

## Sławomir Zatwardnicki

Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław  
ORCID 0000-0001-7597-6604

### The Eucharistic Presence and Making Christ Present in the Word of God: A Study Inspired by the Views of Robert Sokolowski<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** Robert Sokolowski wrote that biblical words activate the presence of God. But can we speak of the “sacramentality of the word” analogous to the sacrament itself? This paper collects reflections on the “making present” of the word of God *intra mysteriorum celebrationem*. This issue is related to the theme of the relationship between past and present in the Eucharist, which was dealt with by Sokolowski. The article summarizes this philosopher’s views on the Eucharistic presence, in dialogue with which it then reflects on the presence of Christ in the word of God. From the “Passover-centricity” of the Holy Scriptures stems a kind of making present the anticipatory self-giving of God in the events to which the inspired texts testify. The liturgy of the word must lead to the climactic event of Passover and its sacramental making present. There can be no question of “two presences” of the Lord at Mass. The words of institution from the Last Supper have a role in the actualization of the Passover, while the inspired words are not in the same way “instituting” words. It is only in their inner orientation that they lead to the mystery of Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament.

**Keywords:** eucharistic presence, making the word of God present, liturgy of the word, sacramentality of the word of God, Blessed Sacrament, Robert Sokolowski

---

Robert Sokolowski writes that the words of Scripture can activate God’s presence, with the result that God can remain present

---

<sup>1</sup> This article is a corrected version of the article published in Polish: Sławomir Zatwardnicki, “Obecność eucharystyczna a uobecnienie Chrystusa w słowie Bożym. Studium inspirowane poglądami Roberta Sokolowskiego,” *Collectanea Theologica* 91 (2021) no. 3, 95–123. Translated from Polish by Maciej Górnicki.

“here and now.”<sup>2</sup> However, we need to look for the answer to the question of what kind of presence this might be. We know that Christ is present in the Church in many ways, of which the sacramental presence should be considered the most important.<sup>3</sup> Is it possible to speak about the “sacramentality of the Word” analogous to the sacrament itself, as suggested by Benedict XVI, considering the relationship between the Word and the Eucharist?<sup>4</sup> The reflection on the “making present” of the Word of God during the liturgy seems to be a good starting point precisely because of the inseparable connection between the liturgy of the Word and the Eucharistic liturgy (VD 55). The question of making present is related to the theme of the mutual relation of the past and present in the Eucharist. One of the scholars of this issue is the phenomenologist just quoted above, with whose reflections on Eucharistic presence I will begin this article. The first two points are a recapitulation of the philosopher’s views and will serve to guide my own reflections on the making present of Christ in the Word of God in the following three points. This will allow me to draw a final conclusion.

## **1. The correspondence between the Cenacle, Calvary and the liturgy**

In his study, which he calls “phenomenological theology,” Sokolowski derives theological conclusions from the celebration of the Eucharist. He does not even exclude from consideration the grammar of the language used during Mass. The philosopher points out that during the words of institution the perspective changes: from the assembly present at the liturgy (the previously used prepositions “we” or “us”) to Jesus and the community gathered around him at the Last Supper (“my,” “you”). The phenomenologist points to the

---

<sup>2</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, “God’s Word and Human Speech,” 209–210.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 7; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1373 [hereafter CCC].

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Benedict XVI, Exhortation *Verbum Domini*, 56 [hereinafter VD]; F. Martin, “Revelation and Understanding,” 265; J. Ratzinger, *O nauczaniu II Soboru*, 688.

indicative pronoun “this” found in the words of institution: “Take *this* [...] and eat it: *this* is my body,” “Take *this* [...] and drink from it: *this* is the cup of my blood.”<sup>5</sup> The word “it” was used by Christ to refer to the bread held in his hands at the Last Supper<sup>6</sup> (a moment before), not to the bread that is on the altar during the liturgy. If the celebrant, instead of quoting Christ’s words and gestures, chose only to recount the event of the Cenacle, then the actions of the liturgical leader and Christ would exist in parallel, as separate one from the other. If “my body” were replaced by “his body” in this narrative convention, the priest would direct attention to Christ present in the Cenacle, but such Christ would not speak *hic et nunc*. The words “there and then” would remain separate from “here and now,” and the priest would not lend his voice and hands to Christ. The entire narrative of the events of nearly two thousand years ago, necessarily dominated by the past tense, would not allow for a reoccurrence in the present.<sup>7</sup>

According to Sokolowski, this exercise in imagination makes it possible to become more aware of the theological properties of the Eucharistic formulas:

The words we do use allow a dovetailing of perspectives and contexts, not a mere reference from within one context to another. In our present liturgical context, the context of the Last Supper is activated, and this in turn activates and preenacts the context of Calvary. The voice of the priest can be identified with the voice of Christ, and the bread and wine taken up by the priest can become identified in their substance with the bread and wine taken up by Jesus.<sup>8</sup>

The priest does not recount or imitate, but quotes both the words and actions of Christ (Sokolowski calls the Eucharistic gestures *quotational gestures*), in accordance with the Lord’s command: “Do this in memory of me” (Luke 22:19; cf. 1 Cor 11:24). The

---

<sup>5</sup> R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic Presence*, 82–83.

<sup>6</sup> According to St Thomas Aquinas, the pronoun “it” indicates that the bread is no longer bread; otherwise Christ would have said “This bread is my flesh” – cf. STh III, q. 78, art. 2, ad. 3 and STh III, q. 75, art. 3, 3; R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 98.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 83–85.

<sup>8</sup> R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 85.

philosopher emphasizes the distinction between the actions of the priest and the dramatic performance of the Lord's behavior, because the Mass is not an actor-like representation of the Last Supper or the Passion. It is not a mimetic but a sacramental realization of Christ's Passover, or more precisely, the making present of its anticipation by Christ at the Last Supper. The elevation and kneeling, which come later, are a return to the present tense, directed toward Christ present here and now, which is also emphasized by the acclamation of the assembly: "We proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, we confess your resurrection, and we await your coming in glory."<sup>9</sup>

Quoting serves the purpose of transferring from the present situation to another context, while performance, on the contrary, introduces the past into the present context and it is the past that is being played out; it is not about making the Last Supper present, but about placing the participants of the assembly in the presence of the original event. But during the liturgy everything is done in the presence of the Father, which emphasizes the sacrificial dimension of the Mass – for the purpose of the Eucharist is the redemptive action of Christ.<sup>10</sup> Liturgical quotation thus differs from that practiced in ordinary, everyday citation of others. Christ himself acts in the Eucharist, and when his words and gestures are cited, what he has already done is fulfilled in a sacramental way. There is thus an identification of action and effect, unlike in ordinary citation, where the quoted words or actions remain in the past tense and in their original place.<sup>11</sup>

The sacramental quotation is different because it is made before the eternal Father, in prayer addressed to him. Eucharistic quotations are primarily addressed not to those gathered but to the Father, toward whom the primal sacrifice of the cross is eternally present. Before the Father, the image and the citation blend into one with the original sacrifice in a way unknown to our human representations. Because the Eucharist makes real the action between the incarnate

---

<sup>9</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 85–88, 91. The slight bowing when the words of establishment are spoken and the elevation and kneeling that follow could be interpreted as a form of inverted commas expressed by gestures (*gestural quotation*) – cf. *ibid.*, 87.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 91–93.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 89.

Son and the Father, the sacrifice of the Mass can be for us the same as the sacrifice of Calvary was. The identity that is manifested to us is dependent on the identity achieved before the Father<sup>12</sup>

The faithful at Mass “come into contact sacramentally with the sacrifice of Calvary and the exchange that occurred there between Christ and the Father.”<sup>13</sup> It can be said that the Church is admitted to this intimate dialogue of intra-trinitarian words and acts, yet “translated” and lived out in the human nature of the Person of the Word sent for our salvation. The initiative in the liturgy does not lie in the present and in the Church; indeed the primacy belongs to the saving action of God through Christ, who nevertheless, as in the whole economy of salvation, calls people to collaborate, so that the liturgy is not only receiving but also offering.<sup>14</sup> “Christ elevates the voice and gestures of the celebrant and allows them to reembody his own words and gestures, thus allowing his redemptive action to be embodied sacramentally in the Eucharist.”<sup>15</sup>

The turning back, by means of quotation, to a past salvific event made present again in the Eucharist does not, of course, mean turning one’s attention away from the present situation. The re-offering of the one and only perfect sacrifice to God is also marked by a theological sense. It is “we,” the participants in the liturgy, who have been displaced, as it were, to another time and place. And it was the community that acted during the epiclesis before the consecration, when the Holy Spirit was invoked over the gifts presented to the Father. “Here and now” speaks of “our” offering and “our” celebration of the mystery. “These” gifts brought by us will become the Body and Blood, and thus will be connected to

---

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 89–90.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., *Eucharistic presence*, 93.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 90–91. Cf. also: P. Liszka, *Wpływ nauki o czasie*, 126: “Through sacramental signs there is some opening, some special intensification of the relationship between the temporal world and God. Liturgy is the place where the relationship between God and people, between eternity and temporality, is intensified. These intensifications are also influenced by human actions in space-time.”

<sup>15</sup> R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 90. Telford Work, in his ecclesiology of Scripture, sees the Bible as the means of the divine presence in the community of believers, and at the same time as the instrument of the worship of that community when it is present before God – cf. Cf. T. Work, *Living and Active*, 216.

the pronoun “it” used by Christ. The epiclesis illuminates the perspective proper to the quotation of Christ’s words and gestures. The celebration does lead through the Cenacle to Calvary, but at the same time it fulfills the intention that the event on Calvary should be celebrated throughout the world. The Eucharistic making present (re-presentation) is part of the essence of those events, which are not closed in the past.<sup>16</sup>

## 2. The Eucharistic transcending time

“Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will return.” In the celebration of the Eucharist the temporal dimensions of present, past and future are related to one another.<sup>17</sup> The purpose of the Jewish Passover was to remember God’s deliverance from slavery in Egypt and to prepare the people for God’s expected action in the future; this memorial was accomplished by fulfilling the ritual commandments given by Moses concerning the first Passover and its future repetition (cf. Exod 12:25).<sup>18</sup> “The subsequent Jewish Passovers thus looked back to the deliverance from Egypt, but they also looked back to the first Passover, which anticipated this deliverance. [...] Moses anticipated not only a future celebration but also a future remembering or memorial of what God did for his people at the

---

<sup>16</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 94–95. That Christ’s substitution must not be reduced to His Person alone, and that the sacrifice of the Logos results in “logicizing” of existence – cf. J. Ratzinger, *Teologia liturgii*, 58–59.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 101, 103. Piotr Liszka, in an attempt to explain the contact between Christ and temporal time in liturgy, proposes to adopt an analogous temporal structure in the Resurrected Christ, and in the structure of chronos a certain openness allowing for a contact with Christ’s eternity. The Polish theologian believes that contemporary physics, including the theory of relativity, may broaden the horizons in understanding temporal time. Therefore, he calls the time of the liturgy a “singular place,” a kind of curvature of space-time, in which God’s intervention would gain more “density.” – cf. P. Liszka, *Wpływ nauki o czasie*, 151. Cf. P. Liszka, *Biblijna teologia czasu*, 28: “In a way, the totality of Christianity’s time forms one great singularity in which the line between already and not yet is blurred.”

<sup>18</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 101–102.

time when he, Moses, gave the people these instructions.”<sup>19</sup> The celebrated Eucharist assumes both contexts – the Jewish Passover and the Last Supper – and if the Last Supper recalled the Passover, then the Mass recalls the Last Supper with the Passover immersed in it. In the Eucharistic realisation of the Lord’s death and resurrection, God’s saving action at the time of the Exodus is also realised.<sup>20</sup>

It should be emphasized that the Eucharist does not actualise the death and Resurrection of Christ directly, but rather activates again (*reenacts*) the Last Supper, during which Christ anticipated and pre-actualised (*preenacted*) the salvific Passover.<sup>21</sup> Through the Last Supper the Mass “as an action blends with the action of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross; the ‘two’ actions are sacramentally one action, one deed.”<sup>22</sup> In this case, writes Sokolowski, the Eucharist “has a double revival of the past, with one of its reenacted pasts, the Last Supper, enclosed within the context set by the other, the Passover. The past of our Eucharist is the present of the Last Supper and the sacrifice of Calvary; in a deeper dimension, the past of our Eucharist is the present of the Passover and the Exodus.”<sup>23</sup>

At the Last Supper, Jesus Christ celebrated the First Eucharist in the context of the Jewish Passover, with its appropriate remembrance of the past. At the same time, however, he anticipated the future: firstly, his imminent death, and secondly, the repetition by his disciples of the actions he performed as the New Moses, according to the mandate given to the community gathered around him. The Eucharist thus appears as a future anticipated by Christ in the past. In addition, the Saviour also anticipated the eschaton, the Realized Kingdom of God (cf. Mt 26:29), involving his Second Coming and the renewal of all things. The eschatological future is

---

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 102. God in Scripture sometimes speaks of something as already having been fulfilled, even though in the chronos order the event in question may still belong to the future (cf. Josh 10:8) – cf. W. Gitt, *Time and Eternity*, 48.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 103.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 91, 93.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 103. Concerning the Eucharist as a New Passover – see B. Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish*, 50–77.

the future for both the past Cenacle and the present Eucharist.<sup>24</sup> The present determines both the past, that is, what Christ has already done to initiate the Kingdom of God (the foundation), and the future work of Christ (the goal), whose final fulfilment believers look forward to.<sup>25</sup> “Our celebration of the Eucharist, our sacramental way of looking back on the one sacrifice of Christ and being present to it, becomes a temporal icon of how we will look “back” on that same sacrifice from the eschaton, from the eternal present of our life with God.”<sup>26</sup>

Eucharistic memorial and anticipation do not consist in evoking psychological states, but are a true re-enactment of what God has already accomplished and an anticipatory realization of what He will yet do.<sup>27</sup> The sacramentally realised sacrificial Passover of Christ

<sup>24</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 102–104. On a more personal level, the Eucharist also anticipates the death and resurrection of the faithful linked to the sacrificial death of Christ – cf. *ibid.*, 104.

Joseph Ratzinger also emphasized that the Christian liturgy was not merely an adaptation of Jewish traditions or a mere reenactment of the Last Supper – indeed, it was an anticipation referring back to the fulfillment of the words in the sacrifice of the Cross and the hope of resurrection, without which it would have been unreal; all this means that it did not in itself contain the full form – cf. S. Hahn, *Przymierze i komunija*, 225.

<sup>25</sup> G. Wainwright, “Sacramental Time,” 136. Cf. W. Kasper, *Kościół katolicki*, 208: “Finally, the sacraments point beyond themselves to eschatological fulfillment and, as such, are a real anticipation of ultimate things. The sacraments, especially the Eucharist, are thus always also an anticipatory celebration of eschatological perfection.”

<sup>26</sup> R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 107. In relations to the parousia, as Geoffrey Wainwright said, “the eucharist may be seen either as its pro-jection from the future (the future coming into the present) or as its anticipation (the present reaching out for the future)” – G. Wainwright, “Sacramental Time,” 137. One can, Jean Guilton believes, “define the present as the past of the future” – J. Guilton, *Absurd i tajemnica*, 53.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 105. Cf. also G. Wainwright, “Sacramental Time,” 135: “the presence of Christ to his Church, epitomized in the eucharist, has more ontological substance than a psychological event in the mind of the individual.” Peter Rostworowski, with regard to the realisation of the promise in John 6:56, wrote: “While receiving the grace of this union in Holy Communion in an immensely real way, we do not feel it psychologically. Like every other reality given in the sacraments, we reach this one only by faith.” – cf. P. Rostworowski, *W szkole modlitwy*, 108.



gives believers a foretaste and a promise of the heavenly feast.<sup>28</sup> The temporal succession which characterises the created world becomes the material for the Eucharist, which re-enacts the saving work once accomplished precisely by making use of the world's temporality. The sequence of things and events becomes a moving image of eternity, which cannot be "felt," because being subject to time means that we touch the divine mystery not by sight, but by faith.<sup>29</sup> It is not just one event among many in the timeline, but an event which, in the Eucharist, is realised as taking place before God and addressed to Him in prayer.

In this way, the chronology of events does not have the last word here, but proves itself to be based on the life and "event" of the eternal God having no "before" or "after," which in turn is presented to the participants in the liturgy by no other means than the succession of times.<sup>30</sup>

"The Eucharist takes time when it is celebrated, but it also overcomes time as it reenacts an event that took place at another time. In doing this, the Eucharist calls time into question. It claims to go beyond time and thereby indicates that time and its succession are not ultimate. It makes time to be an image; it makes succession to be a representation".<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 105. Cf. also: J. Meyendorff, *Teologia bizantyjska*, 208: "In the Eucharistic presence of the Lord His future coming is already realised and 'time' is transcended". What we experience is already the future Kingdom of God, and at the same time we look forward to the future glory" – cf. P. McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation*, 6, 8.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 105–106. However, it can be said that Christians see by faith – cf. Francis, Encyclical *Lumen fidei*, 29–31. Cf. STh III, q. 55, a. 2, ad. 1: "[...] *apostoli potuerunt testificari Christi resurrectionem etiam de visu, quia Christum post resurrectionem viventem oculata fide viderunt, quem mortuum sciverant.*"

<sup>30</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 106.

<sup>31</sup> R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 106. Cf. P. Evdokimov, *Prawosławie*, 271: "History takes place in time and is stored in memory. This ability to transcend the divisions of time is at the core of the liturgical "memorial," but its mystery goes further. During the liturgy, through its sacred power, we are placed at the point where eternity intersects with time and where we become truly contemporary with the biblical events from Creation to Parousia; we experience them in a concrete way as their eyewitnesses. During the liturgy, when we hear: "This is my body," the

Thus, the Eucharist presents the eternal God as distinct from the created world.<sup>32</sup> If God were subject to the necessities of time, then the Eucharist could be nothing more than a symbol of that event. Only the transcendent God can become truly present in the Incarnation and (sacramentally) in the Eucharist. By revealing the otherness of the biblical God from creation, the Eucharist goes all the way back to creation and thus, together with the anticipated eschaton, establishes the widest possible horizon and emphasises that both the beginning (protology) and the end (eschatology) have their origin in the same God.<sup>33</sup> Only such a God could enter into time, first by preparing for his Incarnation,<sup>34</sup> then by becoming man, and now by making the Passover present in the Eucharist.

### 3. The Paschal orientation of the holy scriptures

The liturgy of the word shares in the Passover in the sense that the *Logos Incarnatus* is inseparable from the word, but at the same time not reducible to it. Ratzinger wrote that from the beginning of salvation history it is possible to speak of the Incarnation, so that already Old Testament words are linked to Christ's self-humiliation.<sup>35</sup> One should add that they are also connected with his

---

words of Christ himself sound out of time. This is not human repetition, but through liturgical community we participate outside of time in what lasts once and for all."

<sup>32</sup> R. Sokolowski, *Christian Faith and Human Understanding*, 38–50; R. Sokolowski, *The God of Faith*, 21–29. A good summary of Sokolowski's key term "Distinction" used to show the relationship between the Creator and the created world is given by Wright IV and Martin. They show four important implications of the fundamental Distinction: first, the radically transcendent and immanent God cannot be classified as some kind of thing or entity; second, the Creator's relationship with the world cannot be considered from the point of view of competition - neither does God compete with created reality, nor does his action or presence violate its integrity; Third, God cannot be thought or spoken of in the same way as created things; and fourth, if God does not need the world to be God, then the world is a selfless gift of his goodness – cf. W.M. Wright IV, F. Martin, *Encountering the Living God*, 115–119. Cf. also R. Barron, *Exploring Catholic Theology*, 111.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *Eucharistic presence*, 107–108.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. R. Sokolowski, *The God of Faith*, 31–40.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Wiara w Piśmie i Tradycji*, 627; S. Zatwardnicki, "An Incarnational Analogy," 62.

Passover; moreover, the Incarnation cannot be seen separately from the Passover, for which the Word became flesh – Jerzy Szymik therefore speaks of the “Paschal orientation of the Incarnation.”<sup>36</sup> The Cross, though in different ways, marks all sacred writings. William M. Wright IV and Francis Martin write in their monograph based on Sokolowski's analyses, among others, that “[w]hen seen from within the context of the paschal mystery, all other biblical realities come to light as caught up in the salvific economy of the Word and are shown to have dimensions wherein they participate in his saving work.”<sup>37</sup>

However, the question must be raised as to whether the paschal-centric reading of the Old Testament texts is not done at the expense of their diversity. In response, let us recall the “pedagogy” of God, who reveals himself gradually and in various ways, educates God’s people and leads them to the climactic moment of revelation. Perhaps an example from the earthly relationship of father and son will be helpful. The father speaks a multitude of words and takes a variety of actions not so that they all will have to be replayed later in his son’s memory. Rather, he prepares his offspring for the time when he, fully formed, will be able to perceive his parent, himself and the world in a mature way. Everything that happened before (words and actions) does not lose its value, because without it the son would not be what he has now become. Something similar and at the same time different happens in the relationship of Yahweh to the People of God, whose memory God shapes through all the events (*logoi kai erga*) of the economy of salvation, so that it is capable of “holding” the climactic event of the history of salvation and revelation. The passage to the New Testament, even if it relativises past history by making it appear as a mere shadow of present reality, does not cancel it out. Indeed, what points to Christ must be preserved if He is to be fully accepted and understood. Herein lies the difference between the natural memory of the son and the memory of the people of God – Yahweh’s first-born son.

John Goldingay warns against the “castrating” of the Old Testament (or rather the First Testament, for that is the term the

---

<sup>36</sup> J. Szymik, *W światłach Wcielenia*, 62–69.

<sup>37</sup> W.M. Wright IV, F. Martin, *Encountering the Living God*, 215.

British writer prefers) that a typological reading can cause. The scholar argues that if the Incarnate One is the climax of the Old Testament story, it means that this story plays a role in the interpretation of the “Christ event.” Consequently, not only will the Exodus be seen in light of Christ’s coming, but also the other way round: the coming of Christ must be seen from the perspective of the Exodus. The typological approach, however, aims at looking at the reality of the Old Covenant in the light of the event of Christ.<sup>38</sup> It seems to me that the essence of a typological reading does not include the “castration” of the Old Testament that Goldingay warns against. Moreover, the liturgy of the word, as an essential element of the Mass, even points to the necessity of this double illumination of the event of Christ and the events of the First Covenant, which are not thus deprived of their real character and meaning. If we reduced the sacred history of Israel to the point where the Old Testament events were not so much about the events themselves as about God revealing himself in them, we would fall into a form of “modalism.” Indeed, it is the very liturgy that attests to the lasting value of the events, even if only relative, because it foreshadows their fulfilment in the New Testament. Consequently, the fulfilment cannot be understood without prior events. Goldingay himself acknowledges that the Exodus, of crucial importance for Israel, is nevertheless not the final work of God, but the beginning towards fulfilment in the Second Testament. Therefore, later events and the Exodus itself must explain each other (the hermeneutic circle).<sup>39</sup>

As Luke’s description of the disciples’ encounter with the Risen Lord shows (cf. Luke 24:13–32), the Lord is present at all times *intra mysteriorum celebrationem* but can be fully recognized only in the liturgy of the Eucharist. Even though the disciples’ hearts were already burning when He explained the inspired books to them (v. 32) and when, “beginning with Moses through all the prophets, he expounded to them what in all the Scriptures referred to him” (v. 27), yet they did not come to know Christ until after He had

---

<sup>38</sup> Cf. J. Goldingay, *Models for Interpretation*, 65–66.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 68.

broken bread (v. 31). Transferring this to the structure of the Mass,<sup>40</sup> we can say that Christ is already present in the liturgy of the word; this is about more than just a “verbal presence,” for words do not exist without a speaker. And yet the Lord is still present, as it were, “externally” (v. 15: “Jesus himself drew near and walked with them”) and by internal effects (the burning heart). It is only in the Eucharistic liturgy that “they recognized Him, but He disappeared from their sight” (v. 31), which could be interpreted to mean that the outward presence together with interior grace had now passed into an interior *communio* with the Person of the Lord. As Ratzinger wrote: “[T]here is a person-to-person exchange, a coming of the one into the other. The living Lord gives himself to me, enters into me, and invites me to surrender myself to him, so that the Apostle’s words come true: ‘[I]t is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me’ (Gal 2:20).”<sup>41</sup>

The Scriptures and the revelation which is the base of their writing are explained in the Eucharist not primarily in the homily, but in the Eucharistic liturgy.<sup>42</sup> One could follow Waclaw Świerzawski in writing about hermeneutics in liturgy, although I would prefer the term “eucharistic hermeneutics.” In any case, the liturgy has its own set of interpretative rules, and the main Exegete of Scripture in the liturgical celebration is the glorious Kyrios.<sup>43</sup> The relationship between the Word and the Eucharist is two-way, that is, it would be impossible to discern the Eucharistic mystery without the Scriptures, and it would be impossible to understand the inspired scriptures without recognizing the Lord under the Eucharistic species: the words would remain in the past and would not carry the present meaning.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> Benedict XVI saw in this very Luke narrative the inner logic of Christian worship, consisting of the liturgy of the word and the Eucharistic liturgy – cf. Benedict XVI, Regina Caeli 6.04.2008. Cf. S. Hahn, *Przymierze i komunია*, 231.

<sup>41</sup> J. Ratzinger, *Duch liturgii*, 81. All quotations are from the English translation: J. Ratzinger, *Theology of the Liturgy*.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. M. Levering, *Engaging the Doctrine*, 59: “The liturgy is the primary place in which the Church participates in and interprets the revelation of God.”

<sup>43</sup> Cf. W. Świerzawski, “Hermeneutyka w liturgii,” 132, 143–144, 146.

<sup>44</sup> This was pointed out by Benedict XVI in no. 55 of his exhortation *Verbum Domini*.

The Eucharist recalls not only the Last Supper, but also the Passover immersed in it. Thus the celebration of the memorial of the Lord's Supper is at the same time, if one may say so, a model example of the interpretation of the Old Testament by the New, and thus of the fulfilment of the Old in the New. Generalizing, one can write that the whole liturgy of the word, or rather: the liturgy of the word in its entirety (spread over consecutive years of readings), is exactly the same, i.e., the interpretation of the Old by the New and the New by the Old Testament. However, in the case of the individual readings, what appeared to be a pattern in the Passover-Eucharist relationship will not be marked so distinctly. To paraphrase St. Augustine: it is the Old Testament as a whole which is explained and fulfilled in the New, and the whole of the New was hidden in the totality of the Old.<sup>45</sup> To this another remark must be added: the words and action of the earthly Jesus must be related to the Eucharist, in which the glorified Jesus acts. Therefore the particular readings of the Old Testament find their fulfilment more in connection with the sacramental Christ than in the New Testament itself, when not liturgically interpreted. The saving action of God in the events of the Old Testament is realised in the sacramental events. To express this more strongly: from the book (the Old Testament) we pass not to the book (the New Testament) but to the living Christ (cf. John 5:39–40). “The Bible is sacred history, and the liturgy prolongs it in the sacraments.”<sup>46</sup>

The words of Scripture serve to bring the faithful into contact with the sacrifice of Calvary in various ways: either by preparing it, foreshadowing it, or indirectly explaining its need by showing the unfaithfulness of the addressee of God's revelation (Old Testament), or by testifying to it and revealing its meaning (New Testament). Ultimately, all Scripture is one dimension of the exchange taking place between the Incarnate One and the Father. Perhaps too little attention is paid to the fact that those gathered hear the word of the Son addressed to the Father. But the exchange between the Son and

---

<sup>45</sup> Cf. St. Augustine, *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*, 2, 73 (PL 34, 623): “Novum in Vetete latet et in Novo Vetus patet.” Cf. also: CCC 129; Second Vatican Council, *Dei verbum*, 16 [hereafter DV]; VD 41.

<sup>46</sup> W. Świerzawski, “Hermeneutyka w liturgii,” 131.

the Father also involves believers as the Body of Christ in this divine – and at the same time, through the Incarnation, divine-human – dialogue. The Eucharist, in both the liturgy of the word and the Eucharistic liturgy, is an extension of the Incarnation to believers. In the sacrifice of the Mass, the Church not only receives God’s action, but also co-offers herself with Christ. Similarly, in the liturgy of the word, the Church is also a speaker: in the words of Scripture of which she is co-author, in the proclamation of the word in response to the word, in prayer nourished by the Word of God. As the words and gestures of the celebrant are received by the Lord, so also the Risen One uses the words of Scripture read by people to speak to the assembly himself.<sup>47</sup>

#### **4. The liturgical here and now of the word of God**

In the liturgy of the Word, as in the Eucharistic liturgy, the present tense plays an important role. At the climax of the Eucharist, the celebrant does not report, but quotes the words and gestures of Christ, so that the words and actions of the liturgical president and Christ do not exist in parallel, but are identified with each other. Liturgical quotation differs from simply quoting words or citing other people’s gestures. When Christ’s words and gestures are quoted, Christ himself acts and there is an identification of the action and its effect. All is accomplished before the Father, for whom the sacrifice of the Cross is eternally present – and therefore can be for the participants in the liturgy the same as the sacrifice of the Mass. The Eucharist must be seen as a dialogue and an action taking place between the Son and the Father. We deal with something both similar and different in the reading and proclamation of the Word.

The similarity consists in the fact that the Church stands before the Father in communion with the People of God, in whose history He has acted through Christ. Just as the kneeling after the words of institution and the acclamation “We proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, we confess your resurrection and await your coming in glory”

---

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 7. However, this should not be understood as if the lector were lending his lips to Christ in the same way as the priest lends his voice and hands at the time of transubstantiation.

closes the “inverted commas” in the citation of the *gesta et verba Iesu*, so the acclamation “The Word of God” at the end of the readings from Sacred Scripture is a return to the present tense (hence the homily will attempt to read the inspired texts *hic et nunc*). As in the Eucharistic liturgy, the liturgy of the word does not recount the sacred scriptures, but interprets them, thus quoting the testimony of the inspired authors. However, this is not accompanied by any gestures; everything is done on a verbal level.

The authors of *Encountering the Living God in Scripture*<sup>48</sup> maintain that the addressee of the Word of God, on the way of entering into cognitive contact with the realities mediated by the biblical text, is contacted with the divine mystery carried by the sacred texts. Although the realities mediated by the inspired books and bearing the divine mystery happened in the past, they can mediate the mysterious reality of God in the present. Scripture thus appears as a vehicle for the encounter with the word of God and his saving power “here and now.” This is possible because the divine mystery conveyed by the realities attested in the Bible is eternal, and therefore can be encountered at any time.<sup>49</sup> To this must be added, however, that it is not only a matter presenting of God speaking and acting – admittedly in the past, but nevertheless eternally present – but also of the fulfilment of those events which the inspired authors describe.

However, the assembly does not expect the Word read and proclaimed to be accompanied by a quasi-sacramental making present of past events in the present. Thus, one cannot speak of an identification of past action with the present one. Rather, the key moments of the salvific economy pass into the sacraments (cf. e.g.,

---

<sup>48</sup> It is true that Francis Martin died two years before the publication, and that it was therefore physically written by William M. Wright IV, but the former’s contribution to the work was so significant that he must be counted as a co-author – cf. S. Zatwardnicki, “Recenzja: W.M. Wright IV, F. Martin,” 483–484.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. W.M. Wright IV, F. Martin, *Encountering the Living God*, 192, 215–216. Cf. CCC 600: “To God, all moments of time are present in their immediacy.” Cf. also M.L. Lamb, “Eternity Creates and Redeems,” 131, 132–133, 140; W.L. Craig, “God, Time and Eternity,” 501. The Protestant philosopher and apologist recognises that “God exists changelessly and timelessly prior to creation and in time after creation” – cf. *ibid.*, 503.



the typological announcements of baptism and the Eucharist in: 1 Cor 10:1–4; 1 Pet 3:20–21<sup>50</sup>), while the other events have another task: either they typify the action of the Risen One through the sacrament of the Eucharist, or they prepare, educate (“pedagogy”) or deepen the memory of God’s people. To put it differently: the liturgy of the word does not aim at recreating past events, but directs us towards the fulfilment of the Scriptures which will take place in the Eucharistic liturgy. The inspired books read in the Church make it possible, in the language of Sokolowski, to activate the past context so that it in turn activates the context of Calvary – and this is possible precisely and only because the whole of Scripture is directed towards Christ, or more precisely towards the Passover.

According to the liturgical criterion, one of the three criteria used by the early Church in recognising the inspiration of a book and declaring it canonical,<sup>51</sup> what was required was the widespread use of the book in the Church’s worship, sustained over time. Recognised as inspired, the book could then serve as normative for faith, worship and Christian life. In addition to the above observations of O’Collins, it should be added what kind of authoritative character is at stake in the exercise of worship in the Church. It is by no means only, nor even primarily, about the possibility of deriving rules to govern worship. Rather, the point is that the sacred text truly allows God to be glorified by bringing the assembly into contact with the mystery of the living God. On the anthropological side, this means that inspired scripture finds a resonance in the souls of the faithful analogous (*analogia fidei*) to the response that foundational revelation evoked in the early Church. In turn, this first and authoritative response also included writings produced under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The charism of inspiration made it possible to reflect both the essence of revelation and the essence of the Church as the subject of its reception. The Scriptures, read in the midst of the worship assembly, prepared for the encounter with the Lord present in the Eucharist. Even more, the New Testament

---

<sup>50</sup> Cf. S. Hahn, *Przymierze i komunia*, 184–185. According to the Catechism, the crossing of the Red Sea foreshadows baptism – CCC 1221.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. G. O’Collins, *Inspiration*, 5, 140, 143–145; G. O’Collins, *Revelation*, 170–173.

writings were probably written with the Eucharistic assembly in mind, according to Denis Farkasfalvy.<sup>52</sup>

“Therefore faith is born of what is heard, and what is heard is the word of Christ” (Rom 10:17). The inspired biblical words can be the word of Christ only in union with the Blessed Sacrament. If the matter of the Eucharist is not a mere means of sanctification, but is transformed (transubstantiation) into the Person of Christ, this means that the liturgy of the word leads to an encounter with the living Lord, and even more: that the word becomes his word “here and now,” inseparable from this encounter with him (cf. John 5:39–40). This word, which bears witness to the *kairos* entering into *chronos*, speaks in a special way in the Eucharistic *kairos*.<sup>53</sup> Jesus’ statement in John’s Gospel acquires a meaning that is not at first obvious: the assembly studies the Scriptures, in which there is eternal life, because they bear witness to Christ, and therefore to Him the faithful come to acquire that life. Now, in Holy Communion, the words read earlier become the words of the Lord spoken in an unspeakable way.

The sacramentality of the Word of God should not be seen as parallel to the sacrament of the Eucharist. If the whole history of salvation aims at the “hour of the Passover,” then in the liturgy of the Word there can at most be an anamnesis analogous to the Eucharist. It is not a matter of making present the salvific events of salvation history, but rather of hearing the living Word, which can become sacramental flesh only in the Eucharistic event. If we may speak of re-presenting the past events, it is only if we assume that they are transformed into a sacramental event. Secondarily, of course, Old Testament events can also be made present in the Church, but precisely because the Church, as the fruit of Christ’s Passover and the image of ultimate reality, is the fulfilment of Old Testament

---

<sup>52</sup> Cf. D. Farkasfalvy, *Inspiration & Interpretation*, 63, 86–87, 210. Cf. also: P. McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation*, 3.

<sup>53</sup> About the distinction between *kairos* and *chronos* – see. B. Nadolski, “Christus heri, hodie,” 24; P. Liszka, *Wpływ nauki o czasie*, 132, 142, 152. Obviously there is no question of some kind of mathematical conversion of *chronos* to *kairos* – cf. W. Gitt, *Time and Eternity*, 46. In a sense, for the Christian, the whole *chronos* is an anticipation of the *kairos* associated with the Parousia (cf. 1 Pet 1:3.13.21) – cf. S. Hałas, “«He may exalt you at the expected time»,” 227.

shadows (cf. Heb 10:1). While the actions of the Mass only through the Last Supper can merge with the actions of Christ as Sacrifice on the Cross, there is no such identification between the Passover and the liturgy of the Word; the Word has a role insofar as all the Scriptures point to Christ's Passover and insofar as in them the Lord already "gives himself" in a certain sense to humanity – but never apart from or parallel to the self-giving of the Cross. Already Dom Odo Casel pointed out that in the liturgy we deal not only with the person of Christ but also with His work; the participants in the liturgical assembly enter into Jesus' own mystery and are included in what was once accomplished in Him and which continues in the mystery of worship.<sup>54</sup>

Like the Last Supper itself, all the *gesta et verba Iesu* retain their intrinsic dimension calling us to "make a memorial." Their essence lies in the fact that they cannot be confined to the past and to a particular place, but are meant to extend to the whole world and to history. And this not only, nor even primarily, in the fact that the inspired texts will be read and proclaimed in the liturgy throughout the history of the Church, but above all that they will somehow be "transposed" in the sacramental action of the Lord in the souls of individual believers and of the Church as the Body of Christ. Whoever consumes the Blessed Sacrament consumes, as it were, the transformed Gospel,<sup>55</sup> and with it the entire New Testament and the Old Testament, inseparable from it. Perhaps this is why, because of this transformation of the book into the living Gospel, there will be no "citation" in the liturgy of the Word analogous to that which occurs at the time of transubstantiation. The mystery of God present in all the words and events recorded in the Bible, as it were, "enters" into the person receiving Holy Communion, or perhaps vice versa: it is the believer who enters into the mystery of God conveyed by the inspired testimonies. "In this way, the Incarnation appears all-embracing, and single episodes from the life of Christ can become

---

<sup>54</sup> Cf. R. Woźniak, *Różnica i tajemnica*, 83, 85–86. Discussion of Casel's concept with special attention to the term "anamnesis" – see. J. Froniewski, *Teologia anamnezy eucharystycznej*, 221–224.

<sup>55</sup> The prophet Ezekiel and the visionary in Revelation were prompted to consume the word written in the scroll – cf. H.U. von Balthasar, *Medytacja chrześcijańska*, 24.

omnipresent. The mystery of the Word becoming man continues in time through Christ's passage into eternity and sacramental re-presentation."<sup>56</sup>

It is only in this context that we can agree with following statement by Hans Urs von Balthasar:

Jesus knows that His earthly, one-time actions will be present for all time – “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away” (Matt 24:35) – yet He entrusts the actualization of his words, actions and sufferings to the Holy Spirit. It is not merely a matter of bringing to mind what once existed and passed in history, but of realistic making it present, *re-praesentatio*. It is important to note the close analogy between word and sacrament. It would be a mistake to limit the Holy Spirit's re-presenting to the sacrament itself; it must also be applied to the words of the Gospel – and, as we have seen, they include not only His words, but also His deeds and His resurrection.<sup>57</sup>

## **5. The relationship of the tenses in the liturgy of the word**

As in the Eucharistic liturgy, so in the liturgy of the Word the present, past and future tenses remain related to one another. Seen in this light, the inspiration of the Old Testament must be the ability to speak the Word in such a way, the deepest sense of which need not be conscious to the inspired author himself, but which must be in accordance with the intention of God contained in the inspired text. Inspiration in the New Testament phase made it possible to read this spiritual sense and to testify to the realisation of the promises and the fulfilment of the sacred writings of the Old Testament. And because of the fact that the New Covenant is a picture of reality – inspiration must at the same time serve the anticipation of eschatological fulfilment.

---

<sup>56</sup> Cf. S. Zatwardnicki, “Stół Bożego słowa” – a post-symposium publication in preparation, which I have used in writing this article. I have also reached out to another of my works awaiting print: “The Eucharist as a ‘singular place’.”

<sup>57</sup> H.U. von Balthasar, *Medytacja chrześcijańska*, 24.

If the Old Covenant is to remain a shadow for the image, then the relationship of the past (Passover) to the future (Eucharist) must correspond to the analogous relationship of the present (Eucharist) to eschatology. But this analogy, like any analogy of dissimilar similarity,<sup>58</sup> must be well understood: the relationship of the future to the past is one thing, and that of eschatology to the present is another.<sup>59</sup> St. Augustine's division into physical time and anthropological time can be a starting point for reflection on the relationship between history and the theological future; in any case, eternity must neither be placed "after" time<sup>60</sup> nor treated as non-time.<sup>61</sup> The Eucharist goes back to the Last Supper, which in turn corresponds to the Passover – it celebrates and at the same time fulfils and transforms it.<sup>62</sup> The readings of the Mass correspond to this; the Church goes back to the Old Testament to see its fulfilment in the New Testament. And if everything is to be centered on the fulfilment of the Passover in the Last Supper and the sacrifice of the Cross anticipated by Christ, all the readings are ultimately "transformed" to a greater or lesser degree for the purposes of this reading.

Ratzinger, in his discussion with the views of Rudolf Bultmann, stressed the primacy of *actio* over *verbum*, of reality over message. The event of Divine revelation remains prior to and deeper than the possibilities of testifying to it (in proclamation or inspired writings).<sup>63</sup> However, the inspired word, as eloquently illustrated by Moses' command calling for the observance of the Passover (cf. Exod 12, especially Exod 12:25), can also precede the event

---

<sup>58</sup> Cf. M.A. Krąpiec, *Analogia*.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. S. Zatwardnicki, *Kościół zgorzzenia*, 122–131.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Zmartwychwstanie i życie wieczne*, 354–355.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 355–357; K. Góźdź, "Czas a wieczność," 162, 168. The Bishop of Hippo perceived history interpersonally, as a conversation between man and God. He did not consider eternity abstractly, for him it was God in the Trinity alone. He sought an analogy that would enable him to grasp God's eternal present in some way in the human experience of consciousness: man knows that he is now present to himself, and the passage of time does not determine who man is, since the past exists only in his memory and the future in his expectation – cf. M.L. Lamb, "Eternity Creates and Redeems," 120, 130–132.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. T. Work, *Living and Active*, 87, 174–175.

<sup>63</sup> J. Ratzinger (Benedict XVI), *Formalne zasady chrześcijaństwa*, 251.

itself. A word without fulfilment would remain empty; the celebration of the liberation from Egypt, on the other hand, turns out to be possible precisely because of the inspired word, and the Exodus itself is comprehensible only in relation to the word announcing it. A similar thing happens in the case of the sacrifice of the cross anticipated by the word of Jesus. Were it not for the inspired word of the institution of the Eucharist and Christ's call to make a memorial (the Last Supper), this memorial could not be celebrated in the Mass, and Christ's sacrifice would remain incomprehensible to men.<sup>64</sup> Inspiration here is connected with the anticipation of the event itself, or perhaps it would be better to say with the realisation of God's eternal plan (in this sense, indeed, before the word there would be God's action, although not yet realised in history). Celebrating would not be possible without the saving event itself, and in this sense the sacrifice of the Cross obviously exercises primacy over the Eucharist. From another angle, however, the celebration is more important than the event prior to it, because it is the celebration of the Eucharist which makes it possible to participate in the eternal mystery. This, in turn, can be celebrated only through the inspired word which anticipates the event: the event would remain unrecognized and one-off without the biblical word, and so it appears as a "once for ever" event.

Another important conclusion comes from the analysis of the celebration of the sacred liturgy. The turning of the participants to a past event and to the gathering of the disciples around Jesus (during the Last Supper) does not mean escaping from the present and the present assembly. Indeed, it is the participants in the present liturgy who are – as it were – transferred in time and place and who, as participants and not observers, offer the sacrifice and celebrate the mystery. The conclusions concerning the role of the Word of God seem obvious: it too, though spoken sometime and somewhere, *hic et nunc* is addressed to this and not to another community. The ineffable gift of inspiration makes possible this strange property of the Word of God, which lives in a context different from its original, but never without it. It is "we," with "our" life, who are

---

<sup>64</sup> Work claims that Scripture makes the Eucharist (and the Eucharist the Scripture) – cf. T. Work, *Living and Active*, 303.

now the recipients of the Word.<sup>65</sup> As the Last Supper continues throughout history, so the one-time events and words of the past are addressed “once and for ever” to all. The inspired Word serves to stand before the Father in communion with Christ acting in the history of salvation and with all the experience of the People of God themselves, co-author of the sacred writings. Everything has a meaning here, which on the one hand “focuses” on Christ and His Passover, to which the word leads, and on the other hand “scatters” into the manifold experiences of the community of faith and the diverse ways in which God has spoken to this people (cf. Heb 1:1) and acted in it.

The necessity of interpreting Scripture is also connected with this presentness of the past word – including the interpretation which takes place during the homily – as the living and relevant word of God.<sup>66</sup> The Bible is a book which originated in preaching and as such is to remain a preached book.<sup>67</sup> By virtue of the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Church is able to lend her voice in preaching to the word of God in Scripture. Although ecclesial preaching obviously does not enjoy the charism of inspiration and infallibility, the Holy Spirit nevertheless guides the Church and grants the graces associated with preaching and office. The Church’s proclamation of the Word of God is indeed linked to inspired Scripture as her norm, with the result that it must be an interpretation, a reflection on Scripture and an updating of Scripture. The Church’s proclamation remains the Word of God, in so far as it is subject to the norm of Scripture.<sup>68</sup>

Just as the Eucharistic memorial is also the anticipatory realization of an eschatological future, so too the Word of God *intra mysteriorum celebrationem* carries within it an already present dimension of ultimate fulfillment when heard in connection with the sacramental presence of the Lord. The traditional doctrine of the four

---

<sup>65</sup> Gerald O’Collins includes in the integral interpretation of Scripture, besides the intention of the author (*intentio auctoris*) and the text itself (*intentio textus*), also the intention of the reader (*intentio legentis*) – cf. G. O’Collins, *Inspiration*, 150–151, 153, 164; G. O’Collins, *Fundamental Theology*, 254–258.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, III, C, 1; VD 5.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. J. Goldingay, *Models for Interpretation*, 8.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. L. Scheffczyk, “Sacred Scripture,” 40

dimensions of Scripture finds its justification here in its anagogical sense.<sup>69</sup> The Eucharist makes use of chronology, but at the same time it transcends time. In the same way, the inspired testimony of revelation, which takes place in history and is therefore marked by the passage of time, is surpassed in the liturgy of the word when it is referred to the mystery of Christ, present both on the altar and before the eternal Father. The liturgy of the word also takes advantage of temporality to stand in prayer before the eternally living God. The reading of the word does not consist in reminiscing, but rather in God's real entry through those events into a new time in which those events gain their fulfilment (*contra* "modalism"). The so-called pedagogy of God, if it is not to be misinterpreted, demands a Eucharistic perspective: the mystery of God, which is available "here and now" in its fullness, was made manifest in the economy of salvation according to its historical stage (cf. VD 42).<sup>70</sup> The Last Supper is the "epicentre" from which the radiation of Christ's *kairos* sacrifice spreads in all directions, into all the time, both into the past and into the future (though differently in either direction), and which interferes with the running *chronos*.<sup>71</sup> This is why Abraham was able to rejoice in seeing the day of Christ (cf. John 8:56), and the Old Testament Passover could be an anticipatory "insight" into the Passover of the New Covenant. Or, from the other side: the future reality available in the image has cast a shadow over the past.

### Responsum

The Eucharistic presence of the Lord is made possible by the representation of the Last Supper (or rather of the Passover mediated by the Last Supper). Also, the presence of the Lord in the Word must

---

<sup>69</sup> Cf. W. Świerżawski, "Hermeneutyka w liturgii," 144.

<sup>70</sup> According to St Thomas Aquinas, biblical hermeneutics must take into account: the unifying role of Christ in the understanding of the sacred texts; reading Scripture from the perspective of God's plan carried out in accordance with the divine pedagogy of *condescendentia* – adaptation to the recipient; the growth of faith in the communal dimension; the incidental and not the substantive belonging of certain sentences of Scripture to faith – cf. P. Roszak, "Revelation and Scripture," 212–213.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. S. Zatwardnicki, *Kościół zgorszenia*, 129–130.



presuppose some kind of making present the “self-giving” of God in the events to which Scripture bears witness. Thus, in the liturgy of the Word it is important to move from the inspired word to the mystery of God expressed in it, from the “shadow” of Old Testament events to the New Testament “image” of things (cf. Heb 10:1). Ultimately, however, there is just one mystery of God, or more precisely, it is Christ.<sup>72</sup> This observation leads us to see in every word some aspect of the “riches of Christ,” but it also points us to the “fulfilment of the Scriptures” in Christ’s Passover. If the liturgy of the word reveals God to the assembly, then ultimately as a whole it cannot fail to lead to an event central to the history of salvation and revelation. This leads us away from the temptation to see the Lord’s “two presences” in the Eucharist: indeed, the liturgy of the word must point to the Eucharistic liturgy, lead up to it and only in conjunction with it fulfil its task.<sup>73</sup> On the other hand, the unity of salvation history and the “fulfilment” of the Scriptures in the Eucharistic mystery must not lead to a “uniformization” of the sacred Scriptures or to the annulment of the events of the Old Covenant. If the words of institution at the Last Supper play an irreplaceable role in the Eucharistic actualization of the Passover, the inspired words, on the other hand, are not in the same way “instituting” words; rather, it is only in their continuity and inner direction that they lead to the mystery of Christ “instituted” sacramentally.

## Bibliography

- Augustine of Hippo, *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*.  
 Balthasar, von H.U., *Medytacja chrześcijańska*, W. Szymona (transl.),  
 Poznań 2014.  
 Barron, R., *Exploring Catholic Theology. Essays on God, Liturgy, and  
 Evangelization*, Grand Rapids (MI) 2015.

---

<sup>72</sup> Cf. *Dogmatic constitution on Divine Revelation*, 2; J. Ratzinger, *O nauczaniu II Soboru*, 654.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. S. Hahn, *Przymierze i komunja*, 231: “Scripture is central to the eucharistic celebration because the liturgy actualizes and continues the story of salvation that begins in the pages of the Bible” – quoted directly after the original: S. Hahn, *Covenant and Communion*, 175.

- Benedict XVI, Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini*, [http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_exh\\_20100930\\_verbum-domini.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20100930_verbum-domini.html) (accessed: 20.10.2021).
- Benedict XVI, Regina Caeli (6.04.2008), [https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/angelus/2008/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_reg\\_20080406.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/angelus/2008/documents/hf_ben-xvi_reg_20080406.html) (accessed: 07.07.2021).
- Catechism of the Catholic Church*, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_INDEX.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM) (accessed: 20.10.2021).
- Craig, W.L., “God, Time and Eternity,” *Religious Studies* 14 (1978) no. 4, 497–503.
- Evdokimov, P., *Prawosławie*, J. Klinger (transl.), Warszawa 1964.
- Farkasfalvy, D., *Inspiration & Interpretation. A Theological Introduction to Sacred Scripture*, Washington, 2010.
- Franciszek, Encyklika *Lumen fidei* (29.06.2013), Vatican 2013.
- Froniewski, J., *Teologia anamnezy eucharystycznej jako pamiętki uobecniającej ofiarę Chrystusa i jej implikacje ekumeniczne*, Wrocław 2011.
- Gitt, W., *Time and Eternity*, Neptune 2001, 48.
- Goldingay, J., *Models for Interpretation of Scripture*, Toronto 2004.
- Góźdz, K., “Czas a wieczność według Josepha Ratzinger/Benedykta XVI,” *Studia nauk teologicznych* 12 (2017), 155–171.
- Guitton, J., *Absurd i tajemnica. O czym rozmawiałem z prezydentem Mitterandem*, J. Łukaszewicz (transl.), Wrocław 1998.
- Hahn, S., *Przymierze i komunია. Teologia biblijna papieża Benedykta XVI*, D. Krupińska (transl.), Kraków 2021.
- Hahn, S.W., *Covenant and Communion. The Biblical Theology of Pope Benedict XVI*, Grand Rapids (MI) 2009.
- Hałas, S., “«He may exalt you at the expected time» (1 Pet 5:6). The Conception of Time in the First Letter of Peter,” *Verbum Vitae* 38 (2020) no. 1, 219–228.
- Kasper, W., *Kościół katolicki. Istota, rzeczywistość, posłannictwo*, G. Rawski (transl.), Kraków 2014.
- Krapiec, M.A., “Analogia,” in: *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii*, Vol. 1, <http://www.ptta.pl/pef/pdf/a/analogia.pdf> (accessed: 12.07.2021).
- Lamb, M.L., “Eternity Creates and Redeems Time. A Key to Augustine’s Confessions within a Theology of History,” in: *Divine Creation in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought. Essays Presented to the Rev’d Dr Robert D. Crouse*, M. Treschow, W. Otten, W. Hannam (eds.), Leiden–Boston 2007, 117–140.
- Levering, M., *Engaging the Doctrine of Revelation. The Mediation of the Gospel through Church and Scripture*, Grand Rapids (MI) 2014.

- Liszka, P., *Biblijna teologia czasu*, Wrocław 1990.
- Liszka, P., *Wpływ nauki o czasie na refleksję teologiczną (Wpływ koncepcji czasu na refleksję teologiczną)*, Warszawa 1992.
- Martin, F., “Revelation and Understanding Scripture. Reflections on the Teaching of Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI,” *Nova et Vetera* (English Edition) 13 (2015) no. 1, 253–272.
- McPartlan, P., *Sacrament of Salvation. An Introduction to Eucharistic Ecclesiology*, Edinburgh 1995.
- Meyendorff, J., *Teologia bizantyjska. Historia i doktryna*, J. Prokopiuk (transl.), Kraków 2007.
- Nadolski, B., “Christus heri, hodie et in saecula saeculorum. Uobecniająca pamięć misterium paschalnego,” *Ethos* 25 (2012) no. 3, 21–35.
- O’Collins, G., *Fundamental Theology*, Eugene (OR) 2001.
- O’Collins, G., *Inspiration. Towards a Christian Interpretation of Biblical Inspiration*, Oxford 2018.
- O’Collins, G., *Revelation. Towards a Christian Interpretation of God’s Self-revelation in Jesus Christ*, Oxford 2016.
- Pitre, B., *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist. Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper*, New York (NY) 2011.
- Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, [https://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/PBC\\_Interp-FullText.htm](https://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/PBC_Interp-FullText.htm) (accessed: 20.10.2021).
- Ratzinger, J., *Duch liturgii*, E. Pieciul (transl.), Poznań 2002.
- Ratzinger, J., *Formalne zasady chrześcijaństwa. Szkice do teologii fundamentalnej*, W. Szymona (transl.), Poznań 2009.
- Ratzinger, J., *O nauczaniu II Soboru Watykańskiego. Formułowanie – Przekaz – Interpretacja* (Opera omnia 7/2), E. Grzesiuk (transl.), Lublin 2016.
- Ratzinger, J., *Teologia liturgii. Sakramentalne podstawy życia chrześcijańskiego* (Opera omnia 11), W. Szymona (transl.), Lublin 2012.
- Ratzinger, J., *Theology of the Liturgy. The Sacramental Foundation of Christian Existence*, M.J. Miller (ed.), J. Saward, K. Baker, H. Taylor, et al. (transl.), San Francisco 2014, *Collected Works*, vol. 2.
- Ratzinger, J., *Wiara w Piśmie i Tradycji. Teologiczna nauka o zasadach* (Opera omnia 9/1), J. Merecki (transl.), Lublin 2018.
- Ratzinger, J., *Zmartwychwstanie i życie wieczne. Studia o eschatologii i teologii nadziei* (Opera omnia 10), J. Kobienia (transl.), Lublin 2014.
- Rostworowski, P., *W szkole modlitwy*, Kraków 2011.
- Roszak, P., “Revelation and Scripture. Exploring Scriptural Foundation of Sacra Doctrina in Aquinas,” *Angelicum* 93 (2016), 191–218.

- Scheffczyk, L., "Sacred Scripture. God's Word and the Church's Word," *Communio* (English Edition) 28 (2001) no. 1, 26–41.
- Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19631204\\_sacrosanctum-concilium\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html) (accessed: 20.10.2021).
- Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19651118\\_dei-verbum\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html) (accessed: 20.10.2021).
- Sokolowski, R., "God's Word and Human Speech," *Nova et Vetera* (English Edition) 11 (2013) no. 1, 187–210.
- Sokolowski, R., *Christian Faith and Human Understanding. Studies on the Eucharist, Trinity, and the Human Person*, Washington 2006.
- Sokolowski, R., *Eucharistic Presence. A Study in the Theology of Disclosure*, Washington 1994.
- Sokolowski, R., *Obecność eucharystyczna. Studium z teologii fenomenologicznej*, Tarnów 2005.
- Sokolowski, R., *The God of Faith and Reason. Foundations of Christian Theology*, Washington 1995.
- Świerzawski, W., "Hermeneutyka w liturgii," *Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny* 24 (1971) no. 2–3, 131–147.
- Szymik, J., *W światłach Wcielenia. Chrystologia kultury*, Katowice–Ząbki 2004.
- Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, I–III, Torino 1962–1963.
- Wainwright, G., "Sacramental Time," *Studia liturgica* 14 (1982) no. 2–4, 135–146.
- Work, T., *Living and Active. Scripture in the Economy of Salvation*, Grand Rapids (MI) 2002.
- Woźniak, R., *Różnica i tajemnica. Objawienie jako teologiczne źródło ludzkiej sobości*, Poznań 2012.
- Wright IV, W.M., Martin, F., *Encountering the Living God in Scripture. Theological and Philosophical Principles for Interpretation*, Grand Rapids (MI) 2019.
- Zatwardnicki, S., "An Incarnational Analogy That Is Hard to Escape From. A Polemic with James Prothro," *Collectanea Theologica* 91 (2021) no. 2, 37–75.
- Zatwardnicki, S., "Eucharystia jako «miejsce osobliwe». Na marginesie monografii Piotra Liszki pt. «Wpływ nauki o czasie na refleksję teologiczną»," non-published work.

- Zatwardnicki, S., "Recenzja: W.M. Wright IV, F. Martin, Encountering the Living God in Scripture. Theological and Philosophical Principles for Interpretation, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids (MI) 2019, ss. 253," *Wrocławski Przegląd Teologiczny* 29 (2021) no. 1, 483–495.
- Zatwardnicki, S., "Stół Bożego słowa i Ciała Chrystusowego (DV 21)," non-published work.
- Zatwardnicki, S., *Kościół zgorszenia – tajemnica obrazu*, Katowice 2018.