), n.p.

texts, which presumably had a strong interest in presenting their subjects in the best possible light, ignored the acknowledged achievements of one of their own. This stands as testament to the extent Untraut's liturgical accomplishments have been overlooked, both by historians of the movement and by those who ought to take pride in his work.

In the preface to her study of Virgil Michel's ecclesiology, Jeremy Hall drew attention to the fact that even Michel himself acknowledged that he was not the first to attempt a liturgical reawakening among Catholics in the United States. "Early issues of *Orate Fratres*," she wrote, "provide many evidences of an almost spontaneous development of programs of liturgical interest in many parts of the country." Thus, as she wisely pointed out, designating Virgil Michel as "founder" of the American movement paints a misleading picture. She suggested that "[i]t would, therefore, perhaps be more accurate to speak of Dom Virgil as the organizer or leader of the liturgical movement in the United States."<sup>69</sup> Replacing "founder" with "organizer or leader" and crediting Michel with consolidating the American liturgical movement "into something of a unified vision," rather than initiating liturgical renewal efforts in the United States, allows historians to grant much-needed attention to those pioneers who explored new liturgical frontiers prior to and contemporaneously with Michel, while acknowledging that none of them was able really to begin a movement as such.<sup>70</sup>

Having established that a number of individuals preceded Virgil Michel in working

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<sup>69</sup>Hall, *Full Stature of Christ*, xi.

<sup>70</sup>Hall, "American Liturgical Movement," 474.

for liturgical renewal in the United States, and that these people deserve inclusion in studies of the liturgical movement, we can see that Hermann Untraut undoubtedly merits mention in this group, along with such frequently cited liturgical luminaries as Martin Hellriegel and William Busch. A typically conservative German Catholic immigrant priest whose approach to liturgical reform was shaped not only by European theological developments but also by his experiences in parish ministry, Untraut provides a lens for examining both German Catholic immigrant life and the early years of the American liturgical movement and deserves recognition for his uncommonly prescient liturgical ideas. As Bernard Laukemper wrote in Untraut's obituary in 1941, "Friends of the liturgy and leaders of the liturgical movement will be glad to see the name of this holy and zealous priest listed among the pioneer workers for the revival of liturgical understanding and piety."<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Laukemper, "Father Untraut," 566.

## Chapter 2

### German Catholics in the United States

The story of German American Catholics is the story of the evolving identity of a group of people. German American Catholics, characterized German heritage and descent, American residence and citizenship, and Catholic faith, found that at different times—depending on such factors as the length of time they or their families had lived in the United States, the current political circumstances, the degree to which they desired inclusion in American social life, and the effort they were willing to make to preserve Old World ways in a New World environment—the relationships between the “German,” “American,” and “Catholic” elements of their identities shifted.<sup>1</sup> The formation of this complex and distinctive identity began with the departure of German-speaking Catholics from the regions of their birth for the distant shores of the United States.

#### Arrival in the New World

Catholics who came to the United States from the German-speaking regions of Europe constituted one of the most significant ethnic groups within the American Church. Often emigrating from rural areas, they tended to favor settlement in fertile farming regions, and they came to dominate the culture and hierarchy of Catholicism in certain

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<sup>1</sup>Philip Gleason, *The Conservative Reformers: German-American Catholics and the Social Order* (Notre Dame, University of Notre, 1968), 7, 144; Margaret Susan Thompson, “Cultural Conundrum: Sisters, Ethnicity, and the Adaptation of American Catholicism,” *Mid-America: An Historical Review* 74, no. 3 (Oct 1992): 210.

parts of the country, including the southwestern region of Wisconsin where Hermann Untraut labored as a pastor and chaplain for over fifty years. Recounting the Catholic settlement of a county where Untraut served early in his career, the Rev. Joseph Hauck, then pastor of St. Mary's Parish in Wausau, Wisconsin, described in effusive language the attractions of the area for immigrants from Germany and elsewhere: "Trempealeau County's fertile fields and salubrious air invited them from Germany, Austria, Ireland, Poland, and other European countries in search of new homes. The free institutions of this Republic seconded nature's invitation. Modern inventions narrowed sea and oceans; and so, during the last half of the nineteenth century hundreds of Catholics poured into this district."<sup>2</sup>

### *Patterns of Immigration*

During the hundred-year period from 1820 to 1920 when massive waves of immigrants arrived in the United States, bringing with them their distinctive cultures, traditions, languages, and religions, nearly 5.5 million Germans, an estimated 1,648,407 of them Catholic, were among them.<sup>3</sup> In the first two decades of this period, the number of German Catholic immigrants was relatively small, but the succeeding decades brought a significant increase, particularly as many fled the unrest resulting from the 1848 revolutions.

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<sup>2</sup>Joseph Hauck, "Catholic Church in Trempealeau County," in *History of Trempealeau County, Wisconsin*, ed. Eben Douglas Pierce (Chicago: H.C. Cooper, Jr., & Co., 1917), 837.

<sup>3</sup>Jay P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc.), 130. Dolan based this estimate on the assumption that thirty percent of German immigrants were Catholic.

Prior to the unification of Germany in 1871—and afterwards, as well—German-speaking immigrants often had little sense of themselves as “German” and drew their “national” or ethnic identities from their native towns, parishes, or regions. The story of German immigration is thus really the story of the immigration of German speakers from Prussia, Bavaria, Swabia, and even Austria and Switzerland. Untraut, for example, although he left Germany over a decade after unification, identified strongly with the region of his birth and took pride in his Swabian roots. He was the subject of a long, rhyming poem, composed in the Swabian dialect and published in the *La Crosse Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht*, which sent him holiday greetings “vom Schwoabe-Landsma” (“from a fellow Swabian”) in Minnesota, and he referred to himself in letters as “*der alte Schwabe*” (“the old Swabian”).<sup>4</sup>

The establishment of the modern German nation-state in 1871 brought the onset of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck’s harshly anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf*, culminating in the 1873 May Laws that practically annulled papal jurisdiction over German Catholics, abolished religious orders, and fined and deposed resisting bishops, German Catholics—especially priests and nuns—were more eager than ever to leave their homeland

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<sup>4</sup>“*Meinem lieben Freunde H.J.U. Zum Neu-Jahr!*” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht*, 2 Jan 1896; Untraut to Michel, 24 Feb 1929; Untraut to Deutsch, 14 May 1939, St. John’s University Archives. Rachel A. Bonney, “Was There a Single German-American Heritage?” in *A Heritage Deferred: The German-Americans in Minnesota* ed. Clarence A. Glasrud (Moorhead, MN: Concordia College, 1981), 30; Colman J. Barry, *The Catholic Church and German Americans* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1953), 9, n. 10; James M. Bergquist, “German-America in the 1890s: Illusions and Realities,” in *Germans in America: Aspects of German-American Relations in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. E. Allen McCormick (Brooklyn, NY: Brooklyn College Press, 1983), 9-10; Timothy L. Smith, “Religion and Ethnicity in America,” *The American Historical Review* 83, no. 5 (Dec 1978): 1170-71.

for the promise of a new life and greater religious freedom in America.<sup>5</sup> The German Catholic population of the United States, estimated to be one million in 1870—nearly one-fourth of the total American Catholic population—had doubled by 1890, due in large part to the arrival of some 575,000 new immigrants, most of whom arrived in the 1880s, partly because of the *Kulturkampf* which, though weakened, continued until 1887.<sup>6</sup> During those two decades, Germans made up the single largest Catholic immigrant group entering the United States.<sup>7</sup> Writing in his typically dramatic style, Hauck alluded to the trials of the *Kulturkampf* years, as well as to other hardships endured by other European Catholics, when he noted that many Catholic immigrants who settled in Trempealeau County—including several leading members of the parish which became Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Arcadia, where Untraut served from 1889 to 1893—“were sons and daughters of races who had suffered martyrdom for their faith; they were inured for every trial and trained to be unbending before the most violent storms.”<sup>8</sup>

After reaching its zenith in the 1880s, immigration from Germany declined sharply, due to the country’s long-anticipated unification, anti-emigration measures instituted by

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<sup>5</sup>Don Heinrich Tolzmann, *The German-American Experience* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2000), 225; Harold J. Abramson, “Ethnic Diversity within Catholicism: A Comparative Analysis of Contemporary and Historical Religion,” *Journal of Social History* 5 (1971), 383; Gerald Shaughnessy, *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith?* (New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1969), 158

<sup>6</sup>Dolores Liptak, *Immigrants and Their Church* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 93; Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 46-47; Shaughnessy, *Has the Immigrant*, 163.

<sup>7</sup>Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 7. According to Shaughnessy, German Catholic immigrants numbered 175,000 from 1871 to 1880 and 400,000 from 1881 to 1890; Irish Catholics immigrants during those same decades numbered 180,000 and 300,000, respectively (*Has the Immigrant*, 159, 165).

<sup>8</sup>Hauck, “Catholic Church in Trempealeau County,” 837. The members named were Nic and Casper Meiers, Peter Meyers, Frank Zeller, and Carl Zeller.

the imperial government, and a labor shortage occasioned by rapid industrial expansion in Germany.<sup>9</sup>

### *Patterns of Settlement*

Upon their arrival in the United States, many German immigrants hoped to settle in rural areas and farm. This desire often led them away from the teeming cities of the eastern seaboard toward the fertile plains and valleys of the country's interior. Migrating westward and establishing communities marked by their ethnic character, these immigrants came to make their new homes in particular in the region roughly bounded by the cities of Cincinnati, Milwaukee, and St. Louis, an area that came to be called the "German Triangle."<sup>10</sup>

Within this "German Triangle," one state in particular, Wisconsin, developed a strongly German character. According to Wisconsin historian Larry Gara, "In Germany, Wisconsin had a special meaning," and many Germans, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, dreamed of the state as place where they could maintain their German identity without the religious oppression, political struggle, and economic hardship of life in the fatherland. Quoting the 1847 declaration of "an enthusiastic patriot," Gara wrote, "In Wisconsin, ... Germans could have 'German schools and universities, German literature and art, German science and philosophy, German courts and assemblies'; in fact, they could

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<sup>9</sup>Erik Kirschbaum, *The Eradication of German-American Culture in the United States, 1917-1918* (Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz Akademischer Verlag, 1986), 38-39.

<sup>10</sup>Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 137.

have a 'German state,' in which the German language could flourish and the German spirit rule."<sup>11</sup>

While these ambitious hopes of establishing a German bastion in the American Midwest were not fully realized, German immigrants did predominate in Wisconsin. According to the census of 1890, the native-born population of the state was 1,167,681 and the foreign-born, 519,199, of which 259,819 were from Germany.<sup>12</sup> In the words of Wisconsin historian Richard Nelson Current, "By the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, a clear majority of Wisconsinites were of German origin or background. In this respect, at least, Wisconsin had become a German state."<sup>13</sup>

Wisconsin's undeniably German character did not, however, necessarily imply that Catholicism was the state's dominant faith since German immigrants, unlike those from Ireland, were not religiously homogeneous. Estimates of the percentage of German immigrants who were also Catholic usually fall in the range of thirty to thirty-five percent. For Wisconsin, the number was appreciably higher, probably around fifty percent.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Larry Gara, *A Short History of Wisconsin* (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1962), 89-91.

<sup>12</sup>Gara, *Short History of Wisconsin*, 154.

<sup>13</sup>Richard Nelson Current, *Wisconsin: A History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 38.

<sup>14</sup>Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 130; Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 7; Current, *Wisconsin*, 40. According to Gerald Shaughnessy, the percentage of Catholics in the German population increased from 30 to 36.5 over the course from 1830 to 1920, "chiefly due to the acquisition of Alsace-Lorraine in the Franco-Prussian War" (*Has the Immigrant*, 111).

### German Catholic Conservatism

German Catholics in the United States generally favored a conservative approach to adjusting to life in their new environment and tended to hold tightly, and often quite self-consciously, to the familiar traditions of the Fatherland. On issues of education, language, parish life, liturgy, and, most broadly, Americanization, German Catholics often fought fiercely for maintaining the old rather than adopting the new, and Hermann Untraut, while serving as pastor of Holy Trinity parish in La Crosse, gave voice to this conservative position in his frequent essays for the diocesan newspaper.

#### *Preservation of Old World Heritage*

German Catholics, when compared with their Irish brothers and sisters in the faith, tended toward conservatism in most aspects of their religion, and historians have made much of this seemingly typical German characteristic. According to Colman Barry, German immigrants “were, for the most part, with the exception of liberals and socialists who came in the late 1840s and 1850s [in the wake of the 1848 revolutions], a conservative force in the community.”<sup>15</sup> These immigrants sought in the New World a life that resembled as closely as possible the life they had led in the old:

They desired to have churches of their own in which their traditional religious observances and customs could be carried out, where they could hear sermons in their mother tongue, go to confession as they had learned to confess from early childhood, and take an active part in parish life through their beloved societies. They wanted the order and discipline of

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<sup>15</sup>Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 8.

parish life as they had known it before coming to the United States.<sup>16</sup>

Like other immigrants to the United States, German Catholics arrived in the New World bearing a rich heritage of language, faith, and tradition, and, as Margaret Susan Thompson has noted, “because real or perceived threats to national or ethno-cultural survival were often prime reasons behind decisions to leave their homelands in the first place, the desire to preserve distinctive identities persisted long after settlement in the U.S.”<sup>17</sup> Their strong attachment to the familiar customs of their native land often led German Catholic immigrants to reject adoption of “American” culture and, specifically, “American” Catholicism. In this respect, they differed from the Irish—who had influenced to a significant degree the style of Catholicism commonly practiced in the United States—and they often objected to the extent to which Irish immigrants became Americanized.<sup>18</sup> Summarizing the conservative viewpoint vis-a-vis American culture—a position German-American Catholics often supported since they “feared that Americanization might lead the German Catholic immigrant to jettison his religion along with his language and cultural outlook” —Philip Gleason wrote:

They [conservatives] were less impressed by the glorious opportunity open to American Catholics in reconciling the Church and modern culture than they were by the indisputable Protestantism and periodic nativism of Americans; hence they emphasized the need to maintain the traditional integrity of Catholic life and thought as the surest means of maintaining the faith in the United States. To men of this persuasion, the flexibility

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<sup>16</sup>Colman J. Barry, “The German Catholic Immigrant,” in *Roman Catholicism and the American Way of Life*, ed. Thomas T. McAvoy (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1960), 191. See also Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 9.

<sup>17</sup>Thompson, “Cultural Conundrum,” 209.

<sup>18</sup>Liptak, *Immigrants and Their Church*, 94.

commended by the liberals looked much like laxity, accommodation suggested compromise, and adjustment to the new environment resembled capitulation before the enemy.<sup>19</sup>

At the heart of the conflict that occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries between conservative and liberal Catholics in the United States lay differing views of how far and how fast Catholics in this country should adapt their religion to the American environment; in the words of Thomas McAvoy, "The critical problem of the Catholic Church in the United States at the turn of the century was the extent of the adaptation of Catholic practices to the American milieu."<sup>20</sup> Many German American Catholics opposed accommodating their faith to the culture surrounding them less out of any abstract conservative ideology than out of concern for preserving concrete expressions of their cultural heritage, including the German language and traditional ways of worship. German Catholics retained their suspicion about American culture even after the turbulence of the late nineteenth century subsided, and they continued to believe that liberals failed to acknowledge the flaws and weaknesses of the American status quo. The disagreements between conservatives and liberals came to a head in the so-called "Americanist" dispute of the late nineteenth century, and most German members of the hierarchy and clergy, including Untraut, favored the conservative position in the debates over education and language, secret societies, and attitudes toward Protestants that

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<sup>19</sup>Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 31.

<sup>20</sup>Thomas McAvoy, *The Great Crisis in American Catholic History, 1895-1900* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1957), x. See also Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 29.

characterized the controversy.<sup>21</sup>

### *Education*

Most Catholics in the United States, both immigrant and American-born, shared a passionate interest in the education of Catholic children, and arguments over education, which had been the source of controversy in earlier decades, as well, played a major role in the disagreements between so-called liberals and conservative Catholics.<sup>22</sup> Believing that public schools afforded Catholic children significant opportunities to interact with non-Catholics and thus to integrate them into the mainstream of American life, liberal Catholics tended to favor public education. Conservatives, by contrast, objected to many aspects of public education and considered public schools “godless” and an infringement by the state on the rights of individual parents. They looked to parochial schools as a means to combat the perceived anti-Catholic bias in public schools, instill in students moral as well as practical knowledge, and preserve ethnic heritage, including language.<sup>23</sup>

German Catholic immigrants who believed preservation of language was the key to maintaining their faith and culture in a strange land wanted to maintain a “Catholic German milieu” for future generations, as well, and for this reason they staunchly advocated the establishment of parochial schools in which their children could learn the

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<sup>21</sup>Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 39, 78; Philip Gleason and David Salvaterra, “Ethnicity, Immigration, and American Catholic History,” *Social Thought* 3 (1978), 8-10.

<sup>22</sup>Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 316.

<sup>23</sup>Gerald P. Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy from 1870 to 1965* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1985), 65; Robert D. Cross, *The Emergence of Liberal Catholicism in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), 95 ff., 135; Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 100ff.

language of their parents and grandparents. These parish institutions were central to maintaining the German language since they instilled in generations raised in the United States an understanding of and appreciation for the mother tongue. With their passionate commitment to parish-based education, Germans played the leading role in setting up Midwestern parochial schools, and by 1914, over 95% of German parishes could boast schools of their own, not a few of which had been built even before the construction of the parish church.<sup>24</sup>

In each of his parish appointments in the Diocese of La Crosse, Untraut displayed this characteristic German interest in parochial education, especially because of its role in preserving language. Early in his career, as rector of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Edson (1883-1888), he established the parish's school, enrolling eighty students. Likewise, while pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Arcadia (1888-1893), he opened a school for that parish. His devotion to this institution extended to financial sacrifice since he used some of his salary to pay the teachers.<sup>25</sup> His final two parishes, in La Crosse and Eau Claire—both German-language national parishes—had established parochial schools prior to his arrival. In the case of Holy Trinity in La Crosse, the parishioners deemed the appropriate education of their children to be of such significance that they opened the school just one day after the church building was dedicated, on October 31, 1887—over a

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<sup>24</sup>Heinz Kloss, "German-American Language Maintenance Efforts," in *Language Loyalty in the United States: The Maintenance and Perpetuation of Non-English Mother Tongues by American Ethnic and Religious Groups*, ed. Joshua A. Fishman (The Hague, The Netherlands: Mouton & Co., 1966), 209; Stephen Shaw, "The Cities and the Plains, A Home for God's People: A History of the Catholic Parish in the Midwest," in *The American Catholic Parish: A History from 1850 to the Present*, vol. 2, ed. Jay P. Dolan (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 306.

<sup>25</sup>Hauck, "Catholic Church in Trempealeau County," 841.

week before they first celebrated mass.<sup>26</sup>

Known for their emphasis on education, German Catholics in the United States, including the members of Untraut's Wisconsin parishes, looked to parochial schools to protect their children from Protestantism and secularism, as well as to transmit their cultural and religious heritage, and American Catholic leaders recognized the importance of these schools not only as a way of preserving the faith but also as a tool of Americanization.<sup>27</sup> Because they regarded language as both a part of their heritage and the best possible means for communicating it, German Catholics supported German-language instruction in the schools, and they held high hopes for this type of education, relying on the school to serve as "the bulwark for the defense against Protestantism, 'Godless' secularism, even the loss of ethnic identity in the church."<sup>28</sup> For leaders of the American Church, on the other hand, the parochial school provided another "way-station" on the journey toward assimilation.<sup>29</sup> In the words of James Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore, students in ethnic parochial schools "come under the instruction of those who know the respective languages and can understand the peculiar idioms of thought and speech" and "are gradually and unconsciously brought into complete sympathy with

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<sup>26</sup>*Holy Trinity Catholic Congregation, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1887-1987* (La Crosse: privately printed, 1987), n.p.

<sup>27</sup>Bonney, "Single German-American Heritage," 28. Regarding the relatively high level of education among German missionary priests in the United States, see John Tracy Ellis, "The Formation of the American Priest: An Historical Perspective," in *The Catholic Priest in the United States: Historical Investigations*, ed. John Tracy Ellis (Collegeville, MN: Saint John's University Press, 1971), 20.

<sup>28</sup>Liptak, *Immigrants and Their Church*, 98; James Hennesey, *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 194; James S. Olson, *Catholic Immigrants in America* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1987), 56.

<sup>29</sup>Shaw, "The Cities and the Plains," 313.

American ideals and readily adapt themselves to American manners and customs."<sup>30</sup>

Nonetheless, despite the backing of the liberal-leaning Gibbons, German Catholic support for ethnocentric parochial schools faced significant opposition, both from those Catholics who favored adoption of the English language and adaptation to American culture and argued against educating children in a primarily "foreign" milieu, and from nativist Americans who feared that foreign-language schools prevented immigrant children from becoming good American citizens.<sup>31</sup> Untraut acknowledged the arguments of "Americanizing" Catholics, who wanted parochial schools to turn out English-speaking "defenders of the faith and apostles among the heterodox and nonbelievers," but argued that providing instruction in English had in reality the opposite effect since "the number of those who have fallen away [from the Catholic faith] is increasing terribly."<sup>32</sup>

A passionate defender of parochial education, Untraut wrote often on the topic and considered supporting it one of his primary duties as pastor. In 1895, for instance, he declared,

The true priest of the Lord has always dedicated his entire life to the education of young people and considers himself lucky to dedicate his priestly life to the dear youth and the salvation of souls. Better to be without the honor of the world than without parochial schools. Better an empty coin purse than an empty parochial school. Better to be hated by the liberals than to be loved by them. Better to be an enemy of the *Zeitgeist*

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<sup>30</sup>Quoted in Richard M. Linkh, *American Catholicism and European Immigrants (1900-1924)* (Staten Island, NY: Center for Migration Studies, 1975), 127.

<sup>31</sup>Frederick C. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974), 61-62; Kloss, "German-American Language Maintenance Efforts," 236.

<sup>32</sup>"Pfleget und erhaltet die Muttersprache," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 24 Jan 1895.

than a friend of the same. One must obey God more than men. Better to displease men than God. Money rules the world, but the parochial school rules Catholic life.

He then added a favorite saying, "*Wem die Jugend, dem die Zukunft,*" which means that those who had the greatest influence over the youth of today would have the greatest power in the future.<sup>33</sup> He feared the influence of public schools and once treated his readers to an extended account of a defense attorney's argument that his client, a seventeen-year-old boy who had committed numerous crimes, had been damaged by his education in "neutral schools." At the conclusion of the boy's story, Untraut remarked, "Even a blind man can see that 'our schools'—the public schools—produce no better fruit. The more merciful social relations 'the little school' would bring us cannot even be expressed."<sup>34</sup>

The preeminence of German Catholic concern for cultural preservation and defense of proper Catholic values did not, however, preclude an interest among them in the academic welfare of their parochial school students. At Sacred Heart Parish in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, a German national parish where Untraut was pastor from 1908 to 1920, students at the parochial school in the 1890s took a public school test in order to answer the question "as to whether the children from Sacred Heart School could reach the standard of the public schools." The experiment successfully quelled any worries parents or others in the parish may have had about the academic quality of the school since it

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<sup>33</sup>"Father Dunn's Lecture in Mondavi," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 26 December 1895.

<sup>34</sup>"*Strafpredigt des Vertheidigers eines Angeklagten,*" *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 3 September 1896.

yielded the “very gratifying” result of scores no lower than 94 and as high as 100 percent correct.<sup>35</sup>

*Secret societies and relations with non-Catholics*

Liberals and conservatives also disagreed on the issues of membership in secret societies and relations with American Protestants, and Untraut again stood squarely in the conservative camp. Conservatives believed secret societies, including notably the Knights of Labor, were contrary to papal mandate and, according to Bishop Bernard McQuaid of Rochester, drew lay people away from the church.<sup>36</sup> Liberals, on the other hand, did not consider such societies a particular danger, and, in the case of the Knights of Labor, actively defended the union.<sup>37</sup>

Untraut strongly opposed secret societies and addressed the topic frequently in the *Patriot*. Although he never missed a chance to support and defend “genuine Catholic organizations,” Untraut harbored deep suspicions about such groups as the American branch of the Knights of Malta, a religious and knightly order founded in the eleventh century to aid Christian pilgrims in the Holy Land. After a dramatic opening, in which he announced that “Lucifer holds high his banner and sends his minions into all the world,

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<sup>35</sup>James E. Noonan, “Your Parish...Eau Claire: Sacred Heart” (30 July 1954). Diocese of La Crosse Archives (hereafter DLC Archives).

<sup>36</sup>Cross, *Liberal Catholicism*, 201; Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 312. Regarding the Knights of Labor, see Henry J. Browne, *The Catholic Church and the Knights of Labor* (New York: Arno Press, 1976).

<sup>37</sup>Cross, *Liberal Catholicism*, 170ff.; Browne, *Church and Knights of Labor*, 239ff.; John Tracy Ellis, ed. *Documents of American Catholic History* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1962), 440-53.

where they labor tirelessly,” Untraut explained that the branch of the Knights of Malta active in the United States, while claiming Catholic roots, was in fact a product of the Protestant Reformation in England and Scotland. He maintained that the organization, which had six “commanderies” in La Crosse, was unabashedly Protestant and required of its members certain beliefs, such as an acceptance of Holy Scripture as the sole source of religious truth, which no faithful Catholic could countenance. Confident that these arguments would suffice to keep the “practicing Catholic” away from the Knights of Malta, he worried nonetheless that the “nominal Catholic does as he pleases—he considers himself wiser than Solomon and speaks of ‘*Pfaffenherrschaft*’ [rule by clerics] and ‘force of conscience’ and denies the faith in favor of ephemeral, worldly advantages.” Untraut concluded the essay with a plea: “Sons of the Church, do not join any societies that stand outside the Church, but rather only those Church-related organizations that act in a true Catholic fashion and know nothing of ‘liberalism.’”<sup>38</sup>

In his arguments against secret societies, Untraut claimed that the authority of ecclesiastical legislation was on his side. Also in 1895—the year three secret societies, including the Knights of Pythias and the Oddfellows, failed to gain Roman approval—he expounded upon a statement in a German catechism which read, “*Du sollst dich keiner verbotenen Gesellschaft anschließen*” (“You shall join no forbidden societies”). Warning that “lodges” were expanding rapidly in the United States, he proclaimed, “The number of

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<sup>38</sup>“*Die Malteser-Ritter* (Knights of Malta),” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 5 December 1895. The source of Untraut’s frankly rather paranoid beliefs about the Knights of Malta is unclear but may have resulted from his confusing the Knights of Malta with the Freemasons or with a local group claiming association with the Knights of Malta.

Freemasons and members of other secret societies is legion, to the ruin of society, the destruction of the Christian religion, and the temporal and eternal undoing of the individual.” With these words he expressed the belief of many conservatives that secret societies challenged He resolutely condemned the supporters of these organizations, including liberal Catholics: “Only liberalism, which the Catholic ‘*Americanissimi*’ defend, sees no danger in secret societies and ‘kicks’ against the acceptance of the rule in question [opposing secret societies] as a law of the Church.”<sup>39</sup>

Liberal Catholics also supported the development of friendlier relations with the American Protestant majority and advocated at least limited cooperation with them in such spheres as practical social reform work.<sup>40</sup> Believing that Protestants were in error but nonetheless usually had some truth that could well led them to the Church, liberals were open to contact with Protestants and even other non-Catholics in such forums as the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago, which raised fears of religious indifferentism among more conservative Catholics, including Cardinal Francesco Satolli, apostolic delegate to the United States.<sup>41</sup>

Conservatives, however, harbored deep and abiding suspicions about American

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<sup>39</sup>“Rev. Färber’s *Katechismus und die Gebote der Kirche*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 7 November 1895.

<sup>40</sup>Aaron I. Abell, *American Catholicism and Social Action: A Search for Social Justice, 1865-1950*, (Garden City, NY: Hanover House, 1960), 120.

<sup>41</sup>Cross, *Liberal Catholicism*, 54, 201; Fogarty, *Vatican and American Hierarchy*, 131. In 1928, Pope Pius XI officially opposed Catholic-Protestant interaction out of fear that it might lead to the belief that all religions are equal.

Protestants, who had an unhappy history of nativism and anti-Catholic prejudice.<sup>42</sup> Untraut cautioned readers of the *Patriot* against certain types of interaction with Protestants and other non-Catholics. For instance, he devoted a series of eleven essays to the topic of mixed marriages, which he deemed generally inadvisable.<sup>43</sup> The first essay, which appeared fortuitously on St. Valentine's Day in 1895, began with the concession, "There have been mixed marriages in every era, and there will unfortunately be such marriages until the end of time." Although Untraut did not favor a complete ban on marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics, since such a prohibition might result in "something still worse than mixed marriages—the abandonment of the faith," he nonetheless cited numerous objections to these unions. Mixed marriages, he argued, suffered from a fundamental barrier to the complete union of the couple, in that "one considers the other heterodox or heretical and fears for the salvation of the other and for his or her eternal soul." While addressing the question of marriage between Catholics and all types of non-Catholics, Untraut stated plainly that a Catholic-Protestant marriage, a "marriage entered into with a baptized heretic," was certainly a mixed marriage, though not as severe a case as a union between a Catholic and an unbeliever.<sup>44</sup>

Like many Catholic conservatives, Untraut feared that liberal toleration of

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<sup>42</sup>Cross, *Liberal Catholicism*, 51. Regarding legitimate reasons for conservative suspicions about Protestants in the United States, see Ray Allen Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860* (New York: Rinehart, 1952).

<sup>43</sup>"*Mischehen*," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 14 February-25 April 1895.

<sup>44</sup>"*Mischehen*," Part I, "*Begriff der Mischehen*," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 14 February 1895.

interaction with non-Catholics often went too far and created conditions in which religious indifference could flourish. In his writings on mixed marriages, for instance, he reminded his readers to beware of the “heretic who assures his beloved bride that ‘all religions are equal, we all want to get to heaven, you according to your church and I according to my (Lutheran, Calvinist, etc.) church will enter the kingdom of heaven.’”<sup>45</sup> He objected, as well, to those liberal Catholics who “gladly accepted Protestants as godparents—out of neighborliness and friendship,”<sup>46</sup> and he railed against those who would transform a Catholic church into a “lecture hall” and charge admission for “non-sectarian” speeches. Were such lectures truly religious, he admitted, one could hardly complain, but “in order to make them attractive, they must be ‘non-sectarian,’ according to the principle, ‘We all believe in one God—Christian, Jew, Hottentot.’”<sup>47</sup> Untraut considered outrageous any activity, such as a non-sectarian lecture or secret society meeting, which might give the impression that all religions had equal access to divine truth since “there is only one true religion and that is the Catholic religion.”<sup>48</sup>

### *The Abbelen Memorial*

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, when the liberal-

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<sup>45</sup>“*Begriff der Mischehen.*”

<sup>46</sup>“*Das Einmaleins des praktisch-katholischen Lebens,*” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 11 October 1894.

<sup>47</sup>“*Das Haus Gottes eine-lecture hall,*” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 13 September 1894.

<sup>48</sup>“*Begriff der Mischehen*”; Fogarty, *Vatican and American Hierarchy*, 132.

conservative conflict reached its peak, German Catholics in the United States were actively promoting a conservative agenda within their community. In 1886 Milwaukee priest Peter Abbelen composed and submitted to Rome a document in which he detailed grievances of German Catholics in the United States. This so-called "Abbelen Memorial" requested "equality and independence" for German parishes and objected in particular to the "relation of dependence and subordination" Abbelen perceived in German parishes vis-a-vis Irish parishes. The memorial closed with a summary of eight demands, including the placement of German (and other non-English-speaking) parishes on an equal footing with Irish (English) parishes; the assignment of immigrants to the appropriate national churches; the installment of German-speaking clergy wherever German-speaking Catholics worshiped; and the acknowledgment of the eventual necessity of offering Catholics of German descent the opportunity to transfer to English-language parishes.<sup>49</sup> Significantly, earlier in 1886, prompted by a query from Bishop Kilian Flasch of La Crosse, the American bishops of dioceses with large German populations had addressed two of Abbelen's main points: the canonical status of national parishes and the obligation of children in a national parish to remain in that parish. The bishops had decided that national parishes had a status equal to that of territorial parishes and that children could attend the parochial schools of another parish and, once they were grown, were free to attend the territorial parish if they so desired.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>"Abbelen Memorial," in Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 289-90, 295-96; Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 297.

<sup>50</sup>Fogarty, *Vatican and American Hierarchy*, 45-46.

Thus, when Abbelen took his grievances to Rome and submitted them to the Vatican's Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, they were by and large moot points. On account of this, as well as its substance, the memorial dismayed some of the more liberal members of the American Catholic hierarchy, notably Bishop John Ireland of St. Paul and Bishop John J. Keane of Richmond, who also presented their position to the Sacred Congregation. They objected first to the secretive nature of Abbelen's appeal to Rome and then to the structure of Abbelen's argument, which posited an opposition between "Irish" and "German" Catholics in the United States. Such an opposition was, to their minds, meaningless, and the question at hand was one of language, not nationality. They also expressed concern that the German element in the American Church desired nothing less than to remake the institution in its own immigrant image: "The object of some German bishops seems to be to Germanize their dioceses, and that of many German priests to Germanize their parishes. As soon as one of these priests is placed over a mixed parish, the school becomes German; the German customs are introduced into the church...Let this German element but once obtain a preponderance, and it will immediately inaugurate a warfare to perpetuate it."<sup>51</sup>

In its response to the Abbelen Memorial and the opposition to it, the Sacred Congregation chose to address only the two issues on which the American bishops had

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<sup>51</sup>In Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 304. Gleason and Salvaterra pointed out that "[c]ontrary to the impression sometimes given, the national parish did not have to be forced down the throats of the Americanizing bishops of the 1880's and 1890's. Cardinal Gibbons and his episcopal allies recognized as well as anyone else that the national parish performed an indispensable function. The point on which they would differ from the spokesmen for the Germans at the time of the nationality controversy was *how long* the national parish would be needed to perform this function" ("Ethnicity, Immigration," 15).

already voiced their opinion. It affirmed the legitimacy and equality of German and other national parishes, approved of irremovable rectors for such parishes, and required that children in national parishes remain in those parishes until grown. In sum, the decision essentially validated the status quo since national parishes were already common in the United States and had been approved by American bishops.<sup>52</sup>

*Cahensly, the St. Raphaelsverein, and the Lucerne Memorial*

Later, in 1891, another document relating to German American Catholics was submitted to Rome. The Lucerne Memorial grew out of the work of one of the most controversial figures in late-nineteenth-century Catholicism, Peter Paul Cahensly, a Catholic layman and German Center Party politician who worked tirelessly on behalf of German Catholic emigrants, despite official German government opposition to his efforts. He proposed the establishment of a society for the protection of German Catholic emigrants, leading to the founding in 1871 of the St. Raphaelsverein, whose full name, *Der St. Raphaelsverein zum Schutze katholischer Deutscher Auswanderer* (The Society of St. Raphael for the Protection of German Catholic Emigrants) captures the essence of its aims: “to help the emigrant in every possible way before he sailed, during his voyage, and at the ports of debarkation.”<sup>53</sup>

Since hundreds of thousands of German Catholics chose the United States as their

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<sup>52</sup>Fogarty, *Vatican and American Hierarchy*, 48-49; Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 33; Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 297.

<sup>53</sup>Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 28-30. See also Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 298.

destination, Cahensly and the St. Raphaelsverein as well as German American Catholics eagerly sought to set up a branch of the society in the United States. They accomplished this in 1883, following Cahensly's visit to the United States, and the American branch of the St. Raphaelsverein achieved notable success in its first years. At the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884, members of the hierarchy praised the organization for its relief work among German immigrants which later included Leo House, an institution in New York which offered assistance to arriving German Catholic immigrants. From its opening in 1889 to 1901, Leo House provided social services, including everything from assistance with banking and letter-writing to free meals and lodging, to tens of thousands of immigrants.<sup>54</sup>

Despite these accomplishments, however, the society and its founder became embroiled in controversy after the drafting and submission to Rome of the so-called Lucerne Memorial, composed at the First International Conference of St. Raphael Societies, a meeting of leaders of the various national branches of organization, which no American representatives attended. The gathering took place in Lucerne, Switzerland, in late 1890, and the memorial produced there, based on a draft by a member of the Italian *Società San Raffaele*, called for the establishment of separate parishes, congregations, or missions for each nationality, served by priests of the appropriate national background; the operation of parochial schools separated by nationality; the inclusion of members of each nationality in the hierarchy; and the support of the Holy See for efforts on behalf of emigrant Catholics. The Italian representative, the Marchese Volpe-Landi, and Cahensly

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<sup>54</sup>Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 58; 109-10.

were to present the memorial, signed by directors of all the society's branches, to Pope Leo XIII in 1891, but Cahensly had to do this alone after Volpe-Landi was called away.<sup>55</sup>

The first reports of the memorial reached the American Catholic press gave the mistaken impression that it was the work of Cahensly alone and further confused the issue with claims that Cahensly was embroiled in a complex plot involving the Vatican, German Center party politicians, and German American priests and laymen, with the aim of ensuring separate bishops, clergy, and schools for each nationality. These early dispatches provoked strong responses from liberal Catholics like Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, who deplored such evidence of foreign interference in the American Church and labeled the aims of the memorial "Cahenslyism."<sup>56</sup>

Cahensly then engendered further controversy by authoring a second memorial, in which he cited greatly exaggerated figures for both the number of Catholic immigrants who had entered the United States and the number who had subsequently abandoned their faith and claimed that in order to forestall further membership losses in the American church, Catholic leaders needed to extend to immigrants opportunities to preserve cultural expressions of their religious life.<sup>57</sup> The second memorial was made available to the American press and its appearance brought the nationality debate to the fore.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Fogarty, *Vatican and American Hierarchy*, 55-56; Ellis, *Documents*, 477-478.

<sup>56</sup>Fogarty, *Vatican and American Hierarchy*, 57-58; Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 298; Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 176; Ellis, *Documents*, 476.

<sup>57</sup>Fogarty, *Vatican and American Hierarchy*, 57-58; Ellis, *Documents*, 477-78; Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 263.

<sup>58</sup>Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 298.

After considering the claims of the St. Raphaelsverein, Pope Leo XIII declared the demands of the Lucerne Memorial “neither opportune nor necessary,” and the furor surrounding Cahensly and the Lucerne Memorial, which had further damaged relations between German-speaking and English-speaking Catholics, eventually subsided in the United States. In 1898 the Deutsch-Amerikaner Priester-Verein disbanded, and German Catholics acknowledged the end of “Cahenslyism.”<sup>59</sup>

### *German Catholic solidarity*

The Priester-Verein had come into existence just over a decade earlier, in 1887, the same year the Sacred Congregation replied to the Abbelen Memorial, and that year saw the first national *Katholikentag* in the United States, as well. German clergy in the United States established the Deutsch-Amerikaner Priester-Verein, as a national organization to promote the interests of German Catholics. The *Katholikentag*, an assembly of German Catholics, modeled on similar gatherings held in Germany, gave both priests and lay Catholics an opportunity to come together for worship, lectures, and socializing. Both the Priester-Verein and the *Katholikentag* served as “manifestation[s] of German Catholic solidarity.”<sup>60</sup> Organizers of the Priester-Verein and the *Katholikentage* wanted to address a broad range of concerns they believed to be common among German American Catholics, including the German Catholic press, music in

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<sup>59</sup>Fogarty, *Vatican and American Hierarchy*, 58-60; Abell, *American Catholicism and Social Action*, 134. For a positive reassessment of Cahensly, see Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 258-60; 271, n. 53; 269.

<sup>60</sup>Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 298 (gives incorrect year of 1882); Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 27. See also Hennesey, *American Catholics*, 194.

schools and churches, the education of school teachers, and care for recent immigrants.<sup>61</sup>

Untraut was a firm believer in the importance of such expressions of German Catholic unity. In his view, *Katholikentage* and other public gatherings of German Catholics bore witness to the strength of this group, even in the face of prejudice and persecution, and he admired German Catholics, such as those in Minnesota, who hosted genuine *Katholikentage*, at which only German was spoken and German Catholic heritage was celebrated without shame.<sup>62</sup> Untraut participated eagerly in a Minnesota *Katholikentag* in October, 1896, and enjoyed all aspects of it, from the solemn worship services to the “authentic German fare” served at meals.<sup>63</sup> Later in his career, while serving as pastor of Sacred Heart parish in Eau Claire, he wrote to his bishop about the possibility of hosting a small *Katholikentag* in the city—an event for which he sought permission to use the church itself “since I have no hall which is big enough.”<sup>64</sup>

For German Catholics in the United States, social life was closely linked to religious life, and they organized their voluntary associations around their religious identity.<sup>65</sup> They enjoyed not only special gatherings such as *Katholikentage* and various social activities promoted by their parishes but also the many German Catholic

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<sup>61</sup>Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 98.

<sup>62</sup>“Söhne unserer Katholikentage,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 24 September 1896.

<sup>63</sup>“Nachklänge über den St. Cloud'er Katholikentag” (four-part series), *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 29 October-19 November 1896.

<sup>64</sup>Untraut to Schwebach, 17 September 1909. DLC Archives.

<sup>65</sup>Smith, “Religion and Ethnicity,” 1169.

organizations or *Vereine*. While one purpose of all these clubs and meetings was undoubtedly the simple *Gemütlichkeit* of being together, German Catholic social life also offered a sense of solidarity in an unfamiliar environment and provided opportunities for German Catholics to work for social reform.

Much of the social life of German American Catholics centered on the societies and organizations they founded for a variety of purposes. Often named for a particular saint, such as St. Rose of Lima or St. Aloysius, these groups generally had a primarily social function but nonetheless took part in religious celebrations, as well. For instance, the St. Rose Society at Holy Trinity Church, where Untraut served from 1893 to 1907, gave young German Catholic women a chance to socialize together, to do good works for the parish, and to participate as a group in special worship services.

Untraut considered "*echt katholisches Vereinswesen*" ("genuine Catholic organizations") a great boon to German Catholic life in the United States, but he strongly criticized any club or society which strayed from his understanding of "*echt katholisch*." A great believer in the benefits of *Vereinswesen* for the individual, the church, and the larger society, he summarized his position by writing, "Past and present show that *Vereine* are necessary. *Vereine*, when rightly led, accord considerable advantages to the individual member as well as to the religious, civic, and social life of human society."<sup>66</sup> In an essay addressed to "the German youth," he recommended membership in "pure, churchly organizations or those that stand under ecclesiastical authority," and declared, "In these

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<sup>66</sup>"*Katholisches Vereinswesen und katholische Versammlungen*," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 21 May 1896.

German organizations you find a firm support for your faith, your morals, for the beloved, precious mother tongue and the lovely German traditions, a good helper in business and in times of peril.”<sup>67</sup>

Untraut feared greatly, however, the infiltration of liberalism and worldliness into German Catholic *Vereine* and wrote extensively on the topic, always warning readers to keep a safe distance from those societies that had been corrupted by the *Zeitgeist*.<sup>68</sup> In 1896, for example, he described how “liberal members of the *Vereine*,” following the misguided lead of “lodges, sports clubs, atheists, and heretics,” were permitting and even encouraging such activities as dances and masquerades. “But this living in accord with the times,” he warned in ominous tones, “this lust for pleasure and amusement, is the murderer of man and destroyer of his happiness, the ruin of the happiness and well-being of his family, the destruction of religious life.”<sup>69</sup>

German Catholics’ tendency toward conservatism also influenced their attitudes toward social reform, though simply labeling their approach “conservative” greatly oversimplifies this complex and important element of German Catholic immigrant life. Though active promoters of social reform in the United States, German Catholics tended

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<sup>67</sup>“*Ein Wort an die deutschen Jünglinge*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 12 December 1895.

<sup>68</sup>“*Liberalismus in katholischen Vereinen*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 20 September 1894; “*Zeitungen, Vereine, Wahlen, Glauben*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 13 February 1896; “*Ein Schritt in der rechten Richtung*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 27 August 1896; “*Griff und Paßwort in katholischen Vereinen*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 22 October 1896.

<sup>69</sup>“*Genuß- und Vergnügungssucht in katholischen Vereinen*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 20 Aug 1896.

to favor traditional, even medieval, means for accomplishing such reform. The paradoxical nature of this approach to issues of social welfare prompted Philip Gleason to describe American German Catholics as “conservative reformers.”

German Catholics were particularly well suited for the work of social reform, as they possessed a strong sense of community and, as distinctly foreign immigrants, could turn a critical eye to the American scene. Particularly during and after the liberal-conservative wrangling of the late nineteenth century, conservative German Catholics displayed a greater willingness to question the conditions of American life than did most liberals, who sometimes hesitated to advocate social reform, as this implied criticism of the United States.<sup>70</sup> Philip Gleason has aptly summarized the relationship between the liberal-conservative conflict and German Catholic attitudes toward social reform:

At least in part, it was precisely because they were estranged and mistrustful that the German Catholics were predisposed to take an interest in the social question. They needed no muckrakers to tell them that all was not well in American society. They had known that all along. After more than a decade of resisting the misguided enthusiasms of the Americanizers, the German Catholics were well practiced in the criticism of American weaknesses, for in the course of defending their own language and culture they had naturally had occasion to examine the imperfections of the culture they were called upon to embrace. Flaws, of course, there were, and the German Catholics pointed them out: limitations in such key institutions as the public school and failings in the national character, such as the prevailing materialism and worship of mammon.<sup>71</sup>

Never one to shy away from critical comment, Untraut exemplified this German Catholic willingness to call attention to perceived flaws in American society. Although he

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<sup>70</sup>Cross, *Liberal Catholicism*, 108.

<sup>71</sup>Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 44.

admired such American ideals as freedom of expression and often encouraged his German Catholic audience to support the "*Sternenbannerland*" ("Land of the Stars and Stripes"), he also recognized that not all Americans welcomed newcomers and that some in the country took a greater interest in trivial amusements than in helping the less fortunate. Nativism, he believed, betrayed the very foundations of the country, as he noted pointedly in an 1896 essay. "To stir up hatred of foreigners," he wrote, "is the life's work of many genuine [*waschecht*] Americans, who think they hold the lease to the land of the 'Pilgrim fathers.'"<sup>72</sup> A month later, he produced a blistering critique of those Americans who pursued the "season's pleasures," blissfully ignoring the plight of the poor, who endured great economic and social hardship in the 1890s. In his words:

When we page through the "Sunday papers" of the Anglo-American press...we find under the title "Society" or "Season's pleasures" a series of announcements about how the week or day or night might be pleasantly spent, especially by the "fashionable" [*vornehm*] classes. As we read through these interesting (?) [*sic*] curiosities, nothing suggests that we live in hard times. One talks of business slowdowns, of masses of people who are out of work, of families near starvation; indeed, some see the future covered in dark, ominous clouds and fear a violent coup in society. And yet despite all this there are "Wagner evenings," "social clubs" in abundance, "evenings at cards," "charity balls," and all the amusements, pleasures, and entertainments one could name, which delight pleasure-seeking people, boys and girls [*Männlein und Weiblein*], by chasing the cares and concerns of life from their heads.<sup>73</sup>

Although events of the late nineteenth century influenced their attitudes toward social reform, German Catholics had taken a strong interest in social issues even decades

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<sup>72</sup>"*Die Loge und die 'Fremdlinge,'*" *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 8 October 1896.

<sup>73</sup>"Season's Pleasures," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 5 November 1896.

earlier. With their founding in 1855 of the Central Verein, “the first organization for Church-based social outreach,” German immigrants had become the first American Catholics to respond systematically to the social needs of their community.<sup>74</sup> Originally begun in Baltimore to provide social services to immigrant Catholics<sup>75</sup>, this group became a vehicle for advocating a distinctive German Catholic philosophy of social reform and new basis for ethnic identity among German immigrants and their descendants.

Untraut supported the Central Verein and considered it a prime example of “*echt katholisches Vereinswesen*.” Forty years after its founding, he praised the “German Roman Catholic Central Verein,” which he thought took precedence over all other organizations “on account of its age, its strength, and its genuine Catholic purpose.” He admired in particular the Germanness of the Central Verein: “It is indeed German in its origin, German in its structure, German in its character, German in its language, German in its habits, and simultaneously a loyal *Verein*, wholly devoted to the ‘land of freedom.’” When he encouraged young German Americans to join “an organization which preserves and tends to the mother tongue, has German customs and habits, and requires true love for the Church and the Fatherland from its members,” he clearly had in mind the Central Verein, “a bulwark for *Deutschtum* in the American Church, as well as for the American Church itself.”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Keith Pecklers, *The Unread Vision: The Liturgical Movement in the United States of America* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 96.

<sup>75</sup>Abell, *American Catholicism and Social Action*, 18.

<sup>76</sup>“*Der Deutsche Römisch-Katholische Central-Verein*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 26 December 1895.

The Central Verein not only perpetuated *Deutschtum* in the United States, it also undertook social reform efforts, especially under the leadership of Frederick Kenkel, who became head of the organization's newly established social bureau in 1908. Influenced by German Romanticism, Kenkel and the Central Verein championed an approach to social reform based on an idealization of the Middle Ages and a holistic view of human life. This corporative philosophy was not without attractive elements, particularly its romantic, idealistic dream of a society in which social reform would recognize the connections inherent between all parts of human life and address all dimensions of the human condition. Yet social reform efforts based on this thinking made little headway in the United States. Kenkel and his fellows, adamant in their belief that social reform had to encompass all elements of human life, were ill-equipped to develop practical means of meeting the overwhelming social needs of modern America. More theoretician than social worker, Kenkel displayed greater interest in examining the philosophical possibilities of reform than in implementing concrete remedies. Attempts to introduce corporatism in the United States also foundered, Gleason has argued, "because it was so exotic, so foreign to the experience of Catholics in this country, that they found it difficult to comprehend and impossible to act upon."<sup>77</sup>

Nevertheless, with its peculiarly German approach to social reform, the Central Verein provided German immigrants and, more importantly, their children and grandchildren, with a way of maintaining a proud and distinctive ethnic identity without

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<sup>77</sup>Philip Gleason, "Mass and Maypole Revisited: American Catholics and the Middle Ages," *The Catholic Historical Review* 57, no. 2 (July 1971): 268; Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 136; Hennesey, *American Catholics*, 212.

clinging to the older and increasingly irrelevant causes of language and nationality. While German Catholics did not fully abandon these more traditional interests, they supported the Central Verein and its philosophy, as well. “[D]evotion to social reform,” according to Gleason, “furnished a new and more universalistic mode of expressing ethnic loyalty that was accessible to the American-born generations whose ‘cultural’ ethnicity was already attenuated.”<sup>78</sup> In this way, the approach of the Central Verein became for some German Catholics an alternative or supplementary source of ethnic identity and thus remained an important force in German-American Catholic life even as immigration patterns shifted. Likewise, the humanitarian relief work that some German American organizations undertook to aid Germany after the First World War revived interest in German ethnic associations, the *Vereine* that had played an important role in German American social life, and allowed them to shift their *raison d’être* from the preservation of language and culture to the amelioration of social problems.<sup>79</sup>

### *The German Catholic press*

German Catholics in the United States also strove to hold fast to their ethnic identity by developing a thriving German-language press. German immigrants had developed and supported German-language publications to such an extent that by 1872 eighty percent of the non-English press in the United States was German, and, prior to World War I, German-language newspapers “were a chief ingredient of the atmosphere

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<sup>78</sup>Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 210.

<sup>79</sup>Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 318.

the German-Americans breathed, a leading factor in their conviction that the American future would and should be cast in a Germanic mold."<sup>80</sup> According to John Kulas, in his study of one of the most important German Catholic newspapers in the country, *Der Wanderer* of St. Paul, Minnesota,

The German immigrant newspaper played a significant role in shaping and stimulating German ethnic communities throughout the country, admonishing German-Americans to adhere to their traditions and language and to carve out in their large areas of heavy and exclusive concentration a style and pattern of life that could be given and sometimes explicitly was given the name *Deutschtum*. In language that was often grandiose the values of German culture were promoted, defended, and glorified. As such, the newspaper was an antidote to cultural disintegration and bolstered the feeling of self-worth in the uncertain immigrant.<sup>81</sup>

*Der Wanderer* and papers like it covered news "aus der alten Heimat," discussed issues of interest to youth, offered jokes and humorous anecdotes, published serialized works of fiction, challenged readers with *Rätselfn* (puzzles), and informed them of events, both secular and ecclesiastical, in the region. As "the voice and mirror of the immigrant community," these publications offered German Catholic immigrants both comforting reminders of the old country and the vital information necessary to adapt to their new environment.<sup>82</sup>

Untraut believed in the importance of the German Catholic press and argued

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<sup>80</sup>Richard O'Connor, *German-Americans: An Informal History* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968), 360; Tolzmann, *German-American Experience*, 228. According to Kirschbaum, in 1910, 55% of the foreign-language press in the United States was German (*Eradication of German Culture*, 8), and according to O'Connor, the percentage in 1914 was 40% (*German-Americans*, 360).

<sup>81</sup>John S. Kulas, *Der Wanderer of St. Paul, The First Decade, 1867-1877: A Mirror of the German-Catholic Immigrant Experience in Minnesota* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), 55.

<sup>82</sup>Bonney, "German-American Heritage," 28.

passionately in its favor. He used the La Crosse diocesan weekly as a platform for reaching an audience of German American Catholics and often as a vehicle for showing his support for all German Catholic publications. In an 1896 essay entitled "*Aufgabe der deutschen katholischen Presse*" ("Task of the German Catholic press"), he summarized the responsibility of these publications to "discuss in the mother tongue the burning issues of the day in the ecclesiastical, social, and political arenas, for the use and benefit of [their] readers and for the betterment of the church and the state." He believed the German Catholic press ought to adopt a strict conservative line by defending parochial schools, opposing liberalism, and supporting "true Catholic societies and organizations," and he deemed especially insidious those publications that appeared under the guise of the Catholic press but advocated liberal causes. "These are yet more harmful," he wrote, "than those that openly oppose the Church—it is these that appear to the family in the form of an angel of light and so drip slowly into the hearts of their readers the poison of religious indifferentism, liberalism, and immorality."<sup>83</sup>

Untraut's belief in the importance of the German Catholic press seemingly knew no bounds. In typically dramatic fashion, he proclaimed in an 1894 essay:

He who cares about the well-being of youth, the prospering of the family, the blossoming of virtue, the progress of the Church and the religious life, the true love of the Fatherland, and the honor of God, will always support in word and deed the Catholic press, following the wishes of the representatives of Christ, the bishops and zealous pastors, who see in the Catholic press a powerful defense against the assaults of unbelievers and

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<sup>83</sup>"*Aufgabe der deutschen katholischen Presse*," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 9 January 1896; "*Pflicht die katholische deutsche Presse deutscher Sprache zu unterstützen*," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 6 December 1894.

heretics and of immorality—against all that is not Catholic.<sup>84</sup>

Untraut likely would not have needed to employ such bold rhetoric had the German Catholic press been in unquestionably good health. By the mid-1890s, however, because they addressed a particular audience, these newspapers were suffering a precipitous decline as the character of that audience changed. The flood of immigration from Germany that had begun 1870s was slowing somewhat, and as first generation immigrants, whose attachment to the traditions and language of the old country was the most visceral and fervent, aged and died, their children and grandchildren had less need for and interest in German-language publications. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the German-language press in the United States became increasingly Americanized, as “strange mixtures of German and English vocabulary and grammar” came to characterize their style and they gradually became, in essence, American newspapers which happened to appear in a foreign language.<sup>85</sup>

### *Parishes and priests*

As members of a ethnic minority within the American church and a religious minority within their ethnic group, German Catholics turned to their parishes as sources of both religious and national identity. The local parish became for the German Catholic immigrant, who brought with him or her a tradition of flourishing parish life and active lay involvement, the center of both religious and social life. In Untraut’s words, “the parish

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<sup>84</sup>“*Pflicht die katholische deutsche Presse.*”

<sup>85</sup>Carl Wittke, *The German-Language Press in America* (New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1973), 197, 200.

church is the central focus of the entire congregation. Young and old should go there to attend worship; it is there that the shepherd prays for his flock and breaks for them the bread of life."<sup>86</sup>

Characterized by strong lay leadership and cooperative spirit which they carried with them from the Old World, German American Catholics tended to favor a relatively democratic approach to parish life, and this heritage of lay initiative sometimes led parishioners to challenge the authority of the priests who served in German parishes.<sup>87</sup> Untraut faced such challenges during his years at Sacred Heart parish in Eau Claire, when some members of the church sent the bishop a petition asking for his removal and later wrote other letters of complaint to the bishop.<sup>88</sup> Nevertheless, the work of German Catholic lay people contributed much to the American Church and helped meet the religious and social needs of this immigrant group. German Catholic lay leaders—such as Nicholas and Casper Meyer and other early settlers of the area which became the home of Our Lady Perpetual Help, Untraut's parish from 1888 to 1893—often helped found and manage parishes in the United States, and these ethnic parishes became the "primary institution" in the struggle to preserve *Deushtum* in America.<sup>89</sup>

Since much of both religious and social life for German Catholic immigrants

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<sup>86</sup>"*Rechte und Pflichten des Seelsorgers*," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 25 October 1894; Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 8-9; Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 168-169.

<sup>87</sup>Liptak, *Immigrants and Their Church*, 97; Shaw, "The Cities and the Plains," 304.

<sup>88</sup>Richard Hermann, et al. to Schwebach, 1 March 1908; Untraut to Schwebach, 10 June 1910. DLC Archives.

<sup>89</sup>Stephen J. Shaw, *The Catholic Parish as a Way-Station of Ethnicity and Americanization: Chicago's Germans and Italians, 1903-1930* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1991), 43; Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 163, 168.

centered on the local parish, the parish priest played a significant role in the life of the community, and since the community had a great interest in preserving its language, priests who spoke German were highly desirable.<sup>90</sup> As early as the 1840s, as German Catholic immigrants began to enter the United States in significant numbers, some leading figures in the American Church expressed a desire to address the need for priests trained to serve this particular ethnic population, and German Catholics believed they needed a special seminary in order both to counter the anti-Catholic sentiment then simmering in the larger German immigrant population and to preserve their unique identity within the greater American Church. Bishop John Purcell of Cincinnati, for instance, proposed the establishment of a seminary dedicated to training German-speaking priests, and King Ludwig I supported the founding of a seminary in Bavaria for educating German priests to minister in the United States.<sup>91</sup>

While neither of these plans came to fruition, Catholic priests proficient in the German language played an important role in the late-nineteenth century American Church. Historian John Tracy Ellis noted that in 1869, about one-third of the 3,505 priests in the United States “were of German birth, descent, or German-speaking,” and that this percentage held through the end of the century. This is evidence, he wrote, of “the seriousness with which the Germans took their obligations at a time when the great

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<sup>90</sup>Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 9; Olson, *Catholic Immigrants*, 57; Liptak, *Immigrants and Their Church*, 97; Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 162.

<sup>91</sup>Philip Gleason, “Chicago and Milwaukee: Contrasting Experiences in Seminary Planting,” in *Studies in Catholic History in Honor of John Tracy Ellis*, ed. Nelson H. Minnich, Robert B. Eno, and Robert F. Trisco (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1985), 165; Joseph M. White, *The Diocesan Seminary in the United States: A History from the 1780s to the Present* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 90-91.

majority of them were convinced that to lose their language was to lose their faith.”<sup>92</sup>

Peter Abbelen argued from this position in his “Memorial,” in which he countered the claim that “We are in America, we should be Americans” by asserting that however desirable this goal may be, ensuring that Catholic immigrants remained true to their church was much more important, even if this meant retaining the customs and languages of their native lands: “Now experience teaches us that the only means by which Catholic Germans (and other foreigners) shall be able to preserve their Catholic faith and morals is that they shall have their own priests, who shall instruct them in the language and traditions of their fatherland.”<sup>93</sup>

In the minds of those who adopted the popular slogan, “language saves faith,” English-speaking parishes jeopardized the very foundations of German immigrants’ faith. Continuing a tradition begun in 1788 with the founding Philadelphia’s German parish Holy Trinity, the first national parish in the United States, many German immigrants strongly supported the establishment of parishes based on language rather than geography since English-speaking Irish Catholic parishes represented a significant threat to German language and culture.<sup>94</sup> Two of Untraut’s parishes, Holy Trinity in La Crosse and Sacred Heart in Eau Claire, were national parishes whose first members were German Catholics who left other congregations—St. Joseph’s Cathedral in La Crosse and St. Patrick’s Church in Eau Claire—to found parishes which preserved their language and traditions.

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<sup>92</sup>Ellis, “Formation of the American Priest,” 31.

<sup>93</sup>“Abbelen Memorial,” in Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 292.

<sup>94</sup>Olson, *Catholic Immigrants*, 56. See also Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 9, n. 10; Liptak, *Immigrants and Their Church*, 94.

By removing German Catholics from the broader stream of American Catholic life, the national parish helped them to preserve their faith in the face of challenges from other Catholic traditions, such as those of French and Irish immigrants, while simultaneously helping immigrants begin the process of integration into American life. In the words of Reinhard Doerries, "the ethnic church, by helping to maintain and strengthen the faith, often reinforced the immigrants' ability to protect themselves and their personalities against the dramatic onslaught of strange and unknown forces."<sup>95</sup> While not all German immigrants had access to national parishes, many such parishes were established and continued to exist even into the 1940s. From 222 German parishes in the United States in 1880, the number increased to 336 in 1900 before declining again to 280 in 1920 and 237 in 1940.<sup>96</sup>

#### *Preservation and decline of the German language*

Many German American Catholics, Untraut very much among them, considered preservation of their native language of paramount importance, and this desire often fueled the fight for parochial schools, German-language newspapers, and national parishes. Their shared language united German-speaking Catholics from different regions, especially since, upon arrival in the United States, these immigrants, unlike most of their Irish coreligionists, suddenly spoke a foreign language. Language provided common ground

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<sup>95</sup>Reinhard R. Doerries, "Immigrant Culture and Religion: Church and Faith Among German Americans," in *Germans in America: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Randall M. Miller (Philadelphia: The German Society of Pennsylvania, 1984), 85-86. See also Barry, "The German Catholic Immigrant," 191; Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 204.

<sup>96</sup>Olson, *Catholic Immigrants*, 122.

for German-speaking immigrants from many regions and offered tangible opportunities, such as German-language schools and newspapers, to preserve a unique identity in a new environment. As one analysis of the fate of the German language in the United States has noted, "When millions of monolingual immigrants stream into a country that speaks a language different from their own, the natural thing for them to do is to form a semi-autonomous community of their own, with their churches, clubs, business establishments, and schools."<sup>97</sup>

Thus, rather than forsake the mother tongue, many German Catholic immigrants chose to preserve and defend it with a passion born of the belief that the German language was far more than merely a means of communication but also the transmitter of culture and guardian of faith.<sup>98</sup> As a people who had not known political unity prior to 1871, who in many cases did not have any sense of a country called "Germany," and who, after unification, had little reason to rally around the leadership of Bismarck, German Catholics relied on their language as a source of national solidarity and pride.<sup>99</sup> This led inspired in

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<sup>97</sup>Kloss, "German-American Language Maintenance Efforts," 226; Kulas, *Der Wanderer*, 65. On the role of language in the assimilation of Irish Catholics, see Gleason and Salvaterra, "Ethnicity, Immigration," 16-17.

<sup>98</sup>Kulas, *Der Wanderer*, 65. A desire to retain their native language had long been characteristic of German Catholic immigrants to the United States, as Lambert Schott points out in *Pioneer German Catholic in the American Colonies (1734-1784)* (New York: The United States Catholic Historical Society, 1933): "It is a peculiarity of all Catholics to desire to use their mother tongue in their devotions and especially in the confessional, even if they know the language of the country or of the priest quite well. The early Germans were known to cling to their native language quite obstinately, molding it, by accepting many English terms, into 'Pennsylvania Dutch'" (39).

<sup>99</sup>Bergquist, "German-America in the 1890s," 7. The question of Catholic support for the formation of a German nation-state is complex since no German "national Catholicism" existed. German Catholic initially tended to support the "großdeutsch" settlement of the question of German unification, meaning they favored the inclusion of Catholic Austria. When the new nation was formed along the lines of the "kleindeutsch" model instead—and when the Kulturkampf quickly followed—German Catholics showed little interest in supporting the Reich. See Thomas Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch*:

German Catholic immigrants a powerful sense of “cultural nationalism” and a related belief that, in the words of James Olson, “language and faith in America were inextricably connected.”<sup>100</sup>

German Catholic immigrants to the United States clung fiercely to their language in large part in order to continue practicing their religion as they had done in the Old World. They hoped to protect their faith—and, significantly, the faith of their children—by holding fast to their traditions. A staunch advocate of the preservation of German, Untraut argued that religion and language ought not, and in fact could not, be separated. “He who supports and tends to the mother tongue,” he wrote, “promotes the cause of religion,” and he characterized the German language as “profoundly connected to religion.”<sup>101</sup>

Living in a state whose legislature sought to ban the use of foreign language instruction in all schools by introduction of the Bennett Law in 1890, Untraut fiercely defended the right and obligation of German Catholics to preserve the German language. He objected strenuously to demands that German Catholics adopt the “language of the country,” and found particularly offensive those within the German Catholic community who advanced such arguments.<sup>102</sup> Describing these German Catholics as traitors,

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*Deutschland 1870-1918* (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1988), 46-51.

<sup>100</sup>Olson, *Catholic Immigrants*, 55. See also Philip Gleason, *Keeping the Faith: American Catholicism Past and Present* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 42.

<sup>101</sup>“*Pflicht die katholische Presse.*” See also Shaw, *Catholic Parish*, 43.

<sup>102</sup>Interestingly, in response to the demand for “American language for Americans,” Untraut raised the question of what the “American language” was. He noted that “rightly concluded,” this would be the language of the Indians, though their many languages further complicated matters. He continued, “Well, then what should happen with Canada?” Many French speakers lived there, and “the Canadians

“enemies in our own camp,” he lamented that they “are ashamed of being German in word and deed,” that “within their families, German is banned,” and that “they advocated an ‘english sermon’ in the worship service.” He feared that in the “*Lande der Freiheit*,” the mother tongue was to be “laid on its deathbed,” a fate he equated with the “death of the soul of a people.”<sup>103</sup>

Unfortunately for Untraut and other supporters of the German language, changing patterns of immigration led to a marked decline in use of German in the United States. Interest in the language, as well as in traditions and customs of the Old Country, began to wane in the United States even before the start of the twentieth century, as fewer immigrants from German-speaking regions came to the United States and second- and third-generation Americans of German descent adopted the language and lifestyle of the land of their birth.<sup>104</sup> One sign of this decline was the changing attitude of the American Catholic Church toward the German language. In 1894, for instance, according to a brief notice in the German-language weekly newspaper of the Diocese of La Crosse, English had been mandated as the language of all cathedral churches in the United States. “The order has particular significance for La Crosse,” the item noted, “since in nearly all other cathedral churches the English language is already in use.”<sup>105</sup> Additionally, in 1900, Bishop Frederick Eis of Marquette ordered that English was to be preached at least once

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are just as much Americans as the men of the United States!” “*Amerikanische Sprache für Amerika*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 25 October 1894.

<sup>103</sup>“*Pfleget und erhaltet die Muttersprache.*”

<sup>104</sup> La Vern J. Rippley, *The German-Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976), 180.

<sup>105</sup>“*Kirchliche Berichte*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 3 May 1894.

in the Sunday masses of his diocese; Sebastian Messmer, then bishop of Green Bay, soon followed suit.<sup>106</sup> Around 1900, the fraction of Wisconsin's population able to speak or understand German peaked at about one-third; after that, the percentage declined rapidly.<sup>107</sup>

In addition to changes in the character of the German immigrant community, whose members were becoming increasingly Americanized, the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 profoundly affected German Americans and the fate of the German language. The war and its attendant demonization of all things German made continued defense of the language appear disloyal and unpatriotic, and during the years of American involvement in the war, "anti-German hysteria...rose so suddenly and climbed to such brutal heights of intolerance...that there exists hardly a more apt description of the fate of 'Deutsche Kultur' in the United States than the word eradication."<sup>108</sup>

Wartime anti-German measures in the United States took many forms, both formal and informal, and the German language became a special target. Some states enacted legislation forbidding the teaching of German—which was at the time the most widely studied foreign language in the United States, from the elementary school to the university—while others went even further, as councils of defense banned the use of

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<sup>106</sup>Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 48-49.

<sup>107</sup>Bergquist, "German-America in the 1890s," 7.

<sup>108</sup>Kirschbaum, *Eradication of German Culture*, 15. See also Shaw, *Catholic Parish*, 97; Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 178; Carl Wittke, *German-Americans and the World War (With Special Emphasis on Ohio's German-Language Press)* (Columbus: The Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, 1936), 3-4.

German in nearly every imaginable setting, from worship services to telephone calls.<sup>109</sup> In instituting these restrictions, which occasionally took the extreme form of resolutions calling for the burning of German books, authorities acted out of a desire to Americanize foreign-born citizens and fear that studying German might undermine support for the United States.<sup>110</sup>

As anti-German agitation led to shocking acts of violence and rioting, popular publications expressed similar attitudes toward the continued use of German in the United States, equating the speaking of English with loyalty to American democracy, as in Arthur Guy Empey's unequivocal declaration in the July 1917 issue of *McClure's*: "If a man cannot speak English, and can only speak German, that man must be an enemy of the United States because he does not understand this wonderful democracy of ours. But if a man can speak English and prefers to speak German, then since it is war time, that man must be doubly an enemy of the United States."<sup>111</sup>

The anti-German hysteria that swept the United States during the First World War

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<sup>109</sup>Frederick C. Luebke, *Germans in the New World: Essays in the History of Immigration* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 37. See also. Rippley, *German-Americans*, 186-187; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1963), 208; Tolzmann, *German-American Experience*, 280-83; Kirschbaum, *Eradication of German Culture*, 89 ff., 131; Bernd G. Längin, *Aus Deutschen werden Amerikaner: Die Geschichte der deutschen Einwanderung in die Neue Welt* (Österreichische Landsmannschaft, 1993), 90; Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 250-51.

<sup>110</sup>Kirschbaum, *Eradication of German Culture*, 99-100, 143-44; Higham, *Strangers*, 208; Luebke, *Germans in the New World*, 37; Rippley, *German-Americans*, 186-187.

<sup>111</sup>Quoted in Kirschbaum, *Eradication of German Culture*, 62; Kloss, "German-American Language Maintenance Efforts," 238. See also Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, 14-15.

also exacerbated the decline of the Catholic German-language press.<sup>112</sup> As opposition to the German language increased—even within the American Catholic Church—the German Catholic press suffered, as eight publications ceased production during the years 1917-1918.<sup>113</sup> An additional fifteen went out of business in the succeeding decade, indicating the severity of the crisis. While some of these publications, notably those that shut down during the war years, fell victim to the war and the associated anti-German sentiment, the demise of others must be attributed to the shift among German Catholics away from German toward English. According to Philip Gleason, “the condition of the German Catholic press had been unhealthy since 1900, and the continued losses of the twenties show that its real nemesis was not external hostility but indifference among Catholics of German descent.”<sup>114</sup>

By the end of the First World War, German American Catholics had all but abandoned their attempts to preserve the mother tongue, and they began to view attempts to preserve the language as obstacles to organized German-American Catholicism.

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<sup>112</sup>The war and its aftermath decimated the American German-language press, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. According to Kirschbaum, “In 1910 there were 488 German-language newspapers in America, with a combined circulation of 3,391,000. By the year 1920 there remained just 152 German-language publications. The combined circulation plummeted to 1,311,000—a 60 percent decrease in a single decade” (*Eradication of German Culture*, 71).

<sup>113</sup>Edward Cuddy, “Pro-Germanism and American Catholicism, 1914-1917,” *The Catholic Historical Review* 54, no. 3 (October 1968): 441-42; David O’Brien, *Public Catholicism* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 153-54; Rory T. Conley, “Priest, Chaplain, Soldier...Spy?: Father Franz J. Feinler and the Experience of German American Catholics during World War I,” in *Building the Church in America: Essays in Honor of Robert F. Trisco on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Joseph C. Linck and Raymond J. Kupke (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1999), 160.

<sup>114</sup>*Conservative Reformers*, 48, 175. See also Gleason, *Keeping the Faith*, 51; Liptak, *Immigrants and Their Church*, 107; Rippley, *German-Americans*, 180; Kirschbaum, *Eradication of German Culture*, 124.

German was the language of the past, and its time was over. As Philip Gleason has described the situation at the end of the 1920s, "German was finished, and those who identified group loyalty with language loyalty were in effect sentencing the group to extinction with the language."<sup>115</sup>

Nevertheless, even in the face of the overwhelming push for German Catholic immigrants and their descendants to surrender the mother tongue in favor of the "language of the country," some continued to cling to their beloved German. Untraut, for instance, despite his knowledge of English, preferred to use German even in the final years of his life. Aside from an occasional English word or phrase added for rhetorical effect, he wrote only in German, from his earliest essays in the 1890s to his 1925 book to his letters of the 1930s. While his fellow Germans were increasingly adapting to life in the larger American society by adopting the language of commerce, politics, and mass communication, Untraut remained loyal to the *Muttersprache* to the last.

### German American Catholics and Religious Life

The Catholic faith constituted an important element of German American Catholic identity, and their German heritage shaped their religious ideas and practices. In its

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<sup>115</sup>Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 178; Rippley, *The German-Americans*, 115. Although most historians of German immigrants in the United States have cited World War I and the 1920s the years in which the German language essentially disappeared from the American scene—and most argue that the decline began about two decades earlier than that—Richard Nelson Current asserted instead that, at least in Wisconsin, World War II "stands as a kind of dividing strip. Before that time many Germans and Norwegians, even those of the second or third or later American-born generations, continued to learn English as a second language, if at all, and to speak it with a very noticeable accent...After the war, however, Wisconsinites who understood German or Norwegian became fewer and fewer, and in a couple of decades they were downright scarce" (*Wisconsin: A History*, 65).

liturgical and devotional expressions, the Catholicism of German Americans gave this immigrant group a sound foundation for their religious identity.

### *German Catholic liturgical theology*

As American Catholics, prominent among them German immigrants and their descendants, began gradually to take an interest in liturgical renewal in the 1920s and 1930s, they stressed this communal aspect of the liturgy and sought “to instill in American Catholics an understanding of the Church as a spiritual community, the Mystical Body of Christ, whose official public prayer, the Mass, should be approached as a corporate act of thanksgiving and sacrifice offered in common by all the faithful.”<sup>116</sup> German immigrants were particularly amenable to thinking about the liturgy this way because contemporary intellectual trends in their native land—where many of their priests, including Untraut, had been educated—tended toward romanticism and influenced Catholic theology through an “emphasis on organic unity, a new appreciation for traditions, for the communal life of the Church.”<sup>117</sup> Additionally, German American priests had access to the works of such German theologians as Johann Adam Möhler (1798-1838), who revived an ecclesiology of the Mystical Body of Christ, and Valentin Thalhoffer (1825-1891), author of the

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<sup>116</sup>Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 190.

<sup>117</sup>Ernest Koenker, *The Liturgical Renaissance in the Roman Catholic Church*, 2d. ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 27. German Catholic theologians were not alone in exhibiting the influence of romanticism in their ideas about the liturgy; Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875), a French Benedictine, expressed a similar faith in the power of the liturgy to return an organic wholeness to human life and harbored a “vision of worship as a means to solve one of the great problems of the nineteenth century—the reintegration of matter and spirit” [R. W. Franklin, “The Nineteenth Century Liturgical Movement,” *Worship* 53, no 1 (January 1979): 25].

monumental *Handbuch der katholischen Liturgik*, “the most significant handbook of liturgics in the German-speaking world in the nineteenth century.”<sup>118</sup> These and other German Catholic thinkers who were part of “the religious renewal sparked by German romanticism” laid the groundwork for much of the liturgical movement in both Europe and the United States.<sup>119</sup>

### *German Catholic liturgical practice*

German American Catholics not only had greater opportunities to encounter new ideas about liturgical theology than did other American Catholics, they also possessed a well-developed tradition of liturgical participation and were known for their love of elaborate worship services, which often included special music and congregational singing. Catholics in Germany had long-standing liturgical traditions which they carried with them to the United States and which then came to characterize their worship in the New World, as well.

Despite the unity imposed upon Roman Catholic worship by the Council of Trent, which had attempted to correct liturgical abuses by returning to standardizing the mass on the basis of Roman norms, Catholics from different parts of the world added their own

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<sup>118</sup>Reinhold Malcherek, *Liturgiewissenschaft im 19. Jahrhundert: Valentin Thalhfer (1825-1891) und sein “Handbuch der katholischen Liturgik”* (Munster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2001), 181. See also William O’Shea, “Liturgy in the United States, 1889-1964,” *American Ecclesiastical Review* 150 (March 1964): 182; Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 29-30.

<sup>119</sup>Thomas F. O’Meara, “The Origins of the Liturgical Movement and German Romanticism” *Worship* 59, no. 4 (July 1985): 342.

distinctive cultural elements to the mass and other liturgical celebrations.<sup>120</sup> Catholic immigrants “worshipped the same God and participated in what was essentially the same Mass, but they viewed what was a universal religion in culturally defined ways.”<sup>121</sup> When these immigrants arrived in the United States with a wide variety of expectations about how the liturgy ought to be celebrated, the result was “a state of chaos...[in] liturgical practice.”<sup>122</sup>

Differing circumstances in their native lands had created divergent liturgical traditions among Catholics, most notably between the Irish and the Germans. In contrast to the Irish, German Catholics expressed their faith through elaborate rituals featuring instrumental and choral music and involving the participation of the whole community.<sup>123</sup> As Untraut remarked after his visit to the *Katholikentag* in St. Cloud, “The Germans love a beautiful worship service.”<sup>124</sup> Extending his analysis of the differences he perceived

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<sup>120</sup>Reinold Theisen, “The Reform of Mass Liturgy and the Council of Trent,” *Worship* 40, no. 9 (Nov 1966): 565-83; Keith Pecklers, “History of the Roman Liturgy from the Sixteenth until the Twentieth Centuries,” in *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: Introduction to the Liturgy*, ed. Anscar J. Chupungco (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 156-57; Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 385-86.

<sup>121</sup>Timothy J. Kloberdanz, “Cultural Integrity and the Role of Religion,” in *A Heritage Deferred*, ed. Clarence A. Glasrud (Moorhead, MN: Concordia College, 1981), 91. Not only Catholics confronted tensions arising from differing ideas about worship; according to Kloss, who referred explicitly to Old Lutherans, German Catholics, and German Reformed, “there was a general aversion among German Americans toward modes of worship prevalent among Anglo-Americans” (“German-American Language Maintenance Efforts,” 227).

<sup>122</sup>Jay P. Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience, 1830-1900* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978), 31.

<sup>123</sup>Olson, *Catholic Immigrants in America*, 54. See also Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815-1865* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 79-80.

<sup>124</sup>“Nachklänge über den St. Cloud'er Katholikentag,” Part III, “Der Katholikentag selbst,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 12 November 1896.

between Irish and German Catholics in the United States, Fr. Peter Abbelen, in his 1886 memorial, described the contrast between the liturgical customs of these two groups, stressing the importance of these “inessential” matters in the lives of immigrant Catholics:

In all this controversy,...we must not by any means make light of the difference and discrepancy of Catholic customs as they are to be found among Germans and Irish. The Irish, on account of the oppression and persecution which they suffered for religion’s sake in their own land, love simplicity in divine service, and in all the practice of their religion, and do not care much for pomp and splendor. But the Germans, from the liberty which as a rule they have enjoyed in the exercise of their religion from the earliest times, and the traditions of their fathers, love the beauty of the church edifice and the pomp of ceremonies, belfries and bells, organs and sacred music, processions, feast days, sodalities, and the most solemn celebration of First Communion and weddings. These and other like things, although not essential to Catholic faith and life, foster piety and are so dear and sacred to the faithful that not without great danger could they be taken away from them.<sup>125</sup>

German Catholics, unlike most Irish immigrants, were accustomed to participating in the mass, especially in song.<sup>126</sup> The practice of congregational singing dated back centuries in Germany, and it offered German Catholics the opportunity not only to participate actively in worship but also to incorporate a limited use of the vernacular language into the liturgy. As early as the Middle Ages, some German hymns were included in the mass, though the extent to which the songs followed the liturgy is unclear.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>“Abbelen Memorial,” in Barry, *Catholic Church and German Americans*, 294.

<sup>126</sup>O’Shea, “Liturgy in the United States,” 182; Pecklers, *Unread Vision*, 37.

<sup>127</sup>J.D. Crichton, *Lights in Darkness: Forerunners of the Liturgical Movement* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 38. According to Thomas Day, in *Why Catholics Can’t Sing: The Culture of Catholicism and the Triumph of Bad Taste* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), “...Catholics in Germany, Austria, and Eastern Europe had a long history of participating in the liturgy (at least the Low Mass) by singing hymns, chorales, and pieces that paraphrased or approximated the Latin that the priest said quietly at the altar” (9). However, James F. White, in *Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today* (New

German Catholic love of music and singing as part of worship survived the trip across the Atlantic and became one of the most distinctive features of worship in German parishes, which was “filled...with *lustige Gesang* (hearty singing).”<sup>128</sup> Music provided a distinctive cultural identity for German Catholics, and both within the context of worship and in non-liturgical settings, it fostered a sense of community.<sup>129</sup>

Untraut both praised and criticized the use of music in the worship services of German American Catholics. He recognized the long tradition of German hymnody and lauded in particular the medieval songs that were “in word and melody so heartfelt and lovely, so powerful and great that even opponents of the Church are amazed.” However, he believed that during the eighteenth century “a radical break with tradition began,” and “the times produced many songs with didactic, unpoetic language and trifling, worldly, operatic melodies.”<sup>130</sup> These unfortunate developments still haunted the church music of Untraut’s day, and, while he approved of music which inspired devotion, he objected

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York: Paulist Press, 1995), has written, “A tradition of congregational singing in the vernacular had been present in Germany even before the reformation though only loosely connected with the mass” (42).

<sup>128</sup>Shaw, “The Cities and the Plains,” 309; Day, *Why Catholics Can’t Sing*, 24. Even prior to the century of massive immigration, German Catholics in America likely incorporated traditional music in their worship services. Schott wrote of German Catholic immigrants in the mid-eighteenth century that “[t]he religious songs of their childhood needed no books, being chanted from memory as the custom was in the home parishes, and since the German school-masters were generally required to be musicians and choirmasters, the colonial German Catholics very early must have had religious services patterned after those common in Germany” (*Pioneer German Catholics*, 100).

<sup>129</sup>Kulas, *Der Wanderer*, 165; Liptak, *Immigrants and Their Church*, 97. In at least one case, however, controversy over singing led to a notable breakdown in *Gemeinschaft* when local loyalties inspired a fight between one group of Germans from Alsace and another from Hessen-Darmstadt over which hymns to sing in a rural Ohio church, and the argument escalated to the point that one side burned down the church (Shaw, “The Cities and the Plains,” 308).

<sup>130</sup>Hermann Joseph Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung: Ein Beitrag zu ihrer besseren Würdigung* (Marshfield, WI: by the author, 1925), 40.

mightily to the use in churches of any music which was “modern, tickled the senses, [or] was reminiscent of the theater.” A great lover of music and a skilled musician, Untraut nevertheless placed obedience to the Church above any considerations of personal preference. “Neither the opinion of the pastor nor the taste of the people makes the decisions concerning church music,” he wrote in 1896, “but rather the laws of the Church.”<sup>131</sup> Nearly thirty years later, when he wrote his book on liturgical reform, he revisited the question of appropriate church music and reiterated his belief in the importance of liturgical music which met the standards of the church rather than the world.

German Catholic immigrants to the United States cherished their peculiar liturgical customs, including congregational singing of hymns in their native tongue, as a means of maintaining a connection to their European roots, and their liturgies united them as Germans.<sup>132</sup> In the words of cultural anthropologist Timothy Klobardanz, “...for many immigrants there was security in knowing that while no tree or brook or meadow anywhere in the New World would be the same as those they had know in their native country, their religious worship would remain unchanged.”<sup>133</sup> Influenced by “the close bond which existed in the German consciousness between the practice of their faith and...traditional customs which were deeply rooted in the centuries-old Catholic culture of

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<sup>131</sup>“Nachklänge über den St. Cloud'er Katholikentag,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 29 October 1896; “Nachklänge zur Staats-Versammlung in Racine,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 18 June 1896.

<sup>132</sup>Shaw, “The Cities and the Plains,” 311.

<sup>133</sup>Klobardanz, “Cultural Integrity,” 90. See also Dolan, *Immigrant Church*, 4.

the German fatherland," German immigrants sought to recreate in their new environment the religious life they had known in their native parishes.<sup>134</sup>

### *German Catholic devotional practices*

German American Catholics did not limit their religious lives to liturgical worship; they also took part in a variety of extra-liturgical practices, including devotions to the Virgin Mary, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Blessed Sacrament, and numerous saints. The roots of these devotional exercises lay in Europe, where they had increased in popularity during the nineteenth century, and continuing to observe such devotions in the United States offered immigrants another tangible link to their Old World heritage.

Pious exercises had provided German Catholics with one source for a distinctive religious identity and had helped them preserve their faith in tumultuous times. The May devotions to Mary, for instance, had played an important role in the Catholic response to the persecutions of the Church during the Kulturkampf of the 1870s, when Philipp Krementz, bishop of Ermland (1867-1885) and later archbishop of Cologne, promoted the practice and exhorted Catholics in his diocese to "call upon the protection and aid of the Mother of God, so that religious peace and the inner harmony of the Fatherland might be maintained or restored."<sup>135</sup> Popular religious practices offered German Catholics a way to

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<sup>134</sup>Barry, "The German Catholic Immigrant," 191.

<sup>135</sup>Kurt Küppers, *Marienfrömmigkeit zwischen Barock und Industriezeitalter: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Feier der Maiandacht in Deutschland und im deutschen Sprachgebiet* (St. Ottilien: Eos Verlag, 1987), 217, 232, 252. See also Gottfried Korff, "Kulturkampf und Volksfrömmigkeit," in *Volksreligiosität in der modernen Sozialgeschichte*, ed. Wolfgang Schieder (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 147-148.

impart to their political and social struggles a universal and even divine significance and gave them a source of identity in a society which challenged and at times actively persecuted their way of life.<sup>136</sup> When German Catholics moved to the United States, they found that their devotional practices provided a means of preserving their ethnic and religious identity in a new environment and, in particular, a way to express their Catholic identity in a Protestant society.<sup>137</sup>

### *Religion and identity*

German Catholic immigrants used the traditions of their faith as a way to hold fast to their ethnicity because religion was in many ways the ideal vehicle for preserving identity in an unfamiliar setting. In the United States, immigrants enjoyed the freedom to practice their religion without government interference, and the generally private nature of religious belief in America provided a certain degree of protection for the religious elements of immigrant culture. According to Reinhard Doerries, in an essay which addressed the experiences of German immigrants from a variety of religious backgrounds, “[F]aith unquestionably belongs to that small private realm that usually survived the turbulences of leaving home, traveling across the Atlantic, arriving in the New World, and continuing the voyage to unknown frontiers inland.”<sup>138</sup> H. Richard Niebuhr, in his

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<sup>136</sup>Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 47; Korff, “*Kulturkampf und Volksfrömmigkeit*,” 150.

<sup>137</sup>Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, 238.

<sup>138</sup>Doerries, “Immigrant Culture and Religion,” 84-85.

influential 1929 book *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, also considered the role of religion in maintaining immigrant identity. In an environment which threatened the values and traditions that provided immigrants with a definable identity, these newcomers sought a practical way to preserve and pass on the unique qualities of their culture, and religion offered just such a way:

It was necessary, too, for the immigrants under these circumstances to find a center around which they could organize their values, a leadership which would hold together the scattered individuals of the race, a form of organization which would enable them to maintain and foster their solidarity. The only center which was available, as a rule, was religion; the only leaders, with few exceptions, who had braved the difficulties of a new orientation along with the migrating artisans and farmers were the clergy; the only organization which was readily at hand for maintaining the unity of the group was the church.<sup>139</sup>

Liturgical and other religious traditions constituted a significant element of ethnic and religious identity for German Catholics, as well as other immigrants. In their minds, “their traditional ways of worship were to be safeguarded; any attempt on the part of the clergy to uproot them was viewed not only as sacrilege but as an attack on the ancestral culture which formed the very basis of the immigrant’s identity.”<sup>140</sup> Among Catholic immigrants to the United States, liturgical and devotional practices proved to be among the most durable expressions of religious and ethnic identity. As Aidan Kavanagh has pointed out, even as the ethnic character of national parishes and parochial schools gradually diminished and “the ethnic group blurred into third and fourth generations[,] the

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<sup>139</sup>H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: Meridian, 1929), 222-23.

<sup>140</sup>Kloberdanz, “Cultural Integrity,” 91.

patterns of worship at Sunday Mass and in religious devotionalism remained static.”<sup>141</sup>

As German American Catholics became less “German” and more “American,” their Catholicism took on an increasingly significant role in preserving their unique cultural identity. In order to advance in American society—and, in some cases, to avoid persecution—they sacrificed the language of their homeland. In order to conform to the American mainstream and not be rejected as “old-fashioned,” they turned away from the foreign traditions of their parents and grandparents. However, wanting not to forsake entirely their immigrant roots, they strove to continue practicing their religion in the ways of their German Catholic forebears. In a society which considered faith an essentially private matter, religion offered the best means for immigrants to preserve some semblance of their old identity while adapting to the practical demands of life in the United States.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>141</sup>Aidan Kavanagh, “Spirituality in the American Church: An Evaluative Essay,” in Philip Gleason, ed., *Contemporary Catholicism in the United States* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 208.

<sup>142</sup>Doerries, “Immigrant Culture and Religion,” 86.

## Chapter 3

### Life and Work of Fr. Hermann Joseph Untraut (1854-1941)

Hermann Joseph Untraut's life took him from a childhood and youth in Germany, where he was educated for the priesthood, to a long and fruitful career serving the rapidly expanding American Catholic Church in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth. Over the course of his life, in each of the parishes he led, he labored to ensure the vitality of the German Catholic community through education, social life, language, and worship.

#### Early Years and Education in Europe

Hermann Untraut began life under inauspicious circumstances, as the illegitimate son of Josefa Dullenkopf, a woman from Meckenbeuren in southwestern Germany. On a certificate attesting to the birth, his father's name appears merely as a black line. Such a situation could have complicated his later entry into the priesthood, but fortunately for both his eventual career and, presumably, his family, Josefa soon married Bernard Untraut, and this October 19, 1854, wedding legitimated young Hermann. Notice of this legitimization appears on an official statement from 1881, which was likely submitted as evidence of Untraut's fitness for ordination.<sup>1</sup>

A hard-working and successful student, Untraut attended several schools, where

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<sup>1</sup>Document from Diocese of La Crosse Archives (hereafter DLC Archives). I am grateful to Fr. Robert Altman, archivist, for his assistance in translation.

he developed a strong foundation for his later work as a pastor and writer. According to those school records that have survived, he completed his basic education in March, 1868, at age thirteen, and his graduation certificate, signed by both the “royal school inspector” and parish officials, attested to his earning the designation “*sehr fleissig*” (very diligent) in all subjects.<sup>2</sup>

Untraut not only earned his high marks in academic subjects, he also consistently merited praise for his morally upstanding character. For instance, in an 1872 letter evidently written to evaluate his morals, the author, possibly the pastor of his parents’ parish, wrote, “Hermann is a morally pure young man” and noted that “while staying with his parents during vacations, he led under every circumstance a blameless moral life.” This “good-natured” youth would never, the letter continued, “willingly make a grave error.”<sup>3</sup>

Untraut continued his studies at the Benedictine abbey of Beuron in southwestern Germany from December 1872 to sometime in 1874 and then traveled to Belgium to live and study at Maredsous, then a priory founded by monks from Beuron in 1872. The Wolter brothers, Maurus and Placidus, founded the abbey of Beuron in 1863 and, following the lead of Dom Prosper Guéranger of Solesmes, under whom they had studied, actively promoted liturgical studies and cultivated in particular the revival of Gregorian chant. The abbey of Beuron and the foundations it established, including Maredsous and Maria Laach, eventually comprised the Beuronese congregation, a group of monasteries within the larger Benedictine Order, which became renowned for its leading role in

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<sup>2</sup>The few extant records of Untraut’s education are held by the DLC Archives.

<sup>3</sup>Letter of Fr. Dorn, 25 Sept 1872. DLC Archives.

monastic liturgical renewal, especially the development of liturgical art. Although little is known about Untraut's time at Beuron and Maredsous, he may have studied at Beuron with Anselm Schott, creator of the *Schott Messbuch* (1882), a German missal which made the liturgy more accessible to countless German-speaking Catholics, and likely also pursued his interest in music. He made a good impression on the faculty at both institutions, including Fr. Placidus, then prior of Maredsous, who, in a letter of recommendation, described how Untraut earned "the praise of his teachers" on account of his "diligence" and "persistence."<sup>4</sup>

Diligence and persistence clearly characterized Untraut throughout the years of his formal education. His report card from the second semester of 1876/77, when he was a pupil at the school of the monastery at Mehrerau, a Cistercian foundation near Bregenz, Austria, shows grades of "*erste Note*" or "very good" in nearly all subjects, from religion to natural science to Greek and Latin, when Untraut's teachers evaluated his "*Fleiss*" or effort. In the column marked "*Fortgang*" or progress, however, his grades slipped somewhat, with highest marks appearing only in religion, geography and history, and singing. The "A's for effort" he achieved in German, Latin, Greek, and natural science became B's and C's in actual accomplishment. Nonetheless, his overall academic performance was strong—despite a poor showing in mathematics, which included geometry grades of four or "barely sufficient" in both effort and progress—and, when combined with the A he received for moral conduct, resulted in the conclusion that his advancing to the next level was "*unbedingt*" or without question.

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<sup>4</sup>Letter of Placidus Wolter, 3 May 1875. DLC Archives.

While at Meherau, Untraut also began the process of entering the Cistercian Order and took simple vows on November 1, 1878, upon completion of his novitiate year. However, on account of an unspecified “defect of vocation” (“*ob defectum vocationis*”), he chose to leave the monastic life. The novice master at Meherau, Fr. Bernard Hochstrasser, still enthusiastically endorsed Untraut as a good and honest man, and the dissolution of his vows evidently presented no obstacle to his later ordination to the priesthood.<sup>5</sup>

Untraut’s good academic background in such subjects as religion and foreign languages likely served him well as he completed his formal education at the seminary in Eichstätt, a Bavarian town about halfway between Munich and Nuremberg.<sup>6</sup> He studied dogmatics, moral theology, pastoral theology, and liturgics, and his grades were consistently excellent, especially in liturgics. In the first semester of the 1881/82 academic year, he earned the equivalent of an A+ for diligence in every subject, as well as straight A’s—with an A+ in liturgics—for progress. Having found a calling which suited his intellectual strengths—and required little aptitude for geometry—Untraut embarked on a career in which both his extensive academic training and his remarkable capacity for hard work would prove invaluable.

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<sup>5</sup>“Testimonium” of Bernard Hochstrasser, 10 May 1881. DLC Archives. I am grateful to Fr. Wilfred Theisen, O.S.B., for assistance with this and other Latin documents.

<sup>6</sup>For an overview of the seminary’s history, see Theodor Maas-Eward, “Katholische Theologie im Altmühltal: 150 Jahre Theologische Fakultät Eichstätt,” in *Die 150-Jahrfeier der Theologischen Fakultät Eichstätt der Katholischen Universität Eichstätt*, ed. Alfred Gläßer (Eichstätt: Franz-Sales-Verlag, 1994), 83-84.

### Pastoral Work in Wisconsin

From his arrival in the United States in 1882 to his retirement in 1932, Untraut served as pastor at several parishes in the Diocese of La Crosse in southwestern Wisconsin before ending his career as chaplain for an order of sisters and the hospital they ran in Marshfield, Wisconsin. During this time, the Catholic population of the diocese increased significantly, from approximately 50,000 to over 120,000<sup>7</sup>, and Untraut's work often included projects to accommodate these swelling numbers, including opening parochial schools, organizing social groups, and erecting new buildings.

#### *Sacred Heart of Jesus, Edson (1883-1888)*

Untraut's first appointment following his ordination to the priesthood in 1882 was as rector of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Edson, a rural community in Chippewa County.<sup>8</sup> During his five years there, from 1883 to 1888, he established a parochial school

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<sup>7</sup>Population data from *Sadliers' Catholic Directory, Almanac, and Ordo, for the Year of Our Lord 1883* (New York: D. & J. Saldier & Co., 1883), 348, and *The Official Catholic Directory* (New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1932), 452.

<sup>8</sup>It is unclear where and precisely when this ordination took place. The records of the Diocese of La Crosse indicate he was ordained on 23 September 1882 in Eichstätt, and, significantly, his gravestone gives the same date, though no location. According to *The Catholic Church in Wisconsin*, however, the date was 25 September and the place St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee (769). Untraut's entry in *The American Catholic Who's Who* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1911) also places the ordination at St. Francis, while *The Biographical History of La Crosse, Trempealeau and Buffalo Counties* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1892) states that Untraut "came to America in June, 1882, and was ordained at La Crosse in September of that year" (686). Inquiries at St. Francis Seminary and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Archives yielded no relevant information. Because the official document transferring him from the Diocese of Rottenburg to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, dated 11 April 1882, refers to him as a "candidate in theology" ("*theologiae candidati*"), rather than a priest, it seems likely that his ordination to the priesthood took place after his arrival in the United States, probably on 23 September 1882 in Milwaukee. (Statement of Charles Joseph, bishop of Rottenburg. DLC Archives.)

and erected a parsonage. The school was run by the School Sisters of Notre Dame and enrolled eighty students in 1886.<sup>9</sup>

Following Untraut's departure from Edson, the Rev. William Weckes succeeded him as pastor. After Fr. Michael Schoelch served the parish for one year in 1893, it became a mission church for the parish of Boyd and closed its school. During those years, Untraut led another rural parish, in the small town of Arcadia in Trempealeau County.

*SS. Peter and Paul/Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Arcadia (1888-1893)*

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, as it is known today, traces its history to early settlers in the region around Arcadia, who began intermittent celebrations of mass in private Catholic homes as early as 1854.<sup>10</sup> Served by missionary priests from La Crosse and Prairie du Chien, these Catholic newcomers eventually coalesced to form the Congregation of St. Joseph at Glencoe, which erected first a small log church and then a larger building to contain their growing numbers. The increasing Catholic population created a desire to organize a second congregation for those settlers living east of the Trempealeau River, and since “[a] church building was an unknown luxury in those days in Trempealeau County,” these Catholics in the Meyers Valley worshiped in the home of a

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<sup>9</sup>*The Catholic Church in Wisconsin*, 769; *Sadliers' Catholic Directory, Almanac, and Ordo, for the Year of Our Lord 1886* (New York: D. & J. Saldier & Co., 1886), 236.

<sup>10</sup>The history of the parish comes from *A Heritage Intact: Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Congregation, Arcadia, Wisconsin* (Arcadia: privately printed, 1976); Joseph L. Hauck, “Catholic Church in Trempealeau County,” in *History of Trempealeau County, Wisconsin*, ed. Eben Douglas Pierce (Chicago: H.C. Cooper, Jr., & Co., 1917), 839-41; and *Biographical History*, 686-87.

leading member of the community, Nic Meiers, a man “of sturdy Teutonic blood.”<sup>11</sup> Both congregations built churches in 1867; the building in Glencoe was dedicated to St. Joseph, that in Meyers Valley to Ss. Peter and Paul.

By the time of Untraut’s arrival, the church in Meyers Valley had moved to the village of Arcadia, which had become, in Hauck’s words, “the metropolis of Trempealeau County.”<sup>12</sup> Not everyone in the parish welcomed this change, and farmers in particular objected to having to travel to town to worship. However, as the parish history puts it, “Eventually, the village convinced the farmers that they could come to Arcadia as easily to church as to do their trading,” and the first Catholic church was built in the town, with the initial service taking place on January 1, 1885. At that time, the resident priest, Fr. Bernard Klein, lived in Glencoe and oversaw both St. Joseph Parish and the Arcadia congregation. When Untraut assumed the pastorate, however, he believed Arcadia was becoming the more important of the two communities and thus settled and ministered to both parishes from there.<sup>13</sup> Although the region was settled primarily by German immigrants, by 1891, St. Joseph’s was listed in the *Official Catholic Directory* as an

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<sup>11</sup>Hauck, “Catholic Church in Trempealeau County,” 840. Meiers appears in *A Heritage Intact* as “Maiers.”

<sup>12</sup>Hauck, “Catholic Church in Trempealeau County,” 840.

<sup>13</sup>The date for Untraut’s assumption of the Arcadia pastorate is uncertain. According to Hauck and *A Heritage Intact*—which borrows heavily, at times verbatim, from Hauck—, Untraut took over pastoral responsibilities in Arcadia and Glencoe in 1885. However, according to the *Catholic Directory*, he remained in Edson through 1888, while first Bernard Klein (1885) and then W. Weckes (1886-88) served in Glencoe and Arcadia, and the *Biographical Dictionary* concurs with this account. Records from the Diocese of La Crosse indicate he became pastor in Arcadia in April, 1888, with the parish listed as “St. Mary’s”—perhaps simply convenient shorthand for “Our Lady of Perpetual Help.”

English-language parish.<sup>14</sup>

Among the lasting legacies of Untraut's tenure at Arcadia was the adoption of a new name for the parish. When the parish officially incorporated on July 31, 1888, its name was no longer Ss. Peter and Paul but rather Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Untraut inspired this change in name by procuring for the parish a copy of the miraculous picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help from Rome, and the change may also have been a way to acknowledge the new role of the parish as the primary Catholic church in the area, as well as a reflection of the popularity of Marian piety at the time.<sup>15</sup>

Untraut also contributed significantly to the history of Our Lady of Perpetual Help by establishing the parish's first school. Officially opened on September 3, 1889, with an initial enrollment of 58 students, St. Aloysius School (later combined with St. Stanislaus School to form Arcadia Catholic School) was the first Catholic school in Arcadia. Under Untraut's direction, two School Sisters of Notre Dame from Milwaukee, S. Gebharda and S. Agapita, taught the pupils in a building purchased by the church for that purpose.<sup>16</sup> Although setting up and running the school entailed significant financial sacrifice, the new

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<sup>14</sup>*Sadliers' Catholic Directory, Almanac, and Ordo, for the Year of Our Lord 1891* (New York: D. & J. Saldier & Co., 1891), 269.

<sup>15</sup>Regarding the increasing interest in Marian piety among German Catholics in the late nineteenth century, see Kurt Küppers, *Marienfrömmigkeit zwischen Barock und Industriezeitalter: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Feier der Maiandacht in Deutschland und im deutschen Sprachgebiet* (St. Ottilien: Eos Verlag, 1987); Joachim Schmiedl, *Marianische Religiosität in Aachen: Frömmigkeitsformen einer katholischen Industriestadt des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 1994). On the political dimensions of Marian piety, see William McSweeney, *Roman Catholicism: The Search for Relevance* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), 40-44

<sup>16</sup>According to *Sadliers' Catholic Directory, Almanac, and Ordo, for the Year of Our Lord 1889* (New York: D. & J. Saldier & Co., 1889), the school was staffed for its first year by the Franciscan Sisters of New Cassel (p. 267).

institution thrived, with enrollment reaching 100 students in 1893, Untraut's last year in Arcadia, and a new school building constructed two years later.<sup>17</sup>

### *Holy Trinity, La Crosse (1893-1907)*

In 1887, due to the increasing Catholic population of La Crosse, Bishop Killian Flasch determined that German Catholics living in the southern part of the city ought to have a separate parish, so he established a new church, whose original members came from the congregation of St. Joseph's Cathedral.<sup>18</sup> The first parishioners, eager to worship in a place of their own, soon purchased property and erected a church building, which Bishop Flasch dedicated on October 30, 1887. The two-story structure served both the worship and educational needs of the parish since the upper floor contained space for church services and the lower was used for the parochial school. The latter was staffed by two Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration and opened the day after the dedication, even before the congregation celebrated the first mass in their new quarters on November 8, 1887.

Untraut assumed pastoral duties in 1893, a year which brought two significant changes to the parish.<sup>19</sup> First, as had happened in Arcadia, the parish changed its patron,

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<sup>17</sup>Hauck, "Catholic Church in Trempealeau County," 841.

<sup>18</sup>The history of Holy Trinity comes from *Holy Trinity Catholic Congregation, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1887-1987* (La Crosse: privately printed, 1987); Harry Hooper Heming, *The Catholic Church in Wisconsin: A History of the Catholic Church in Wisconsin from the Earliest Time to the Present Day* (Milwaukee: Catholic Historical Publishing Company, 1895-98), 767-69; and *Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee of the Holy Trinity Congregation* (La Crosse, WI: Holy Trinity Congregation, 1937), 23-26.

<sup>19</sup>Dates given in various sources for the start of Untraut's pastorate vary. Records of the Diocese of La Crosse and the diocesan newspaper of the time, *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht*, give August

replacing St. Nicholas, to whom the bishop had originally dedicated the church, with the Holy Trinity. Additionally, Holy Trinity officially became a national rather than a strictly geographical parish, as its membership was defined to include all German-speaking Catholics in the southernmost section of La Crosse. According to a time-line of parish

history included in a special centennial edition of the church directory, at this time, "Parishioners are mostly immigrants and speak their native tongues at meetings and in the classrooms."<sup>20</sup>

German-speaking immigrants made up a substantial portion of the Catholic population of La Crosse in the late nineteenth century, and the diocese sought to meet the



needs of this important group; of the twelve churches listed for the city in *The Catholic Directory* of 1894, three, including St. Joseph's Cathedral and Holy Trinity, are

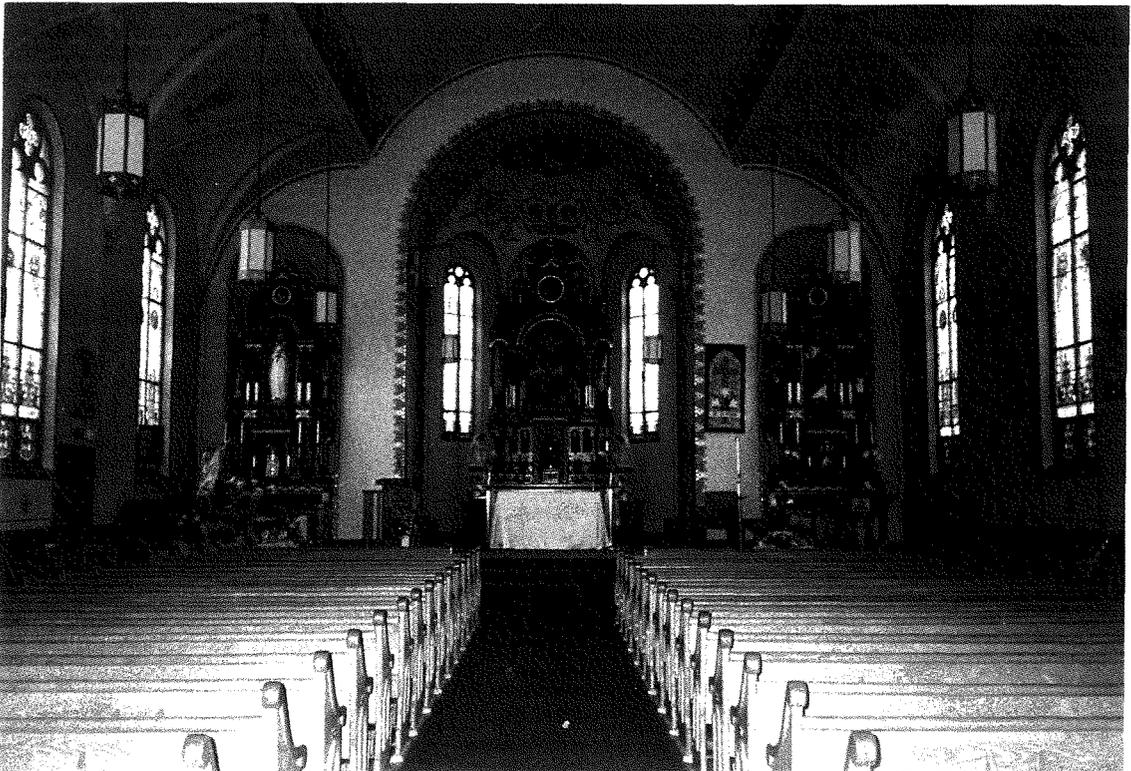
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1893 (see "Kirchliche Nachrichten, *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 10 August 1893 and 17 August 1893). *Holy Trinity Catholic Congregation and Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee* give August 1895. *The Catholic Directory* lists him at Holy Trinity already in 1894. *Catholic Church in Wisconsin* provides no specific date but places his building of the new parsonage in 1894.

<sup>20</sup>*Holy Trinity Catholic Congregation*, n.p.

designated as German.

In the years prior to Untraut's arrival, the parish had grown considerably, necessitating the construction of a larger church building, dedicated on December 4, 1894. The costs of putting up the new building and running the parish had mounted, and Untraut confronted a significant debt burden, in excess of \$10,000. Apparently undaunted by these financial woes, however, he saw to the construction of a new rectory, at a cost of \$2800, and instituted numerous efforts to improve the church's interior, including the addition of "two handsome altars, a pulpit and three lamps," all donated by members of the congregation. The installation of the new pulpit, "built in the Roman style" by Egid Hackner, an artist "known to all," garnered notice in the diocesan weekly newspaper,



*Interior of Holy Trinity Catholic Church*

which announced that Holy Trinity “was improved last week by a magnificent new pulpit.” Parishioners were better able to enjoy such adornments following the installation of electricity in the church in 1895, funded by two parochial organizations for young people, the St. Aloysius Young Men’s Society and the St. Rose Young Ladies’ Society.<sup>21</sup>

During his years at Holy Trinity, Untraut sought to address the social as well as the spiritual needs of the parishioners. To that end, he actively encouraged the development of such groups as the St. Aloysius and St. Rose societies, both of which came into being under his administration. On January 5, 1896, he led the consecration of the flag of the St. Aloysius Society, which took place following the celebration of mass. According to the report in the diocesan newspaper, he addressed the members of the society, explaining the symbolic significance of the flag’s design and encouraging the young men to maintain “peaceable solidarity,” to pursue a “genuine Catholic *Vereinswesen*,” and to harbor “love for the societies their fathers had founded.” He also supported the establishment in 1893 of a branch of the *Verein vom Allerheiligsten Altarsacrament* (Society of the Most Holy Sacrament), which was connected to St. John’s Abbey in Minnesota, a Benedictine community Untraut came to admire greatly. Another organization begun during his pastorate, the St. Anne’s Ladies’ Society, led a long and active life, meriting mention in the 1987 parish history as an “outstanding example” of the “long list of societies and organizations that have contributed greatly to the success of our parish.” Additional groups added to that “long list” during Untraut’s years included the Order of the Knights

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<sup>21</sup>“*Kirchliche Berichte*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 11 October 1894; *Catholic Church in Wisconsin*, 768; “*Kirchliche Berichte*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 22 February 1894.

of St. George and a branch of the Family Protective Association.<sup>22</sup> Untraut did not limit his interest in *Vereinswesen* to his own parish; he wrote extensively on the topic for the diocesan weekly, *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* and, beginning in late 1897, served as diocesan director for the *Kindheit-Jesu-Verein*.<sup>23</sup>

The various societies and clubs active in the parish during Untraut's tenure not only provided opportunities for socializing and the performance of good works, they also participated as groups in certain special worship services. For example, on December 6, 1893, the parish celebrated the Feast of St. Nicholas with a solemn mass, at which a holy picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, a gift from a Frau Julia Diller of Philadelphia, was installed in the church. Describing the procession at the start of the service, the diocesan newspaper reported that participants entered in the following order: "the crucifer, the Society of the Holy Trinity, the Catholic Knights, schoolchildren, the members of the St. Rose Young Ladies' Society, four young women carrying the holy picture, twelve ministers, the clergy, the people." Many clergy took part in the service, which included much choral singing, as well as at least one hymn, "*Großer Gott wir loben dich*," sung by

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<sup>22</sup>"*Kirchliche Berichte*," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 5 October 1893, 9 January 1896; *Holy Trinity Catholic Congregation*, n.p.; *Catholic Church in Wisconsin*, 768.

<sup>23</sup>Essays addressing the topic included "*Liberalismus in katholischen Vereinen*" (20 September 1894); "*Wahl der Vereinsbeamten*" (6 December 1894); "*Ein Wort an den deutschen Jünglinge*" (12 December 1895); "*Die Deutsche Römisch-Katholische Central-Verein*" (26 December 1895); "*Zeitungen, Vereine, Wahlen, Glauben*" (13 February 1896); "*Leo XIII. und das katholische Vereinswesen*" (27 February-12 March 1896); "*Katholisches Vereinswesen und katholische Versammlungen*" (21 May 1896); "*Genuß- und Vergnügungssucht in katholischen Vereinen*" (20 August 1896); and "*Griff und Paßwort in katholischen Vereinen*" (27 August 1896). "*Kirchliche Berichte*," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 16 December 1897.

the entire gathering.<sup>24</sup>

The St. Rose Young Ladies' Society also participated as a group in a Sunday mass honoring their patron saint. On August 30, 1896, the feast day of St. Rose of Lima, the members of the society received communion together, after listening to a special message from Untraut, in which he "recalled for them in particular the day of their first communion."<sup>25</sup> Even at this time, decades before he became one of the first proponents of the liturgical movement in the United States, Untraut encouraged lay people to participate in the public worship of the Church and stressed the centrality of the Eucharistic celebration.

Another special type of activity which Untraut fostered while at Holy Trinity was the mission, an eight-day program of worship and prayer popular among American Catholics of the day. In March 1894 such a mission took place at Holy Trinity, with a sung mass and preaching each morning at nine o'clock and recitation of the rosary, more preaching, and benediction every evening. A similar event, led by a Redemptorist father from Detroit, Chicago, and Seattle, took place at St. Joseph's Cathedral in La Crosse in 1896 and likewise featured mix of prayer and preaching, as well as special activities for some of the cathedral's social organizations. According to a contemporary report, "Participation so far has been in such numbers that the church has been filled to its very

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<sup>24</sup>"*Kirchliche Berichte*," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 14 December 1893.

<sup>25</sup>"*Kirchliche Berichte*," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 3 September 1896.

last seat, and the mission accordingly promises to be a great success.”<sup>26</sup>



*Leo Hall, social hall of Holy Trinity Parish*

Not content merely to organize societies and clubs to encourage social activity among his parishioners, Untraut also oversaw the construction of a new building, Leo Hall, devoted to meeting the social needs of the parish community. Completed in 1898, Leo Hall offered new opportunities for gatherings of all sorts—including bowling tournaments since the building housed a nine-pin bowling alley.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>“Kirchliche Berichte,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 15 February 1894, 15 March 1894, 26 November 1896. Regarding the popularity of similar missions in Germany, see Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 57, 73.

<sup>27</sup>According to the time-line in *Holy Trinity Catholic Congregation*, this nine-pin alley remained in place until 1929, when the congregation removed it to make room for two ten-pin alleys and formed the Holy Trinity Bowling Association.

As the social life of the Holy Trinity flourished during Untraut's years there, the parish as a whole likewise thrived. According to a parish history written in honor of Holy Trinity's fiftieth anniversary, "the growth and expansion of the parish during Father Untraut's pastorate was rather dynamic."<sup>28</sup> In addition to the building projects and embellishment of the church that took place during his time in La Crosse, Untraut presided over the highly successful parish school. From 155 pupils in 1896, enrollment increased steadily to 260 students in 1901 before declining again somewhat to between 218 and 247.<sup>29</sup> Untraut's "brick and mortar" work for Holy Trinity also benefitted the school, as he saw to the construction of Holy Trinity Convent, designed to ease the burden of the teaching sisters who had previously had to travel daily from St. Rose Convent. Additionally, although actual construction did not take place until after Untraut's departure, plans for a new school building began in 1904 and came to fruition under his successor in 1909.

#### *Other activities during the La Crosse years*

Besides serving as pastor of Holy Trinity, Untraut played an active role in other aspects of German Catholic life during the years he lived in La Crosse. He wrote dozens of essays for the diocesan newspaper, participated in special gatherings of German Catholics, and visited St. John's Abbey in Minnesota as both a guest and a retreat leader.

During his first years in La Crosse, Untraut became a frequent contributor to the

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<sup>28</sup>*Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee*, 23.

<sup>29</sup>Data on school enrollment come from *The Catholic Directory* for the years 1896-1907.

diocesan German-language weekly newspaper, *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht*, usually signing his submissions “H.J.U.”<sup>30</sup> From late 1893 to 1896, he offered readers his views on a variety of issues in essays notable for their display of passionate support for conservative causes—including preservation of German language and culture, support for parochial education, and opposition to secret societies—and also of Untraut’s considerable learning. His European education served him well as he peppered his rhetoric with citations not only from the Bible and such Church Fathers as Ambrose, Augustine, Tertullian, and Jerome, but also from German poets, including Goethe, and even a number of “*alte Heiden*” (“old heathens”)—Plato, Ovid, Seneca, Xenophon.<sup>31</sup> Untraut enlisted all this knowledge in the service of his efforts to maintain German Catholic life in the United States, and as the debate between liberal and conservative Catholics in the United States grew ever more intense, he declared his beliefs without reservation, upholding, like most German American Catholic priests of his time, a consistently conservative position. He addressed such topics as the maintenance of the German *Muttersprache*, “which is so intimately tied to religion”; the value of parochial schools; the dangers of secret societies;

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<sup>30</sup>While no direct evidence proves that “H.J.U.” and Untraut were one and the same, the circumstantial evidence supporting this claim is overwhelming. “H.J.U.” was a priest from Swabia who lived in La Crosse and who had traveled to St. Cloud and met some of the St. John’s Benedictines prior to 1897. No other priest with the initials “H.J.U.” was active in the Diocese of La Crosse—or anywhere else in the United States—at the time, and a letter from Untraut to Abbot Peter Engel of St. John’s shows he had been to St. Cloud and met the abbot. Untraut to Engel, 27 October 1897. St. John’s Abbey Archives (hereafter SJA Archives).

<sup>31</sup>“*Tanzbelustigung und Maskenball*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 17 January 1895; “*Reichtum und die hl. Schrift*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 7 February 1895; “*Die Pflicht, Kirche, Priester und Schule zu unterhalten*,” Part IV, “*Die ersten christlichen Jahrhunderte*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 17 October 1895; “*Die Pflicht, Kirche, Priester und Schule zu unterhalten*,” Part X, “*Fluch oder Segen*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 28 November 1895.

and the threat of liberalism, “the gravedigger of Catholicism.”<sup>32</sup>

On occasion, Untraut paused in his harangues against the liberal Americanizers who he feared would undermine the very foundations of the Church and offered his readers instead accounts of his experiences with *Katholikentage* and other gatherings of German Catholics for worship, lectures, and socializing. He fervently believed in the power of such meetings to maintain and strengthen German Catholic faith and solidarity. He wrote in September 1896, “We have German societies and German gatherings because they increase loyalty to our religion and our ability to keep the faith, foster an attitude of self-sacrifice in fulfillment of the duties of our religion, strengthen our courage to defend against all attacks on our Catholic faith and Catholic freedom, and help us truly fulfill those posts to which Providence has called us.”<sup>33</sup>

Untraut based these convictions on personal experience. In June 1896, he attended, for the fourth time, the statewide gathering of Wisconsin Catholics held in Racine. In his account of the experience—in which he intended, “according to his usual habit,” to “praise what was to be praised and criticize what was to be criticized”—he described the positive effects of the parade that was part of the festivities. Such a “powerful demonstration of Catholic faith and also Catholic love of the Fatherland” surely

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<sup>32</sup>“Pflicht die katholische Presse deutscher Sprache zu unterstützen,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 6 December 1894; “Father Dunn’s Lecture in Mondovi,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 26 December 1895; “Rev. Färber’s Katechismus und die Gebote der Kirche,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 7 November 1895; “Das Einmaleins des praktischen katholischen Lebens,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 11 October 1894.

<sup>33</sup>“Söhne unserer Katholikentage,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 24 September 1896.

also made an impression upon “the most dogged nativists and the hungriest of *Katholikenfresser* [devourers of Catholics].” Despite his opinion that some of the music performed at the gathering was inappropriate and “led worshipers involuntarily into a theater,” he found much to admire in the event, including the great number of young men who participated, the support given to the Central Verein, and the hospitality extended by the citizens of Racine, both Catholic and non-Catholic.<sup>34</sup>

He also participated in a German Catholic gathering in Minnesota, the St. Cloud *Katholikentag* in October 1896, an experience he described in four-part series for the *Patriot*.<sup>35</sup> He traveled to St. Cloud in order to “get to know Minnesota’s German Catholic life,” as well as to seek “spiritual refreshment.” In words which likely echoed the feelings of many of his brethren in the priesthood, he compared the life of a pastor to that of an overworked farm animal: “A workhorse which is placed under the yoke for the entire year will finally collapse; he must, if he is to perform his duties, have proper care and rest.” His trip to central Minnesota provided such rest, along with an opportunity to examine Catholic life in this neighboring state.

After a train journey following the “*Vater der Ströme*” (Mississippi River), Untraut arrived in “the lovely episcopal city of St. Cloud,” which was decorated for the occasion and where he felt very welcome. In St. Cloud he met for the first time the Benedictine monks of St. John’s, “who hospitably opened their beautiful home” to him. The parish

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<sup>34</sup>“*Nachklänge zur Staats-Versammlung in Racine,*” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 18 June 1896.

<sup>35</sup>“*Nachklänge über den St. Cloud’er Katholikentag*” (four-part series) *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 29 October-19 November 1896.

priests hosting the event, Fr. Gregor and Fr. Martin of Immaculate Conception Parish, also impressed him favorably.

Untraut greatly enjoyed the *Katholikentag* activities, including the celebration of mass, lectures on topics of interest to German Catholics, and socializing with the other participants. He praised in particular the music provided in the worship services, which he declared was “not only well-rehearsed but also sung with heart and spirit.” In contrast to the music featured at the Racine gathering, some of which he deemed inappropriately worldly, the music he heard in Minnesota met with his hearty approval. “Indeed,” he proclaimed, “true churchly singing also belongs in such festivities. Theatrical, somersaulting, di-del-dum-dy-ing, solo-trilling masses are never appropriate but especially not on such occasions.” Fortunately, he “heard not a single time in the churches of St. Cloud that theatrical music which tickles the senses and ears.”

He also approved of the preachers and other speakers who addressed the gathering in St. Cloud. For the benefit of his readers in La Crosse, he summarized the sermons of Fr. John Meier of Winona, who spoke primarily about Catholic *Vereinswesen*, a topic dear to Untraut’s heart, and Fr. Augustin Brockmeyer, a “son of St. Benedict,” who addressed the duties of German Catholic men to preserve their faith and culture. Untraut described Meier’s sermon as “an earnest appeal from the heart for the preservation of genuine Catholic organizations, valiant defense of Catholic interests, loyal devotion to church and priest, lasting practice of true Christian love for others, a firm opposition to all secret societies.” For his part, Brockmeyer reminded listeners of their obligation to hold fast to the one true faith, especially since Catholics were a “disappearing minority” in the United

States, and impressed upon them the importance of raising their children “as God requires.”

Untraut and the other attendees in St. Cloud also heard addresses from laymen, and Untraut noted appreciatively that he “had seldom in this country heard laymen deliver speeches as well as Herr Nachbar and Judge Brüner did theirs.” Although he provided few details of these addresses, Untraut lavished praise upon the speakers and recommended them as role models for young German Catholics, who ought to “emulate and learn from” such men, “in the areas social life, politics, and the Church.”

Judge Brüner delivered his lecture, “*Der Werth der deutschen Sprache*” (“The Value of the German Language”), *auf Deutsch*, and German was the lingua franca of the entire event. Untraut particularly admired this aspect of the St. Cloud gathering and wrote approvingly that “Minnesota has not yet disfigured a *Katholikentag* with English addresses.” In Wisconsin, however, German Catholics had stepped onto “dangerous ground” since “first one, then two addresses; next every single one, with the exception of the opening speech (so that something “*deutsch*” remains), is held in the ‘language of the country.’” For Untraut, the German language not only helped German American Catholics maintain their faith, it even made food more appealing. Praising the work of the women and girls of Immaculate Conception Parish, who oversaw many of the practical tasks necessary for the *Katholikentag*, he declared, “The genuine German food tasted that much better since it was served by a staff who engaged the guests in conversation in the language of the guests—the German mother tongue. Bravo, young ladies of St. Cloud, young German Americans, may you remain forever so; he who honors his mother tongue,

honors also his mother, both the biological and the spiritual.”

Untraut clearly had a wonderful experience at the St. Cloud *Katholikentag*. In his own words, “The days in St. Cloud remain unforgettable to me! The noble hospitality of the sons of St. Benedict; the earnest, dignified manner of this great gathering of men; the solemn worship; the truly apostolic preaching; the splendid, pithy, far-reaching lay lectures; the friendliness and courteousness of the citizens of St. Cloud, which is marked by the seal of *Deushtum*, Catholic *Deushtum*—all of this remains inextinguishable in my thoughts. May St. Cloud carry on in this spirit.”

The experience of the St. Cloud *Katholikentag* not only left a lasting impression on Untraut’s thoughts, it also introduced him to the Benedictine monks of St. John’s Abbey, with whom he corresponded and worked for decades to come. In the late 1890s and early 1900s, he wrote occasionally to Abbot Peter Engel and evidently engaged in a war of words with at least one other monk, Fr. Stanislaus Preisser, director of the choir at St. John’s. Although the substance of the debate is unknown, Untraut, in a letter to Abbot Peter, expressed his willingness to stand his ground, even in the face of abuse. After asking the abbot to greet Fr. Stanislaus on his behalf and assuring him that he intended no offense to the abbot or St. John’s, Untraut wrote, “The attacks made against me, a man from Swabia like myself can bear very easily. If the pen is taken out of my hands, I simply take it up again and continue writing (and fight, if it has to be), in defense of the truth.”<sup>36</sup>

This self-proclaimed defender of truth was also a pastor entrusted with the care of

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<sup>36</sup>Untraut to Engel, 27 October 1897. SJA Archives. All of Untraut’s letters were handwritten in German. I am grateful to the anonymous person who translated Untraut’s letters to Engel. For all other Untraut letters, the translations are my own.

his parishioners, and Untraut wrote to Engel in this capacity, as well. In 1901, he addressed a letter to the abbot in which he pled the case of a young man, recently arrived from Germany, who lacked the funds necessary to continue his education toward the priesthood. After listing the prospective seminarian's academic accomplishments, Untraut proposed that he be admitted to the philosophy course at St. John's free of charge, on the condition that he pay for the year of studies after he entered the priesthood. Although the abbot's response to this request is unknown, the letter shows Untraut's pastoral concern for this young man, whose "conscientiousness and humility and hope" he admired.<sup>37</sup>

Untraut did not limit his contact with St. John's to letters and "battles with the pen" but also traveled to the monastery at least twice in the early 1900s. According to reports in the *St. John's Record*, the newspaper of St. John's University, in May 1903, "Rev. H. J. Untraut, of Trinity Church, La Crosse, Wis., was a welcome guest at St. John's during the past week," and he also conducted a retreat for St. John's Seminary from February 23 to 26, 1904.<sup>38</sup> The connection Untraut established with St. John's not only broadened his contact with German Catholics in the United States, it also offered a source of inspiration and comfort in the later years of his life, when he became a fervent supporter of the liturgical movement.

### *Sacred Heart, Eau Claire (1908-1920)*

Sacred Heart Parish in Eau Claire, where Untraut served as pastor from 1908 to

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<sup>37</sup>Untraut to Engel, 6 December 1901. SJA Archives.

<sup>38</sup>*St. John's Record*, vol. 16 (May 1903) and vol. 17 (March 1904).

1920, was founded in 1875 as a national parish for German-speaking Catholics. The original members withdrew from St. Patrick's Church, whose history had begun in 1850 with Eau Claire's first Catholic mission church, then called St. Peter's. The Catholic population of Eau Claire in the mid-1870s comprised a variety of immigrant groups, and, in the words of Fr. James Noonan, "It was natural that the recrudescence of nationalism would burst into the open periodically—even in Church organizations—as Canadian, Irish, and German, the predominant races, tenaciously clung to their mother tongues and customs."<sup>39</sup> Known in those days as the *Herz Jesu Gemeinde*, this German-language parish had a church and school of its own to serve the needs of its original sixty families, while the Irish Catholics of Eau Claire worshiped at St. Patrick's.<sup>40</sup>

During the years prior to Untraut's arrival in Eau Claire, Sacred Heart Parish grew considerably, boasting 300 families and 350 school pupils in 1893. The parish also possessed a "beautiful Gothic church,...the finest edifice of its kind in Eau Claire at the time," adorned with colored glass windows and housing a pipe organ and bells, and in 1890 constructed a hospital, also named Sacred Heart.<sup>41</sup>

The parish took particular pride in its school, in which Untraut also took a special interest during his pastorate. In 1910, for instance, he saw to the construction of a new school building. He also changed the teaching staff from the School Sisters of Notre

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<sup>39</sup>James Noonan, "Your Parish...Eau Claire: Sacred Heart" (30 July 1954). DLC Archives. This article is also the source of much of the parish history included here. Additional information comes from "Sacred Heart Parish, Eau Claire, Wisconsin," a summary of the parish's history from the historical files of Eau Claire Public Library (hereafter ECPL).

<sup>40</sup>The two parishes have since merged to form Sacred Heart of Jesus-St. Patrick's Parish.

<sup>41</sup>Noonan, "Eau Claire: Sacred Heart."

Dame, who had had charge of the school since 1881, to the Franciscan Sisters of the Perpetual Adoration, perhaps because of his experience working with members of the latter order at Holy Trinity in La Crosse.

While not without successes, such as the construction of the new school building, Untraut's years in Eau Claire were a trial for him, and he wrote more than once to his bishop, James Schwebach, asking to be relieved of his post. Soon after his arrival in Eau Claire, Untraut had to cope with a group of disgruntled parishioners, who submitted a petition to the bishop complaining about their new pastor. The reasons for their dissatisfaction are unclear, but another party within the congregation responded with their own letter to Bishop Schwebach, in which they staunchly supported Untraut. After explaining that they had heard that some in their parish had circulated a petition opposing Untraut, they wrote, "If this is the case, we protest strenuously against this gross injustice and heartily request that dear God and your episcopal Grace keep our good pastor with us for a long time." The letter, handwritten in German, was signed by a dozen male members of the parish, with many adding "*nebst Frau*" to indicate their wives' support, and its writers noted that "it would have been easy to collect more signatures for this protest, but we decided against this in order not to stir up further the hatred of some."<sup>42</sup>

Despite the unwavering support of this group of parishioners, however, Untraut was unhappy during much of his time at Sacred Heart. In a letter he wrote to Bishop Schwebach in 1909, he first asked for advice on a pastoral problem concerning two young people who wished to wed despite the objection of the bride's father, and then described

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<sup>42</sup>Richard Hermann, et al., to Schwebach, 1 March 1908. DLC Archives.

his feelings of alienation and persecution in Eau Claire. "I have not felt at home for a long time," he admitted, though he had only been at Sacred Heart for about a year. He suggested that the Rev. Joseph Wiedmann, his predecessor at Sacred Heart, who had left parish ministry on account of health problems and was serving as chaplain of St. Joseph's Hospital in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, return to Eau Claire and resume his position as pastor.<sup>43</sup>

Untraut experienced particular problems with the rector of St. Patrick's Parish, Arthur B. C. Dunne, who evidently acted as if he were "bishop of Eau Claire" and was turning other clergy, including Martin Connolly, chaplain of Sacred Heart hospital, against Untraut.<sup>44</sup> The conflict may have arisen from Irish-German ethnic tensions or perhaps from professional jealousy. Having served as pastor of St. Patrick's since 1891, Fr. Dunne had a long history in Eau Claire and had earned the nickname "Convert Maker of the West." According to an informal history of St. Patrick's, Untraut's nemesis was a capable and devoted priest, active in community affairs, who dedicated his energies in particular to St. Patrick's parish school.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, this shared interest apparently did little to

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<sup>43</sup>Untraut to Schwebach, 30 September 1909. DLC Archives. Untraut's involvement with the young couple may have been related to his work as notary for the diocesan Court for Matrimonial Causes, a position he held from 1903 to 1934.

<sup>44</sup>Untraut to Schwebach, 30 September 1909. DLC Archives. Untraut's dislike of Dunne may have dated back to the mid-1890s. In 1895 Untraut wrote an essay on "Father Dunn's Lecture in Mondavi," in which he sharply criticized the speaker for overemphasizing the issue of temperance and for supporting public schools. This "Fr. Dunn" (perhaps because of his German background, Untraut spelled the name "Dunn" rather than "Dunne" in his later letters), whom Untraut also called the "'eloquent divine' from Eau Claire," was likely the same Arthur B. C. Dunne who caused him such misery during his years at Sacred Heart. "Father Dunn's Lecture in Mondavi," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 26 December 1895.

<sup>45</sup>"History of St. Patrick's Parish, Eau Claire, Wisconsin." ECPL.

soothe relations between Untraut and Dunne, and some of the animosity between them may have sprung from different views on the specific methods and goals of parochial education.

While the conflict with Dunne continued, resulting in at least two more letters to the Schwebach complaining about the “bishop of Eau Claire,”<sup>46</sup> Untraut also faced battles with some of his parishioners. He had difficulty winning their financial support for the school and felt obligated to apologize to the bishop for the letters some members of his parish were sending. By 1911, plagued by dissent among his parishioners and significant practical problems, including a church furnace which the local fire department deemed “dangerously faulty,” Untraut conceded to his bishop, “In truth, if my departure from here would improve the congregation, I would gladly go. It is becoming difficult, very difficult, for me here, with all the work. Although I do not shy away from work, but....”<sup>47</sup>

His pleas to leave Eau Claire did not, however, result in a transfer, and Untraut remained at Sacred Heart for over a decade. In 1917, he wrote a four-page letter to Bishop Schwebach, in which he laid out a plan for assuming the chaplaincy of St. Mary’s Convent and St. Joseph’s Hospital in Marshfield, Wisconsin.<sup>48</sup> He had discussed the matter with the Fr. Anthony Joehren, chaplain emeritus, and Msgr. George Jacquemin, spiritual director of the convent, and had even spoken to a Rev. Kaiser regarding taking

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<sup>46</sup>Untraut to Schwebach, 17 December 1909; 10 June 1910. DLC Archives.

<sup>47</sup>Untraut to Schwebach, 10 June 1910; 26 May 1911. DLC Archives.

<sup>48</sup>Untraut to Schwebach, 26 October 1917. DLC Archives.

over the pastorate in Eau Claire.<sup>49</sup> While the bishop did not immediately approve this plan, Untraut did finally get his wish three years later when he left Eau Claire to become chaplain in Marshfield.

*St. Mary's Convent and St. Joseph's Hospital, Marshfield (1920-1932)*

In 1920, after nearly forty years of parish ministry, Untraut received a new call and became chaplain of St. Mary's Convent, American motherhouse of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, and their hospital, St. Joseph's. Throughout his career, Untraut had worked with members of several orders of women religious, including the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the Franciscan Sisters of the Perpetual Adoration, who played an important role in the life of the American immigrant Catholics and their families through their work in the parochial schools. The Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, while also involved in education, particularly of young children, devoted much of their energy to the other great labor of active Catholic sisters of their day: health care.

The Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother trace their history back to late-nineteenth-century Europe, though some members of their community arrived in the United States only a few years after the establishment of the order.<sup>50</sup> Their foundress, Mother Frances

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<sup>49</sup>According to the *Official Catholic Directory*, two priests named Kaiser were active in the Diocese of La Crosse in 1917: Fr. Gustave J. Kaiser of St. Mary's in Gays Mills and Fr. John L. Kaiser of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in St. Mary's Ridge. Untraut was likely referring to one of these men.

<sup>50</sup>The history of the order is taken from Aquilin Reichert, *Mother Frances Streitl: Her Life and Work* (Milwaukee: Convent of the Sorrowful Mother, 1948), and *1883-1983: Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother: In Celebration of who we are and what we believe...* Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother Archives (hereafter SSM Archives).

Streitel (1844-1911), was born and educated in Germany and became a Franciscan postulant in 1866. After feeling called to greater solitude, she transferred to a Carmelite community, but this, too, left her unsatisfied. She determined in 1883 to leave Germany for Rome, where she and a small group of German-speaking women formed a new community which was recognized as a religious congregation and given the name the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother in 1885. Envisioning an order which would bring together contemplative and active ministries, Mother Frances recounted, "In spirit I beheld two mountains rise...In the one I recognized Carmel; in the other, Alverno...Both mountains arched themselves into one...The call which I received...sounded like this: 'To unite the active life with the contemplative.'"<sup>51</sup>

Although unable at first to establish a branch of her order in her native land, on account of the anti-Catholic policies of Otto von Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*, Mother Frances soon sent sisters to the United States and, slightly later, to Austria. The first members of the order to travel to America arrived in New Jersey in March, 1888, and before long, sisters had ventured into the interior of the country, where they began the active ministry of caring for the sick that became one of their greatest contributions to the Catholics of the United States.

After the establishment in 1889 of St. Francis Hospital in Wichita, Kansas, the community's first American foundation, the order founded two hospitals in Wisconsin in 1890, St. Mary's in Menomonie and St. Joseph's in Marshfield, the latter upon the invitation of Fr. Paul Geyer, Untraut's predecessor at Holy Trinity. Mother Frances took

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<sup>51</sup>Quoted in *Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother*, 66.

a personal interest in these projects and traveled to Wisconsin in that year during her first visit to the United States. Although St. Mary's Hospital never enjoyed much success and closed in 1898, St. Joseph's, after some early struggles, thrived and remains today an important health care center for Marshfield and the surrounding area. After nursing patients in their homes for two months following their arrival in Marshfield, the sisters moved their work into a new hospital building early in 1891. In the hospital's earliest days, a widower who turned to the sisters to help care for his five children provided the community's only source of income, \$1.05 per day. Since such a paltry sum clearly could not cover the costs of construction and operation, Fr. Joseph Joch, the first chaplain of the Marshfield sisters, organized an insurance system which he marketed to lumberjacks, guaranteeing health care for the payment of an annual fee, and taught the sisters the Kneipp Water Cure, a popular form of hydrotherapy, which Fr. Geyer underwent at Marshfield in 1893. By that time, the hospital had gained such a fine reputation that the sisters had to decline some applications for treatment.<sup>52</sup>

Over the course of the next thirty years, the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother established and staffed hospitals in Oshkosh, Rhinelander, Tomahawk, and Steven's Point, Wisconsin, and Wabasha and Mankato, Minnesota, but Marshfield retained particular significance for the order's work in Wisconsin and throughout the United States. The town was home not only to St. Joseph's Hospital and, after 1917, to an associated training school for nurses, but also to St. Mary's Convent, which opened in 1907 as the

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<sup>52</sup>*Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother*, 36-37; Reichert, *Mother Frances*, 118, 120; Gerald Edward Fisher, *Dusk is My Dawn: The First Hundred Years of the Diocese of La Crosse, 1868-1968* (1969), 67-68; "Kirchliche Nachrichten," *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 20 July 1893.

congregation's first American motherhouse and novitiate.

When Untraut moved to Marshfield in 1920, he assumed the chaplaincy of both the hospital and the convent. During his time as chaplain, the work of the hospital expanded greatly, as a staff of seventeen or eighteen sisters serving between 2000 and 2500 patients annually increased to over forty sisters caring for well over 3000. The number of student nurses enrolled in the hospital's training program also grew, from 35 in 1921 to 61 in 1932.<sup>53</sup> However, also during his time in Marshfield, in 1927, the community transferred their novitiate to Milwaukee, a move Untraut "regretted very much."<sup>54</sup>

#### *Liturgical interests and activities*

In these last years of his career, as he cared for the spiritual needs of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother and the patients of St. Joseph's Hospital, Untraut developed a growing interest in liturgical renewal, an interest whose seeds had been planted during his student days in Europe. He found time in his undoubtedly busy pastoral schedule to learn about the liturgical movement, which was at the time in its infancy in Europe and all but unknown in the United States; to develop new opportunities for the sisters to participate more fully in worship; to correspond with his friends at St. John's, who were also taking note of developments in Europe and finding inspiration there for an American movement for liturgical education and reform; and to write a book, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, which

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<sup>53</sup>These data are taken from *The Official Catholic Directory* for the years 1921-32.

<sup>54</sup>“History of the Sisters of the Community of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother,” vol. I. SSM Archives.

he hoped would spark a desire for liturgical renewal among German Catholics in the United States.

Because of his academic background, Untraut already had a solid foundation in liturgics, and his later writings clearly indicate that he continued to read the latest works in the field, including in particular those of Joseph Kramp and Pius Parsch. Not only do these names appear repeatedly in his book, but in his correspondence with Virgil Michel, O.S.B., founder in 1926 of the liturgical journal *Orate Fratres* and considered by many to be the father of the American Catholic liturgical movement, Untraut recommended Parsch's liturgical calendar, *Das Jahr des Heils*, which he called "*ausgezeichnet*" (outstanding).<sup>55</sup>

Untraut admired Michel and found in *Orate Fratres* a source of both information and inspiration. His letters to Michel convey a sense of relief and joy that others in this country shared his passionate concern for liturgical renewal. "*Orate Fratres* is a very welcome guest," he wrote. "What a shame it visits only *once* per month."<sup>56</sup> Eager to assist in the work of the liturgical apostolate—the term favored by many supporters of liturgical reform since it connoted a sense of being "called out" to serve in the mission of Christ—Untraut offered Michel suggestions for reading, corrected on at least one occasion a minor error in *Orate Fratres*, and volunteered to help out in any way he could. At the close of a 1929 letter, Untraut, then seventy-four years old, wrote to Michel, who was not yet forty, "If I, as an 'old' and 'out-of-date' Swabian can serve in any way, I am always

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<sup>55</sup>Untraut to Michel, 11 January 1927. St. John's University Archives (hereafter SJU Archives).

<sup>56</sup>Untraut to Michel, undated. SJU Archives. Emphasis in original.

ready to do so.”<sup>57</sup>

Untraut served the cause of liturgical renewal not only in word but also in deed, by introducing liturgically progressive practices while chaplain of St. Mary’s Convent. According to a history of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, Untraut “taught sacred liturgy to all the members of the convent and introduced the *Missa Recitata* [dialogue mass] in the convent chapel long before this form of praying the Mass had become popular.” His interest in and talent for music, evident from his early days as a top student in *Gesang* and from its frequent appearance as a theme in his writings, also influenced his liturgical work with the sisters since he taught them the techniques of Gregorian chant, which as early as the era of Dom Prosper Guéranger at Solesmes in the mid-nineteenth century had been used as a means of encouraging greater participation in the liturgy.<sup>58</sup>

Untraut may also have influenced at least one other priest in his diocese to implement the dialogue mass. In 1927, the Rev. H. F. Flock, pastor of St. Patrick’s Church, Sparta, Wisconsin, wrote to St. John’s on a piece of Untraut’s personal stationery and requested one hundred copies of a dialogue mass pamphlet entitled “Offeramus.” He planned to begin the new school year with the “*Missa Recitata*,” and he also remarked that “you ought to offer a prize for a competition to find a *good, liturgical, sonorous, expressive* English name for ‘*Missa Recitata*.’”<sup>59</sup> The relationship between Untraut and Flock is unclear, but Flock may have learned about the dialogue mass from Untraut and

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<sup>57</sup>Untraut to Michel, 7 February 1927; 24 February 1929. SJU Archives.

<sup>58</sup>“History of the Community of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother,” vol. I.

<sup>59</sup>Flock to St. John’s, 29 July 1927. SJU Archives. Emphasis in original. Unlike Untraut, Flock wrote in English.

used Untraut's name to catch the attention of Michel and others at St. John's.

In 1925, inspired by his study of liturgical renewal in Europe and equipped with a solid foundation in liturgical theology, as well as decades of experience as a parish priest, Untraut finally undertook to write a book he firmly believed needed to be written: a survey and evaluation of the methods and goals of the liturgical movement, *auf Deutsch*, for German American Catholics. This work—the sale of which was, as Untraut admitted, “schlecht” (poor)—places beyond doubt Untraut's progressive liturgical views and, in light of the later development of the American liturgical movement and the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council, was clearly the product of a man ahead of his time.<sup>60</sup>

#### *Retirement years (1932-1941)*

After retiring from active ministry in 1932, at the already advanced age of 78, Untraut remained in Marshfield. Although his health during the last years of his life was often poor, he continued to take an interest in Catholic life in the area and to correspond with his friends at St. John's.

Untraut did not let old age prevent him from taking on liturgical questions, and he wrote to Virgil Michel in 1936 to ask about the proper time for worship on Good Friday, a concern which probably arose from requirements for fasting prior to the service. Untraut argued that beginning the service at noon was acceptable and asked Michel, “Is there anywhere a prohibition on beginning the worship service at noon?” He also wanted to know if such a practice would be a “novelty” and added pointedly, “some consider the

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<sup>60</sup>Untraut to Michel, 19 January 1927. SJU Archives. Emphasis in original.

*liturgical apostolate a novelty, as well.*<sup>61</sup>

Because of his connections with the Benedictine community in Collegeville, Untraut could not only turn to Michel for answers to liturgical queries, he could also offer assistance to priests in Marshfield when they needed additional help for special events. For instance, in 1939, Christ the King parish, a mission parish in Spencer, a town nine miles northwest of Marshfield, was planning a special service for the consecration of their church. The service, which was to take place on Pentecost Sunday and include the celebration of a pontifical high mass, required more people and vestments than were available in Marshfield, so Untraut wrote to Abbot Alcuin Deutsch of St. John's for help. He requested that a deacon, subdeacon, and another cleric travel to Marshfield for the occasion, bringing with them red dalmatics, liturgical garments appropriate for the season, since such vestments were "a rarity" in the area. He hoped he could prevail upon the abbot to grant these favors since the consecration would be "the first and last pontifical high mass" for the congregation in Spencer.<sup>62</sup>

In a postscript to one of the letters he wrote to Abbot Alcuin regarding the consecration mass in Spencer, Untraut commented that his health was "reasonably good" and added that, despite being nearly 85 years old, "I can, thank God, still read mass daily in my private chamber."<sup>63</sup> The liturgy of the Catholic Church remained the touchstone of his spiritual life and the heart of his priestly calling. As he had written in *Die liturgische*

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<sup>61</sup>Untraut to Michel, 8 April 1936. SJU Archives. Emphasis in original.

<sup>62</sup>Untraut to Deutsch, 9 May 1939; 14 May 1939. SJU Archives.

<sup>63</sup>Untraut to Deutsch, 9 May 1939. SJU Archives.

*Bewegung:*

What a comfort for a priest, who realizes he is first and foremost a liturgist; he might, when he grows old and frail, cease to be a catechist and preacher, might no longer be pastor of the sacraments—but as long as he can still carry out the holy sacrifice, he stands at the center of the priestly vocation, from which arises the grace of all the sacraments, the strength of all blessings and consecration. It is for this reason a great consolation which the priestly calling provides. Broken by age, military commanders sheathe their swords; statesmen return to private life but are always pained by the words, “*Difficile est in otio quies.*” In the usual course of things, only the priest is able to continue what is highest and holiest in his vocation, performing the holy sacrifice, carrying out until his very end the most solemn duty of his calling<sup>64</sup>

Fr. Hermann Joseph Untraut, German immigrant, parish priest, passionate advocate for both tradition and change, died on August 23, 1941, at age 87, and was laid to rest in Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Marshfield, Wisconsin.




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<sup>64</sup>Hermann Joseph Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung: Ein Beitrag zu ihrer besseren Würdigung* (Marshfield, WI: by the author, 1925), 84.

## Chapter 4

## Influences on the Work of Hermann Joseph Untraut

Although the ideas for liturgical reform and renewal that Hermann Untraut espoused in *Die liturgische Bewegung* were highly unusual for a work by an American Catholic in the mid-1920s—and would remain relatively uncommon for decades thereafter—they were nonetheless not entirely unique. With his knowledge of the German language and background in German theology, Untraut was able to borrow heavily from the work of others, and he took much of his thought from the liturgical pioneers of the Old World, especially the German Jesuit scholar Joseph Kramp, the Austrian Augustinian canon Pius Parsch, and one of nineteenth-century Germany’s finest liturgical theologians, Valentin Thalhofer.

## Joseph Kramp, S. J. (1886-1940)

Despite the controversial nature of his work, the German Jesuit theologian Joseph Kramp influenced Hermann Untraut’s thought significantly.<sup>1</sup> From Kramp’s eucharistic theology of sacrifice to his critique of modern worship, his ideas are present, both explicitly and implicitly, in Untraut’s book. These influences included a favorite slogan, “Whoever loves the Church, also loves the liturgy,” which Untraut appropriated several

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<sup>1</sup>Some American Catholic publications, notably *Ecclesiastical Review* and *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, turned down opportunities to carry Kramp’s essays [Paul B. Marx, *Virgil Michel and the Liturgical Movement* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1957), 92]. Additionally, according to H. A. Reinhold, Kramp’s “daring interpretation of the sacrifice of the Mass” prevented him from being appointed to any academic posts (“Joseph Kramp,” in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*).

times in *Die liturgische Bewegung*, as well as a variety of more substantive theological points.<sup>2</sup>

### *The Eucharist as sacrifice*

The centrality of sacrifice in the Eucharist underlay much of Kramp's writing and, through his influence, shaped Untraut's theology, as well. According to Kramp, "The mass is essentially a sacrifice (*Opfer*), that is, an offering and dedication (*Darbringung und Hingabe*) to the Lord God."<sup>3</sup> In his view, the liturgy existed primarily to "carry out the sacrifice, embellishing it with appropriate beauty, making it stimulating, edifying, and sensible in its prayers and ceremonies."<sup>4</sup>

The idea of sacrifice permeated *Die liturgische Bewegung*, and Untraut often used "sacrifice," "mass," and "Eucharist" more or less interchangeably. For instance, in describing the purpose of the liturgical movement, he stated that it "seeks to teach knowledge and understanding of the universal worship of the Catholic Church; in particular, its goal is to make the primary liturgy, the sacrifice of the mass—its essence and significance, its actions and ceremonies—comprehensible to young and old alike." He continued, citing Kramp, "As soon as the priests and people again celebrate in harmony

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<sup>2</sup>Hermann Joseph Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung: Ein Beitrag zu ihrer besseren Würdigung* (Marshfield, WI: by the author, 1925), 4, 19, 72.

<sup>3</sup>Joseph Kramp, *Messliturgie und Gottesreich: Darlegung und Erklärung der kirchlichen Messformulare* (Vol. 1: Vom ersten Adventsonntag bis sechsten Sonntag nach Epiphanie) (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder & Co., 1921), v.

<sup>4</sup>Joseph Kramp, *Die Opferschauungen der römischen Messliturgie: Liturgie- und dogmengeschichtliche Untersuchung* (2d. ed.) (Regensburg: Verlag Josef Kösel & Friedrich Pustet K.-G., 1924), 22.

the sacrifice of the new covenant, one of the deepest sources of evil is eliminated, and unimagined riches of the Christian life are uncovered for large and small, old and young, the elite and the common folk.”<sup>5</sup> Throughout his book, Untraut referred repeatedly to the “eucharistic sacrifice,” the “sacrificial celebration,” the “sacrificial action,” the “sacrificial meal,” and, simply, “the sacrifice.” While Kramp was not Untraut’s sole source for this idea, as *Die liturgische Bewegung* included related citations from Thalhofer, as well as recommendations of Sauter’s “The Sacrifice of the Mass” and Pax Press’s “The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass,” the numerous specific mentions of Kramp indicate that his influence was paramount.<sup>6</sup>

Although claiming to abjure any attempt to “explain the liturgy according to a theory of sacrifice,” Kramp nonetheless carefully explored the implications of understanding the mass fundamentally as a sacrifice.<sup>7</sup> Kramp understood the sacrificial action of the mass not only as a making-present of the redemptive sacrifice of Christ—the position put forth by the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century—but also as a deeply symbolic act.<sup>8</sup> The eucharistic elements are not mere bread and wine but symbolic representations of those who offer them: “As is generally recognized, the sacrifice is a symbolic action, that is, the offering of visible gifts to the Lord God has no inherent

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<sup>5</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 5.

<sup>6</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 10, 14, 32.

<sup>7</sup>Kramp, *Die Opferanschauungen*, 25.

<sup>8</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 7; Joseph Kramp, *Eucharistia: Von ihrem Wesen und ihrem Kult* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1924). English translations of citations from this work are based on William Busch’s translation *Eucharistia: Essays on Eucharistic Liturgy and Devotion* (St. Paul, MN: The E. M. Lohmann Company, 1926).

purpose (*Selbstzweck*) but rather serves as the means to express an idea.” This “*Idee*,” which the Eucharist puts forth, is the idea of self-sacrifice. As Kramp described it, “The gifts become representatives of those who sacrifice (*Opfernden*), the offering, a symbol of the dedication of one’s very self to the divinity.”<sup>9</sup> In comparing the relative significance of the exterior and interior dimensions of the eucharistic sacrifice, he noted that “as important and essential as the external action may be, from the religious and moral perspective, the chief significance must be accorded to the act of self-oblation.”<sup>10</sup>

Untraut enthusiastically endorsed this extension of the idea of sacrifice, and, in agreement with Kramp, he believed the eucharistic sacrifice encompassed far more than the mere offering of bread and wine. Kramp’s impact on Untraut’s thought becomes particularly apparent in such statements as, “It is to be hoped, as Kramp has put forth, that the minds and wills of the people will again consider the sacrificial gifts of bread and wine as their own gifts and will unite the presentation of those gifts, through the priest, with the presentation and offering of their own selves.”<sup>11</sup> In order to express this dimension of the sacrifice, Untraut encouraged revival of the ancient practice of the offertory procession, a favorite cause of many liturgical movement supporters. In his words:

The ‘liturgical’ movement seeks to reawaken the mind and will of the people to consider the sacrificial gifts, the bread and wine, as their gifts, and through the priest to bind their dedication to the dedication and offering of their own selves... This undoubtedly expresses more clearly the symbolic character of the gifts and calls out urgently to every believer: it is

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<sup>9</sup>Kramp, *Die Opferschauung*, 17-18. See also 109-10.

<sup>10</sup>Kramp, *Eucharistia*, 34.

<sup>11</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 29.

your gifts which should be presented to the Lord as a sign of homage and reverence; it is your very self in those gifts which sacrifices itself and is, through transub-stantiation (*Wandlung*), taken up into Christ and in him offered up to the Father.<sup>12</sup>

### *The Eucharist as a source of union*

Since the Eucharist consisted of not only the offering of bread and wine, but also the transformation of that bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, both Kramp's and Untraut's theologies of sacrifice had further consequences for participants, who by offering themselves in the sacrifice become members of the Mystical Body of Christ and are united with the head, Jesus Christ. For instance, Kramp asserted that through transubstantiation "we ourselves, who want to consecrate ourselves to the Lord, are raised up and led more deeply into the mystical union of grace (*Gnadenverbindung*) with Christ, which St. Paul characterized as the Mystical Body of Christ, and so become more perfectly one with Christ and in him an acceptable offering for the Father."<sup>13</sup> Pursuing this theme in other works, as well, he wrote, "Just as the bread is transformed through the consecration into Christ's body, those who sacrifice are taken up, in a symbolic sense, into his mystical body." Kramp considered the eucharistic sacrifice to be the work not of the priest, the people, or Christ alone, but of all three, sacrificing together as a united body and head: "We sacrifice, but not without Christ, but rather in Christ; and Christ sacrifices not merely for us, but rather with us, united as the head with the body."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 13, 87.

<sup>13</sup>Kramp, *Eucharistia*, 35-36.

<sup>14</sup>Untraut, *Die Opferschauungen*, 36, 99.

Untraut, too, appreciated the unitive potential of the eucharistic sacrifice and emphasized in particular its power to join participants with Christ. In his view, the moment of transubstantiation offered worshipers the possibility of new life, transfigured like the gifts they presented to God in the offertory procession:

The transfigured Christ is now upon the altar and has transformed the gifts within himself, making them into visible expressions of his continual spiritual sacrifice to the Father. Christ rests upon the altar as the unbloody sacrifice. And since he, as the transfigured God-man, is present in the radiant glory of the resurrection, the death and resurrection of Christ are given new and lively reality in the single act of transubstantiation. But Christ is present not only to Christ alone but to the whole Church, especially those faithful in attendance. They have become one with the sacrifice of Christ and receive anew, as Christ did and through him, the divine life of transfiguration.<sup>15</sup>

#### *The reception of communion during mass*

Kramp and Untraut also concurred regarding the importance of receiving communion as part of the mass, and they both considered this an additional source of unity for the Mystical Body of Christ. Arguing that communion was historically a vital component of the eucharistic celebration, Kramp wrote of an eighth-century papal mass, “Offertory (*Opfer*) and communion appear on the face of it as two things, the latter supposing and completing the former, as a single united action, making up the one eucharistic sacrifice.” Later in the same volume, he commented that “communion is in its essence a gift God gives us in return for the offering we have made to him,” and “the fundamental idea of the mass is not completely expressed without communion.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 87.

<sup>16</sup>Kramp, *Eucharistia*, 30, 47-48.

Untraut, following both Kramp and Thalhofer—to say nothing of Pius X—also strongly encouraged the faithful to participate more fully in the mass by receiving communion during worship. He believed communion served as a source of unity on two levels: it united recipients both with God and with one another. In his view, “The desire for a complete relationship with Christ in eternal life finds its most effective pledge in the eating of his body and drinking of his blood in the sacrificial meal,” and “At the table of the Lord, the bonds of love and harmony among the faithful should become ever stronger until they are of ‘one heart and one spirit’; for we are one bread, one body—all of us many partake of one bread.”<sup>17</sup>

As communion united the believer with God, according to Untraut, it also brought him closer to others in the Church, as well as to the Church itself: “Daily celebration of the Eucharist, in which the faithful present the sacrificial gifts and then receive them after they are made holy through the sacrifice, is the true renewal of the sacred work, through which they are united with Christ and brought into the closest communion with his bride, the Church.”<sup>18</sup> Turning to the early Church for guidance and inspiration, he declared heartily, “What an uplifting and edifying sight it must have been when in the earliest days of Christianity all the faithful present received holy communion during the mass!” Recalling that the first Christians “loved one another as brothers— they all ate of one bread as members of the one mystical body of Christ,” he endorsed Kramp’s call for a return to the traditional practice of receiving communion within the mass: “How entirely different

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<sup>17</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 39, 56.

<sup>18</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 18-19.

would this unity of the faithful come into effect psychologically, as well, as Father Kramp, S.J. says, if communion were treated as the communal table (*Tischgemeinschaft*) of those gathered in faith and grace for the sacrificial meal, in accordance with the liturgy!”<sup>19</sup>

Regarding communion, Kramp observed that many Catholics had come to consider it an individual private devotion. While he speculated on the affect this understanding may have had upon the willingness of some to receive communion—he believed men, in particular, avoided communion out of fear of appearing overly pious—he also repeatedly lamented the popularity of private devotions, a concern Untraut clearly shared.

This view that reception of communion had become merely another individual devotion, rather than an integral part of the communal action of the mass, was characteristic of the later liturgical movement, which Joseph Jungmann has described as “simply an attempt to fuse these scattered fragments [of Sacrament, Mass, and Communion] once more into a unified whole, and in particular, to restore the Eucharist to its complete meaning.”<sup>20</sup> In adopting this position, Kramp and Untraut distinguished themselves from supporters of frequent communion who did not address the issue of placing that communion in its appropriate liturgical context.<sup>21</sup> In his examination of the connection in Virgil Michel’s thought between the sacrifice of the mass, in which “the object of the offering, the bread and wine, stood for the giver, for the people themselves, and expressed their self-offering in mind and body,” and the reception of communion,

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<sup>19</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 58.

<sup>20</sup>Joseph Jungmann, “Eucharistic Piety,” *Worship* 35, no 7 (June-July 1961): 418-19.

<sup>21</sup>Roger Aubert, *The Church in a Secularised Society* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 125.

Joseph Chinnici noted that the understanding of the mass favored by Michel, Kramp, Untraut, and other liturgical movement supporters resulted in the liturgical movement's "directly conflict[ing] with the aims and presuppositions of its eucharistic counterpart." If the mass is fundamentally a symbolic sacrifice of the self, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament or reception of communion outside of the liturgical setting cannot replace the active participation of the faithful in the liturgy.<sup>22</sup>

### *Private devotions*

Kramp opposed the practice of private devotions during mass for two reasons in particular: such devotions distracted worshipers from the sacrificial action of the mass, and they prevented the mass from becoming a truly communal action. He complained that "during the mass, each individual offers his own prayer, [and] songs are sung which find their inspiration in some devotion appropriate to the season and have nothing to do with the progress of the mass." Recognizing that most Catholics had become so accustomed to such practices that they no longer noticed their impropriety, he likened it to a hypothetical scenario involving a mishmash of prayers and devotions: "The Church invites us to a Marian devotion, during which the priest recites the prayers to Mary by himself, while simultaneously the people boldly proceed with the stations of the cross or a devotion for poor souls (*Armenseelenandacht*) and many others in attendance offer prayers to St. Francis or some other prayer based on private interests." This situation was clearly not

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<sup>22</sup>Joseph Chinnici, *Living Stones: The History and Structure of Catholic Spiritual Life in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 181.

the ideal for communal worship, and Kramp reminded his readers that “when the Church invites us to mass, then we ought, according to the oft-repeated words of Pius X, to ‘pray the mass’.”<sup>23</sup>

Untraut, too, feared that many of the devotions popular among Catholics of his day distracted those present at the mass from the central action of the Eucharist. Firm in his belief that participation in worship entailed more than mere “attendance,” he wrote, “Some pious souls have erected small private chapels within themselves, so to speak, where they perform private devotions, one after another. They gladly attend the holy mass, but while there, they do not allow the liturgical events occurring on the altar to ‘disturb’ their pious private devotions or reading. They think constantly of their own poor souls.”<sup>24</sup> In a passage which very likely owed a debt to Kramp, he also imagined a situation of liturgical chaos, querying rhetorically, “What would one say if the rosary were prayed in such a way that while the priest and servers prayed the Our Father and the Hail Mary, the congregation sang the litany of all saints, and perhaps during the Hail Mary a sign were given to pause, when the priest began the ‘Gloria Patri,’ the organist responded, ‘sicut erat,’ but in the meantime the people prayed an Our Father in silence?”<sup>25</sup>

Both Kramp and Untraut perceived that worshipers focused excessively on “their own poor souls,” and they attributed this unfortunate individualism, which conspicuously failed to conform to their understanding of the liturgy, in part to the widespread popularity

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<sup>23</sup>Kramp, *Die Opferschauungen*, 37.

<sup>24</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 17.

<sup>25</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 8.

of private devotions. Kramp believed that a strong sense of individual identity was inherent in the modern mind, as people showed greater concern for “personal salvation and the survival of the individual soul into the next life” than for the general day of judgment and Second Coming of Christ. “Our piety,” he noted, “has taken on an individualistic character. In the teachings of Christ and the letters of the apostles, this was not the case.” In Kramp’s view, this modern individualistic piety contrasted sharply with the communal ideal of the liturgy: “The liturgy, however, is the worship of this Church, that is, a community, in which the ends (*Ziele*) of the individual are subordinated to those of the community.”<sup>26</sup> Likewise, Untraut faulted the use of popular devotions during mass for undermining the communal sense of the liturgy. “Through such mass devotions,” he wrote regretfully, “the spirit of community, which finds its most effective source of strength in the liturgy, the sense of peoplehood, has been destroyed.”<sup>27</sup>

### *Priests and people together*

In expressing their concern about the failure of modern worship to fulfill the ideal of the liturgy as a *Volkswerk*, a work of all the participants, Kramp and Untraut referred in particular to the growing split that had developed between the priest and the people. Kramp observed that during the mass “we find almost invariably that the thoughts, prayers, and songs of the priest on the one hand and of the people on the other proceed in two distinct directions,” while Untraut noted that “a cleft exists between priest and people;

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<sup>26</sup>Kramp, *Messliturgie und Gottesreich*, 8-9.

<sup>27</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 8.

the priest holds his worship service and among the attendees, either each performs a private devotion or they join together and hold a singing lesson with songs having absolutely nothing or very little indeed to do with the liturgy and only begin to follow the priest when the mass is over.”<sup>28</sup>

Untraut followed Kramp’s lead in emphasizing the importance of priest and people acting together in the liturgy. After again calling attention to the remarkable flexibility of the prayers of the missal, which “offer an immeasurable wealth of ideas and prove appropriate for every mood and every disposition,” he announced, “May the time come again when the people again participate fully in the sacrifice, praying and sacrificing with the priest!”<sup>29</sup> Kramp had also presented the *Mitopfern* (sacrificing together) of priest and people as the liturgical ideal. Though mindful of the juridical distinction between priest and people, he stated, “According to the liturgy, both priest and people are active participants in the sacrifice.”<sup>30</sup> For Kramp, liturgical participation meant, in its essence, this acting together of priest and people. As he neatly summarized this ideal in German, participation consisted in “*die Anteilnahme von Mitopfernden und Mitbetenden*” (the participation of those sacrificing and praying together).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Kramp, *Eucharistia*, 115; Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 107.

<sup>29</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 30-31.

<sup>30</sup>Kramp, *Die Opferschauungen*, 35.

<sup>31</sup>Kramp, *Eucharistia*, 116.

*Revival of the missal*

Kramp's influence on Untraut's ideas extended beyond the diagnosis of liturgical ills to suggestions for their remedy. They both sought to return Catholics to a communal, sacrificial understanding of the liturgy, in which priest and people worshiped together, and they advocated a revival of the traditional prayers of the missal, as well as full participation in the Church year, as the best means to accomplish this. Kramp lavishly praised the prayers of the missal, declaring that "there is no prayer so appropriate for all varieties of character and disposition and class and age and vocation as the liturgical prayers of the mass itself. Not other prayer so well expresses the organic connection between Holy Communion and the Holy Sacrifice and therefore provides so excellent a preparation for Holy Communion."<sup>32</sup>

Kramp's influence on Untraut in this regard is plain. Not only did Untraut share Kramp's regard for the prayers of the missal as the ideal preparation for reception of communion, as indicated by his entitling Chapter XX of *Die liturgische Bewegung* "The sacrificial meal—the mass prayers are the best preparation and thanksgiving," he also agreed wholeheartedly with Kramp's assessment of the traditional liturgical prayers as exceptionally rich and varied. While crediting Kramp for the idea that "we are...human beings, different every day, and there is a special power in the liturgical prayers, which are able to fashion a new vessel each day for our changing concerns and afflictions, wishes and pleas, sufferings and joys," Untraut did not clearly indicate the extent to which this section of his book depends on Kramp's *Eucharistia*; a comparison of the two texts in the

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<sup>32</sup>Kramp, *Eucharistia*, 123.

original German shows that much of Chapter XX consists of an essentially verbatim transcription of the Jesuit's work!<sup>33</sup>

### *The Church year*

While Kramp evidently did not influence Untraut as directly regarding the significance of the Church year, they nonetheless held some similar views on the matter. For instance, Kramp noted that a return to the traditional understanding of the Church year was a further manifestation of the desire to reinvigorate the liturgical practices of the early Church: "The liturgical efforts of the present day, including those of the Church herself, return to the ancient Christian notion of the Church year."<sup>34</sup> Untraut, who throughout his work encouraged the emulation of Christians of centuries past, opined that "It is certain that if the Church year, with its full development, again had influence and became the common property of the people, as it was in earlier centuries, then it would have to be the case that the degree of holiness of a Christian could be measured by the number of Church years he had experienced, as the rings of a tree indicate its age."<sup>35</sup>

Kramp also challenged the popular misconception that the primary purpose of the Church year is to recreate the earthly life of Jesus as a historical narrative. Its goal is, instead, to "present the life of the Lord with particular consideration of the work of salvation," to use the events of Jesus' life to illustrate and clarify the "two ends of all

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<sup>33</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 60. Cf. Kramp, *Eucharistia*, 125-128.

<sup>34</sup>Kramp, *Messliturgie und Gottesreich*, 23.

<sup>35</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 16.

worship: the honor of the Lord and the salvation of souls.”<sup>36</sup>

Though loath to abandon the idea of the Church year as educating Christians about Jesus’ life on Earth and thus giving them the ideal role model for daily living, Untraut, too, considered the presentation of salvation history a central purpose of the Church year. Describing the first part of the Church year, he wrote, “over the course of half a year, we are lead by the hand of the liturgy through the Savior’s entire sojourn on earth, kept in continuous connection with the progress of the work of salvation. Every feast day and every season is not only instructive and edifying but is also a renewal of the grace of the mystery of salvation which is celebrated, that is to say, a new birth, a new resurrection of Christ, a new sending of the Spirit.” Like Kramp, he believed the account of Jesus’ earthly life, as set forth in the liturgical year, was part of a larger purpose, encompassing the whole of salvation history: “the Church year is the appearance and expression of the grace-filled life of Christ on earth for the salvation of the world.”<sup>37</sup>

Kramp and Untraut both thought education was key to returning Catholics to an understanding of the Church year and a proper living with it. One of Kramp’s most important works, *Messliturgie und Gottesreich* (*The Liturgy of the Mass and the Kingdom of God*), is a three-volume exposition of the mass formularies of the liturgical year. Untraut specifically recommended this work as a guide for those who wished “to penetrate and assimilate the thoughts and ideas of the mass texts” throughout the Church year and understand the “array of precious religious thoughts” contained within each mass

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<sup>36</sup>Kramp, *Messliturgie und Gottesreich*, 11-12.

<sup>37</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 79, 100.

formulary.<sup>38</sup>

### Pius Parsch (1884-1954)

While Kramp unquestionably had a greater influence on Untraut, the Austrian liturgical pioneer Pius Parsch also received attention in *Die liturgische Bewegung*, and his interests coincided with those of both Untraut and Kramp regarding many liturgical matters. An Augustinian canon, Parsch played a leading role in the pastoral phase of the liturgical movement, and his liturgical work at Klosterneuburg, a monastery near Vienna, sought to address the needs of ordinary Catholics. He also placed notable emphasis upon biblical studies and founded a journal entitled *Bibel und Liturgie*. Known primarily as a “popularizer” of the liturgical movement, he contributed to the “*Volksliturgisches Apostolat*,” making theoretical and academic advances in liturgical studies accessible to the people in the pews, and he sought through his work at Klosterneuburg “to seek practical means of encouraging people’s liturgical activity and to champion in particular the active participation of the laity.”<sup>39</sup> A prolific writer with a clear and engaging style, he published numerous works devoted to educating the laity in such liturgical matters as the

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<sup>38</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 10.

<sup>39</sup>Pius Parsch, *Volksliturgie: Ihr Sinn und Umfang*, 2d ed. (Klosterneuburg: Volksliturgisches Apostolat, 1952), 50-51; Ernest Koenker, *The Liturgical Renaissance in the Roman Catholic Church*, 2d ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 15. See also Frank Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 614; Lancelot Sheppard, *The People Worship: A History of the Liturgical Movement* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1967), 45; Keith F. Pecklers, *The Unread Vision: The Liturgical Movement in the United States of America* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 17; Mark S. Massa, *Catholics and American Culture: Fulton Sheen, Dorothy Day, and the Notre Dame Football Team* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999), 150.

order of the mass, the feast days of saints, and the exercise of the divine office.<sup>40</sup>

Parsch was instrumental in placing Austria at the forefront of liturgical development in the early twentieth century, and Untraut praised the liturgical efforts of Austrian Catholics, declaring that they had belied the popular image of their country as “always ‘behind the times.’” “This may well be true in some cases,” he wrote, “but not as far as the liturgical movement is concerned. The nation sunk in poverty has learned to pray—it finds its strength and consolation in the liturgy.” He reckoned Parsch “justified in writing, ‘in all places, in the city and country and especially in Vienna, a spring breeze of renewed liturgical life is blowing,’” and, after reminding readers that “Catholics of all stations in the tiny, severely tested country of Austria show us what enthusiasm, courage, and a willingness to work can accomplish,” he made appreciative note of such Austrian achievements as liturgical conferences, lectures, and study groups.<sup>41</sup>

### *The people’s liturgical mass*

Untraut admired Parsch for his work on the people’s liturgical mass, which the Austrian cleric developed for his parishioners at Stift Klosterneuburg. Untraut described this type of worship as a mass in which “individual elements which have been taken for dead in today’s mass are brought to renewed life, to the extent that they can be made useful for religious life—responsive singing, homily, offertory procession, greeting of

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<sup>40</sup>*Kurze Messerklärung* (Klosterneuburg bei Wien: Verlag Volksliturgisches Apostolat, 1930); *Die Heiligen des Messbuches* (Klosterneuburg bei Wien: Volksliturgisches Apostolat, 1930); *Brevier-Erklärung im Geiste der liturgischen Erneuerung* (Vienna-Klosterneuburg: Volksliturgischer Verlag, 1940).

<sup>41</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 68-71.

peace, communion.”<sup>42</sup>

Parsch’s parish was a special “liturgical parish,” whose members, “not more than one hundred and fifty persons from every class and station and age,” devoted considerable time and energy to developing a model of active liturgical life. They studied not only the liturgy itself but also the Bible, chant, and Latin—though Parsch strongly advocated greater use of the vernacular in worship. Describing this community’s typical Sunday service for the benefit of readers of *Orate Fratres*, Parsch wrote:

Services begin mostly with Lauds [morning prayer of the divine office], partly chanted and partly recited, followed by a reading of the martyrology, reading of the dyptichs (anniversaries of the baptism, nameday, and death of our members). The Mass is celebrated with the greatest possible active participation *omnium circumstantium, non circumgenuflectentium*, after the manner of the early Church. The Mass is mostly a *missa lecta* on the part of the priest, but with songs in the vernacular on the part of the people. We revive the four ancient processions: the Proper (Introit, Gradual, Offertory, Communion) we sing in full during the procession. During the chanting of the entire Introit, the priest with the boys’ choir, the ministers and acolytes (sometimes as many as twenty) march solemnly from the entrance through the church; for the Gospel the procession goes to the *ambo* accompanied by the Alleluia. We have the offertory procession of the faithful who bring offerings of nature’s products which are for the benefit of the poor. Amid the chanting of the enlarged Communion, the faithful come to the holy table (not the railing). Introit and Communion are so sung that the schola chants the verses of the Psalm, after each of which the people repeat the antiphon. The chanting is done in a free rhythm, like choral, in German.<sup>43</sup>

As this account of worship at Klosterneuburg makes clear, Parsch, like other advocates of liturgical renewal, passionately advocated active participation by the laity, which served as

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<sup>42</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 65.

<sup>43</sup>“Liturgical Action in Austria,” *Orate Fratres* 5, no. 4 (Feb. 22, 1931), 180. Cf. *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 65-67.

the guiding principle of his liturgical work. “This principle is so precious to me,” he asserted, “that I would even forgo the classical liturgy in favor of the popular liturgy, if the latter hindered active participation.”<sup>44</sup> While Untraut likely would not have made such a bold declaration, he, too, believed such practices as the dialogue mass and the people’s liturgical mass were but means to a greater end. The “primary task” of the liturgical movement was, in his words, “thoroughly to educate the people liturgically, to introduce them to the spirit and content of the Church year, and to renew in them the religious life through the mysteries, sacraments, and, above all, the eucharistic sacrifice.”<sup>45</sup>

### *Biblical revival*

Parsch was known particularly for his desire to renew interest in the Bible among Catholics, and he “saw an intrinsic unity in liturgy as commentary on scripture and scripture as central in liturgy.”<sup>46</sup> Although Untraut referred to this aspect of Parsch’s work only in passing, he also displayed in his writing a thoroughgoing interest in the relationship between the Bible and liturgy. He wrote appreciatively of Parsch’s institution of Bible evenings in his parish, and, recognizing that these Bible study sessions furthered liturgical renewal, as well, he declared that “in this way, the Bible has become a

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<sup>44</sup>Pius Parsch, “*Wesentliches zur liturgischen Haltung*,” in *Lebendige Liturgie*, ed. Pius Parsch (Vienna-Klosterneuburg: Volksliturgischer Verlag, n.d. ), 8.

<sup>45</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 68.

<sup>46</sup>James F. White, *Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 90-91. See also I. H. Dalmais, *Introduction to the Liturgy*, trans. Roger Capel (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961) 172; Louis Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1955), 65-66.

preparatory school for the liturgy.”<sup>47</sup>

*Die liturgische Bewegung* included numerous references to Scripture, which Untraut often used to support his claims about liturgical reform. For instance, he argued for the transcendent value of communal prayer, prayer “together with the priest, with the Church,...with Christ, the Bridegroom of the Church,” by citing Matthew 18:19-20: “Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”<sup>48</sup>

Although Untraut did not explicitly cite Parsch in this regard, he recognized the profound connection between Holy Scripture and the holy liturgy and wrote about the historical, pedagogical, and theological dimensions of this relationship. His belief that liturgical prayer, in both the missal and the breviary, was far superior to other devotional prayer stemmed in large part from the observation that much liturgical prayer was drawn directly from the Bible. In protesting the charge “that we Catholics may not read Holy Scripture,” he asserted, “Already in the earliest Christian gatherings Holy Scripture was read, as it was in the synagogues.” As the liturgy developed, the Church year provided a framework for the distribution of readings from the Old and New Testaments in both the mass and the divine office, and eventually liturgical worship contained many verses from the psalms, as well as “excerpts from the Five Books of Moses, the seven historical books, the seven poetic books, and the Book of Wisdom, as well as selections from the eleven

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<sup>47</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 70.

<sup>48</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 12.

prophetic books and more than 450 citations from the four Gospels and parts of almost all the letters of the apostles.” The words from these scriptural sources were, according to Untraut, “especially holy and dignified, effective and grace-filled—they are indeed the words of God—words which claim the Holy Spirit as their creator.”<sup>49</sup>

Untraut also believed the use of biblical readings in liturgical worship offered important lessons to those in attendance since “in the readings we have the word of God, through which he speaks to us and instructs us in all doctrine and truth.” After describing how the responsive prayer of the dialogue mass ought to “place us in the proper state of mind for the day,” Untraut explained that the function of the “teaching elements (epistle and Gospel)” was to “show us how this state of mind ought to be manifested in deeds.” In addition, he maintained that Scripture provided the strength necessary to live a Christian life in the modern world since “in the midst of a world which has fallen away from Christianity and is hostile toward the Church, in the midst of all suffering and persecution which oppresses us, in the midst of all the storms which rage around us, the immortal word of God encourages and uplifts us and grants us, when we faithfully and obediently accept it, eternal life.”<sup>50</sup>

Finally, Untraut identified the theological significance of Scripture in the liturgy, which “presents to us the entire saving work of the Redeemer.” In *Die liturgische Bewegung* he wrote:

[Christ’s] first task was to teach the truth and the law of God—outwardly

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<sup>49</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 49-51, 72.

<sup>50</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 15, 51.

through the words which flowed from his lips, inwardly through the light which streamed from him into hearts. Only after the Lord as teacher of truth had shown the path to heaven did he sacrifice himself on the cross for reconciliation and to unite man with God in grace and love. This is reiterated in the celebration of the mass. Before the Savior appears on the altar as the mystical sacrificial Lamb through the transubstantiation, he speaks to us the words of eternal life—and this first through the prophets and apostles and then through himself. The epistle and the Gospel precede the sacrificial action. This order indicates the profound connection between the doctrine of truth and the mystery of the altar, between the word of God and the divine, eternal Word, which became flesh and in Eucharistic form is again made present and lives among us. The sacramental God-made-man is not only the life but also the way and the truth for us men. The altar of grace and the pulpit of truth are closely bound together shrines, and the priest, who presents the sacrifice, also proclaims the truth. It is thus entirely appropriate that the Church link readings from Holy Scripture with the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice, which is the “mystery of faith” par excellence. The proclamation of truth precedes the completion of the sacrifice, for knowledge is the beginning of salvation.<sup>51</sup>

Whether or not Parsch directly influenced Untraut’s reflections on Scripture and liturgy, they clearly shared a belief in the inextricable connection between these two fundamental elements of Catholic life.

### *The Church year*

Untraut also mentioned Parsch’s great interest in proper observance and understanding of the Church year, a common concern among participants in the liturgical movement. He cited Parsch specifically as the source of his claim that “through the Church year, the Church is the best guide for souls, leading seekers of God with pedagogical tact, touching all dimensions of the soul, allowing for the full range of

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<sup>51</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 50-51.

motives.” Untraut, Kramp, and Parsch all believed instruction in the basics of the Church year was a key element of liturgical renewal. Untraut wrote that the people “must be reintroduced, as Dr. Parsch says, to an understanding of the feasts and seasons of the Church year, to the mass formularies of the individual Sundays and feast days.”<sup>52</sup> Parsch considered the Church year an important tool for making Christian teaching accessible to the laity. Turning, as he often did, to metaphor, he compared the Church year to a prism: “Sunlight contains all colors of the spectrum; by looking through a prism, we can separate the colors. Likewise the sunlight of the Eucharistic mystery is separated into its colors by the prism of the Church year. In other words, we can over the course of the Church year truly partake of the life of Christ in the mass.”<sup>53</sup>

### *Eucharistic theology and practice*

Parsch shared with both Untraut and Kramp a concern that all Catholics understand the mass as a sacrifice and recommended similar remedies for the “great liturgical ignorance” Untraut believed existed among the people.<sup>54</sup> Although Untraut did not cite Parsch in his discussion advocating revival of the offertory procession, Parsch strongly favored a return to this ancient custom. In his short book explaining the mass, he detailed the significance of this practice, noting the profound symbolism of the gifts of bread and wine, representing human labor and suffering, as gifts of the self. He also

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<sup>52</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 6, 90.

<sup>53</sup>Parsch, *Kurze Messerklärung*, 19.

<sup>54</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 105.

argued for the importance of communion as an intrinsic element of the mass. “Mass without communion,” he proclaimed, “is like a ring from which the gem has fallen.”<sup>55</sup>

While less significant than Kramp as a direct influence on Untraut’s thought, Pius Parsch nonetheless shared many of Untraut’s methods and goals, and the German American pastor clearly admired the work of the Austrian liturgical pioneer. While he looked to Kramp for theological guidance, Untraut turned to the example of Parsch for inspiring lessons in the practical implementation of the liturgical apostolate.

#### Valentin Thalhofer (1825-1891)

While a student at the Catholic seminary at Eichstätt, Herman Untraut studied under the eminent German liturgist Valentin Thalhofer and adopted many of this professor’s ideas about liturgical theology. Despite a lifelong struggle with poor health,<sup>56</sup> Thalhofer authored an exhaustive two-volume *Handbuch der katholischen Liturgik*, a work which established him as “the founder of an Eichstätt ‘handbook tradition,’” and is “rightfully numbered among the most important liturgists of the nineteenth century.” His career included professorial positions at the royal lyceum in Dillingen and the Bayerischen Landesuniversität in Munich, as well as the appointment at Eichstätt, where he began

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<sup>55</sup>Parsch, *Kurze Messerklärung*, 107, 176.

<sup>56</sup>In his recent study of Thalhofer, Reinhold Malcherek has speculated on the influence Thalhofer’s physical problems may have had on his theology, perhaps providing the inspiration for his preoccupation with the idea of sacrifice. *Liturgiewissenschaft im 19. Jahrhundert: Valentin Thalhofer (1825-1891) und sein “Handbuch der katholischen Liturgik”* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2001), 46.

work in 1877.<sup>57</sup>

Thalhofer's teaching career spanned a wide variety of subjects, from pastoral theology to homiletics, but his favorite field of study remained liturgics. Throughout his work as a liturgist, he expressed a particular interest in the theology of the mass as a sacrifice, a topic he first investigated in an essay he wrote as a theology student. As his scholarly career progressed, he explored this theme in both the Old and New Testaments and developed an understanding of the liturgy as a joint action of worship offered by both the laity and the priest, the head and the members. The metaphor of "head" and "members" and the attendant theology of the Mystical Body of Christ, so prevalent in the work of Untraut and other advocates of liturgical renewal, appeared repeatedly in Thalhofer's writings and likely at least partially inspired Untraut's use of this image. Like the liturgical reformers of the twentieth century, Thalhofer advocated greater participation by the lay members of the Mystical Body of Christ and supported the revival of such venerable practices as the offertory procession and reception of communion during mass, as well as vocal responses by the congregation to the words of the celebrant.<sup>58</sup>

Although *Die liturgische Bewegung* is more a work of persuasive rhetoric than sophisticated theological analysis, and Untraut explicitly cited Thalhofer only three times, the influence of the Eichstätt liturgist on Untraut's thought is clear. For instance, Untraut

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<sup>57</sup>Theodor Maas-Ewerd, "Lehrer vieler Priester: Valentin Thalhofer (1825-1891) als Liturgiker in Eichstätt," *Erbe und Auftrag* 68 (February 1992): 35.

<sup>58</sup>Walter Dürig, "Valentin Thalhofer," in *Katholische Theologen Deutschlands im 19. Jahrhundert*, Vol. 3, ed. Heinrich Fries and Georg Schwaiger (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1975), 111; Erich Naab, "Valentin Thalhofer," in *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexicon*; Paul Doncoeur, "Lessons of Eucharistic History (II)," *Orate Fratres* 23, no. 9 (24 July 1949), 416.

appealed to Thalhoffer for support of a revival of the offertory procession and, consequently, for a renewed social order based on the Christian liturgical spirit. Believing that the solution to what Thalhoffer had called “the burning social question of today” lay in full participation in worship, Untraut wrote, “In the first centuries, according to Thalhoffer, the faithful practiced true Christian socialism, which found its origin and the key to its persistence in communal worship.” He then continued, possibly still taking his cue from Thalhoffer, “Unfortunately, the tradition of bringing gifts, as well as the understanding of the presentation of the gifts of the Christian people for the Lord God, has vanished from the awareness of the faithful.”<sup>59</sup>

Like Untraut in this passage and elsewhere, Thalhoffer favored a return to the ancient practice of the offertory procession, and he hoped that such a revival might provide lay Catholics with the means to take an active part in the liturgy. According to Thalhoffer, “Bread and wine, which were necessary for the consecration, were for centuries taken from the oblations of the faithful, and thus the inner connection of the oblations made by the members to the sacrifice of the head and with the sacrificial meal of the Eucharist was visibly expressed.”<sup>60</sup>

Untraut also turned to Thalhoffer in arguing for lay reception of the Eucharist as an integral part of the liturgy. On two occasions in *Die liturgische Bewegung*, Untraut attributed to Thalhoffer the statement, “The sacrificial meal is part of the sacrifice and is

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<sup>59</sup>Valentin Thalhoffer, *Handbuch der katholischen Liturgik* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1883), vol. I, 245. Cf. Malcherek, *Liturgiewissenschaft*, 136. Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 29.

<sup>60</sup>Quoted in Dürig, “Thalhoffer,” 121; Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 13, 66.

the richest fruit of the sacrificial action, its fullest reward, one might say. Reconciled with God through the sacrificial action, the participant in the sacrifice appears at the sacrificial meal as the house and table companion of God, eats of that which was presented to God and accepted and sanctified by him, and through such eating of the divinely sanctified sacrificial food, he enters into the most intimate union, ‘communio,’ with him.”<sup>61</sup> Replete with Thalhoffer’s characteristic emphasis on the theme of sacrifice—the word *Opfer* appears in various forms seven times in this brief citation—this statement clearly shows the influence of his thought on Untraut’s understanding of the significance of lay communion.

Thalhoffer considered lay reception of the Eucharist a key part of the “integrity of the whole sacrificial action” and encouraged frequent communion by lay people within the context of the mass—a position which distinguished him from many of his contemporaries and made him, in Malcherek’s view, “a forerunner of the Liturgical Movement of the twentieth century.”<sup>62</sup> Untraut, too, stressed the importance of communion and implicitly understood it as a part of the larger liturgical context rather than an isolated devotional act. To his mind, like Thalhoffer’s, the parts of the mass, including the communion of the laity, formed a coherent whole, as this description of the liturgy from *Die liturgische Bewegung* indicates: “Can there be a better preparation for the sacrificial meal than the liturgy of holy communion? This includes especially the table prayer of the liturgy, the Lord’s Prayer; the ‘Libera’; the breaking of the bread; the mixing of the elements; and the related greeting of peace and kiss of peace, as well as the subsequent prayers. The

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<sup>61</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 14, 57.

<sup>62</sup>Thalhoffer, *Handbuch*, vol. II, 12; Malcherek, *Liturgiewissenschaft*, 134.

communion of the priest and the faithful then follows.”<sup>63</sup>

Although Untraut did not specifically acknowledge Thalhoffer’s influence on other aspects of his thought, the subtle presence of his teacher’s ideas may be present in his emphasis on the mass as the center of all liturgical action, the “center of our worship and of the mediation of grace.”<sup>64</sup> Thalhoffer, too, understood the sacrifice of the mass as the center of the Church’s public worship, including the liturgy of the hours, which he, like Untraut, wanted to revive. To this end, he published in 1857 a commentary on the Psalms, intended to assist and encourage the praying of the breviary by explicating for each psalm its “liturgical-mystical significance.”<sup>65</sup> Untraut, though not referring to Thalhoffer in this context, also stressed the place of the divine office in liturgical worship, calling the breviary “the original prayer book of the Church.”<sup>66</sup>

While Thalhoffer’s influence on Untraut’s work was not as explicitly evident as, for instance, that of Joseph Kramp, the ideas of this great nineteenth-century German liturgist clearly had an impact on the ideas found in *Die liturgische Bewegung*. Since Untraut’s purpose in writing *Die liturgische Bewegung* was to advocate liturgical renewal rather than present a detailed liturgical theology, he likely found Thalhoffer’s scholarly study of eucharistic sacrifice less useful than the pragmatic suggestions for action given by such

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<sup>63</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 14.

<sup>64</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 63.

<sup>65</sup>The full title of the Psalm commentary clearly indicates Thalhoffer’s interest in their liturgical significance: *Commentary on the Psalms with special attention to their liturgical usage in the breviary, missal, pontifical, and rituals, with an appendix including commentary on those Old Testament canticles appearing in the breviary*. Thalhoffer, *Erklärung der Psalmen* (Regensburg: Verlag von G. Joseph Mauz, 1857), iv. Cf. Malcherek, *Liturgiewissenschaft*, 25.

<sup>66</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 4, 72.

liturgical reformers as Pius Parsch. Thalhoffer's work, despite its theological significance and anticipation of future developments, remained for the most part on a theoretical rather than practical level.<sup>67</sup>

### Conclusion

Because of his European background and knowledge of German, Untraut had access to the latest developments in liturgical theology and practice, and he borrowed freely from Kramp, Parsch, Thalhoffer, and other sources as he wrote *Die liturgische Bewegung*. His purpose in writing this book was not to develop an original liturgical theology but rather to "contribute to ever greater knowledge of the liturgical movement in this country," so he cobbled together the ideas of many European liturgical pioneers to create a comprehensive account of the grounds and possibilities for liturgical renewal in the United States.<sup>68</sup> Using theological insights from Kramp and Thalhoffer, practical suggestions from Parsch, and bits and pieces from such leading liturgical lights as Ildefons Herwegen, Anselm Schott, and Pope Pius X, Untraut assembled a guide for liturgical reform which encompassed both theoretical and practical considerations and which reflected his fervent desire to make the best liturgical thought of Europe available to the German American Catholics he served in the United States.

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<sup>67</sup>Malcherek, *Liturgiewissenschaft*, 146-47.

<sup>68</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 3.

## Chapter 5

Summary and Critique of *Die liturgische Bewegung*

Hermann Untraut wrote and published *Die liturgische Bewegung*, which he based on a series of articles published in the *Excelsior*, a German-language Catholic newspaper in Milwaukee, for a specific audience and with a clear intention. In the introduction, he explained that “[t]he following articles... attempt to make the essence and purpose of the ‘liturgical movement’ familiar to German Catholics in this country, as well as inspire among them enthusiasm for the holy liturgy and instruct them in such a way that they will desire again to live, pray, and celebrate with the Church.”<sup>1</sup> With this statement, Untraut captured the spirit of his book, in which he sought not only to inform his audience but also to rouse them to action, encouraging them to return to traditional Catholic liturgical understanding and practice, as he understood them.

Throughout *Die liturgische Bewegung*, Untraut railed against the state of the liturgy in contemporary Catholic churches. In his view, Catholics had succumbed to the individualism that pervaded modern society and, embracing secular aesthetic standards, had forsaken the glories of the traditional liturgy. In his mind, the popular devotional practices of his day clearly reflected this surrender.

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<sup>1</sup>Hermann Joseph Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung: Ein Beitrag zu ihrer besseren Würdigung* (Marshfield, WI: by the author, 1925), 3. See also Untraut to Michel, 19 January 1927. St. John’s University Archives. Although *Die liturgische Bewegung* was self-published, it received a *nihil obstat* from F. G. Holweck and the *imprimatur* of Archbishop John Glennon of St. Louis.

### Devotional Catholicism in the United States

In the 1920s, American Catholics practiced their religion in large part through a wide variety of devotional practices and pious exercises. Growing out of the “devotional revolution of Roman Catholicism in the second half of the nineteenth century,” this type of Catholicism was based upon private, experiential piety, expressed in popular spiritual practices devoted to the Virgin Mary and other saints, the cult of the Sacred Heart, the Blessed Sacrament, and other objects of veneration.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Nineteenth-century “devotional revolution”*

Historians of American Catholicism, including most notably Jay Dolan, have generally concluded that, in contrast to the relatively restrained piety of the English Catholics who settled in Maryland in the seventeenth century, which characterized American Catholicism in its early centuries, the influx of Catholic immigrants in the nineteenth century brought new strains of devotional practice:

The plain, undemonstrative style of religion, with its emphasis on a personal union with Christ through the mediation of the Bible and other books, gave way to a demonstrative, emotion-packed religion distinguished by its emphasis on the external rituals of devotion, communion with a heavenly host of saintly relatives, and devotion to a suffering servant, all of which was mediated through a sacramental system controlled by the clergy.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Jay P. Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience, 1830-1900* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978), 175.

<sup>3</sup>Jay P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1985), 219.

Roman Catholic religious practices in the United States in the decades before Vatican II generally reflected an amalgam of public and private worship, a blend of official and unofficial religion. Popular devotions, including the rosary, the Sacred Heart, and prayers invoking various saints, often enjoyed the support of the clergy and were beloved by ordinary Catholics, but they sometimes obstructed efforts to encourage participation in liturgical worship.<sup>4</sup>

At the time of *Die liturgische Bewegung*, American Catholics of varying immigrant backgrounds embraced a wide variety of popular religious devotions, most of which had European roots, including the Forty Hours devotion, veneration of the Sacred Heart, and recitation of the rosary. By the mid-nineteenth century, devotional exercises played a more significant role in the religious lives of most American Catholics than did reception of the sacraments.<sup>5</sup>

For many European immigrants, devotional Catholicism provided a tangible connection to the religious practices of their homelands. During the nineteenth century, piety in Europe took on a notably popular and emotional character. In the words of historian Roger Aubert, "The austere and undemonstrative piety characteristic of the preceding generations, confined in practice to an élite, gave way to a piety more accessible

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<sup>4</sup>Patrick Malloy, "The Re-Emergence of Popular Religion Among Non-Hispanic American Catholics," *Worship* 72 (1998), 11-12; Peter Williams, *Popular Religion in America: Symbolic Change and the Modernization Process in Historical Perspective* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980), 75.

<sup>5</sup>Ann Taves, *The Household of Faith: Roman Catholic Devotions in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), viii; Andrew Greeley, "Changing Styles of Catholic Spirituality," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 67, no. 7 (April 1967): 558; Jeanne Weber, "Devotion to the Sacred Heart: History, Theology, and Liturgical Celebration," *Worship* 72, no. 3 (May 1998): 236-254.

to the masses and giving greater scope, because of its stress on a multiplicity of exterior devotions and on frequent attendance on the sacraments, to emotional participation.”

Devotional activities which increased in popularity during this time included prayers and meditations focused on the suffering Christ, on the Virgin Mary, and on such beloved saints as St. Anthony and St. Joseph.<sup>6</sup>

### *Devotions during mass*

Devotional Catholicism affected not only how American Catholics practiced their religion outside of the official setting of the public mass but also within that setting itself. Since relatively few Catholics understood the liturgical Latin used in worship, they often favored the use of vernacular prayer books during the service. These volumes “provided lenses through which the laity could view the Mass” and although some included a translation of the liturgy, they frequently also offered “devotions for Mass,” whose use during mass was strongly encouraged.<sup>7</sup>

For centuries, devotions focused on the Blessed Sacrament had been an important element of mass attendance for many Catholics, and this devotion was by far the most popular devotion among Catholics in the United States. Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament had arisen in the eleventh century out of debates over the nature of the Real

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<sup>6</sup>Roger Aubert, *The Church in a Secularised Society* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 117-118

<sup>7</sup>Taves, *Household of Faith*, 42-43. See also William J. Leonard, “The Liturgical Movement in the United States,” in *The Liturgy of Vatican II: A Symposium in Two Volumes*, ed. Jovian Lang (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1966), vol. II, 294-95.

Presence and had gradually become the focus of mass for many Catholics.<sup>8</sup> The increasing reverence Catholics felt for the sacrament also influenced their participation in the liturgy of the mass by making them more hesitant to receive communion out of respect for the sacred host.<sup>9</sup>

### *Popularity of devotional Catholicism*

Devotional Catholicism had appealed to Catholics in the United States since the mid-nineteenth century for a variety of reasons. For instance, since the mass was still celebrated in Latin, Catholics looked to devotional prayers to express their faith in a familiar language. Additionally, devotions offered opportunities to establish a more personal connection between the human and the divine, as well as to experience a sense of community since many could be performed as a group.<sup>10</sup> At a time when passive attendance at mass was the norm, devotional Catholicism also gave Catholics a way to participate more actively in the spiritual life of the Church, and with the development of popular confraternities dedicated to particular devotions, it created possibilities for lay

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<sup>8</sup>Carl Dehne, "Roman Catholic Popular Devotions," in *Christians at Prayer*, ed. John Gallen (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), 87; Jeremy Hall, *The Full Stature of Christ: The Ecclesiology of Virgil Michel, O.S.B.* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1976), 77; Theodore Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy: An Account and Some Reflections*, trans. John Halliburton (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 139; Keith Pecklers, "History of the Roman Liturgy from the Sixteenth until the Twentieth Centuries," in *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: Introduction to the Liturgy*, ed. Anscar J. Chupungco (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 161.

<sup>9</sup>Klauser, *History of the Western Liturgy*, 136.

<sup>10</sup>G. J. F. Bouritius, "Popular and Official Religion in Christianity: Three cases in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Europe," in *Official and Popular Religion: Analysis of a Theme for Religious Studies*, ed. Pieter Hendrik Vrijhof and Jacques Waardenburg (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1979), 138; Aubert, *Church in a Secularised Society*, 117-118; F. Michael Perko, *Catholic & American: A Popular History* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1989), 160.

members to assume leadership roles, as well.<sup>11</sup>

For many Catholic immigrants, devotions provided a means not only to continue to express their faith in a familiar manner but also a vehicle for preserving their ethnic and cultural identity. National parishes, for instance, might support devotional practices honoring a saint who had special significance for an ethnic group, or devotions might be held in immigrants' native languages, as was the case among some Germans in Chicago as late as the 1930s.<sup>12</sup>

Despite the attraction this style of piety held for many Catholics, numerous supporters of the liturgical movement, in both the United States and Europe, looked askance at devotional Catholicism and found considerable fault with this type of religious practice. Summarizing "the typical attitude of liturgical enthusiasts toward the devotions," Carl Dehne has written that devotions "are criticized as being peripheral to the central mysteries which should be the gospel, of being 'subjective,' of having almost no explicitly scriptural content, of developing the worst sort of sentimental piety, of being unvarying—and this often in a way that obscures the more important seasons and rhythms of the Church year, of being vulgar, shapeless, and ugly."<sup>13</sup> While these spiritual exercises

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<sup>11</sup>Chester Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 149. For an unusual Freudian interpretation of the popularity of devotional Catholicism, see Michael P. Carroll, *Catholic Cults and Devotions: A Psychological Inquiry* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989).

<sup>12</sup>Stephen J. Shaw, *The Catholic Parish as a Way-Station of Ethnicity and Americanization: Chicago's Germans and Italians, 1903-1930* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1991), 85-86, 96; Aidan Kavanagh, "Spirituality in the American Church: An Evaluative Essay," in *Contemporary Catholicism in the United States*, ed. Philip Gleason (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 207-08.

<sup>13</sup>Dehne, "Roman Catholic Popular Devotions," 90; Gottfried Korff, "Kulturkampf und Volksfrömmigkeit," in Wolfgang Schieder, ed., *Volksreligiosität in der modernen Sozialgeschichte*

gave immigrant Catholics and their families opportunities to practice their religion in familiar and comfortable ways, such forms of popular piety fell far short of the ideal of active participation in celebration of the mass supported by Untraut and other proponents of liturgical renewal.<sup>14</sup>

### Untraut's Critique of Contemporary Worship

While Untraut approved of some aspects of the popular style of piety, such as the emphasis on a sacramental system, he nonetheless objected strenuously to much of what he saw in the Catholic devotional life of his day. He expressed horror, for instance, at the “didactic, unpoetic language and trifling, worldly, operatic melodies” that characterized much modern church music<sup>15</sup>, and the sweet, sentimental prayers that filled popular prayer books.<sup>16</sup> In his view, the Catholic piety of his day represented what Daniel Stevick has called the “heresy of accommodation,” in which the surrounding secular culture determines the nature of worship.<sup>17</sup>

The sentimentality and emotionalism he believed American Catholics of his day had whole-heartedly embraced appalled Untraut. He objected to many popular prayers and hymns on numerous grounds, including their worldly inspiration, their utter failure to

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(Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 149-150; Aubert, *Church in a Secularised Society*, 118-119; Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism*, 175.

<sup>14</sup>John Tracy Ellis, “The U.S.A.,” in Roger Aubert, *The Church in a Secularised Society* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 278-79.

<sup>15</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 40.

<sup>16</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 23.

<sup>17</sup>Daniel Stevick, “Culture: The Beloved Antagonist,” *Worship* 69, no. 4 (July 1995): 294.

measure up to the standards of traditional liturgical prayer and music, their lack of connection to the liturgy, and their opposition to ecclesiastical norms. The church music commonly featured in services had, in his opinion, turned the liturgy from a collective act of worship into a dramatic performance. He declared in no uncertain terms that “[w]ere the Savior to come to one of the churches on a Sunday or feast day and hear the worldly and often entirely trivial singing and musical numbers, he would, in holy wrath, wind up a rope and pull down the organist and choir, along with the prima donnas decked out in their modern garb, as he once drove the merchants and moneylenders from the temple.”<sup>18</sup> As a liturgist, the pastor was obligated to conform worship in his church to the will of God and the Church, “not the will or taste of the corrupt people.”<sup>19</sup>

### *Comparison of devotions to traditional liturgy*

Because modern church music and prayers reflected the influences and concerns of the secular world, they could never, Untraut believed, measure up to the lofty standards required by the holy liturgy—and met only by traditional music and the missal of the Church, the liturgical book which provided the complete rite of mass for each day and occasion. Although ecclesiastical regulations had limited lay access to the missal from the mid-seventeenth to late nineteenth centuries, on account of fears that translating its

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<sup>18</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 61.

<sup>19</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 62. This argument was nothing new for Untraut; he had used the similar language in an 1896 essay reflecting on his experiences at the Katholikentag in St. Cloud, Minnesota: “Neither the opinion of the pastor nor the taste of the people makes the decisions concerning church music but rather the laws of the Church” [*Nachklänge über den St. Cloud’er Katholikentag*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 29 October 1896].

contents would distort or corrupt it, Pope Leo XIII lifted the prohibition on translation, creating new opportunities to expose lay Catholics to the prayers of the mass in their own languages.<sup>20</sup> Untraut recognized that people might at first find these prayers of the missal “slight and austere,” when compared to the popular prayers to which they were accustomed. However, he found in the traditional liturgical prayers “a solid, elemental piety, showing forth the fruits of the life of faith” and speaking in the voice of the Holy Spirit, and he recommended that German Catholics obtain bilingual missals, which would enable them to participate fully in liturgical worship.<sup>21</sup> In comparing popular music and prayers unfavorably to those of the traditional liturgy, Untraut was hardly alone since many advocates of liturgical renewal argued along similar lines. As Constantine Koser has written, “Preeminence was also given to the esthetical value of liturgical forms in contrast with the rather questionable features of the pious exercises in themselves, and with their manifestations in architecture, in the plastic arts, and in the various modes in which prayer and the interior life find expression.”<sup>22</sup>

Untraut considered the missal of such importance for Catholics that he included in *Die liturgische Bewegung* an appendix focusing on its history and structure and thus attempted to compensate for the dearth of educational materials then available on the liturgy. As William O’Shea pointed out regarding the significance of such efforts, “A

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<sup>20</sup>Gerald Ellard, *The Dialog Mass: A Book for Priests and Teachers of Religion* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1942), 8-9.

<sup>21</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 7.

<sup>22</sup>Constantine Koser, “Liturgy and pious exercises,” in *The Liturgy of Vatican II: A Symposium in Two Volumes*, ed. Jovian Lang, O.F.M. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1966), Vol. I, 224.

literature that consisted only of the missal...would be an inadequate literature. The missal is not self-explanatory. It must be opened up and explained.”<sup>23</sup>

Untraut began this section by reminding his readers of the utter failure of the popular devotional manuals of the previous three centuries to equal or even approach the wonders of the Church’s traditional mass prayers. “The devotions contained in these books,” he maintained, “are only products of the thoughts and emotions of their authors, in contrast to those in the missal of the Church, written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>24</sup> In his view, modern, secular trends and norms were holding Catholic worship hostage, and reawakening people’s interest in the traditional prayer of the Church was the best means to free it from this worldly prison.

### *Return to traditional music*

In addition to his desire for a return to the prayers of the missal, Untraut advocated a revival of the church music of centuries past. He considered music so central to Catholic worship that he titled one article in his book, “Where there is no understanding of true Christian music, there is also no understanding of the liturgy.” Displaying his characteristic emphasis on the authority of the pope, he bewailed the failure of many Catholics to follow the guidelines for sacred music that Pius X had decreed in his 1903 *motu proprio*. “People warble and yodel and tolerate so many church choirs,” he lamented, “that it is as if the rules had never been publicized.” He believed that Pius X

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<sup>23</sup>William O’Shea, “Liturgy in the United States, 1889-1964,” *American Ecclesiastical Review* 150 (March 1964): 178.

<sup>24</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 94.

sought to return choral music to the laity, making it again the property of the people (*Volkssache*), and was quick to point out in *Die liturgische Bewegung* that doing away with congregational singing was hardly a goal of the liturgical movement: “Hymns are there for the people, and any who say that the ‘liturgical movement’ would rob people of this treasure are incorrect.”<sup>25</sup>

Untraut did not, however, shy away from harsh denunciation of the worldliness and triviality of the music common in the worship of his day. Likening modern music to “the fleshpots of Egypt” and calling it “a mockery of the mass sacrifice,” he declared unequivocally that “[t]he liturgical movement will be in vain if a revival of authentic church music does not take place at the same time.”<sup>26</sup> Complaints such as these were far from novel; as early as the Council of Trent, Catholics expressed dismay at the state of church music, and the complaints registered before the council’s 1562 session “revolved around irreverence on the part of the singers, the music submerging or almost ignoring the text, secular melodies, and musical instruments not considered appropriate for church use.”<sup>27</sup>

Concerned not only about the secular roots of much contemporary prayer and music, Untraut also railed against the failure of popular hymns and devotions to connect the people in the pews to the action on the altar. In his description of modern Catholic worship, “[t]he priest celebrates the liturgical service, the holy mass, at the altar, while in

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<sup>25</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 61, 42.

<sup>26</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 26.

<sup>27</sup>James F. White, *Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 22.

the pews the people pray the rosary, sing one hymn or another, or meditate privately—all without consideration of the mass.” The prayer books popular among Catholics of his day did not reflect the desires of the Church but were merely “a substitute which often distracts from the liturgy.”<sup>28</sup> Echoing this view, a later commentator noted that in the United States in the 1920s, “Missals were so rare as to be virtually unknown; a few people used ‘prayer books,’ but occupied themselves as a rule rather with the devotions they contained (‘acts’ of faith, hope, love, contrition, etc.) than with the text of the Mass itself.”<sup>29</sup>

Untraut fervently hoped that the liturgical movement would return people to earlier customs and especially that they would abandon certain practices which had come into vogue since the “sorrowful (*traurige*) Reformation.” He described the historical evolution of Catholic worship since the Reformation as a gradual rejection of the ancient tradition of active lay participation, “sacrificing and praying with the priest,” in favor of passive “attendance” at mass. He believed that those present at mass in his day were so preoccupied with their private devotions and popular songs, that they paid little or no attention to the actions occurring on the altar. On more than one occasion in *Die liturgische Bewegung*, Untraut wrote ruefully of the “cleft” that had developed between the priest and the people as individual devotional practices increased in popularity.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 5, 8.

<sup>29</sup>William J. Leonard, “The Liturgical Movement in the United States,” in *The Liturgy of Vatican II: A Symposium in Two Volumes*, ed. Jovian Lang (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1966), Vol. II, 294-95.

<sup>30</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 42, 106-07.

In addition to criticizing “worldliness” in both prayer and music, Untraut addressed the role he believed popular hymns had played in exacerbating the division between priest and people during worship. German Americans had a particular fondness for music, and German Catholics had a long tradition of vernacular singing during worship, though the selections were generally “only loosely connected with the mass.” Well aware of this, Untraut often accused mass attendees of holding a “singing lesson” (*Gesangsstunde*) rather than participating fully in the liturgy. Although he generally dismissed the modern music popular in many churches as “improper, watery, sentimental, sweet-and-sour hymns,” he also agreed with Joseph Kramp, S.J., that some devotional music, such as “the beautiful songs of Mary,” was aesthetically pleasing. However, such hymns were nevertheless entirely inappropriate in the setting of the eucharistic liturgy because they lacked any connection to actions of the mass. Even schoolchildren learned the popular hymns rather than the traditional Greek Kyrie and Latin Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei, and, as Untraut noted with irritation, “whether [these hymns] correspond to the various parts of the mass concerns no one.”<sup>31</sup>

As popular devotions and hymns became more common, Untraut’s opined, “the people were gradually estranged from the liturgy and remain so today.” He found this estrangement unfortunate not only because it reflected an abandonment of ancient traditions in favor of secular, worldly standards and severed the vital liturgical link

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<sup>31</sup>*Die liturgische Bewegung*, 107, 41, 9, 42. Complaints similar to Untraut’s about the state of church music dated back to the Council of Trent: “Complaints coming before the twenty-second session of the council in 1562 revolved around irreverence on the part of the singers, the music submerging or almost ignoring the text, secular melodies, and musical instruments not considered appropriate for church use” (White, *Roman Catholic Worship*, 22).

between priest and people, but also because it represented a failure to conform to the will of the Church, as expressed by the pope and hierarchy. For instance, after citing the guidelines given by Pius X's 1903 *motu proprio* on sacred music, he asked rhetorically, "[H]ave they been conscientiously followed everywhere? Or have they suffered the fate of the 'prohibition laws,' which were made to be broken and so inspire scorn for other laws?" He even accused some of the faithful of believing they knew "even better than the pope himself what is appropriate during the holy mass (*Wandlung*)," as they substituted "an eccentric, entirely unliturgical tradition" for officially sanctioned actions at the moment of transubstantiation.<sup>32</sup>

### *Appeal to Roman authority*

Although Untraut strongly favored greater lay participation in the liturgy, he also consistently supported the authority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In fact, he believed the latter reinforced, rather than compromised, the former. He frequently referred to the policies of Pius X, whom he called "*der eucharistische Papst*," particularly his dictum, "You should not pray in the mass, you should pray the mass,"<sup>33</sup> and noted that this pope

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<sup>32</sup>*Die liturgische Bewegung*, 42, 61, 35.

<sup>33</sup>Regarding this popular quote, Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., has written, "It is an apt saying, a good axiom. It has, in fact, become the slogan of most publishers of vernacular missals, and a handy argument in pastoral efforts to promote active assistance in the holy Sacrifice. But there seems to be no evidence that Pius X ever spoke these exact words. At the same time, there can be no doubt that the words do summarize effectively a principal aim of the saintly Pope's pontificate." "Lay Participation in the Liturgy of the Church," in *A Symposium on the Life and Work of Pope Pius X* (Washington, D.C.: Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, 1946), 137. See also *Orate Fratres* 8 (1933-34), 379 ff.; and 9 (1934-35), 526.

earnestly desired to inspire active lay participation in worship.<sup>34</sup> After acknowledging that some readers might believe his views on liturgical renewal contradicted the official stance of the Church, Untraut declared, “I am, in this regard, in good company,” company which included popes, cardinals, bishops, and both lay and clerical scholars.<sup>35</sup>

Reflecting a trend in the American Church of his time toward greater Romanization and emphasis on the authority of the papacy—the “cultivation of *romanità*”—Untraut repeatedly called upon German Catholics in the United States to follow the official liturgical policies of the Vatican.<sup>36</sup> On several occasions in *Die liturgische Bewegung* he referred not only to liturgical renewal efforts in Europe but also to the papal approbation these efforts received. For example, the *missa recitata* or dialogue mass, which Untraut enthusiastically advocated, not only offered opportunities for greater lay participation in the liturgy but also enjoyed the support of Pope Pius XI, who celebrated such a mass in St. Peter’s Basilica. Likewise, when Untraut referred to the abbot of Maredsous in Belgium, he emphasized that Pius XI “praised” him “for his efforts to spread knowledge, love, and practice of liturgical prayer among the people.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>*Die liturgische Bewegung*, 42, 17. Untraut also showed his admiration for Pope Pius’s liturgical pronouncements by placing at the top of his personalized stationery a quote from the 1903 *motu proprio*: “Active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.” (See Untraut to Michel, 19 January 1927; 7 February 1927. St. John’s University Archives.)

<sup>35</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 6.

<sup>36</sup>James Hennesey, *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 240. See also Perko, *Catholic & American*, 240. A similar turn toward Rome affected Catholic intellectual life in Germany, as the Vatican sought to combat the perceived dangers of modernism by imposing theological uniformity and becoming “a substitute university faculty” [see Thomas F. O’Meara, *Church and Culture: German Catholic Theology, 1860-1914* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 190-91].

<sup>37</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 9, 69.

*Critique of individualism*

By stressing that German American Catholics ought to conform to the policies of the official Church, Untraut again displayed his distrust of individualism, which he considered a principal scourge of modern life. Like Virgil Michel, he recognized that “[w]e are today facing anew the great problem of the relation of the individual to the fellowship, the problem of personality,” and he shared Michel’s view that liturgical renewal represented a viable solution to the modern dilemma of individualism since the liturgy “has preserved intact the supernatural model of all human fellowship in full harmony with the complete responsibility of all individual members.”<sup>38</sup> “An obedient child of the Church,” Untraut declared, “listens to the word of the father of all Christendom and does not go off on his own path, guided only by self-delusion (*Eigendünkel*).”<sup>39</sup> In his view, proper participation in the liturgy, as prescribed by the teachings of the Church, was an ideal means to overcome the egotistical obsessions of contemporary secular culture.

The devotions Untraut saw commonly practiced during worship among the Catholics of his day reflected this trend toward individualism. He described the congregation as “a passive collection of individuals, each sunk in his own thoughts and practices,” who had “essentially lost the understanding of communal prayer and sacrifice.” By turning to private devotions during the mass, rather than following the sacrificial actions of the priest, many Catholics focused narrowly on “their own poor souls” and

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<sup>38</sup>Virgil Michel, “The Scope of the Liturgical Movement,” *Orate Fratres* 10, nos. 11-12 (31 October 1936), 489.

<sup>39</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 100.

ignored the inherently collective nature of the liturgy.<sup>40</sup> This analysis supports historian William McSweeney's claim that over the course of many centuries, "the Eucharist became a private devotion reserved to the celebrant priest and its function for the laity became progressively more individualistic—the Mass became a source of salvation for the individual Catholic," and Untraut's critique anticipated Gregory Dix's assertion in *The Shape of the Liturgy* that "a churchful of worshippers each silently contemplating the passion and atonement in his or her own mind, and each forming devout affections upon that, while a priest and server offer the eucharist inaudibly and in another tongue, is very near a different thing altogether from the corporate action of the primitive eschatological rite."<sup>41</sup>

Untraut believed that proper understanding of and whole-hearted participation in the liturgy of the mass inspired and in fact required the abandonment of egoism and individualism. In his detailed description of the contents of the missal, he declared:

Indeed, voluntary inner self-abnegation is the basis of the feeling we call worship and express in the sacrifice. Only when the soul gives up its inner "I" can it embrace its eternal God with the arms of faith and love and fully savor (*kosten*) the meaning of the words, "We laud you, we praise you, we worship you, we glorify you." Only a heart which is free of all self-love, self-confidence, and egoism can say with full sincerity, "Accept, O Father, this spotless host," etc. For the spirit of this presentation is the offering of the self, as the words "in the spirit of humility" so beautifully express.<sup>42</sup>

In Untraut's view, a primary goal of the liturgical movement was to reawaken among the

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<sup>40</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 11, 17.

<sup>41</sup>William McSweeney, *Roman Catholicism: The Search for Relevance* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), 110; Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Glasgow: Robert MacLehose and Co., Ltd., 1945), 607.

<sup>42</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 56.

people an understanding of the mass as a “collective action, in which the people should follow the priest in all aspects and create a unity with him and thus with Christ.” In order to do this, people had to conquer the “terrible egoism” rampant in modern life, and the liturgy was ideally suited to assist in this effort.<sup>43</sup> Untraut’s position on this matter, in terms of both identifying the problem and proposing a solution, was wholly in line with the opinions of other supporters of liturgical renewal, as Ernest Koenker noted in his study of the movement: ““Within the Liturgical Movement leaders will admit that 99 per cent of their people are monads—either they are saying prayers which have nothing to do with the Mass, stumbling through a missal, or saying their rosary. It should be clear that one of the great objectives of the [liturgical] apostolate is the consciousness of worshiping as a social unit, as a corporate group.”<sup>44</sup>

Untraut defined “liturgy” as “collective public Catholic worship in all its forms, actions, signs, and words,” and he explicitly distinguished it from such private devotions (*Segensandacht*) as the rosary and stations of the cross. The inherently communal nature of the liturgy made it not only an excellent antidote to individualism but also the foundation for a life of Christian virtue. Untraut believed that participation in the liturgy strengthened bonds of Christian brotherhood, as it awakened in the Catholic a sense of obligation not only to God but also to his fellows. Catholics took part in the mass as members of the one body of Christ, in which each is “dependent not only upon the head

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<sup>43</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 12.

<sup>44</sup>Ernest Koenker, *The Liturgical Renaissance in the Roman Catholic Church*. 2d ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 33.

but also on the other members.”<sup>45</sup>

### *Liturgy and social reform*

Untraut titled Chapter VII of *Die liturgische Bewegung* “The liturgy supports the pursuit of virtue,” and in this article he declared optimistically, “Through proper participation in the sacrifice,...Christians learn much love and humility before God, a great sense of sacrifice, a spirit of community, dedication to the service of God and their fellow man—virtues so necessary for their lives and work.” The liturgical sacrifice was for Untraut “the source of brotherly love and harmony,” and when Catholics participated in it fully and actively, it inspired in them a desire to serve one another in humility and love.<sup>46</sup>

Like other American Catholics interested in liturgical renewal, including Virgil Michel, as well as some of those with a passion for social reform, such as Dorothy Day, Untraut found an inseparable link between the liturgy and the “social question.”<sup>47</sup> This emphasis on the connection between liturgical worship and social reform was the most significant contribution of American liturgical leaders to the movement, and it reflected Michel’s belief that the liturgical movement had two intertwined objectives: “If the first purpose of the liturgical movement is to lead the faithful into more intimate participation in the liturgy of the Church, then the further objective must also be that of getting the liturgical spirit to radiate forth from the altar of Christ into every aspect of the daily life of

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<sup>45</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 27.

<sup>46</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 17, 106.

<sup>47</sup>Joseph Chinnici, O.F.M., *Living Stones: The History and Structure of Catholic Spiritual Life in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 175.

the Christian.”<sup>48</sup> In describing Michel’s work, H.A. Reinhold wrote in 1947 that he “had one urge none of the great masters of Europe seemed to see: the connection of social justice with a new social spirituality.”<sup>49</sup> Likewise, Keith Pecklers has argued that “[t]he liturgical pioneers and promoters saw the relationship between liturgy and social concern as absolutely fundamental to the future success of the movement: liturgical renewal which did not connect to real life was a dead issue.”<sup>50</sup>

Unfortunately, Untraut’s treatment of this topic was rather superficial and lacked the practical dimension prominent in the work of Michel and Day. Although *Die liturgische Bewegung* includes an article called “The liturgy helps solve the social question,” the essay reflects an essentially naive faith in the power of the liturgy to act as a social panacea, inspiring such a sense of selfless sacrifice in its participants that problems would simply disappear. “The burning social question of today,” Untraut wrote confidently, “would be easy to solve—or, more accurately, would cease to exist at all—if all the faithful were, following the prescription of the Church and in her spirit, to participate fully in public worship, especially the liturgy of the holy sacrifice.”<sup>51</sup> Perhaps an even

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<sup>48</sup>Michel, “Scope of the Liturgical Movement,” 485.

<sup>49</sup>Quoted in Keith Pecklers, *The Unread Vision: The Liturgical Movement in the United States of America, 1926-1955* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 23. See also M. Francis Mannion, “Liturgy and the Present Crisis of Culture,” *Worship* 62, no. 2 (March 1988): 100-01.

<sup>50</sup>Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 148. H. A. Reinhold commented on the notable failure of the German liturgical movement to grasp this fundamental connection between liturgy and life and noted that during the Nazi years, many German Catholics participated in model liturgical worship services while doing nothing to oppose Hitler’s regime. See “The German Lesson,” *Orate Fratres* 19, no. 9 (29 July 1945): 415.

<sup>51</sup>*Die liturgische Bewegung*, 29. This is a direct quotation of Valentin Thalhofer, *Handbuch der katholischen Liturgik* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1883), vol. I, 245. Cf. Reinhold Malcherek, *Liturgiewissenschaft des 19. Jahrhundert: Valentin Thalhofer (1825-1891) und sein “Handbuch der katholischen Liturgik”* (Munster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2001), 136.

more impressive indication of his abiding faith in the ability of the liturgy to work veritable wonders for social relationships is his description of the effect of participation in a “schoolchildren’s mass” upon a school community:

One will find that in a school where the “schoolchildren’s mass” is celebrated in spirit and truth, religious earnestness, coupled with love for the children, is found among the teachers, while the children show their teachers respect and devotion, treating one another with tender consideration, and an innocent happiness reigns.<sup>52</sup>

Untraut certainly painted an appealing picture of the positive consequences he believed necessarily followed from active participation in the liturgy, but he was notably reticent regarding pragmatic issues of social reform. However, by describing the models the liturgy provided for a proper Christian life of virtue, he did offer further suggestions for how Catholic worship influenced everyday life.

The highest ideal for Christian living is of course Christ himself, and Untraut emphasized again that the liturgy served to remind Catholics of Christ’s sacrifice. He hoped that, as people learned “again to celebrate the sacrifice with the priest,” they would “strive to appropriate the spirit of sacrifice and the sacrificial attitude, in order to become like Jesus.” Untraut also encouraged Catholics to look to the Church year for a presentation of the life of Christ which they could apply to their own lives, using this “as an example and model to emulate.”<sup>53</sup>

Though undoubtedly the most perfect, Jesus was not the only model for Christian living Untraut found in the liturgy. In his discussion of the Church year, which he hoped

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<sup>52</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 31.

<sup>53</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 10, 101.

would spark interest in the cycles of liturgical worship, he addressed the topic of saints' feast days. He believed Catholics ought to venerate these holy Christian figures not only by honoring them in the liturgy, but also by imitating their lives of heroic virtue. In his words, "The liturgy honors the saints as the faithful and eternally transfigured and blessed friends of God, as ancestors (*Ahmen*) and heroes of the kingdom of God, as models for emulation of a life of God." Citing St. Augustine, he noted that "imitation of those whom one honors" represented "the zenith of living veneration."<sup>54</sup>

While the words and actions of the liturgy of the mass represented to Catholics the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, calling them to imitate his sacrificial attitude, the *Vormesse*—the prayers and readings of the liturgy of the Word—spoke to worshipers of the lives of the Jesus and the saints, providing guidance for daily life. The *Vormesse* educated the laity in "the life and teachings of Jesus, as well as of his saints, and those truths we must believe." Through prayer, song, and Scripture, participants contemplated their "obligations to God, neighbor, and self." Turning to the biblical reading for the fifth Sunday after Pentecost as an example, Untraut lauded the "rich material" found there:

It offers norms for conduct among Christians, conduct toward everyone, friend and stranger alike, conduct toward the hostile world, basing the demands made on an appeal to the calling and hope of the Christian. Then the Gospel forbids hurtful words and actions and hostile attitudes, and commands reconciliation and righteousness before God, neighbor, and self.<sup>55</sup>

Untraut fervently hoped that the spirit of the liturgy would not remain bounded by the walls of the church but rather would permeate all aspects of Catholics' lives. Keith

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<sup>54</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 103.

<sup>55</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 44.

Pecklers has attributed to the American liturgical pioneers a belief, similar to the mindset of the first Christians, that “the *lex orandi* was not only the *lex credendi*, but also the *lex vivendi*.”<sup>56</sup> Untraut’s writing clearly reflects this belief, as he asserted, “Every contemplation includes affects and intentions which should help us practically carry out what we have recognized in the contemplation as right or good or necessary.” He advocated careful study of the text for the Sunday mass, as the Catholic “would find there an entire week’s program for virtue, instruction, and personal growth ...and would in the coming week live out the mass liturgy more courageously in his daily life.”<sup>57</sup>

In addition to his confidence in the potential of the liturgy to transform the lives of individual Catholics, Untraut also found in the liturgy an ideal model for a Christian social order. In championing the liturgy as a blueprint for society, Untraut returned to themes common throughout much of *Die liturgische Bewegung*: the importance of obedience to authority and the dangers of selfish individualism. With his advocacy of a return of all nations to acknowledgment of “the supremacy of Christ in secular and social matters,” he believed he had solved the perennial problem of international strife. After admonishing the peoples of the world to “give the pope, the representative of Christ, a place of honor among the nations and in the world, as befits him,” he counseled that “[o]ne ought not forget that respect for ecclesiastical and secular authority, which is the basis of society, is firmly founded in the liturgy.”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 45.

<sup>57</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 44, 102.

<sup>58</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 48.

In the holy liturgy of the mass, Untraut saw the conquest of individual differences as “all come together as brothers at the Lord’s table, all sing praise to God with one voice.” Social inequality—which, he noted, the Church did recognize—had no place in the liturgy, which united all participants spiritually in their status as “children of God.” Untraut took no comfort in “the utopian fables of socialism and individualism” and supported instead the “principles of true Christian social order,” as reflected in the liturgical worship of “the only international society, the Church.”<sup>59</sup>

Untraut’s discussion of the liturgy and social reform reflects the influence of German romanticism and the corporative philosophy popularized in the early decades of the twentieth century by Frederick Kenkel and the German Catholic Central Verein, who “call[ed] for a fundamental restructuring of society and for a reordering of attitudes and values so that human life could again be lived within an integrated Christian community such as the one that prevailed during the Middle Ages.”<sup>60</sup> Although Untraut usually favored the early Church as the best model for Catholics of his own day, he also admired certain aspects of the Middle Ages, especially the clear subjection of the state to the Church which he believed was the norm in those days. He imagined that medieval life, in sharp contrast to modern customs, followed the rhythms of the Christian calendar:

Public life arranged itself according to the life of the Church, the secular calendar according to that of the Church. Certain feast days, e.g. the Feast of the Apostles, were observed as holidays. The conclusion of court sessions (*Gerichtssitzungen*) was organized according to liturgical seasons.

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<sup>59</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 49.

<sup>60</sup>Dolores Liptak, *Immigrants and Their Church* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 108. See also Philip Gleason. *The Conservative Reformers: German-American Catholics and the Social Order* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), 136, 215; Hennesey, *American Catholics*, 212.

Even the family dinner table gave indications of the arrival of feast days of the Church. Contracts were concluded or renewed on certain feast days, such as All Saints, Martinmas, and Christmas...[T]here are now a great many secular holidays and today even a number of rest days (*Ruhetage*) with sports of all kind; even Sunday is no longer considered sacred, as it should be. With great strides, things are heading toward a new heathenism.<sup>61</sup>

The romantic, corporative philosophy Kenkel espoused suffered from its overly idealistic and impractical approach to solving social problems, and a similar flaw characterized Untraut's views on the liturgy and social reform.<sup>62</sup> Nonetheless, while one can undoubtedly fault Untraut for a certain naive optimism regarding the power of the liturgy to lead individuals to lives of saintly virtue and to reconstruct society on a foundation of spiritual equality, his work was not entirely void of pragmatic suggestions for implementing many of the liturgical innovations then in vogue among some European Catholics. He supported in particular celebration of the dialogue mass, return to regular use of the missal and breviary, revival of certain traditional elements of the mass, proper understanding of the Church year, and liturgical education for laypeople of all ages.

### *The dialogue mass*

Untraut enthusiastically endorsed the dialogue mass or *missa recitata*, a practice then gaining favor among European Catholics interested in liturgical renewal and

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<sup>61</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 47. Untraut also admired the German hymns produced during the Middle Ages (*Die liturgische Bewegung*, 40).

<sup>62</sup>Gleason, *Conservative Reformers*, 136. See also Philip Gleason, "Mass and Maypole Revisited: American Catholics and the Middle Ages," *The Catholic Historical Review* 57, no. 2 (July 1971): 268.

celebrated for the first time in Germany in 1914.<sup>63</sup> Gerald Ellard, an American Jesuit who supported and wrote extensively on the liturgical movement, described the dialogue mass in simple terms as a low mass in which “the entire congregation answers, along with its official representative, the server, to the priest, in running dialog, and recites, along with its hierarchical officiant, the priest, some of the parts sung at a high Mass, such as the *Gloria* and *Credo*.”<sup>64</sup> By calling upon those present at worship to speak aloud some parts of the service, the dialogue mass encouraged greater participation but did not require any special skills, such as the ability to chant in unison. It thus provided a stepping stone of sorts to the “ideal” liturgy, the sung high mass.

In constructing an argument in support of the dialogue mass, Untraut emphasized not only the positive effect this type of worship had on lay participation but also that it had been “recommended by popes, cardinals, and bishops,” a point he made even in the title of Chapter III of *Die liturgische Bewegung*. Through introduction of the dialogue mass, in which lay congregants were encouraged to participate with vocal responses and bodily gestures, Untraut hoped “the people [would] learn again to celebrate the sacrifice with the priest” rather than simply passively observing the mass or pursuing personal devotions during the service.<sup>65</sup>

According to Untraut, the *missa recitata* conformed to the Church’s understanding of the purpose of liturgical worship, and he looked to it as a path toward “the

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<sup>63</sup>Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 613.

<sup>64</sup>Ellard, *Dialog Mass*, 2-3.

<sup>65</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 8, 10.

reinvigoration and deepening of religious life among our Catholics.” Again chastising those Catholics who asserted that their private devotional practices during the mass constituted appropriate participation in the service, he argued that “...according to Church teachings, the priest should not be the representative of a passive collection of individuals, each sunk in his own thoughts and practices, but rather he should bring together their sacrificial state of mind and lead them up to Christ.”<sup>66</sup>

Etymologically, “liturgy” means “the work of the people,” a definition which Untraut took to heart and which undergirded his support for the dialogue mass. To reawaken in the people this sense of liturgy as a *Volkswerk*, he maintained that “vocal, communal prayer” was “an excellent, and perhaps the only, means.” He reminded his readers that, while “vocal” prayer was an important aspect of the dialogue mass, the true significance of the *missa recitata*, the primary reason partisans of the liturgical movement supported it, was its emphasis on communal prayer. Communal prayer, not individual devotions, was the ideal prayer of the Church. Citing Jesus’ promise to be among “two or three gathered in my name” (Matthew 18:19-20), he insisted that “[t]o pray together with the priest, with the Church, means to pray with Christ, the Bridegroom of the Church. The spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, lifts up the prayer of the community and imparts to it a divine worth it could never have given itself.”<sup>67</sup>

Untraut strictly differentiated liturgical worship from the private devotions popular in his day, stating in no uncertain terms, “No one can deny that liturgical worship is of

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<sup>66</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 11.

<sup>67</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 8, 12.

much greater worth than private worship.” In the case of private worship, “it is I who pray to God; in liturgical prayer, by contrast, it is the universal Church who prays through me.”<sup>68</sup> To encourage greater participation in liturgical prayer and worship, Untraut recommended the dialogue mass and also a return to the traditional “prayer book of the Church,” the missal.

### *Call for return to the missal*

Like Untraut, many other leaders of the liturgical revival in both Europe and the United States supported greater use of the missal by the laity. Beginning with the Belgian pioneer Lambert Beauduin, supplying churchgoers with missals and educating Catholics in their use were central goals of the liturgical movement.<sup>69</sup> During the early years of the movement in the United States, when “the main emphasis of the founders was on eucharistic participation,” increased use and understanding of the missal provided a means to encourage “full and active participation,... the fundamental goal of the liturgical movement in the United States.”<sup>70</sup> William O’Shea summarized the views of many with his statement, “To come in direct contact with the missal is to come in direct contact with the liturgy itself.”<sup>71</sup>

In his strenuous objections to the “sweet, sentimental piety exuded by many prayer

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<sup>68</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 4.

<sup>69</sup>John R. K. Fenwick and Bryan D. Spinks, *Worship in Transition: The Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 25. See also Senn, *Christian Liturgy*, 613.

<sup>70</sup>Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 73, 79.

<sup>71</sup>Leonard, “Liturgy in the United States,” 177.

books,” Untraut consistently offered the prayers of the missal as the best antidote to this brand of devotion. Describing the piety of the missal as “solid” and “elemental,” he noted that such piety not only encouraged a rich life of faith but also instructed believers in both faith and morals. Although never explicitly referring to it, Untraut turned to the ancient principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi* in his discussion of the mass prayers. For example, he noted that “the thrice-repeated sign of the cross over the sacrificial gifts” and “the conspicuous choice of the trilogy in many prayers, such as ‘this pure, this holy, this spotless host,’” recalled for worshipers the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. Additionally, he cited the priest’s bending his knee before the consecrated elements as a reflection of the doctrine of the Real Presence.<sup>72</sup> In Untraut’s mind, the liturgy taught participants not only how to live but also what to believe.

In order for the faithful to reap the full benefits of the liturgy, its spiritual power as well as its lessons in faith and morals, they needed to participate actively in the worship service, which Untraut believed they could best do by studying and using the missal, “the first and unsurpassable source of the true Christian spirit.” Ever effusive in his praise of the missal, with its “venerable and sacred, uplifting and magnificent prayers,” he longed for all Catholics to return to the “prayer book of the Church,” which provided prayers ideally suited to the celebration of the Eucharist. Stressing the importance of understanding the sacrificial dimension of the mass, Untraut declared, “As the most natural and best preparation for the mass, one ought to consider the words of the Eucharistic pope, Pius X—‘Do not pray in the mass, rather pray the mass’—and pray not just any old

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<sup>72</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 7, 53-54.

preparatory prayers, lacking all connection to the mass as sacrifice, but rather the mass prayers themselves, and participate as much as possible in the sacrificial action.”<sup>73</sup>

While passionately advocating greater lay participation in the liturgy and a return to use of the missal, Untraut did not support development of a vernacular mass. Maintaining that “the people understand better than we believe that the mystery consummated in the holy mass has its mysterious power also in the ritual language of Latin,” he believed instruction of the laity and use of bilingual missals provided a sufficient foundation for active lay participation.<sup>74</sup>

For educational purposes, Untraut highly recommended one bilingual missal in particular, Dom Anselm Schott’s *Messbuch der heiligen Kirche*, which he considered the best German version.<sup>75</sup> This missal, a product of the Benedictine monastery at Beuron, was first published in 1884 and, by the time of *Die liturgische Bewegung*, was available from the St. Louis publishing house of Herder. Schott’s German missal, which Untraut praised for its instructional as well as devotional benefits, was the first official German missal with a translation and explanations of the entire mass.<sup>76</sup>

### *Recommendation of the breviary*

According to the title of Chapter XXIV of *Die liturgische Bewegung*, “Besides the

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<sup>73</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 46, 52, 58.

<sup>74</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 63/72-73.

<sup>75</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 7.

<sup>76</sup>R. William Franklin, “Johann Adam Möhler and Worship in Totalitarian Society,” *Worship* 67, no. 1 (Jan 1993): 14-15. Franklin also noted that “[i]n the ‘Vesperale’ section of the 1893 edition of the *Messbuch* the phrase ‘liturgical movement’ was used for the first time in Germany.”

missal, the breviary is the most important prayer book of the Church.” This prayer book, which provides in a convenient format the Psalms, hymns, scriptural readings, writings of the Church Fathers, hagiographies, and prayers of the divine office, represents another form of Catholic liturgical worship.<sup>77</sup> By setting aside certain hours of the day for prayer and reflection, the divine office gives Catholics, both ordained and lay, the opportunity to fulfill Jesus’ call to “pray always” (Luke 18:1), and the practice has its roots in the earliest centuries of Christianity. This connection to the early Church, as well as the fact that the Church recognized the divine office, even when prayed alone, as liturgical activity, made the breviary particularly attractive to supporters of the liturgical movement, who believed the prayers of the divine office were the province of all Catholics, not just priests and monks, and so encouraged lay people to learn about and participate in the liturgy of the breviary.<sup>78</sup>

Though he always emphasized the preeminence of the missal, Untraut lauded the breviary as “a prayer in large part inspired by the Word of God itself, an example of true prayer, resting entirely upon the great and just contemplation of God, wholly immersed in the spirit of God, full of truth, full of beauty, full of strength and sincerity, full of glorious poetry,” as well as an excellent teacher of Catholic doctrine in its reflection of “the sublime truths of the faith—God, the Trinity, salvation through Christ, Mary, the Church, the

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<sup>77</sup>Information about the breviary and the divine office comes from R. T. Callahan, “Breviary, Roman,” and P. Salmon, “Divine Office, Roman,” both in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2d. ed.

<sup>78</sup>See, for instance, Ellen Gates Starr, “The Delights of the Breviary,” *Orate Fratres* 1 no. 9 (10 July 1927): 263-68; William Busch, “The Missal and the Breviary, or the Mass and the Hour-Prayers, as Sources of Spiritual Life,” *Orate Fratres* 3, no. 11 (8 September 1929):346-47; Pius Parsch, “Liturgical Action in Austria,” *Orate Fratres* 5, no. 4 (22 February 1931), 181.

sacraments, the Last Things...[and] traditional orthodox doctrines and ideas about the purpose of human beings, conscience, the commandments, virtues, about virginity, martyrdom, etc.”<sup>79</sup>

While lavish in his praise of the breviary, Untraut acknowledged sorrowfully that not all modern Catholics shared his views. He believed that the breviary had, over the course of the centuries, met with a fate similar to that of the missal; as knowledge of Latin decreased and influences of “the Enlightenment, Jansenism, and Josephinism” took hold, popular vernacular prayers replaced the liturgical prayers of the breviary.<sup>80</sup> However, leaders of the liturgical movement eagerly sought a revival of the divine office among lay people. In the words of Ernest Koenker, “An explicit understanding of the breviary is a primary objective of the liturgical reformers, for the breviary is the objective, lucid, official prayerbook of the whole Church.”<sup>81</sup> Untraut expressed a similar view and included “return[ing] the breviary to the people,...mak[ing] it again the prayer book of the universal Church” among the tasks of the liturgical movement. He concluded the chapter on the breviary with a dramatic flourish: “May the time come again, when the breviary, this precious book, will be open to the faithful, when it will become for them a ladder which their souls can ascend to heaven! May the breviary again become a prayer book for all Christians!”<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 72.

<sup>80</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 73.

<sup>81</sup>Koenker, *Liturgical Renaissance*, 60.

<sup>82</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 73-75.

### *The Church Year*

Recognizing that “a considerable percentage of the faithful no longer have any idea of the breviary prayer,” Untraut provided a description of the liturgy of the hours, reminding readers that with these prayers, “the Church sanctifies day and night,” and his interest in the liturgical sanctification of time extended further to a strong desire for the faithful to live with the Church by following the Church year, “the holy calendar of heaven.”<sup>83</sup> In a brief notice of his death in *Orate Fratres*, special mention was made of Untraut’s interest in the Church year, and he was called “a prolific and able writer especially on the liturgical year.”<sup>84</sup> In Untraut’s day, the sanctoral cycle and devotions to favorite saints took precedence over the rhythms of the liturgical calendar in the minds of many Catholics,<sup>85</sup> but he hoped that Catholics would return to the Church year, “one of the most magnificent and clearest witnesses of the Holy Spirit,” for both edification and inspiration. In the Church year, he informed his readers, the Christian can observe and consider both “the truths of the holy faith on the basis of the admonitions and teachings found in each feast day” and “the life of Jesus as it appears in the Church year as an example and model to emulate.”<sup>86</sup>

As a guide for Catholics in following the Church year, the missal figured

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<sup>83</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 73-74, 100.

<sup>84</sup>“Fathers Winnen and Untraut, R.I.P.,” *Orate Fratres* 15, no. 11 (5 October 1941), 517.

<sup>85</sup>Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 42.

<sup>86</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 101.

prominently in Untraut's discussion of this topic. Maintaining that "[t]he missal of the Church is an excellent teacher—it strives to instruct those who pray it to observe the Church year with blessings and grace, to experience it within themselves and to express its changes outwardly," Untraut longed for the faithful to surrender the popular modern prayer books, whose content could scarcely compare to the "rich, inspiring, grace-filled, didactic variety" offered by the missal. Untraut noted in particular the broad range of saints' feast days found in the Church calendar and celebrated with the aid of the missal: "Today a saint from the apostolic age, tomorrow one from the centuries of persecutions of Christians, the day after one from the terrible time of the Reformation, and so on. Thus each day we have beside us a heavenly and transfigured friend, whom we venerate through the sacrifice and who helps us through intercession."<sup>87</sup>

Always interested in educating his readers about liturgical issues, Untraut offered on more than one occasion an overview of the Church year, noting the significance of the various seasons and feasts. He again stressed the educational value of the liturgy, celebrated according to the Church calendar, stating that "[t]he incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, and glorification of Christ find in the Catholic sacrificial rite their richest unfolding and most beautiful presentation; for over the course of the Church year the mysteries of the great work of salvation are by the various mass formularies individually emphasized and placed in the foreground." Confident that the Church year offered Catholics a solid foundation for spiritual life, he ended his outline of its structure with an unequivocal endorsement: "the Church year is the best guide for souls, the Church year is

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<sup>87</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 20-21.

a spiritual exercise for all of life and exerts its strength upon the soul when the soul lives with the Church, led by her doctrines and truths and translating these into daily life. The Church year eventually leads the soul to the fullness of Christ.”<sup>88</sup>

### *Revival of ancient rituals*

Untraut’s plans for liturgical renewal included not only implementation of the dialogue mass and revival of the missal, breviary, and Church year but also reintroduction of certain mass rituals which had lost their original significance or fallen into disuse. He took a particular interest in the ancient traditions of the kiss of peace and the offertory procession.

Only a faint vestige of the kiss of peace remained in the liturgy in Untraut’s day, and he doubted its significance for most worshipers. Calling the modern liturgical kiss of peace “little more than a ceremony,” he noted mournfully that as understanding and love of the liturgy decreases, “life becomes ever more restless activity, and love, true Christian love, grows cold.”<sup>89</sup> It is this “true Christian love” which Untraut believed the kiss of peace ought not only to symbolize but also to express and even inspire.

Untraut considered the kiss of peace a profound and necessary “preparation for reception of holy communion, the meal of peace and love.” In language foreshadowing the revival of a Mystical Body of Christ ecclesiology that began soon after his death<sup>90</sup>, he

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<sup>88</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 101-102.

<sup>89</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 19.

<sup>90</sup>Encyclicals of Pius XII: *Mystici Corporis* (1943) and *Mediator Dei* (1947).

declared, “When the faithful give on another the kiss of peace, they act toward one another with reconciling brotherly love, and thus appear united as one body under one head.” The kiss of peace had a dual significance for Untraut, as it “is in the first place a granting of grace by the head to his members and next a true expression of the all-embracing love of the members for one another.” Intimately connected to the Eucharist, it inspired the peace necessary for this sacrament: “The holy Eucharist is indeed a sign of unity, the bond of love, the symbol of harmony—the sacrifice of peace; for peace is an excellent effect of holy communion, but at the same time a necessary requirement for participation in the sacrifice and the sacrificial meal.”<sup>91</sup>

Also necessary for the celebration of the Eucharist were the elements: the bread and the wine. Here Untraut saw another opportunity for active lay participation in the liturgy by reviving the ancient tradition of the offertory procession. Numerous scholars of liturgical history have pointed to the offertory procession as an example of early participation of the faithful in the mass and noted that the decline of the practice after only a few centuries accompanied a larger move away from an active role for the laity in worship.<sup>92</sup> Since the offertory procession served “as a concrete example of the union between the marketplace and the liturgical assembly,” Virgil Michel advocated its revival as a means to increase active participation in the liturgy.<sup>93</sup> Untraut, too, recognized this

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<sup>91</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 37, 38, 39.

<sup>92</sup>Klauser, *History of the Western Liturgy*, 8, 109-110; Dix, *Shape of the Liturgy*, 290.

<sup>93</sup>Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 134. Michel also interpreted the modern practice of offering money a suitable adaptation of the ancient tradition of the offertory procession to the conditions of contemporary life. See Michel and Louis Transler, “The Mass as the People’s Sacrifice,” *Orate Fratres* II no. 7 (15 May 1927), 210-11.

potential of this ancient practice and, like Michel, sought to return Catholics to this ritual which had fallen out of favor centuries before.

In the first centuries of Christian worship, when the foundations of the liturgy were first laid, the custom developed, apparently out of the early practice of bringing food to share at the *agape* meal that followed the celebration, of having the faithful provide the elements of the Eucharist.<sup>94</sup> As Untraut described it, “The ancient Christian liturgy asked that all the faithful present at the mass personally and publicly contribute to the offering made to God during the mass.”<sup>95</sup>

In Untraut’s mind, revival of this practice would serve both a symbolic and a social end. Throughout *Die liturgische Bewegung*, he emphasized the importance of understanding the mass as a sacrifice, and he connected the offertory procession to this central theme. Encouraging Catholics “to consider the sacrificial gifts, the bread and wine, as their gifts,” he agreed with the liturgical movement’s support for a revival of the offertory procession, which

undoubtedly expresses more clearly the symbolic character of the gifts and calls out urgently to every believer: it is your gifts which should be presented to the Lord as a sign of homage and reverence; it is your very self in those gifts which sacrifices itself and is, through transubstantiation (*Wandlung*), taken up into Christian and in him and through him offered up to the Father.<sup>96</sup>

The idea of self-sacrifice, as expressed in the offertory procession, also played a role in Untraut’s understanding of the liturgy as a solution to social problems. By reminding each

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<sup>94</sup>Klauser, *History of the Western Liturgy*, 8.

<sup>95</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 12.

<sup>96</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 13.

worshiper that “[w]hen he comes to the sacrifice, [he] has the obligation to bring a sacrifice of his own, in order to unite it with the sacrifice of the head,” the offertory procession focused attention on the communal nature of the liturgy and the equality of all believers before God. Untraut also hoped that, since “[t]he offertory gifts belong to the poor,” revival of the offertory procession might spark renewed interest in “Christian care of the poor.”<sup>97</sup>

### *Early Church as ideal model*

Untraut had long considered the practices of the earliest Christians a guide for Catholics of his own time and had argued from this position over three decades prior to his writing of *Die liturgische Bewegung*. In 1894, for example, he published an essay in the La Crosse diocesan newspaper entitled “*Einst und Jetzt*,” (“Then and Now”), in which he praised the courage of the first Christians, who “eagerly attended Sunday worship, even when they stood in danger of being hauled before heathen judges and gruesomely tortured.” In comparison to these heroes of the faith, the Catholics of his own day, “so many [of whom] stay away from worship on account of amusements,” looked like poor Christians indeed, and Untraut warned that these first Christians would rise far above these “desecraters of the Sabbath” on Judgment Day.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 29, 66.

<sup>98</sup>*Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 5 July 1894. He used the early Church as a model in other essays, as well. For instance, in an 1894 essay on gravestone inscriptions, he wrote, “If we want genuine Catholic inscriptions, we must return to the earliest days of Christianity” (“*Grabschriften*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 22 November 1894). His understanding of the early Christianity relied on the work of the Church Fathers and other Catholic greats, as indicated by his citations of Chrysostom and Augustine in an essay on Epiphany and of Pope Innocent I in an essay on proper behavior for Saturdays (“*Die Dreikönigsweihe*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit*

As one of the first Catholics in the United States to support the liturgical movement, Untraut had to defend his advocacy of such unfamiliar practices as the offertory procession against charges that he was introducing “innovations” or “novelties” into the liturgy, so he cited the traditions of the first Christians and the early Church as models for liturgical renewal. In defense of the offertory procession, for instance, he asserted that “[o]nly those who do not know its origins and significance struggle against this ‘novelty,’” a novelty which, he was quick to point out, was “[f]rom ancient time to the late Middle Ages...not only an obligation but a right, from which those who were not permitted to receive communion were excluded.”<sup>99</sup>

Untraut frequently relied on the example of the most ancient Christians to support liturgical reforms in his own day, including the dialogue mass and the general principle, central to the entire project of the modern liturgical movement, of active participation of the laity. In this respect, he strongly resembles other advocates of liturgical renewal, who frequently sought to emulate the model of the first Christians.<sup>100</sup> After posing the question, “So, what kind of an innovation is that—a ‘missa recitata’ or ‘missa dialogata’?” he responded, “It is, in fact, no innovation at all, but rather a return to old customs, done away with by the Reformation and subsequent events.” Untraut summarized his position by stating, “The early Church, in which the holy mass was truly the sacrifice of the whole

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*und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 28 December 1893; “*Der Samstag in Kirche und Welt*,” *Der Patriot für Wahrheit und Recht* (La Crosse, WI), 20 December 1894).

<sup>99</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 29.

<sup>100</sup>Virgil Michel, “The Case for Private Piety,” *Orate Fratres* 8, no. 8 (11 June 1939): 360; Pius Parsch, “Liturgical Action in Austria,” 178-79. See also Koenker, *Liturgical Renaissance*, 31; Fenwick and Spinks, *Worship in Transition*, 7; Pecklers, *The Unread Vision*, 44-45.

congregation, must again become the ideal.”<sup>101</sup>

### *Frequent communion*

In this turn toward the first centuries of Christianity, Untraut was confident he was conforming to the desires of the Church and particularly to the wishes of Pope Pius X. In the chapter entitled “The liturgy lead to the imitation of the lives of the first Christians,” he stated that Pius “pursued his single goal of inspiring the faithful to participation in the liturgical life and thus to imitation of the virtues of the first Christians with his reform of Gregorian chant and his decrees on frequent communion.” Untraut also favored more frequent reception of communion by the laity and offered the first Christians as a model for this practice: “What an uplifting and edifying sight it must have been when in the earliest days of Christianity all the faithful present received holy communion during the mass!”<sup>102</sup>

Despite his appeal to Pius X as a guide, however, this statement indicates that Untraut actually differed significantly from the pope in his understanding of the importance of frequent communion and allied himself not with those who, like Pius, advocated reception of the Host as an end in itself, with little regard for liturgical setting, but rather with the supporters of the liturgical movement, who looked upon frequent communion as a key element in the larger project of liturgical renewal.<sup>103</sup> Over the

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<sup>101</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 8, 90.

<sup>102</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 22, 58.

<sup>103</sup>Aubert, *Church in a Secularised Society*, 125. For a summary of Pius’s decree, see Roger Schoenbechler, “The Decree of Pius X on Frequent Communion,” *Orate Fratres* 10, no. 3 (25 January

centuries, reception of communion, which often took place at a side altar at a convenient moment during worship, had become less a part of the communal action of the mass than another individual private devotion.<sup>104</sup> A key difference between the liturgical interests of Untraut and other modern reformers and those of Prosper Guéranger and Pius X was “the stress on the reform of the liturgy itself as distinct from a concern with raising the level of lay devotion to it,” a distinction encapsulated in Ernest Koenker’s observation that “it could be said that the Liturgical Movement attempts to shift popular piety from the tabernacle to the altar.”<sup>105</sup>

### *Ecclesiology*

Untraut’s repeated references to the model of the early Church offer insight into his ecclesiology, as well, which was both eminently traditional in its turn toward apostolic models and remarkably prescient in its anticipation of the views of later popes and the Second Vatican Council. Though his views differed markedly from those of most American Catholics of his day, his favored theology of the Church placed him securely within the mainstream of the American liturgical movement.

Untraut emphasized in particular a model of the Church based on the Mystical Body of Christ, an ecclesiology whose roots he located in Christianity’s earliest days and

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1936): 108-12.

<sup>104</sup>White, *Roman Catholic Worship*, 37, 61; Joseph Jungmann, “Eucharistic Piety,” *Worship* 35, no. 7 (June-July 1961): 414-19. See also Paul Doncoeur, “Lessons of Eucharistic History,” *Orate Fratres* 23, no. 8 (12 June 1949): 357.

<sup>105</sup>McSweeney, *Roman Catholicism*, 109; Koenker, *Liturgical Renaissance*, 94.

which figured prominently in the work of Virgil Michel and other liturgical pioneers.<sup>106</sup>

Describing the unifying role of communion in the early Church, Untraut wrote of the first Christians, “They loved one another as brothers—they all ate of one bread as members of the one mystical body of Christ.”<sup>107</sup> In language strikingly similar to that of Vatican II’s *Sacrosanctum Concilium*—issued thirty-eight years after the publication of *Die liturgische Bewegung*—he noted that “[t]he first Christians were always aware that, as members of the high priestly head, they themselves had a priestly character and were a priestly people, having the right and duty to present through Jesus Christ a spiritual sacrifice pleasing to God.”<sup>108</sup>

Untraut further explicated his ecclesiology by comparing the outsider’s view of the Church, which sees “a great and powerful empire numbering over 200 million people, who are not without error,” to the Catholic’s view, which understands the “essence” of the Church and sees “a new representation of the Incarnation, the mystical body which Christ prepared and which He as head brings to life and leads.” Stressing the importance of the mass liturgy in the life of the mystical body, he reminded his readers that “[e]very day the Church gathers together as the transfigured body of Christ for the great mystery, the holy mass, this unbloody renewal of the bloody sacrifice of Golgotha.”<sup>109</sup>

The ecclesiology of the Mystical Body of Christ underlay many of Untraut’s

<sup>106</sup>David O’Brien, *Public Catholicism* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 188-89. See also Colman J. Barry, *Worship and Work: St. John’s Abbey and University, 1856-1956* (Collegeville, MN: St. John’s Abbey, 1956), 265, 275; Pecklers, 6, 44-45, 148-49.

<sup>107</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 58.

<sup>108</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 28, 75.

<sup>109</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 86, 88.

desired liturgical reforms. For instance, he supported his recommendation that the kiss of peace be revived by presenting it as a means of uniting the mystical body prior to the mass sacrifice: “he who is linked to the head and members of the mystical body, as expressed in the kiss of peace, is also worthy to receive the sacramental body and through its consumption to enter into still closer relations with the head as well as the members.” Additionally, he encouraged the reception of communion because “[a]t the table of the Lord, the bonds among the faithful should become ever stronger until they are of ‘one heart and one spirit’; for we are one bread, one body—all of us many partake of one bread.”<sup>110</sup>

Throughout *Die liturgische Bewegung*, Hermann Untraut strongly supported the efforts that Catholics had been making in Europe and that were just beginning in the United States to reinvigorate interest and participation in the liturgy. Despite certain weaknesses in his rhetoric, such as the inordinately harsh tone he adopted in discussing popular devotional practices and the overly idealistic position he took regarding the social effects of liturgical worship, the book does, as Paul Marx wrote in 1957, “show an amazing grasp and comprehensiveness of view for those times.” Though destined to remain “a voice crying in the wilderness,” Untraut anticipated many of the features which would come to characterize the liturgical movement in the United States, including its adoption of the Mystical Body of Christ ecclesiology and its unique emphasis on the relationship between liturgy and social reform.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 38-39.

<sup>111</sup>Paul B. Marx, *Virgil Michel and the Liturgical Movement* (Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 1957), 88.

## Epilogue

### The Liturgical Movement from 1941 to Vatican II

When Hermann Untraut died in 1941, the Catholic liturgical movement had been active in Europe for about a generation and in the United States for about a decade and a half. In the years that followed, the movement made significant progress and eventually influenced important papal and conciliar actions, transforming the ideas of Untraut and other pioneers from the marginal “novelties” promoted by a few frustrated souls into central principles of Catholic liturgical theology and practice.

#### *The dialogue mass in the Diocese of La Crosse*

In 1941, the year of Untraut’s death, Gerald Ellard, an American Jesuit who was active in liturgical renewal efforts, conducted a survey of sodalities, parish organizations devoted to spiritual development, evangelization, and social action, asking about their use of the dialogue mass. He found, to his surprise, that the Diocese of La Crosse reported unusually widespread adoption of this practice, which was “firmly and deeply rooted” there, and this inspired him to investigate the diocese further and include in his book *The Dialog Mass* a chapter entitled, “La Crosse Points the Way.”<sup>1</sup>

In his study of the dialogue mass in the Diocese of La Crosse, Ellard found that parochial schools, young people’s organizations, and communities of sisters had a

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<sup>1</sup>Gerald Ellard, *The Dialog Mass: A Book for Priests and Teachers of Religion* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1942), 129.

particular affinity for this form of worship, and he attributed the success of the dialogue mass in the area to “episcopal commendation and priestly zeal.”<sup>2</sup> He cited a letter from Alexander McGavick, who had become bishop of La Crosse in 1922, in which the bishop wrote, “I would state that this excellent practice [the dialogue mass] has been developing here for several years and is a nature, spontaneous growth. It has received commendation and encouragement on appropriate occasions from both my esteemed auxiliary, Most Reverend William R. Griffin, and myself.” McGavick also attributed the widespread use of the dialogue mass in his diocese to “the fine spiritual basis of our flourishing Catholic Youth Organization and the piety and zeal of the reverend clergy.”<sup>3</sup>

Although Ellard refers by name only to the bishop, auxiliary bishop, and executive secretary of the Catholic Youth Organization, Untraut clearly belonged among the pious and zealous clergy who advocated the dialogue mass in the Diocese of La Crosse. While he was probably never directly involved with the CYO, an organization founded in Chicago in 1930 to provide young people with opportunities for social and religious development, Untraut’s work with parochial schools, communities of nuns, and St. Joseph’s Hospital offered important opportunities for him to contribute to the spread of the dialogue mass. Ellard mentioned the hospital in Marshfield, for instance, as one of several in the diocese where, by 1941, the dialogue mass was “a daily feature,” and he also drew particular attention to the role of women religious, who learned, as the sisters of St. Mary’s Convent in Marshfield did under Untraut’s guidance, the practice of the dialogue

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<sup>2</sup>Ellard, *Dialog Mass*, 141.

<sup>3</sup>McGavick to Ellard, 25 March 1941, cited in *Dialog Mass*, 131.

mass and then taught this mass to those in their care, including parochial school students and hospital patients.<sup>4</sup>

Ellard's study makes clear that at least during most of Untraut's years at St. Joseph's Hospital and during his retirement in Marshfield, the dialogue mass, which he fervently supported in *Die liturgische Bewegung* and introduced to the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, enjoyed considerable episcopal support and gradually became an accepted part of Catholic life in his diocese. The full extent of his contribution to this development is unknown, but the fact that the Diocese of La Crosse, home for nearly sixty years to this pioneer of the liturgical movement who enthusiastically endorsed the dialogue mass, was considered by 1942 to be "furnishing progressive leadership in the spreading in America" of that same form of worship seems a testament to Untraut's efforts.<sup>5</sup>

### *Pope Pius XII*

Pope Pius XII, the long-reigning (1939-1958) and lately controversial pontiff<sup>6</sup>, also offered support to the liturgical movement, which was by then gaining considerable momentum in both Europe and the United States. However, he tempered his encouragement of some aspects of the movement, such as the ecclesiology of the Mystical Body of Christ, with cautions about an excessive emphasis on ancient traditions, to the detriment of later—and often more popular—practices. Both his words, as found in the

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<sup>4</sup>Ellard, *Dialog Mass*, 139-40.

<sup>5</sup>Ellard, *Dialog Mass*, 130.

<sup>6</sup>See, for instance, John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope* (New York: Viking, 1999).

encyclicals *Mystici Corporis* (1943) and *Mediator Dei* (1947), and his actions, such as public celebration of the dialogue mass, influenced—and were influenced by—the liturgical movement<sup>7</sup>.

*Mystici Corporis* and *Mediator Dei* both reflected an ecclesiology based on the Mystical Body of Christ. In the earlier encyclical, the pope acknowledged the role of the liturgical movement in returning this model of the Church to Catholic consciousness, “contribut[ing] in very large part to the present-day interest in this doctrine of our mutual unity of life and spiritual activity in Christ.”<sup>8</sup> The doctrine of the Mystical Body also came to the fore in the definition of the liturgy Pius XII put forth in *Mediator Dei*: “the public worship which our Redeemer as head of the Church renders to the Father, as well as the worship which the community of the faithful renders to its Founder, and through him to the heavenly Father. In short, it is the worship rendered by the Mystical Body of Christ in the entirety of its head and members.”<sup>9</sup>

However, despite the gratitude Pope Pius showed the liturgical movement—or the “liturgical apostolate,” as he preferred to call it—for reviving interest in the ancient doctrine of the Mystical Body, he was notably wary of a wholesale adoption of ancient liturgical

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<sup>7</sup>For a brief, if uncritical, overview of Pius XII’s liturgical contributions, see Gerald Ellard, “Pius XII, Pope of Pastoral Liturgy,” *Worship* 32, no. 10 (Nov 1958), 584-90.

<sup>8</sup>Godfrey Diekmann, “Lay Participation in the Liturgy,” in *A Symposium on the Life and Work of Pope Pius X, Commemorating the Fortieth Anniversary of his Encyclical “Acerbo Nimis”* (Washington, D.C.: Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, 1946), 155.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted in Anscar J. Chupungco, “A Definition of Liturgy,” in *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: Introduction to the Liturgy*, ed. Anscar J. Chupungco (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 4.

practices, especially if such action harmed popular non-liturgical devotions.<sup>10</sup> He began developing this theme in *Mystici Corporis*, in which he proclaimed that “not only should we cherish exceedingly the Sacraments with which holy Mother Church sustains our life, the solemn ceremonies which she celebrates for our solace and our joy, the sacred chant and the liturgical rites by which she lifts our minds up to heaven, but also the sacramentals and all those exercises of piety by which she consoles the hearts of the faithful and sweetly imbues them with the Spirit of Christ.”<sup>11</sup>

With *Mediator Dei*, the pontiff continued to defend popular devotions and “sought to rein in the enthusiasm of the liturgical renewalists for things ancient.”<sup>12</sup> Though praising the liturgical movement for its many accomplishments—and singling out the Benedictine Order for its exceptional role in the revival—he also expressed concern about some of its work.<sup>13</sup> As he declared in the 1947 encyclical:

The liturgy of the early ages is most certainly worthy of all veneration. But ancient usage must not be esteemed more suitable and proper, either in its own right or in its significance for later times and new situations, on the simple ground that it carries the savor and aroma of antiquity. The more recent liturgical rites likewise deserve reverence and respect. They, too, owe their inspiration to the Holy Spirit, who assists the Church in every age even to the consummation of the world. They are equally the resources used by the majestic Spouse of Jesus Christ to promote and

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<sup>10</sup>Godfrey Diekmann, “The Primary Apostolate,” in *The American Apostolate: American Catholics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Leo Ward (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1952), 39.

<sup>11</sup>Paragraph 92.

<sup>12</sup>Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 611.

<sup>13</sup>Paragraphs 4-5.

procure the sanctity of man.<sup>14</sup>

Pius also recognized that some advocates of liturgical renewal had so emphasized liturgical worship they threatened “the spread and ever mounting ardor of devotion to the Blessed Eucharist, devotion to the most bitter passion of our Redeemer, devotion to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, to the Virgin Mother of God and to her most chaste spouse,” as well as such practices as pilgrimages and fasting.<sup>15</sup> Countering the strong opposition some in the movement expressed toward popular devotions, Pius reminded Catholics that non-liturgical piety supplemented and enriched liturgical worship:

[W]hen devotional exercises, and pious practices in general, not strictly connected with the sacred liturgy, confine themselves to merely human acts, with the express purpose of directing these latter to the Father in heaven, of rousing people to repentance and holy fear of God, of weaning them from the seductions of the world and its vice, and leading them back to the difficult path of perfection, then certainly such practices are not only highly praiseworthy but absolutely indispensable, because they expose the dangers threatening the spiritual life; because they promote the acquisition of virtue; and because they increase the fervor and generosity with which we are bound to dedicate all that we are and all that we have to the service of Jesus Christ.<sup>16</sup>

The encyclicals of Pius XII reflect a liturgical movement which had progressed to the point that the upper reaches of the Catholic hierarchy considered its work worthy of both praise and criticism. The pope also responded to calls for liturgical renewal by following

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<sup>14</sup>Paragraph 61. See also Ernest Koener, *The Liturgical Renaissance in the Roman Catholic Church*, 2d ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 64. For a summary of the “heresy of archaism” in liturgical thought, see Daniel B. Stevick, “Culture: The Beloved Antagonist,” *Worship* 69, no. 4 (July 1995), 300-02.

<sup>15</sup>Paragraphs 54-55.

<sup>16</sup>Paragraph 32. Cf. Koener, *Liturgical Renaissance*, 65.

the lead of Pius X and reforming the breviary, introducing a new Latin Psalter and simplifying rubrics, and by restoring the Easter Vigil, reflecting a renewed understanding of Easter as the culmination of the Church year.<sup>17</sup> These developments marked a new level of maturity for the liturgical movement.

### *The Second Vatican Council*

While the growing popularity of the dialogue mass and the encyclicals and reforms of Pius XII indicated the increasing momentum in favor of liturgical renewal, the culmination of the liturgical movement's decades of work occurred in 1963, when, on December 4, the Second Vatican Council, convened by Pope John XXIII with the goal of bringing the Catholic Church up-to-date, released its first official document, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, "The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy." In all its aspects, from its call for active liturgical participation of the laity to its eucharistic theology, this seminal work reflects the ideas and ideals of Hermann Untraut, Virgil Michel, Pius Parsch, Joseph Kramp, and all the other pioneers of the liturgical movement, many of whom did not live to see their Church finally wholly embrace the work to which they devoted their lives.

"The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy" addressed virtually all of the goals and methods of the liturgical movement. First and foremost, it proceeded from a definition of liturgy based on the ecclesiology of the Mystical Body of Christ and emphasized the role

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<sup>17</sup>Keith F. Pecklers, *The Unread Vision: The Liturgical Movement in the United States of America, 1926-1955* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998), xiii; Charles Davis, *Liturgy and Doctrine: The Doctrinal Basis of the Liturgical Movement* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1960), 28-29. Pecklers considered the restoration of the vigil so significant that he used 1955, the year of the restoration, as the end point of his study of the American liturgical movement.

of all the members. The liturgy is “full public worship...performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and his members.”<sup>18</sup> Lest anyone misinterpret this definition to exclude lay people, the constitution made plain the importance of active liturgical participation by every member: “Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people, ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people’ (1 Peter 2:9, 4-5) have a right and obligation by reason of their baptism.”<sup>19</sup>

In order to foster such active participation, the council encouraged pastors to educate their parishioners, an endeavor Untraut and his fellow liturgical movement supporters had advocated and pursued for years. One can imagine the delight Untraut would have taken in the constitution’s declaration that “[w]ith zeal and patience pastors of souls must promote the liturgical instruction of the faithful and also their active participation, both internal and external, taking into account their age, condition, way of life and standard of religious culture. By so doing pastors will be fulfilling one of the chief duties of a faithful dispenser of the mysteries of God, and in this matter they must lead their flock not only by word but also by example.”<sup>20</sup>

According to *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, full participation included lay people’s

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<sup>18</sup>“The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” in *Vatican Council II*, Vol. I, *The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company, 1996), 5. Chapter I, I.7.

<sup>19</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 7-8. Chapter I, II.14.

<sup>20</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 9. Chapter I, II.19.

assuming an active role in the sacrifice of the mass, as Untraut and others had recommended earlier. Drawing on a eucharistic theology of sacrifice similar to that espoused by Kramp and adopted by Untraut, the council recognized that the faithful should sacrifice with the priest and thus sacrifice themselves and achieve closer union with the divine. In the words of the constitution, “Offering the immaculate victim, not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him, they should learn to offer themselves. Through Christ, the Mediator, they should be drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all.”<sup>21</sup>

In order to achieve the ideal form of participation in the sacrifice, Vatican II encouraged Catholics to receive holy communion within the context of the liturgy, as supporters of the liturgical movement had long advised. “The more perfect form of participation in the Mass,” the constitution put forth, “whereby the faithful, after the priest’s communion, received the Lord’s Body from the same sacrifice, is warmly recommended.”<sup>22</sup>

“The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” like Untraut, Pius Parsch, and others, stressed the importance of Scripture in the liturgy and the necessity of educating Catholics in this regard. The document noted that Scripture provides the source and inspiration for the lessons, psalms, prayers, and hymns that make up the liturgy, and thus “in order to achieve the restoration, progress, and adaptation of the sacred liturgy it is essential to promote that warm and lively appreciation of sacred scripture to which the venerable

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<sup>21</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 17. Chapter II, 48.

<sup>22</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 8. Chapter II, 55.

tradition of Eastern and Western rites gives testimony.”<sup>23</sup>

In *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Council Fathers devoted an entire chapter to an element of liturgical renewal which had held a special interest for Untraut, liturgical music. While the council’s statement lacked his hallmark denunciations of worldly, theatrical songs wreaking havoc on divine worship, Untraut would have applauded the conclusion that “sacred music is to be considered the more holy, the more closely connected it is with the liturgical action, whether making prayer more pleasing, promoting the unity of minds, or conferring greater solemnity upon the sacred rites.”<sup>24</sup>

Within the liturgy of the mass, the decision of Vatican II that had the most dramatic impact was the approval of celebration of the mass in vernacular languages rather than Latin. This acceptance of a vernacular liturgy, which the constitution couched in measured language, stemmed from the council’s desire to make the liturgy more accessible to the faithful.<sup>25</sup> While supporters of the liturgical movement shared this goal, not all considered a vernacular mass an appropriate means to this end. Untraut, for instance, at the time *Die liturgische Bewegung*, advocated preservation of the Latin mass since it contributed to a heightened sense of mystery.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to following the lead of the liturgical movement in issues relating to the liturgy of the mass, the Second Vatican Council addressed other liturgical matters which

<sup>23</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 10. Chapter I, III.24.

<sup>24</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 32. Chapter VI, 112.

<sup>25</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 13. Chapter I, III.36.

<sup>26</sup>Hermann Joseph Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung: Ein Beitrag zu ihrer besseren Würdigung* (Marshfield, WI: by the author, 1925), 63.

Untraut and others had deemed important, including the Church year, the divine office, and popular devotions. Vatican II, like the liturgical movement, wanted to impress upon the faithful the importance of living in harmony with the Church year, over the course of which the Church “unfolds the whole mystery of Christ from the incarnation and nativity to the ascension, to Pentecost and the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord.” Far more than simply presenting the biography of Jesus, however, the liturgical year “opens up to the faithful the riches of her Lord’s powers and merits, so that these are in some way made present for all time.”<sup>27</sup>

As the Church year sanctifies the days of the year, so the divine office sanctifies the hours of the day, and through this practice of prayers at set times throughout the day, “the whole course of the day and night is made holy by the praise of God.” Although the constitution’s chapter on the divine office focused primarily on the obligation of priests and vowed religious to take part in the liturgy of the hours, it also encouraged the laity “to recite the divine office, either with the priests, or among themselves, or even individually.”<sup>28</sup>

Concerned chiefly with questions of liturgical worship, the Council Fathers made only brief mention of popular devotions, which they deemed acceptable but unquestionably subordinate to the liturgy of the mass and the divine office. Noting that such devotions were “highly recommended” under certain circumstances, especially when

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<sup>27</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 29. Chapter V, 102. Cf. Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 101-102.

<sup>28</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 24, 28. Chapter IV, 84, 106.

endorsed by the pope, the constitution nevertheless reminded Catholics that “such devotions should be so drawn up that they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some way derived from it, and lead the people to it, since in fact the liturgy by its very nature is far superior to any of them.”<sup>29</sup>

With the issuance of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Second Vatican Council announced to the whole Catholic world that the celebration of the liturgy was neither the exclusive province of priests and theologians, nor an esoteric rite rendered meaningless by the passage of centuries. Far from an irrelevant relic, it was, in fact, “the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed” and “the fount from which all her power flows.”<sup>30</sup> Moreover, in its efforts to restore the liturgy, the council designated as its highest aspiration “the full and active participation by all the people.”<sup>31</sup> As Untraut had hoped 38 years earlier, the liturgy was to become once more “*ein gemeinsames Volkswerk*”—a collective work of the people.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 7. Chapter I, I.13.

<sup>30</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 6. Chapter I, I.10.

<sup>31</sup>“Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 8. Chapter I, II.14.

<sup>32</sup>Untraut, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 8.

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