

A Phenomenological Approach to Sacrifice as Gift:
A Liturgical Anthropology

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A Phenomenological Approach to Sacrifice as Gift: A Liturgical Anthropology

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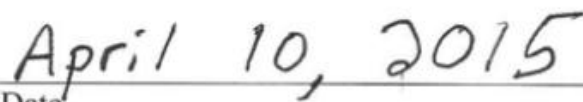
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I. Introduction

A phenomenological investigation of sacrifice appearing as gift reveals important insights, showing how liturgy as both ritual and living manifests and can shape a fuller understanding of the human person. This notion of an adequate anthropology is thwarted by the devaluation of ritual in the secular world, the remoteness of the liturgical rite from one's experience in that world, along with too close an association of sacrifice with deprivation followed by the concept of gift being diminished by a lack of purity. A proper grasp of liturgy, not reduced to liturgical rite, but allowed to envelop the life and experience of the human person, not only connects liturgical rite and living, but in doing so elevates the role of ritual in both regards. Sacrifice no longer simply denotes a loss or a 'giving up', but placed under the auspice of gift purified liturgically, appropriates an authentic identity of the human person. This distinction is signified in the human person as an inter-subjective liturgical relation (horizontally) and an inter-Subjective liturgical relation (vertically) as a gift of the Absolute's given to man, returned to the Absolute¹—this is man's vigil in the world, ordered towards consummation and theosis.

A. Problem Statement

¹ The term 'Absolute' is a philosophical expression, synonymous with the theological understanding of God, Creator and Redeemer. They are both employed intermittently within the work of Jean-Yves Lacoste, who will be a familiar source in this thesis. It is not a usual way to refer to God in a liturgical study, but also not being a foreign concept to theology (*Actus Purus*, sum of all perfection, etc.) it is thought a better choice for a philosophical study of liturgical relation and anthropology.

1. The Struggles of Man: An Inadequate Anthropology

In Plato's dialogue *Philebus*, Socrates' defender Protarchus is working out what consists of the greatest of human goods with his interlocutor Philebus. Their dialectic locates a primacy of man's accord and peace residing in an adequate anthropology. Protarchus offers the notion that though it is impossible for man to know all things, "the next best thing for him is that he should know himself."² To know one's self then, is to know one's nature. Man's nature cannot change or man himself is no longer that thing, but a new thing by virtue of the new nature. This self-knowledge of the human person flows from his nature, his essence, for "to know a thing is to know its essence."³ The essence or nature of the human person, as understood within Catholic Christendom, has been approved by culture both in and by design, and affirmed in Divine Revelation as qualities shared with the Absolute. This human essence incorporates qualities that include a high rational power coupled with varying degrees of free agency existing within a corporeal existence, i.e., man is a hylomorphic being with an earthly and spiritual reality. This infers that "cognition and consciousness are two ways the person is present to the world and to himself. [The former] to material sensible reality, [and man's] consciousness to the spiritual."⁴ This 'conscious presence' situates man in a place (earth and world) and time (temporal and eschatological). To be conscious is always to be conscious of something, here it is man's place and time. The fact that man is in the world though does not compel him to 'belong' to that world or to feel at home in his time.

In that the earth and world are temporary and temporal, the Christian could further deduce a supernatural orientation that speaks to man's nature containing some aspect of

² Plato, *Philebus*, in *Great Books of the Western World*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins (Chicago IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1952), 613.

³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, VII, 1031^b20, trans. Barnes, 1629.

⁴ Mary Shivanandan, "The Anthropology of John Paul II and Social Science," *Catholic Social Science Review*, vol. IV (1999), 30.

fulfillment not possible in the present life. Augustine aptly said man will “find no peace until [he] rests in [God],”⁵ but only upon arriving to the time and place original to his nature. It is also true that man is not meant to exist alone in this world—he not a solitary creature, but has the propensity towards an inter-subjective relationality, i.e., man is built to communicate and reveal.⁶ This anthropological foundation of the human person’s nature cannot change, but neither can it be purported to be the sum of his essence. To concede a person’s nature is unchangeable is not the same as accepting that this nature cannot be understood more deeply, thus leading then to an even finer grasp of an adequate anthropology.

Liturgy offers the possibility of understanding man’s anthropology more deeply and this can be known philosophically. But the connection between philosophical anthropology and liturgy has been modestly expressed at best. In fact one finds the words rarely juxtaposed. Concerning liturgy, generally speaking, in the world it is a term rarely used in common parlance. When it is used, it is often not properly understood. Amongst the various Christian faith expressions of Protestantism, the concept of liturgy is sometimes non-existent, and the liturgical/non-liturgical divide is often more profound than a dogmatic distinction; it is usually coined ‘high’ or ‘low’ church referring to the presence or absence of liturgical form. For those that do hold to the ‘high church’ liturgical tradition (and now this includes both Roman Catholics and the Orthodox), liturgy is often superficially⁷ constructed or narrowly construed to being merely the formal *rite*. This can, and usually does produce the unintended affect of the liturgical ritual becoming not a moment of integrating one’s own life and world as sacred, but a liberation

⁵ Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin, (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1961), 21.

⁶ A further aspect of the human person is that man is inclined to have and rear offspring for the human race’s continual propagation.

⁷ The term ‘superficial’ is used here not to suggest liturgy is not rightly used to refer to rites, or to mean that its use is superficial, but to carry the theme of this thesis that that reductive use is not the proper application of liturgy.

from one's life and the world to the sacred. Whereas ritual is designed to preserve profound elements and experiences, the disconnect between liturgical rite and worldly living rather produces "the palliative function [which] leads to a superficiality and escapism"⁸ towards all things formal. Anything that presents itself as superficial is easily then thought irrelevant and only accidental to one's nature. From this a mistrust arises towards all things formally expressed, and it is concluded that being in liturgical ritual is not being in the *real* world—there has developed a deep disconnect between liturgical rite and man's liturgical nature.

The liturgical ritual, and by extension any formal ritual, becomes for some a performance, a staged carry-over from a time when people were into that 'sort of thing'. Even in the purely secular arena one finds instances of ritual losing its impact. Or perhaps, better put, it first lost its footing in the secular and that bled-back to the sacred.⁹ It could be that the secular ritual was the 'canary in the coal mine' so to say, where the ritual simply became a performance to watch, as one might watch the half-time show of a football game. An example of a non-liturgical ritual that has for some lost its attachment to its formal referent would be the Honor Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. For many who come merely as *spectators*, the ritual experienced holds no connection between themselves as citizens, and the entombed soldier. How many are aware of the significance of Guard placing his rifle on the shoulder between the tomb and the crowd, the number of steps taken in procession, the around-the-clock weather-be-damned vigil, etc? If a *tourist* does not appreciate the solemnness of this enactment by becoming even slightly disruptive, or by speaking too loudly, etc., they find themselves quickly scolded by the

⁸ Gerard Lukken, "No Life Without Rituals," in *Per visibilia ad invisibilia*, ed. Louis van Tongerem and Charles Caspers (Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1994), 106.

⁹ The dichotomy of 'secular' and 'sacred' is quite possibly one of the culprits for the disconnect between liturgy and living. That means it is unfortunate to use those terms here, but it would require some lengthy argumentation to settle that, and the veracity of that argument would muddle the theme of this thesis. It is intended here to merely argue the loss of ritual in living, affects one's understanding of ritual in liturgical rite.

Guard—“Silence”—with a formally-scripted bellow that reminds all present that this is an event connected to and signifying something greater. The formalism and reverent silence signifies respect and gratitude for the contribution of soldiers killed in war. The ritual (participation) is designed to preserve and communicate the ultimate sacrifice of all soldiers. To diminish the ritual is to diminish the ideal and reality it signifies. If in the secular, ritual is understood or reduced to a performance and those in the ritual are merely spectators, then this sets the tone for a formal ritual in general, and that transfers back to the liturgical rite.

The Eucharist Liturgy is not immune to such ‘irreverence’. It is not uncommon to encounter the rote participation of those fulfilling their Sunday *obligation*.¹⁰ For many, it is forgotten that “the origin of ritual is that people repeat an action once it is found, because in that action they encounter a reality that makes the act worth doing,”¹¹ i.e., the reality of uniting one’s liturgical living to the Absolute’s and other’s sacrificial gifts in liturgical rite. Where the need for liturgical ritual is diminished, the signifier becomes separated from the ideal signified. There then erupts a great disconnect between that reality preserved in the ritual, the participant’s experience in that ritual and any export (participation) of that experience into the individual’s living. The ritual under those terms becomes void of relevance and any link between living and liturgy is severed. The tragedy is that if liturgical rite and living encapsulates and preserves man’s adequate anthropology, then the relation of ‘God to man’ and ‘man to God’ is proportionally affected. By not properly apprehending the relational experience of liturgy in living, the relational experience between God and man becomes collateral damage. The “liturgy

¹⁰ Although it is acknowledged that catechesis alone on liturgy is not sufficient, knowledge is necessary for an adequate understanding of liturgy. The language employed demonstrates one’s understanding. It is preferable to know one is ‘entering’ liturgy, not primarily ‘going’ to liturgy. The latter aids the notion of *obligation* as a precept attached to penalties, which is otherwise satisfied by simply being present *versus* entering genuine participation.

¹¹ Lukken, “Liturgy and Secularization,” in *Per visibilia ad invisibilia*, ed. Louis van Tongerern and Charles Caspers (Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1994), 59.

will [only] again become credible when it fulfills the condition of becoming integrated into human existence.”¹² In many respects, this concept of liturgy being central to human existence is not something additional, it is not essentially a discovery, but a restoration or perhaps a re-discovery. Liturgy is larger than a rite, and is fully capable to help mold an understanding of the man-God relationship.

The problem summed up is that an inadequate image of man’s own nature (anthropology) derived from a narrow understanding of liturgy (reduction) festers a disquietude not allowing for a genuine liturgy-centered living. This initiates a problematic trilemma leaving man with and in a restlessness disproportionate to his place and nature (which is to be expected as the World is not man’s destiny). The poorly grasped notion of anthropology and liturgical rite then further stifles the liturgical relationship that presents itself as an identity of man, leaving him prey to a further secularization, i.e., a compromised rite, alienated liturgical living and man’s self-understanding as relationally defunct. This is not going to become evident (exposed) by simply explaining the relevance of liturgical rites and what they symbolize—it is not a didactic issue in that regard. What is needed is a different medium and style of delivery. Perhaps “one must acknowledge that the new [understanding of] liturgy has more need of poets than of Doctors of Liturgical Studies”¹³ to expose how liturgy and ritual manifests and can shape an understanding of the human person in the world. Only then, where it is not simply relevant in the modern sense (utilitarian), but significant for a self-knowledge, will a connection be restored between liturgical living and liturgical rite.

¹² Lukken, “Liturgy and Secularization,” 61.

¹³ Lukken, “Liturgy and Secularization,” 62.

2. Restlessness: Man in His Liturgical Vigil

There is a principle tension between a liturgical understanding of the ‘self’ and the possibility of that effectuating in man’s liturgical vigil of the world. Man struggles in his place (earth) and environment (world) to the degree he has an adequate grasp on his own human nature. Both man’s ever-deepening understanding of himself and his liturgical relation to God and others, being continually in flux only results with him living in a state of un-satisfaction. And in reality, there is nothing in man’s world that can sufficiently satisfy this restlessness. The world is man’s element, but as man is a creation of the Absolute for the Absolute, man is ever being drawn out of the world, and returned towards the Absolute. This is and should be a brutal experience. In a real sense, liturgy is the “resolute deliberate gesture made by those who ordain their being-in-the-world a being-before-God, and who do violence to the former in the name of the latter.”¹⁴ Though man as a being-before-God in the world can in some ways make, or ordain the world more habitable in accord with his nature, it can never become his home in terms of destiny. This is to say that the world can be transformed, but only by man being liturgically transfigured himself as a subject. And “subject means here not the philosophical subject, the *cogito* in any of its forms, but a *ground* wherein the divine, salvific, Trinitarian, action is made manifest.”¹⁵ This proposes that creation itself is able to manifest itself as a sacred order. It is an order of preparation, a ‘vigil’ life that allows man to be drawn closer to his own nature.

This yearning, while in the vigil has only the ability to placate, not resolve man’s deepest desires and relational inclinations. The craving spoken of here is metaphysical, and this “metaphysical desire...desires beyond everything that can simply complete it—the Desire does

¹⁴ Jean-Yves Lacoste. *Experience and the Absolute: Disputed Questions on the Humanity of Man*, trans. Mark Raftery-Skeban (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2004), 42.

¹⁵ Laurence Paul Hemming, “The Liturgical Subject,” in *The Liturgical Subject: Subject, Subjectivity, and the Human Person in Contemporary Liturgical Discussion and Critique*, ed. James G. Leachman. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009),15.

not fulfill it, but deepens it.”¹⁶ The craving deepens the desire, and in so doing, there is the experience of the need to ‘lose one’s self.’ This ‘losing one’s self’ becomes manifest as a sacrifice of one’s *self* and one’s *desire*. This *losing* then culminates in sacrifice as a *giving*, i.e., a ‘giving of one’s self.’ As “subjects (givers and recipients) man does not determine giving, but would instead be determined by giving.”¹⁷ This is central to man’s vocation as an ontological sacrificer and giver, and points to an adequate understanding of the human person.

3. Liturgical Rite and Living: A Concrete Meaning for the Human Person

To be determined by this givenness has concrete meaning for the human person. It derives its efficacy from the apogee of all givings (Absolute’s) and presents itself in a climatic-memorializing ritual for man to celebrate and participate in and with. By “taking part in the Eucharistic sacrifice, which is the fount and apex of the whole Christian life,”¹⁸ man finds both the wellspring and resulting termination of his vocation. This is not plainly intelligible to the laity or even the well-trained catechists, i.e., many are hard-pressed to articulate how the Eucharist is the source and summit of man’s life. The answer begins to be disclosed in understanding that this ‘source and summit’ is the experiential encounter with a Person (Absolute), not simply a connection with an event. This ‘encounter’ is not easily relatable to man’s world environment.

Unfortunately, dangerous analogies are often employed to make the concept relatable. For instance, it is sometimes related that the Eucharistic liturgy fills man with grace (source) which enables him to live out the week, coming back next Sunday to be rejuvenated (summit). What this well-intentioned catechesis inadvertently does is destroy any notion of the liturgical

¹⁶ Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, (Pittsburg, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 34.

¹⁷ Steven A. Tyler, “Even Steven, or No Strings Attached,” in *The Enigma of Gift and Sacrifice*. (eds) Edith Wyschogrod, Jean-Joseph Goux and Eric Boynton, (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2002), 79.

¹⁸ Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium* (21 November 1964), §11.1, in *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Walter M. Abbot (New York, NY: Herder and Herder, 1962), 28.

relation of man in the world (the weekdays). The analogy presents man's living as something detrimental to the life and grace received at the ritual (Mass). What sets in man's mind is that the liturgical *rite* serves as nothing more than a 'filling station' and liturgical *living* is simply man *spending* the fuel. The connection between living and liturgy is symbiotic where the living does not benefit the rite. Rather than an inter-related crescendo of man's givenness, there is a reduction in the significance of the liturgical rite as it erodes whatever remnant there may be of liturgy in living. Properly understood it liturgically flows from the Absolute's sacrifice in the liturgical rite (source), into the world as liturgical living, and man in his givenness in the world as vocation offers all in return (summit).

This concept of the liturgical rite as the source and summit is free to renounce. "Being in the world is primary and liturgy is always secondary. Liturgy is a possibility [man] can always reject."¹⁹ But to discount this will leave man clinging not to the fulfillment of his vocation, but to his life in the world. This means that "any claim of the earth over man can be accepted by man. Man can choose to exist solely in the logic of the world (Dasein)."²⁰ This reality of liturgical rejection as a permanent possibility can make man's vocation of sacrifice and gift appear foreign; they are certainly alien to the logic of the world. It follows then that to accept "the role of being givers or receivers is not experienced by man as an [ascent to his nature], but as a disturbance of a habit that has become second nature."²¹ It is liturgy that situates man over and above those habits, or grounds man in his place where a deep aspect of his person is manifest in terms of sacrifice. The liturgy becomes something, not where one is refueled or filled-up, but the place of presentation (man) and re-presentation (Absolute). There is no decrescendo of grace

¹⁹ Lacoste. *Experience and the Absolute*, 71.

²⁰ Lacoste. *Experience and the Absolute*, 42.

²¹ Joseph S. O'Leary, "The Gift: A Trojan Horse in the Citadel of Phenomenology?," in Ian Leask. *Givenness and God: Questions of Jean-Luc Marion*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2005. <http://muse.jhu.edu/> (accessed September 14, 2014).

in liturgical living. Liturgical living simply becomes a ‘making present’ in the World what was ‘made present’ in the Kingdom. Knowing this and having it be concrete in terms of meaning, is not to say that there will not be aspects of that liturgical reality of sacrifice and gift that elude man. Because liturgy is the work of man, this may appear ironic, but “the meaning of liturgy is not something at the disposal of the modern subject...it is *primarily* for God, only *secondarily*, for man.”²² Liturgy is not *done* for man, but liturgy is man *doing*.

B. Expansion of Thesis Statement

1. Sacrifice Appearing Under the Auspice of Gift

The realities and attributes of liturgy may elude man, but the opposite is true of both sacrifice and gift. Where liturgy is an ambiguous term found distant from ordinary life, sacrifice and gift, even in the absence of a full understanding, are generally thought to be neither cryptic nor opaque. Not only would most be able to provide a subjective definition, but they would further find both concepts quite essential for an adequate flourishing. Concerning sacrifice, how often is heard the maxim, “If you want to achieve your goal, than be willing to work hard and sacrifice to get there?” What about physical health? If a person wants to lose weight, reduce cardiovascular and metabolic disease risks, making sacrifices in diet is worth the results. And the heart swells when one reads of a father or mother who willingly sacrificed a promotion and/or raise to keep a family-friendly work schedule? Often, parents sacrifice their own wants and even needs to give their children a joyful Christmas. What then does the ultimate sacrifice of giving one’s own life out of devotion to God, or sacrificing one’s life for family or friend conjure up? Can sacrifice retain its essence in all those circumstances, or is the general understanding of sacrifice equivocal, and only apparently understood? Must a sacrifice be wholesome and pure, or can it present itself as utilitarian, or possibly be tainted by secondary aims?

²² Laurence Paul Hemming, “The Liturgical Subject,” 14.

Concerning then the understanding of gift, the sheer ubiquity of giving, receiving, exchanging, trading, returning and refusing gifts boggles the mind as to what constitutes its essence from a counterfeit.²³ Can the gift retain its altruistic qualities if it's used for any gain? Would a gift remain pure if it was part of an economic cycle, or is it contaminated by conveying a service? As with Derrida, does not that gift remain impossible in lieu of the very fact there is always an ulterior motive or aim for that giving? Even if the motive is good and the return is a secondary effect, say to receive a heart-felt thanks, does that recognition in itself terminate the gift? Perhaps the term gift is thought to be clearly understood, but only in the absence of some scrutiny, i.e., everyone knows what it is until they have to say what it is.

The understanding and use of sacrifice and gift are only meaningful against a standard. With sacrifice and gift, as with all concepts, one is endeavoring to gain the meaning of words in the varying ways they are presented to man's consciousness. The idea of these semantic expressions present senses of 'giving' to one's consciousness that "reveal such possibilities for reinterpreting intentionality"²⁴ in various ways. Those various ways find the standard in the memorial liturgical event of the apex of all sacrificial gifts, i.e, the Father's gift of His Son to man. It was inaugurated in Christ's self-emptying-Incarnational act (*kenosis*), where "although He was in the form of God, He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant."²⁵ As a servant, Christ presented Himself in the sacrificial act, offering His Body and Blood at the Last Supper, extending the event to its completion on the cross, where He returned Himself as a sacrificial gift to the Father. It is then in

²³ For a brief defense as to why the dichotomy of altruism and egoism is preferred here over that of friendship as a resolution to any ulterior motives present, see "Appendix 2 - Friendship as a Paradigm Rather than Altruism and Egoism" on page 106. The former is a Post-Modern paradigm, why the latter may be argued to mesh more properly to an Aristotelean and Thomistic approach.

²⁴ Tyler, "Even Steven," 83.

²⁵ See *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version-Catholic Edition* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1966), Ph 2:6-7.

“Christ’s self-emptying that the meal-event is emptied of self-assertiveness to become a vehicle of mutual self-emptying wherein the dynamic of Christ’s self-emptying takes over.”²⁶ This self-emptying of Christ’s ties man’s sacrifice to Christ’s sacrifice (His takes over in completion). This does not only place Christ’s self-emptying as the ideal, but it becomes the means of subsuming man’s sacrifice as his own self-emptying, with Christ’s purifying man’s as a presentation to God.

2. Gifting Reveals Man’s Identity: Liturgical Relation to God and World

It is in sacrifice as gift that Christ revealed man to himself, and what that revealed about man is that he is built for sacrifice as gift ontologically, i.e, it is not simply something man does, but something in man’s nature—it is what man is built to do. Sacrifice here involves one’s will inclined to another. Each remains distinct as there is no diminishment of each person’s alterity. It was that way with Christ’s submission to His Father. In Jesus’ submission of His will to the Father, each will remained totally distinct. The distinction thought is not absolute, as each were “subsumed in an ultimate unity of wills, but there remained a difference; an ontological autonomy.”²⁷ That is a splendid application of revelation for a liturgical anthropology, not just between the will of each actor in a sacrificial gift event inclined to the other yet remaining distinct, but in the play of wills between heaven and earth (Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven). Liturgical rite and living are in every way for man, a rupture with the will of the world, but it does not pull man outside of or away from the world. This means that all genuine aspects of sacrifice and gift reside within man’s liturgical experience as a possibility, and remain

²⁶ Joseph S. O’Leary, “The Gift at the Crossroads of Philosophy and Anthropology, Buddhism and Christianity,” talk given at the Irish launching of *Givenness and God: Questions of Jean-Luc Marion*. ed. Ian Leask and Eoin Cassidy. Fordham University Press, 2005, at Mater Dei Institute, Dublin, May 5, 2006.

²⁷ Brian Johnstone, “The Ethics of Gift: According to Aquinas, Derrida and Marion,” *Australian eJournal of Theology*, 3 August (2004), at http://aejt.com.au/2004/vol_3_no_1_2004/?article=395652, 11.

available to him while yet in the world. The good news is “liturgy does not appear solely as a violent act of grace but also as a genuine human possibility”²⁸ for man pre-eschatologically.

Though it is not the only genuine human possibility. Man’s gifting of himself rather reveals an identity equally present in the world where man disallows any union of will with the other or the Absolute. Man can present the converse of Christ’s submission by saying, “not *Your* will, but *my* will be done.” Under those conditions man remains Dasein in the world, thereby repressing the sacrificial-gift act where not only does the other remain other, but the other becomes an idol of the self—a mere projection of one’s own will causing separation. Man must overcome that lure of worldliness (my will, not His), clinging to sacrifice and gift as an “*action* where the separation of subject and object, or separation of self and other is overcome...precisely in the form of giving and receiving the gift.”²⁹ What is overcome is counterfeiting the ‘sacrifice-gift’ simply as an *object* in exchange between giver and receiver. In liturgy the giver, receiver and gift are interconnected to the point that the giver gives of himself, and the receiver receives something of the giver. This genuine sacrifice-gift is an inter-exchange, capable of reflecting man’s liturgical relation to God, God’s to man, man’s to the other and man to the world.

3. The Value of a Phenomenological Approach

What has been spoken of so far is not simply what sacrifice and gift are in themselves as they cannot be reduced to objects. What is studied is the way they appear to man’s consciousness; the way man *experiences* sacrifice and gift liturgically. The unmistakable link of this liturgical relation and experience lends itself receptive to a phenomenological approach for

²⁸ Joeri Schrijvers, “Jean-Yves Lacoste: A Phenomenology of Liturgy” *HeyJ* (2005), 315.

²⁹ Johnstone, “The Ethics of Gift,” 8.

this study. Although any single definition of phenomenology is disputed, even whether it is truly its own system or simply a movement, it is customary to accept that phenomenology is meant to address and “to explore the human *aptitude to experience*.”³⁰ Husserl, who is generally acknowledged as the founder of phenomenology, analyzes that “experience is a major advance in philosophical thinking [as long as it is understood that] it is not something that simply the mind accomplishes (categorical intuition).”³¹ This experience is always one man’s experience, but it is never an experience of only one man. Two can share an experience (intersubjectivity) without compromising alterity (ontological autonomy). In this shared experience “articulation occurs first and foremost between interlocutors,”³² and that articulation exhibits “an essential strength of speech and thinking [in] that they can reach into the absent as well as respond to what is present”³³ phenomenologically.

Any application of liturgical rite or liturgical life, revolves around the profound effect on the consciousness of the human person. To explore the aptitude for liturgical experience is a befitting phenomenological undertaking. In liturgy there is the presence of Christ in the symbols of Bread and Wine, in the Word spoken, the Presider and the liturgical gathering itself (Kingdom). One can further add the vestments and their color, the paschal candle, any iconography present (they do not point to themselves), holy water fonts, the altar, the sanctuary lamp, etc. are all signifiers and “the presence of signifying intentions makes it possible for us to perceive things in a specifically human way.”³⁴ This includes intending both the objects present and those absent, signified by the sensible. To intend something phenomenologically is to be

³⁰ Schrijvers, “Jean-Yves Lacoste,” 315.

³¹ Robert Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 58.

³² Sokolowski. *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 58.

³³ Sokolowski. *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 2008, p. look between 133 and 157.

³⁴ Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, (New York, NY: Cambridge Press, 2000), 80.

conscious of that thing or symbol. Man indeed does “intend the absent, but he may need the support of words or mental images to help. These presences do not impede [man] from truly intending what is not there before him.”³⁵ Phenomenology is especially suited to investigate this reality invisible to man, and the affect it presents. To examine experiences propagating from those intentions, and “work out the theme of presence and absence in an explicit and systematic way is original in Husserl and phenomenology.”³⁶

C. Insights of Philosophical Anthropology on Sacrifice and Gift

1. The Contemporary Understandings of Gift

Prior to covering how phenomenology and the phenomenological reduction contribute to the theme of sacrifice as gift, a brief summary of some of the insights gleaned from the contemporary philosophical understandings of gift, including liturgical studies from the so-called post-modern area should be sketched. Gift first and foremost is an experience in the *natural attitude*. This term *natural attitude* was utilized by Husserl to represent that ordinary experience of man in his present environment. It is “that theoretical position which is called the natural standpoint, indicated by a *single* word, the *World*.”³⁷ It does not carry any naïve connotation, where man is necessarily unaware of transcendence, it’s simply the point of origin from what is accessible, i.e, it is where man begins his discovery. This beginning in the natural *World* resembles Aristotle’s notion of any investigation beginning “from what is more intelligible to oneself [in order to] make what is intelligible by nature intelligible to oneself.”³⁸ The

³⁵ Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 36.

³⁶ Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 22.

³⁷ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas*, (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2012), 9.

³⁸ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, VII, 1029a7-8, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, trans. and ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1625.

phenomenological study here will consider man from the natural world to arrive philosophically at how sacrifice and gift are intelligible to him in nature.³⁹

A proper study of man is not done as though man is an observer, a spectator viewing himself exteriorly. It must originate from the standpoint of man's place, his natural experience being present in his World. The term World here as the natural attitude is not just man's place, i.e., the earth. "The World is [that] totality of objects that can be known through experience (*Erfahrung*)."⁴⁰ Man comes to know those objects and concepts, i.e., what a thing is (*eidōs*) through experience. Man does not arrive at knowledge directly through contact with that *eidōs* as two pedestrian drones passing alongside each other, but by experiencing the phenomenon perceived from those objects presented to his consciousness. In his natural state, gift presents itself to man on a spectrum ranging from a crass economic exchange to the gift's phenomenon appearing as genuine gratuity.

This dichotomy ranging from a pure economic exchange to a pure unadulterated gift often presents man's understanding of gift as a contradiction and an enigma. Ironically, it may be that this dichotomy contributes to gifts understanding. Could it be that the "contradiction lodged in the gift becomes the key to its special status, arising from the *absolute opposition* between gift and commerce as two essences that cannot communicate?"⁴¹ The relation between these two positions will aid in defining gift. A definition consisting of a contrary may be weak, but it may also prove illustrative when liturgical relationality is the added special characteristic allowing a clear distinction between gift and economic modeling to develop.

a) Marcel Mauss on Economic Modeling

³⁹ This natural attitude will be looked at more closely when addressing liturgical anthropology in Section III, particularly under "Man's Horizon and Context for Relation". See pages 77-79.

⁴⁰ Husserl, *Ideas*, 10.

⁴¹ O'Leary, "The Gift," 2005.

Questions dealing with that ‘absolute opposition’ have found treatment in both socio-anthropological and philosophical arenas. What follows is a few paragraphs on Mauss, Levinas, Derrida and Marion serving as an introduction to their approach offering their comments pertaining to an economic modeling of the gift. To start, each of their treatments recognize the affect of ulterior motives as a limitation of ‘economic modeling’. The measure of this economic gifting slides along a gradient from the straight trade of services, to some expectation for recompense, to obligation for a future favor, to an absolutely altruistic gift. Recall that there is not an agreed upon definition of gift. It is a term thought to be known until one is pressed for an exact definition; it is an enigma. This enigma for some is merely a commercial exchange, whether the goal be for the giver’s profit, a debt leveraged against the receiver, recompense for past wrongs on the part of the giver, the prestige of philanthropy for the giver, etc. With this understanding in place, thinkers of both fields have studied developed forms which gifting assumes and worked out the relation of motive to its purity according to each.

This study will highlight the effect their insights have on the inter-subjectivity of man and gift, beginning with the secular anthropology of Marcel Mauss. He was a social anthropologist of the early twentieth century. A particular contribution of interest for Mauss is that in many of the societies he studied and observed, there appeared the phenomena of the gift *given* retaining some attachment and connection to the giver. First the giver *sold* the gift to the other, i.e., the giver was free to dispose of the gift and received something in return for the gesture. But the gift sold retained or gained some sense of life in itself. Perhaps it could analogously be said it developed some semblance of *being*. It was accepted by these observed cultures and Mauss concluded, that “things sold still have a soul. They are still followed around by their former owner.”⁴²

⁴² Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Cultures* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 2000), 66.

It is easy to recognize that gifting in this regard created a certain aspect of community in the exchange of giving and receiving. But a certain hierarchy amidst the flow of those exchanges arose as a dynamic attached to gifting in these communities. From man's natural attitude, there is the apparent observation that as one *receives* while in some state of privation, the one who *gives* does so from a position of excess and ability. The higher *giver* (excess) gives to the lower *receiver* (deprivation). This disparity can then even be enhanced if the cycle of returning the gesture is circumvented, undervalued or flatly disregarded. The expected return proves necessary, for otherwise not only does "the unreciprocated gift make the person who has accepted it inferior, [but more] particularly so when it has been accepted with no thought of returning it,"⁴³ thereby breaking the cycle and the receiver moving lower in hierarchy.

Intersubjectively, any 'handing down' of the gift without the gesture of 'returning up' has a de-stabilizing economic effect. But the market health of the whole depends on the remuneratory participation of the parts even when they are exchanging within the same hierarchical strata. So even in a wider application outside of any hierarchical framework, for a more developed culture the exchange anticipates and requires some reciprocation to just sustain the society's social-economic structure. Mauss found that those "societies have progressed so far as they themselves...have succeeded in stabilizing relationships, giving, receiving, and finally, giving in return."⁴⁴ It should be apparent by his findings that the gift has economic undertones, though it would not be accurate to simply refer to the gift as token currency. It would be accurate though to identify the accumulation of ulterior motives that motivated this 'living' gift as it travels through the society's economy. It amasses as some appendage that presents the question of what inter-subject tension (anxiety) develops in the process and to what degree the inadequate

⁴³ Mauss, *The Gift*, 65.

⁴⁴ Mauss, *The Gift*, 82.

return leaves the other in debt, lower in status or simply excluded. Mauss found the tension is ratified (maintained) in the context of building a community between receiver and giver.

In this thesis the relation between receiver and giver is upheld in terms of the sacrificial gift, not simply managed. In a liturgical relation, those who are on the low-side of the gift being *handed-down*, in fact retain their status, thus permitting a healthy debt-free relational intersubjectivity to emerge. This overcomes the gift which created or maintained the hierarchy discovered in Mauss' observations. It may be correct to say, that in this approach the gift does not leave the individual, but is brought into the community with and by the individual. The gift has created something new, or itself has become something new. Perhaps it can even be said along with Mauss, that it becomes alive, creating a life between the giver and receiver. This presents itself as a beautiful understanding of gifting. And it need not be understood as only possible for man at the level of sentiment, or in the Absolute where genuine love is void of tension and hierarchy prior to the gift *given*. That particular concern will be addressed later.

b) Levinas and Obligation

Another approach is that of the Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, who contributes with his emphasis of intersubjective giving based on responsibility. He provides a fine juxtaposition for Jaques Derrida's and Jean-Luc Marion's augmentation that follows; the latter of which will be cited generously in this study. In terms of gifting for Levinas, one has an obligation to provide and offer some return for any gift received, inherited or acquired. This inter-obligatory posture formed the basis for his ethical perspective of man's relation to the *other*. The alterity toward the other, and as *other*, would present itself as an irreducible motivating factor. The weakness in this ethic is that it locates *giving* outside of one's self, as the

obligation is itself imposed from the *outside*. Here removed from the order of being, Levinas' giving still retains some level of exchange bonding all participants. Though the notion of this *giving* being outside of one's self is something "both Derrida and Marion inherited. [They share] Levinas's sense that the gift is impossible within the order of being and occurs only as an 'interruption' of that order."⁴⁵ The antithesis is to seek some concrete instance of giving within being leaving one with the phenomenon that as giving *appears* in an act, it loses its identity as a gift.

c) Derrida & Marion: Limits of Economic Modeling

This may be understood clearer in how the 'appearing' sets up Derrida's *impossibility* of the gift. Derrida does not recognize the imperative on the part of the donor or donee to reciprocate. This marks a striking disparity and "sharp contrast to that of Levinas and his emphasis on obligation."⁴⁶ Any obligation on the part of the donee places him in a position of owing something back (more thanks, etc.) and the encounter then amounts to nothing more than a series of back and forth transactions. "As soon as the donee knows it is a gift, he already thanks the donator, and cancels the gift."⁴⁷ Hence a pure giving is impossible. In fact, though Derrida recognizes the *impossibility*, he doesn't mean to state that the gift cannot be thought of.⁴⁸ He would aptly put it that although it exists, it "cannot be known, [for] as soon as you know it, you

⁴⁵ See O'Leary, "The Gift," 2006.

⁴⁶ Carl Olson, "Excess, Time and the Pure Gift: Postmodern Transformations of Marcel Mauss' Theory," 351.

⁴⁷ Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion, "On the Gift: A Discussion between Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion" Moderated by Richard Kearney. In *God, the Gift and Postmodernism*. eds. John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon. 54-78. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), 59.

⁴⁸ Derrida has a nuanced understanding of what he calls the 'impossibility as such' in terms of gift. In a discussion between Derrida and Marion, the former is interested in the experience of the impossible, the impossible as a quest for giving. The gift of *pure gift* is not given up, as the impossible is not a negative concept. Though the gift cannot be known, it can be thought of—its possibility is possible as impossible. In the sum of his thinking, it is clear that Derrida does not think the gift can be phenomenologically known. See Derrida and Marion, *God, the Gift and Postmodernism* for a fuller discussion, particularly pp. 57-61, 72-73.

destroy it.”⁴⁹ Within Derrida’s framework, it simply must remain untainted, for even a recognition of giving brings some level of gain thus negating the gift.

Marion concurs with Derrida on the need to completely remove the phenomena⁵⁰ from any economic model. He would understand that gifting is not possible by simply “untying one’s self from a good, [where] the other is bound to accept it and owes the ‘giver’ an equivalent good in return.”⁵¹ In other words for Marion, Levinas’ sense of ethical obligation may be different in form than Mauss’ socio-economic stabilizing exchange, but leaves the giving and receiving tainted all the same, i.e., the receiver owes the giver. What must be found is something that can retain the title of gift outside of *being*, while keeping one foot solid in the realm of the *ordinarily* (meaning the pre-philosophical, akin to Sokolowski’s natural attitude). Marion looks for how the gift can appear pure. He ventures that appearance may be found by reducing the gift to *givenness* outside of the cycle of exchange. His examples would be to perhaps will an inheritance which is only given upon the giver’s death, or giving absolutely in an anonymous manner, etc. Nonetheless, for it to be “a gracious gift, there [must be] no response, no answer, no gratitude back.”⁵² In one way or another the receiver of the gratitude (gift returned) must be removed.

So with Marion a gift cannot be analyzed apart from its manifestation of givenness, i.e., left aloof in being. He understands that “the ultimate determination of the phenomenon implies not to be, but to appear as—given.”⁵³ Removing the gift from the totality of its development (process) conceals the tangible from man’s experience in the natural attitude. Marion would concur that to both “give and to receive is to attune oneself to the texture of reality, and this

⁴⁹ Derrida and Marion, “On the Gift,” 60.

⁵⁰ Marion accounts phenomenologically for the gift (Derrida distinguishes gift from *Gegebenheit*). Derrida denies this possibility. See Derrida and Marion in *God, the Gift and Postmodernism*, p. 60 for a fuller treatment of that distinction.

⁵¹ Jean-Luc Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of Sacrifice.” Lecture transcript from *Lumen Christi Institute*. 29 May 2008: at <https://view.officeapps.live.com>, 6.

⁵² Derrida and Marion, “On the Gift,” 62.

⁵³ Derrida and Marion, “On the Gift,” 57.

process is disrupted when we focus on gift, giver or receiver in isolation from the total process of give and take.”⁵⁴ In short, a relational context is necessary for the giving. The parts cannot be analyzed adequately from the event *in toto*. The receiving event must be permitted to manifest itself, to appear, to un-conceal, or perhaps more properly stated with liturgical phraseology, the gift should be permitted to unveil to giver and receiver and world. Liturgy is uniquely poised as a relational approach for such an unveiling, where ultimately gift has a certain eschatological realization that presents itself with the possibility to be experienced in the present *World* while retaining a transcendental reach.

2. The Phenomena of Gift: Anthropology and Liturgy

Following those brief insights from the fields of sociological and philosophical anthropology on gift, some continued insight on the phenomena of sacrifice liturgically understood may be presented prior to specifically addressing phenomenology and the phenomenological reduction itself. The two fields of sociology and philosophy are not independent or mutually exclusive. In fact they are inter-dependent, though they clearly occupy separate domains with different ends. In terms of gift, the latter treats the gift experience relationally gained by knowledge of the human person, while the former deals with the ‘gift experienced’ observed more corporately within cultural bounds. The first looks at an environment of persons, the latter a person in that environment. The distinction is acute when comparing the phenomenological and liturgical approach because they both are “likely to intuit the essence of the gift that presents itself to the mind in its pure form, rather than [the anthropologist who would understand it as] a complex institution that has no one pure form.”⁵⁵

Pertaining to the gift, one must conceivably question whether it is at all feasible to assert

⁵⁴ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2006.

⁵⁵ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2005.

it as manifest in human experience as a pure form, or rather merely understanding it to exist solely as gift observed in the environment. A socio-anthropologist would suggest that there can be a real danger in the phenomenal reduction of the ‘gift’ and ‘givenness.’ If it is found in the realm of *being*, gift can never shake off its messiness, i.e., the motives, hierarchy, indebtedness, etc. There is less concern quite frankly in the socio-anthropologist’s approach for ferreting out the accidental from the essential. It could be summed up as stating that the form cannot be removed from the material demonstration (understood as a particular form) as a phenomena, and what is presented to the consciousness should remain what it *is* and not what it *can* be—its can be is its possibility (pure).

In short, the sociologist’s analogy might be just that of a biologist’s. If no biologist can study or capture in observation the perfect ‘living creature’, then it follows for studying the gift, that it should be surveyed in any form as is naturally observable. A question would be if that method allows the gift to encompass anything from the visible economic model to the absent (empty) altruistic receipt of another’s gratuity? If the answer is yes (socio-anthropological position), then by this thinking according to the phenomenologists, when *giving* occurs the pure or true *gift* is not possible⁵⁶ for it cannot be properly demarcated, nor demonstrated universally in a societal setting. In other words, it proves too much, so then it proves nothing of value. The shortcoming of this socio-anthropological position leaves a lacuna in terms of gift. There can be here “almost nothing [known] of the system of the gift, because [it has not been] apprehended in appropriate models.”⁵⁷ In fact the proper way to say it is that sociologists are not looking in the proper area, or the proper framework to *unveil* its universal interconnected subjectivity.

⁵⁶ This impossibility of gift is quite distinct from Derrida’s proposition.

⁵⁷ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2005.

The phenomenological approach itself must cautiously steer away from ‘proving too much’. If the observation of gift results in nothing more than a general impression that is a universal recognizable experience, sacrifice and gift become too general to be acts distinguishing human nature from observable accidents. For instance, if some people are regarded “as constant givers, e.g. mothers dedicated to their children, persons consecrated to a religious life, people who dedicate their time and energy to a cause, [this simply] reveals a history of discrete acts”⁵⁸ that are not necessarily essential. It merely reports ‘accidentally’ how individuals live, and in the course of living all people take care of others, seek needs, follow vocations, etc. Is then sacrifice simply everyone doing something for another in the normal course of living? Is what is being described here just mutual efforts recycling, sometimes following an economic model, other times assuming the more altruistic form, but always having some level of self-interest that happens to also benefit others? ⁵⁹

This detraction deserves a response. If the sacrifice as the gift is driven either by Levinas’ obligation or Marion’s pure phenomena, then giving has been reduced “to something more elementary, to the common energy one puts forth in living?”⁶⁰ Giving must be shown as a distinctly human act, not simply a segment of the back-and-forth of one’s common living experience. In reducing gift to the common energy of living, it might suggest that giving is purely egoistic. But a brief comment on this ‘common energy’ at work is not fatal, and offers a point to be seized. The charge may not be entirely mis-worded, but rather mis-viewed. The fact that this ‘giving’ or ‘common energy’ is indeed so common has significance. If it is not a semi-unconscious energy, then its universality and attachment to the human person as something

⁵⁸ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2005.

⁵⁹ Even the Lockean notion of self-protection (property) achieved through group security benefits the society at large. Is the fact there is mutual protection found in each other’s company equivalent to sacrificing for each other? It can hardly be thought to be so.

⁶⁰ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2005.

innate makes the point of this study more secure. In other words, perhaps Mauss' observation of economic modeling is dead-on when he points out that although "exchange is the machinery of society, [the] gift exchange is the language of community."⁶¹ What is seen as the gift being poorly given, or ineptly received is a *cloaking* (a lesser manifestation) of the pure gift which presents itself as the standard. It is the 'language' in which gift is found, and being found in various gradations (along a spectrum), must point to an Absolute standard. Just as lying reveals a standard of truth to which it is measured, the give-and-take of sacrifice as gift found in everyday living reveals itself as *lesser* givings or *diminished* sacrifices. This only makes sense when measured by some ultimate sacrifice as gift, i.e., an *Absolute* standard of gift that is entirely other-directed and void of ulterior motives. The gift is not absent.

The socio-anthropologist concludes that either the theoretical sacrificial gift doesn't exist as a distinct phenomenon, or if it is going to be referred to as a pure gift, that gift is merely the level of purity for what exists in the observable 'World situation', i.e., there is no pure Standard. But phenomenologically the knowledge gained of the human person is not gleaned solely from the *World*, i.e., the natural state. The investigation starts there, and the gift is studied there, but it does not terminate there. That is what liturgy can begin to offer to this study. Liturgy, at its core is transcendent, it is always other-*Worldly* even as the subject remains in the world. Liturgical sacrifice as gift is a 'sacrifice to', or as it developed historically, it becomes a 'sacrifice for'.

a) Halbertral: 'Sacrificing to'

This 'sacrificing to' and 'sacrificing for' appeared as a phenomena only with and within the dynamics of sacrificial *language* within community. Moshe Halbertral looked at the complex notion of sacrifice, the dynamic force it played in the development of religious practice, and the way people of antiquity understood it in terms of their gift to God. Halbertral is the professor of

⁶¹ O'Leary, "The Gift," 2005.

Jewish thought and philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In his studies there, he described the way sacrifice was understood, affected the community's language of expressing the phenomena and even the way the community was gathered or divided by sacrifice. The sacrifice was extremely intersubjective (on man's side) and any acceptance of the gift (on God's side) was an integral and contingent aspect of the sacrificial event. On the human side, one notices early how violence surfaced if the gift was rejected on God's side.

In the story of Cain and Abel, both brought forth respectively, the first of their harvest and flock. God approved of Abel's offering, and had no regard for the first fruit offering of Cain. This disdain prompted Cain to kill Abel over the gift rejected by God; the murder was a manifestation of anger aroused by the rejected gift. But the death (murder) of Abel was not the end of the effect, for this 'rejected gift' on man's side affected the communal structure. The fratricide brought with it "banishment, [and this developed into] a deeper source of violence than the deprivation"⁶² originating from the initial rejection of the sacrifice. The violence arose from the gift turned away, leading to an expulsion which appeared to create deeper wounds than the threat of no reciprocation. This Cain and Abel story demonstrates a development of communal language with 'gifting' void of any economical modeling. It cannot simply be said that the lack of exchange or failed reciprocation broke an economic cycle, as rejection was the major element.

Later in Biblical history to initiate the great Covenant, one witnesses the extraordinary request by God for Abraham to sacrifice his only 'first' son, Isaac. With this some new layers to the study are introduced. Abraham does not hesitate to carry out God's wish, but moments prior to the actual sacrificing, he is commanded to stop. Here the Greater/lesser is not one of an Absolute rejecting the sacrifice, but one of the Absolute rewarding the pure intention of Abraham, who was vindicated in his effort. The hierarchical structure of the *Creator* demanding

⁶² Moshe Halbertral, *On Sacrifice* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2012), 20.

sacrifice from the *creation* allowed the submission of the latter to receive as reward the Former's benevolence before the 'blood sacrifice' was carried out. The sacrifice-gift was not rejected, but the return (on God's side) appears *given* by ceasing the *giving* (on man's side). "In its place as a foundational narrative of the sacrifice, the exchange cycle [becomes] the symbol for a gift that cannot be reciprocated."⁶³ God accepts the pure intention of Abraham's gift (potential sacrifice), and He reciprocates⁶⁴ from His higher position by allowing for a ram to be given in a substitution for Abraham's only son. This forms a context of 'sacrificing to' which expands to initiate a liturgical relation between God and man.

This 'sacrificing to' of Abraham will absorb special status demonstrated further along in liturgical history. When the Hebrews were on the cusp of their exodus from Egypt, the 'sacrificed to' lamb's blood marked those homes to be passed-over, once again saving the first sons.⁶⁵ But, as destruction (kill and eat the lamb) still was necessary for that 'passing over' sacrifice, liturgical relationality has not yet moved entirely out of the 'sacrificing to' mode on man's side. This exchange though does begin a new practice; a ritual remembering. The memorial feast of unleavened bread marking that event, is to be kept as an ordinance in remembrance (*anamnesis*) of the animal (lamb) destroyed which in turn liberated the Hebrews. This symbolic rite, intended to perpetuate the sacrifice (re-present), carries the weight of a severe penalty against anyone who does participate.⁶⁶ If anyone does not eat the leavened bread symbol, "that person shall be cut off from Israel" (Ex 12:15b). What is introduced here to our study is

⁶³ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 25.

⁶⁴ Recognize the asymmetry of the gifting here. This theme of asymmetrical reciprocity will be developed later on in this thesis.

⁶⁵ See Exodus 12:13 *RSV*, "The blood shall be a sign for you."

⁶⁶ In fact, in the ancient world, to eat a sacrifice was to participate in that sacrifice. This understanding continues as an ordinance in the New Covenant. In the letter by the Apostles sent with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, they are instructing the Church to "abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols" (Acts 15:29a) for that very reason. The exception, too for the same reason, then appeared for Christ's sacrifice, where in the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, Paul states, "is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?" See I Cor. 10:16b.

that a sign has been put in place to commemorate an actual sacrificial event no longer locked in time.

b) Halbertral: ‘Sacrificing for’

Sacrifices of animals, first fruits, etc., continued in the substitutionary capacity of ‘sacrificing to,’ until the role of charity⁶⁷ came to the fore as an exemplary form (manifestation) of sacrifice. A recorded appeal by God, for this expansion, is made by the prophet Hosea: “For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice” (Ho 6:6a *RSV*). This ‘sacrificial’ aspect of love (charity) later presented itself in various ways. It first appeared that to will something for God was externalized by a ‘taking-away’, or a ‘doing-without’. For example, charity to God was manifested in the suffering associated with fasting. One of the affects (sufferings) of fasting of course was weight loss.⁶⁸ The loss of the ‘fat weight’ sacrificed in charity was “looked on as actual entities given from the fasting person to God.”⁶⁹ Here one notices the symbolic exchange of ‘animal/first fruit sacrifices’ being equated, and even desired less by God than the self-gift or self-denial done for charity. With this too begins the evident transition towards a ‘gift of self’, which comes to the fore and sets itself as a relational language of the community.⁷⁰

With that transition to self-gift firm in place, it’s interesting to note how God’s desire for a steadfast perseverance (charity demonstrated) in times of trial and persecution was interpreted and developed by the community. In other words, the community asked how does one ‘give

⁶⁷ It should be noted that love was never absent as a prerequisite for sacrifice; love and fear of the Lord (desire to not offend God) were always part of the dynamic.

⁶⁸ Halbertral makes the connection between the fat of animal sacrifices being ‘lost’ during a holocaust offering, and states this was analogously connected to the fasting person losing fat.

⁶⁹ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 49.

⁷⁰ It would be interesting to note, and seek further study on the anthropological contribution to this development predicated on historical happening, such as how the exile event and post-exile liturgical rituals help form the understanding of sacrifice being spoken of here.

themselves' and authenticate their charity appropriately in times of temptation, or worse yet, when they are forced to transgress under threat of life? Does one preserve one's own life, which indeed is a good and itself a gift, or remain steadfast with death immanent? Where is the balance and what would be God's reaction if His gift of life given were spurned? This dilemma is treated and addressed in a "variety of Talmudic and Midrashic texts on sacrifice [where one finds the] phrase, 'get killed rather than transgress.'"⁷¹ This theme of 'get killed rather than transgress,' reminiscent of Plato's 'better suffer wrong than do wrong' in the *Gorgias*, is brought into and made even more acute in the early Christian era. Following Hosea's proscription that God desires charity first, the role of being a witness to the faith (martyrdom) became the ultimate display of fidelity and love for the early Christians. To love was to die as a sacrifice; that was genuine charity demonstrated.

The grand sacrifice of martyrdom thus completed the transition of 'sacrificing to' to the charitable 'sacrificing for.' There was no longer the need for any direct transfer (animal, first son sacrifice, etc.⁷²) for the substitutionary demonstration of fidelity. Sacrifice was paramount when manifested as a love gift, and "began to designate not only *giving to* but also *giving up* (for the sake of)."⁷³ To give up for the other, is a transcendent act. It follows then that the one sacrificing is an acting self-transcendent person. Even when 'giving up' for another does not absolutely manifest that transcendence (for it always can be for selfish reasons and ulterior motives), it is still nonetheless the necessary foundation for such transcendence. This transcendence is a necessary criteria for the gift to be pure. There is a connection between the transcended act and the motive. The motive sanctifies what is *sacrificed*. What one sacrifices *for* becomes a good in

⁷¹ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 58.

⁷² One can't help here but to immediately think of God's first Son, Jesus the Christ and His sacrifice, but that is not what is being addressed in this transition.

⁷³ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 62.

itself. If one sacrifices for what is good⁷⁴, whether perceived or real, it means that “the reverse must be true too—namely, that sacrifice makes something into a good.”⁷⁵

Once again recall the socio-anthropologist’s observation that because everyone must do something for another in the normal course of living, perhaps sacrifice is simply some sort of ‘common energy’. Was not the critique that those constant givers who manifested no distinct essence of sacrifice, appropriated their range of motives and appearances as merely accidental? Even when it served other’s purposes, the motive was at its base the regard of one’s self. Is it not easy to fathom how competitive aspects of sacrifice within the community would develop? Just as with many notable⁷⁶ philanthropists today, the more one personally gives, or the more distinguished the charitable event, or the more high-profile the cause, or a greater the sum of money raised (can last year’s record be broken?), are badges of distinction. There always appears to be some competition for prestige and honor that is connected with giving. That is the idolatrous implication at stake. To avoid those pitfalls, it is necessary to explore precisely how *sacrifice* may present itself as *gift* in a relational liturgical context in the confines of man’s horizon. To follow this thinking through, and to build on the previous introduction to the phenomenological approach, it is worthwhile to survey more fully how that is accomplished through the phenomenological reduction in applying the method to sacrifice and gift.

D. Insights of Phenomenological Anthropology on Sacrifice and Gift

The beginning of the phenomenological approach is pivotal, as it facilitates the basis for the phenomena it purports to reveal and articulate. In entering into a phenomenological method, one must be as free as possible from unexamined preconceptions and presuppositions. The

⁷⁴ Halbertral states later on in his treatise, that one of the main markers of something endowed with intrinsic value is its worthiness of genuine sacrifice. See *On Sacrifice*, 99.

⁷⁵ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 69.

⁷⁶ The fact they are notable, would for Derrida, would be the fatal characteristic.

primary objective is the direct investigation and description of phenomena as consciously experienced and perceived, without relying on preexisting theories. Edmund Husserl, the movement's principle founder, notes that when speaking of that conscious perception of experience being given, one is referring to "*perception* in the ordinary sense of the term. To have something primordially given, and to 'perceive' it in single intuition are one and the same thing."⁷⁷ Intuition is simply to have a thing given or presented to the person's consciousness; it is given to man in experience.

The focus is not on the cause(s) of the perception given, but the impression upon the experience consciously perceived. Often, traditional metaphysics considers a *slice* of being in a particular moment; perhaps it may be spoken of as a photographic glimpse studied, realized and understood as an aggregate of its form. In contrast, phenomenology would consider an identity of that being as an object or experience that cannot be reduced to the sum of its profiles. Man's "perception [here] is dynamic, not static, even if he just looks at one side"⁷⁸ of an object. So even the aspects unseen or absent (in phenomenological terms, the *empty intention*), may adequately present itself to man's consciousness. Whether what is before the person is present or absent from the profile, man consciously perceives what is filled or empty. The consciousness is always a consciousness of some *thing*. So the empty intentions (back side of a building, the fourth leg of a chair out of site, etc.), remain objects of givenness to man in his World. The world is a world of profiles but the consciousness receives the entirety of the object or experience. This speaks as to why such discussion begins with the natural attitude, as man's perspective is always from the *earth* (man's location) and man's *World* (the sphere of experience).

⁷⁷ Husserl, *Ideas*, 2012, 9.

⁷⁸ Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 18.

In order to carry this out adequately, there must occur a ‘freeing’ from any preconceptions and presuppositions. This suspension of beliefs is performed through a process of *bracketing*. This *reduction* allows one to enter the phenomenological attitude, considering perception precisely as it is intended, but not adequately realized in its natural attitude. This reduction is contemplating man’s “participation in the world. The attitude taken [as] the phenomenological reduction (turn toward ego) making the ego and its intentionalities⁷⁹ thematic.”⁸⁰ So the phenomenological reduction allows one to move beyond the thing-as-it-exists to the thing-as-it-is-given. This attitude allows one to “interrogate the gift in view of its givenness just as the ontologist interrogates beings in view of their being.”⁸¹ “Phenomenology recognizes the reality and truth of phenomena, the things that appear...not the Cartesian picture in the mind.”⁸²

Here then, the reality of the *World* is accepted as a given. There is not a ‘my world’ or a ‘your world,’ and never the mere appearance of one’s own *picture* based on one’s own preconceptions. In contrast, the phenomenological reduction allows the study to follow a perception of the natural attitude that is not tainted by, or at least holds in check previously held notions or considerations. The intent is to get at the nature (essence) of the thing or event in terms of experience. This focus on the nature of a thing presented to the consciousness is done by separating anything accidental which might influence an individual’s experience. To deduce something as not essential to the phenomena, simply means it can be conceived as the same thing (essence) without that accidental quality. The conscious must peel away those qualities identified

⁷⁹ Sokolowski points out that whenever there is consciousness, that *consciousness is always consciousness of something*. In other words, there is always something there for consciousness. Consciousness can not be empty. Intentionality primarily means mental or cognitive, and not merely deliberate or practical intentions.

⁸⁰ Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 48.

⁸¹ O’Leary, “The Gift, (This was Marion’s approach and goal in reduction).

⁸² Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 14-15.

as accidental, asking along the way if what remains is essential. To derive at the essential phenomena in this way is a reductive process, a bracketing of the natural *World*. This is a process of bracketing the *World*, coined by Husserl as the *eidetic* reduction. Others, such as Heidegger didn't suspend the 'natural world' as Husserl did, but rather accepted *what* was presented as appearing to the consciousness in the context of a *being*, being-in-the-world. Either of these two or other expressions of phenomenology, have the common focus in the perspective of the individual's intention, studied as it is primarily *experienced* rather than seeking the intent on what it *is* in itself.⁸³ This experience is something so central to the human person. There are in the world signifiers intended by the individual (for example, consider any sacrifice, how it is presented as a gift, and its liturgical relation of the Absolute to man), that permit "the presence of signifying intentions possible for us to perceive things in a specifically human way."⁸⁴

Being part of man's world, these consciously experienced and perceived events, through phenomenological reduction, allow man to transcend the *World* while paradoxically allowing him to remain firmly a part of that *World*. Man's experiences (particularly for this study his sacrifice as gift), become accessible *forms* that pass beyond the survey of socio-anthropological observations. Those observations are limited by what the observer can conclude (much can never be fully grasped from so-called independent observation), and in turn that may preclude affirming sacrifice as an element of human nature.

Man is working towards the Absolute, certainly outside of himself, but to reach toward this Absolute he must also transverse the *World* of his present. This dichotomy exposes a cruel irony, in that between the Absolute and man-in-the-world, there is a never diminishing distance.

⁸³ Traditional metaphysics often seeks ontology first, what a thing *is* or how man come to *know* the thing (epistemology). The contrast here is that with phenomenology, man's experience is primary in how the thing presents itself to the consciousness (*intentionality*).

⁸⁴ Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 80.

The liturgical relation, as will be presented, between the two is what persists and sustains man in that ironic tension between the not-yet with the here-and-now. But in and from that distance as part of man's experience, lies a structure accessible during here-and-now aiding discovery. "The distinctive characteristic of forms is precisely their epiphany at a distance"⁸⁵ where man has a moment into its meaning, i.e., intuition. The finite man in the World is in relation with the infinite. An epiphany always has a point at which it opens to the infinite from the side of the finite. Anything on this *side* of that epiphany (finite) is a limitation. Anything that exists on the other *side* (infinite) is demarcated by a horizon. Phenomenology permits a way to articulate man's relation to the Absolute from his *World*, in terms of his relation to that horizon. It allows man to get at not what the thing *is* necessarily, but describing the essence of the *experience* of the thing. What is under investigation is an experience, not a thing disconnected or analyzed separately from its environment. There is not a thinking of the thing 'inside' the person about the thing 'outside' the person. There has been in the course of modernity the development, or apparent schism between this *thinking man* and the *World*. That describes a Cartesian dualism that is overcome by phenomenological reduction, which by necessity allows for a built-in man/world relationality where horizons form the borders.

1. The Phenomenological Reduction: Overcoming Cartesian Dualism

This horizon is dependent on one's perspective, and following that point phenomenologically speaking, *horizon* can be an elusive term. It carries with it all the usual connotations: a visual precipice that doesn't lose ground as one approaches it, some level of inaccessibility, an *aporia* between the finite and the infinite, etc. But there may also be the

⁸⁵ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 60.

perspective of a horizon within the person, between man as a *subject* and *object*. The given or gift can transverse these horizons, but the Modern Project of René Descartes has left a dualistic split between that subject and object. The world of matter, or anything of the outside, could not be given in the same way spoken of in phenomenology. The consciousness became something the object was placed *in*. Descartes understood “the ‘given’ in one sense [as] supremely corporeal, consisting in matter reduced to concrete *extensio*,”⁸⁶ seemingly leaving matter and immaterial wobbling in a dualistic state with no span connecting the two for man to transverse.

There is no certain way to appraise the given, or the *being* of gift under such a scheme. “For Descartes, the sensible universe [was] verified only in the measure that it conformed to the epistemic demands of the *res cogitans*.”⁸⁷ How does one measure then any experience of the other, or the Absolute, or of the relation beyond the horizon, i.e., a pre-eschatological *res extensa*? Phenomenological bracketing tries to overcome the *aporia* between self and other, subject and object, *World* and *Absolute*, towards a shared meaning of the world. This is not the case with Descartes’ epistemology who “suppressed the *aporia* of the presence of the infinite in the finite,”⁸⁸ leaving a sharp divide or better put, no bridge to possibly cross between the material and immaterial, between the self and the *World*. Descartes adopted certainty at the expense of genuinely transcending the natural attitude.

This left man locked in a world that could not be genuinely accepted as a shared phenomena intersubjectively; limited in the horizon of his own world, man was unable to adequately address his own transcendence in terms of gift. Something was necessary to both bring back man as a subject and to offer givenness as a mode of being, reconnecting them on

⁸⁶ Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1998), 65.

⁸⁷ Robert Barron, “The Liturgical Self: An Exploration of Christian Anthropology in Light of the Liturgy,” 2009, 18.

⁸⁸ Pickstock, *After Writing*, 66.

some level ontologically. The bracketing/reduction offers with it “a leading-back of the phenomenological gaze to the essential mode of givenness of being and beings,”⁸⁹ overcoming any material/spiritual division. There are ways to demonstrate this intersubjectivity to which phenomenology attests, on the ordinary levels of human language.

2. Sokolowski: An Anthropology Approach

That language (speech) of the human person is another layer offered to preserve this intersubjectivity and givenness void of any dualism. The investigation into how language and speech demonstrate man’s intersubjective human nature may at first blush appear a frivolous endeavor, and not worth adding to the argument. But language in its use of the symbolic, addresses transcendence and the way empty intentions are regarded. The fact that man talks to himself and he talks with others is rather obvious. Nevertheless often it is uncritically accepted precisely how language manifests man to himself and how it attests to the interplay of the immaterial with the material. When humans speak, that expressed disclosure of the immaterial is predicated towards a single aim, to communicate his own thoughts. Man does not speak solely for the sake of himself, but for the other. Speech is a signifier of the immaterial being made concrete and measurable for another subject (*being*). This means that language itself, articulated words, mental concepts or written communication, etc., offers one stratum demonstrating how *each* man is embedded relationally with others.

The phenomenologist Robert Sokolowski points out that it is in declarative language that Man reveals to himself his own subjectivity, saying something of himself for another. He can refer to himself as an *I*. As a subject he declares: *I* am faithful to you, *I* sacrifice for you, *I* give to you, etc. It is not simply a matter of man providing a report of his condition, but he is conferring a relation between himself and that aspect or condition of himself he declares. It is with “the

⁸⁹ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2006.

declarative [that man] appropriates, whereas [with] the informational he is reporting”⁹⁰ merely an aspect of himself. With the former, man is stating something concrete of himself relationally. Man is stating what belongs to himself as a subject and not simply providing information in the way he could utter, “That wagon is red.”⁹¹

Even in the case of man being alone (the solitary subject who is present to himself), he still thinks symbolically in terms of words. Language is required for both intra-subject retrospection and inter-subject communication. This declarative language reveals man’s relationality, for he is not some disconnected drone, disjointed in himself nor detached from another. The *I* behind the language is always a subject, for “behind this declarative speech is a ‘who.’”⁹² It is not the brain which thinks, but the *I* that thinks. And this *I* is built to transcend both himself as a subject and the world as his environment evidenced in his language. Since man aims not just beyond himself, but beyond the horizon of his world⁹³ it is fitting that “human speech allows man to transcend his immediate environment.”⁹⁴ This environment includes both those filled and empty intentions.

Human language “can work in both the presence and the absence of its targets.”⁹⁵ The importance of this characteristic is that the prepositional phrases man attaches to the declarative speech, “I sacrifice for you,” “I (offer myself as) gift to my spouse or God” may be an immaterial reality aimed at the absent subject, or even the material symbol gifted to the

⁹⁰ Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 11.

⁹¹ As Sokolowski aptly points out, this distinction is subtle, as the same sentence can be used for either informational or declarative speech. The distinction remains though that as the latter one institutes, the former just states it as so. For a fuller explanation see Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, pp. 10-12.

⁹² Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 42.

⁹³ Even the secular anthropologist observes the universal appeal to the cosmic causes by man that seek not simply the ‘how’ of man, his world and the Absolute, but the ‘why’ of each.

⁹⁴ Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 45.

⁹⁵ Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 38.

immaterial Absolute.⁹⁶ This distinction with language can continue through the third level of speech (*declarative*), to the fourth level identified by Sokolowski as the *philosophical*. The import of the fourth level of the philosophical means that rather than simply recognizing how the subject utilizes the language of *I* as in “*I* offer myself,” the same subject reflects back not just on the language used but what that language used displays of the subject. Whatever was declared and ‘displayed’ in the natural attitude, “must be turned around to let [the subject] display that display...[in order to] speak about appearances and the things that appear”⁹⁷ to the subject.

3. Lacoste: Liturgical Relationality

This transcendence, and the language necessary for the possibility of moving from subject to World, and then ‘subject in the World’ to the Absolute, sheds light on man’s World-transcending vocation. The phenomenologist, Jean-Yves Lacoste holds that “man is an animal...with a twofold task: the hermeneutic (to discern meaning) and the apophantic (to spell out meaning).”⁹⁸ Man moving into Sokolowski’s *philosophical* arena seeks what is disclosed (call it the fruits of wisdom), i.e., the meaning of the phenomena appearing before him. This is where thought finds expression in language and the immaterial is manifested materially. This wisdom⁹⁹ is unavailable to the individual who remains in protolanguage.¹⁰⁰ That persons has limits,¹⁰¹ at least the potentiality of articulating the World-Absolute transcendence are not brought to fruition. This displays not just unactualized potential but the unrealized vocation of

⁹⁶ Here we are clearly speaking of empty intentions of the *I*, transcending both the subject and the *World*.

⁹⁷ Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 33.

⁹⁸ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 185.

⁹⁹ Wisdom can be defined here as recognizing the *Absolute* working in the *World*.

¹⁰⁰ Protolanguage is that child-like talk that is imbued with ambiguity, i.e., “Steve cake”. Does that mean that it is Steve’s cake and Steve wants it, or it is Steve’s cake and Steve doesn’t want anyone else to have it, or simply that Steve wants the cake, or that Steve is cake?

¹⁰¹ This will be overcome with liturgical participation, which allows the ‘articulating’ community to stand and speak in proxy for the infants, mentally challenged or those who have experienced a severe brain injury by accident or disease. This is yet another way to resolve a problem with gift as has been presented thus far, i.e., to answer what of those who appear incapable of giving.

being other-Worldly. This articulation can only be genuinely overcome and completed in a liturgical relation with the Absolute.

“Formally conceived, it is the tension between being-in-fact (the empirical *I*) and being-in-vocation (the eschatological *I*).”¹⁰² Perhaps the restlessness between the empirical and the eschatological can semiotically be described here in Sokolowski’s language. Recall he spoke of the subject releasing the tension of informative speech to give way to the declarative. This declarative then allows for man to ultimately find the subject’s liturgical vocation in the philosophical mode. Liturgy “cannot free [man] from the concrete hold the world exerts...[but] symbolically [liturgy] can leave the world behind.”¹⁰³ In and by liturgy, man has “access to the *originary* (bracketed world) granting to him the grounding sense of his ipseity,”¹⁰⁴ thus preserving or restoring the ontology spliced by Descartes. Here it is clear that the restlessness of the ‘concrete world’ remains, but the being-in-the-world can recognize the Absolute’s gift of man (being-in-vocation) by bracketing that ‘concrete world’ and allowing man to not only accept, but return himself as gift and himself become *gift*.

Applied in this study, the phenomena of sacrifice as gift is the manifestation of the character of man’s language transcending subject and World. It is where the restlessness of man addresses the concrete fact that he is part of that world, while allowing him symbolically in liturgy to ‘leave’ that world. This is central to this thesis’ theme and pertinent in that liturgy connects the inner-subjectivity, the inter-subjective and the subject-Absolute relations. Liturgy is central, it “is not, in fact, one possibility open to man among others which would serve to define [him] but not determine what it is that makes [him] human.”¹⁰⁵ That is to say, to assert liturgy

¹⁰² Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 157.

¹⁰³ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 86.

¹⁰⁴ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 95-96.

¹⁰⁵ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 105.

reveals something of man to himself is a defining characteristic, and a phenomenological element central to his personhood. Liturgy makes man human, it is not just information about his own subjectivity and why, as it will later will be argued, liturgy cannot be reduced to a rite. But central to liturgy is sacrifice, in both rite and liturgical living. In order to proceed then, at this point it is important to examine the various covenantal aspects of sacrifice, and the phenomena of sacrifice as gift in itself. That will further prepare a foundation in equipping this study for a final synthesis of the factors thus far presented.

II. The Sacrifice as Gift

A. The Phenomena of Sacrifice

1. Aspects of Sacrifice

The phenomena of sacrifice in the Old and New Covenant must be placed in the context of an understanding of the human person. The person in the Old Testament consists of the ‘psycho-physiological composite’ of the *nephesh* (soul), the *basar* (body or flesh) and “the source of stability of the composite, the *ruah* (spirit).”¹⁰⁶ Presented in the Genesis *mythos*, this intra-subjective tripartite relation has a resemblance to the characteristics presented here of man’s relation to the Absolute. There is the pre-eschatological agreeing with the *nephesh*, the *Worldly* lining up with the *basar* and the liturgical aspect promising to be that *ruah*¹⁰⁷ or stabilizing source for the others.¹⁰⁸ But for the sake of this study on sacrifice the relevance is that they are not ‘parts’ of the human person which can be presented separately, they exist in and as a whole. Even more importantly this tripartite realization undoes any conflation of the *nephesh* and

¹⁰⁶ Albert Gelin, *The Concept of Man in the Bible*, trans. David M. Murphy (Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1968), 17. For a fuller description of the Hebrew concept of man’s nature, see Gelin pp. 13-19.

¹⁰⁷ This is traditionally known as the Breath of God. It is the intrinsic, personal cause that does more than animate the body. It is the sustaining (loving) aspect of the Creator in the creation. Conditions of sickness, even sleep, are thought of in Hebrew Biblical anthropology as the loss of *ruah*. Death is its absence. *Nephesh* as man’s soul, could be contrasted here with *ruah* in that the former is more akin to *being* and the latter to *life force*.

¹⁰⁸ This analogy is not intended to appear overly contrived, but it is neither thought merely superficial. This will provide the basis for a future essay’s theme that has as its hope, a promising and insightful *denouement*. There is no need to expand on that conclusion in this thesis, save to suggest that liturgy, as relationally conceived, is natural to man.

ruah which rarely is afforded a distinction in contemporary theological anthropology.¹⁰⁹ This is to mean that unlike the problematic dualistic schema of Descartes which struggles for some associative agent between the body and soul, the *basar* and *nephesh* are understood as a composite firmly held in continuance by an outside effort. “Without the *ruah* the psycho-physiological composite *nephesh-basar* would have no life and would be devoid of consistency.”¹¹⁰ This indicates an integral aspect of man’s nature is in perpetual relation to the Absolute as the source of *ruah*. Sacrifice is the constitutive manifestation of that principle. In a similar fashion as the *basar* reveals the *nephesh*, the *ruah* is evidenced in the *nephesh-basar* composite.

a) Sacrifice: Old Covenant

In the Old Covenant, a focal point in the study of sacrifice and gift has been the narrative of Abraham offering to God his son Isaac. At the command of God, Abraham “bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. Then Abraham put forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son” (Gn 22: 9-10). This is an agonizing undertaking Abraham has committed himself to, but his fidelity and desire to not offend God in offering his ‘only son’ provided more than the opportunity for God to display mercy. It presented itself as a way to appropriate to Abraham the acceptance of his gift of Isaac without any actual destruction.¹¹¹ God said to Abraham, “Do not lay your hand on the lad or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me” (Gn 22:12)." It remains a sacrifice, yet nothing was destroyed (Isaac lived) or deprived (Abraham retained his son). The sacrifice appeared in the totality of the event as *givenness*. The conditions of sacrifice phenomenologically speaking have been satisfied, i.e, Isaac was spared and yet Abraham *gifted*

¹⁰⁹ This is not to say that any supernatural force is denied in modern theological anthropology, but the human person is ordinarily presented as being the composite of body (matter) and soul (form).

¹¹⁰ Gelin, *The Concept of Man in the Bible*, 17.

¹¹¹ It is not apparent to the reader of the text though, whether Abraham knew this would occur or not.

him to the Father. Jean-Luc Marion pointed out that although “it does not obey the common determination of sacrifice, its phenomenological concept—that of a sacrifice starting from gift, and from the gift reduced to givenness,”¹¹² it has manifested itself in that modality of a sacrificial-gift. Additionally the concept of gift being disclosed as a *return* is signified, in that Isaac was not solely Abraham and Sarah’s son (Isaac was God’s gift to them), but Abraham was returning to God what indeed belonged to and was given by God:¹¹³ a sacrifice is a returning, it can only manifest outside of a cycle of economic exchange.¹¹⁴

b) Sacrifice: New Covenant

A parallel parable in the New Covenant comprising both gift and sacrifice at the moment of a return is that of the Prodigal Son. It was found particularly worthy of attention by Marion in that it alone was the instance where the philosophical term *ousia* appeared in the New Testament. The younger of two sons, not content in awaiting to receive his father’s inheritance asked, “Father, give me the share of *ousia* that is coming to me.”¹¹⁵¹¹⁶ Marion does not purport that it is meant in the same way of the pure philosophical term *being* that one encounters in Aristotelean categories, but rather accepts a “weak interpretation of *ousia*: the goods disposable for possession and power.”¹¹⁷ Nonetheless, the son leaves in possession of the inheritance (gift) and squandered it in loose living. He eventually finds himself void of that possession (*ousia*). Marion is

¹¹² Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of Sacrifice,” 15.

¹¹³ See Gn. 17:19, RSV—“God said, ‘No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.’”

¹¹⁴ Lawrence Broadt adopts this concept of ‘returning’, where he states “the ultimate test comes when God seems to demand that Abraham sacrifice Isaac *back* to him [God] in chapter 22 [of Genesis]” in *Reading the Old Testament*, (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1984), 141 (emphasis mine). John J. Scullion places it in the context of a *renouncing* of the promise given to Abraham. The renouncing is an act that could only be completed for Abraham as a return. “God had given the free promise of an heir to Abraham; can Abraham go on believing and trusting in God when God asks him to renounce the promise?” See Scullion’s *Genesis: A Commentary for Students, Teachers, and Preachers* in “Old Testament Studies,” vol. 6 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992) 173.

¹¹⁵ Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 96.

¹¹⁶ The son “asks to possess it, dispose of it, enjoy it without passing through the gift and the reception of the gift.” See Marion, *God Without Being*, 97.

¹¹⁷ Marion, *God Without Being*, 96-97.

poignantly stating that in some way any reduction of the gift to this *ousia* by the son, reduces the gift to its equivalency and worth as a means for exchange, thus forming the gift into an idol, making the gift an end in itself.¹¹⁸ Finding himself now in want, the younger son conjectures that if he were to return to his father even as a servant, his lot would improve. As the son was returning, when “he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him,” (Lk 15:20b) restoring his position signified by the best robe, a ring on his hand and the fatted calf for a celebration.

This further gift as a return is as Marion recognizes, not just one of proximity to the father, but a return of both the son’s humanity and filiation. Continuing the story, that restoration incenses the elder son. Made indignant by the further gift of the father’s forgiveness to his brother he protests, “Many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends” (Lk 15:29b). The son does not recognize the *being*, or perhaps it is only the sons and not the father who reduce the gift to such *being* (the gaze toward the *ousia* as an idol). The younger son seeks to have the *ousia*-gift liquidated (his share) and the other son wanted to have the *ousia*-gift (inheritance) in his own possession—so rather than accepting it as “all that is mine is also yours...[the *ousia* is desired to be] separated, delimited, and given to the possession of a solitary individual.”¹¹⁹ In contrast, “the father sees in it the gift ceaselessly re-given [what is mine is already yours] at a new cost (eventually in forgiveness).”¹²⁰

Here it can be found then, how the ‘sacrifice for’ is also a sacrifice in its *returning*. In the Biblical text, the parable of the Prodigal Son is really used as a device to confront the

¹¹⁸ Marion draws the connection between the *property* and *being* in that the *ousia* of philosophy is deployed according to disposable *property*, but both *being* and this *property* ‘possess some stability of *ousia*.’ For a full explanation, see Marion’s treatment of this in *God Without Being*, pp. 96-102.

¹¹⁹ Marion, *God Without Being*, 99.

¹²⁰ Marion, *God Without Being*, 99.

denunciation of “the Pharisees and the scribes [who] murmured, saying, ‘This man [Christ] receives sinners and eats with them’” (Lk 15:2). It immediately follows two parables. The first is the one of the ninety-nine sheep, as the shepherd left to find the one which is lost. The second is of the woman who has lost one of her ten coins, only to drop everything, light a lamp and sweep the floor until it has been found. In each case, the Prodigal Son’s Father sacrificing (forgiving), the shepherd sacrificing (leaving ninety-nine sheep unattended), the woman sacrificing (totally immersed in recovering the lost coin), are all a sacrifice in search of, or for the purpose of a *returning* (son, sheep, coin). In these illustrations from the Old and New Covenant, it is clear that a pattern of sacrifice and returning can only become manifest outside of a cycle of exchange.

The pattern of liturgical gift and sacrifice is eminently disclosed in the pinnacle of all sacrifices, that of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus the Christ (Paschal Mystery). In one respect, the concept of sacrifice as gift does not apply to the sacrifice of *Christ* to the Father in the same way as did the *stayed* Abrahamic sacrifice of Isaac. It seems that with Abraham, the *givenness* was the distillation of his sacrificial intent and followed more of the ‘sacrificing to’ model (destruction), than the strict ‘sacrificing for’ which was disclosed in the case of Christ.¹²¹ But the difference is not necessarily honoring the mere intent of Abraham’s *willingness* to not withhold his only son, as juxtaposed to God’s *action* of not withholding His only Son. The distinction is that God had given Abraham a ram, which he then “offered up as a burnt offering instead of his son” (Gn 22:13b). With *the Christ* no substitution would be satisfactory. So, in both scenarios the God-provided sacrifice was indeed destroyed, but in the former a substitute was permitted.

¹²¹ Indeed the Paschal Mystery encapsulated both forms of sacrifice, i.e., both ‘to the Father’ and ‘for mankind’.

It is also significant that although the Son died, the sacrificial event did not terminate there, but continued with His Resurrection (defeated death). And here is the insight to be gleaned from that, for though death was defeated,¹²² it took away the victory that the destruction typically satisfies without annulling the sacrifice (passion-death-resurrection event). The Son's sacrificial gift was a return to the Father and appears to man as *pure givenness*¹²³, but it was not just a submission to the will of the Absolute, it was an absolute return signified in the Resurrection. This return of the Son to the Father is the eschatological fulfillment, the pinnacle of all sacrifices bar none. This liturgical act will then allow man's sacrifices, ulterior motives *et al.*, to reach a pure givenness in and with the Absolute's.

It is important to note however, that the gift of the Son by the Father to man began, and is profoundly evident in the Incarnation.¹²⁴ It was God who wished Himself "to become a gift for men. God gave his only Son as a gift for us, He assumed our humanity to give us His divinity. This is the great gift."¹²⁵ The anthropological significance of this lies in the fact that Christ revealed man to himself as an Incarnate Being. This is not just in the sense of exhibiting right modeling (ethical living patterned after Christ), but by sacramentally drawing all into union so that each may attain "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ep 4:13b) in themselves. The restlessness within the nature of man stems from the distance between that

¹²² See I Cor. 15:26, RSV—"The last enemy to be destroyed is death."

¹²³ This application of *givenness* does not always line up with Marion's use of it as I understand the concept. Marion has *givenness* to be entirely beyond the reach of *being* as understood by Heidegger. Marion may be paraphrased as 'everything that appears is given', but I am not settled, in fact I lean strongly towards that not *always* having to be the case. To that very point, Derrida wonders if Marion simply "has his own concept of phenomenology" i.e, a phenomenology without an object (see *God, the Gift, and Postmodernism*, p. 60). As it is unsettled in this thesis as to whether or not man can objectively constitute them as objects, or only have them appear as things presenting themselves, that lack of distinction need not degrade the point that in and with the Absolute's gift, ulterior motives find fulfillment and satisfaction.

¹²⁴ This is quite a Franciscan view of the Incarnation. The unsettled options of whether the Fall (Adam and Eve eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil) necessitated the Incarnation for the purpose of the redemptive act of Christ's passion, death and resurrection, or if the Incarnation was always part of God's intended givenness to man and the redemptive act of Christ's passion, death and resurrection alone was initiated by the Fall is not an issue to argue at any length for this thesis, i.e., it is unsettled.

¹²⁵ Pope Benedict XVI, Wednesday General Audience on the Incarnation (21 November 21 2012).

measure of Christ Incarnate and of man struggling as being-in-the-world. Uniting any sacrifice with Christ's became accessible by the Incarnation in and with the sacrificial event,¹²⁶ but the degree of restlessness of man in the world is amplified primarily in measure of the short-fall of emptying one's self as a sacrificial gift. The contribution here then of Christ's sacrificial event evidences itself by not removing the *measure*, but by Christ rendering the distance null in completing it through a sacramental union with *His* measure. All sacrificial givenness present in the human person has been disclosed to man in the Incarnation. The Incarnation was not the initiation of the sacrificial event, but the signification of Christ revealing man to himself. It is only in "the logic of the Incarnation as a real sign that makes the event of Christ present to modern man."¹²⁷ The Incarnation was pure gift (*kenosis-emptying*)¹²⁸ for man thus revealing man to himself. With that sacrificial event, Christ "yielded up his spirit (*ruah*)" (Mt 27:50b), propelling the return-gift (God's original possession) back to God for the sake of man himself.

These brief samples from the Old and New Covenant aid to delineate the necessity of sacrifice and gift manifested completely outside the cycle of exchange, and containing some semblance of return as part and parcel of *givenness*. But a more basic question is to be raised in considering the story of Cain and Abel; a question that is an often gleaned over facet of this story that becomes significant to sacrifice being an ontological reality for man. *Why* are Cain and Abel bringing the first of their fruits and flock as a sacrifice? What is the reason? There was no prior

¹²⁶ "The mystery of the Incarnation means that God hasn't given something, but has given Himself in his only-begotten Son. Here we find the model of our [own] giving." See Pope Benedict XVI, Wednesday General Audience on the Incarnation (21 November 21 2012).

¹²⁷ Angelo Scola, *The Nuptial Mystery*, trans. Michelle K. Borrás (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 99.

¹²⁸ Christ "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross." See Phil. 2:7-8, RSV.

edict commanding them to sacrifice.¹²⁹ The resolution to that *why* is paramount for this study. If no ordinance was prescribed, what would explain the initiative for man to offer sacrifice in terms of gift to God? The Scriptural witness is silent. It simply states, “in the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock” (Gn 4:3-4a). “The different explanations that have been proposed in the scholarly literature are inadequate”¹³⁰ so an alternative reason that proves to be somewhat more spontaneous and inherent in man should be considered.¹³¹

Abel’s sacrifice, and there is no sound reason to exclude Cain’s, is likely an innate conscious sacrificial-gift response to the awareness of the Absolute’s *ruah* (the life force bestowed from above) sustaining and animating the siblings. Even after the Fall, direct communication between God and created man can be assumed, as God does call out to Cain asking the whereabouts of his brother. Their sacrifice as gift, is a symbolic return of a portion of creation to the Creator, not in tribute or to appease, but directed by their faithfulness. Rather than interpret this as many socio-anthropologists might, based on an outside observation as a sacrifice meant to placate God’s anger through conciliatory actions (sacrifices to stave off floods, promote stable crops and maintain healthy herds, etc.), the story should be placed in its proper light as the recognition of the Creator’s gift being returned to its source. Man’s self-consideration in relation to God was not one of appeasement based on fear, but the realization that any loss or reduction

¹²⁹ The only positive command was, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (See Gn. 1:28b-RSV). It would be an interesting (fruitful?) endeavor to work out the inherent relation of sacrifice to being ‘fruitful’, ‘subduing’ and ‘having dominion’. But the point stands, there is no ordinance present in the Biblical account to sacrifice to God or for each other.

¹³⁰ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 9.

¹³¹ Some of the alternative implications include John Skinner’s assessment that animal sacrifices alone were acceptable to Yahweh, superior to the vegetable offerings made to the Canaanite Baals. Robert Candlish places the rejection on the *bloodlessness* of the sacrifice itself writing, “To appear before God without atoning blood, as Cain did—was infidelity.” For an excellent treatment of this, see Bruce K. Waltke’s “Cain and His Offering,” in the *Westminster Theological Journal* 48 (1986) 363-72.

of God's *ruah* resulted in sickness or death. In the early understanding of man even "sleep was a loss of *ruah*. Psalm 104 speaks of the living creatures (men, animals) who [as they] go to sleep, their spirit leaves them."¹³² The *ruah*, and in this study liturgy, is the relational characteristic.

So sacrifice as gift for this sustenance appears as a common experience of the state of man in his World relational to God. This returning on the part of Cain and Abel is not in a cycle of exchange,¹³³ but founded upon the return of a gift *given*. It matters not whether there was an imbalance between the giver and receiver (indeed there was), or that the gift returned was inadequate in some aspect; recall it was recorded that "for Cain and his offering [God] had no regard" (Gn 4:5a). Concerning Cain's sacrifice, the fact that it was a rejection of his return is crucial for setting the stage of the violence which ensued. The incident resulted in Cain killing Abel—"to refuse to give [or accept as in this case] is tantamount to declaring war; it is to reject the bond of alliance and commonality."¹³⁴ So with Cain and Abel, only "in the human-divine relationship, is the divine privilege to reject rooted in the fact that the sacrifice is actually an act of returning rather than giving."¹³⁵ This is to mean that it was God's possession, not just initially, but akin to the continuous life-sustaining *ruah*, and that it remained God's while in the possession (*ousia*) of Cain and Abel. A 'sacrifice to' manifests itself as a gift being returned, predicated on the notion that the giver (returner) merely is the custodian of whatever is being sacrificed and offered in gift back to the receiver (returnee) that which never truly belonged to the giver (the older son's inheritance in the Prodigal Son parable). The 'sacrifice to' is in reality a 'returning to' and is evidence of the relational union of giver and receiver. Notice that in the

¹³² See Gelin, pp. 13-19 for a fuller treatment of the Biblical concept of man's nature from Genesis to Wisdom.

¹³³ It should be noted that Halbertral understood the goal of a sacrifice as to produce a gift cycle. This does not necessarily connote an economic cycle, but may include a *returning*. Nonetheless, the liturgical aspect of this thesis, i.e., a union with the ultimate sacrifice of Christ, secures the gift and sacrifice from falling prey to being reduced by an ulterior motive or lack of genuineness.

¹³⁴ Olson, "Excess, Time and the Pure Gift," 354.

¹³⁵ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 11.

parable of the Prodigal Son, the imbalance between giver (father) and receiver (youngest son) held no bearing on the giving of the father's *ousia*—it was total and without condition. And the inadequate disregard directed towards the father, illustrated by the son's squandering of that *ousia*, did not repel the return-gift of forgiveness on the part of the father as he reinstated the stature of the son.

c) 'Sacrificing for' as Return Gift to the Father

It was already presented how martyrdom permitted a transition of 'sacrifice to' to the 'sacrifice for' as a human experience. This martyrdom allowed "the self to become the locus of giving. Through pain and prayers as forms of offering, [man] entered a new dimension" of 'sacrificing for'. A brief glance back may be of value here to connect it to the preceding section as sacrifice manifesting itself as a gift back to God. In the Babylonian Talmud one finds that transgressing the Law is permitted when death is threatened. In those cases, it was actually "reduced to three transgressions: murder, incest, and idolatry."¹³⁶ This 'dying for' rather than transgressing, intones the significant element of offering one's self; a donation of one's life as a gift. But here the giving of one's life was the means of protecting against what are deemed capital transgressions. In other words, the giving of one's life is not yet an ideal sacrifice as gift, as martyrdom doesn't begin to take root historically with the Jewish people until one enters the Macabean period (second century B.C.). A couple of hundred years further, after the sacrificial event of Christ, the conditions for permitting death when threatened was widened to include any act of infidelity to the teachings (ideals) of the Messiah Jesus.¹³⁷ With the embodiment of the 'martyr ideal', for Christians set forth by Christ, the individual follower does not simply imitate Christ's death, but in sacramental union "shares his sufferings, becoming like Him in his death"

¹³⁶ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 54.

¹³⁷ At least widened for those Jews who became followers of Christ and His teachings.

(Ph 3:10b). This points beyond an “expression of absolute loyalty and love, [to] an offering, a gift offered by the martyr—the gift of himself—to God.”¹³⁸

In this disclosure is found the movement from the primacy of one’s own welfare and good, to the good of the other (in the martyr’s case, the *Absolute*) that demarcates a transcendence¹³⁹ of not just *World*, but also that of the pre-eschatological *Kingdom*. It is a return of the *ruah* given to man in the already-but-not-yet, back to its origin in the Absolute.

2. Purity of Sacrifice—An Enigma of Destruction and Absence

It’s hard to not identify in the gift cycle of Abraham offering Isaac, as Halbertral referred to it, as some form of reciprocity. There’s an emptying or giving by the giver, an acceptance and possession by the receiver, and the return of that possession *via* some annihilation or loss. This return could be directly to the Absolute, or the ‘sacrificing for’ another in the name of the Absolute, i.e., a proxy. The annihilation of the gift given is to be understood as and identified with the sacrifice itself. Here in a sense “sacrifice is equivalent to destroying; to destroy what should not be, at least in the normal custom of the word.”¹⁴⁰ So either the good is destroyed or is absent (destroyed to the giver).

Since the earliest points of Christian history there has been the give-and-take of man in his givenness ordered towards God. It is the foundational structure to which those within the community of the Kingdom are tethered. This is the liturgical hook, where the Eucharistic sacrifice becomes the source and summit of the community, as it is the ultimate gift cycle. It is not so much an ebb and flow as it constitutes a relational status. Marion would laud this Eucharistic gift cycle as the “supreme instantiation of *la donation*, but the ethical purism of his

¹³⁸ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 59.

¹³⁹ It stands in stark contrast to “the Hobbesian combination of self-interest and instrumental rationality, or the Nietzschean view of self-transcendence and sacrifice as perverse applications of the will to power on the self.” See Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 67.

¹⁴⁰ Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept,” 1.

conception of giving might undercut the give and take of the Eucharist.”¹⁴¹ It would probably appear to Marion, and certainly to Derrida, to be tainted by some level of expectation of a return from God or an appeasement for one’s own transgressions (forgiveness of sins). This introduces some level of suspicion, where an ethical enigma arises concerning the purity of the gift.

But in the same way the resurrection was not contaminated in being the reward given to Christ for His willing acceptance of death, the fruits of the Eucharist (it is a celebration of the resurrection) are not contaminated by any concept of reward (a liturgical union with Christ’s sacrificial death). In that the resurrection (posited here as part of the sacrificial event)¹⁴² is absolutely essential for the understanding of this sacrifice, and through it all sacrifice correlates to a liturgical anthropology. The union of man and God is signified itself in being a return of man to God. For Christ, “the taking up again of life is not a matter of an egotistical reward, [for] the death of Jesus leads to resurrection and return to the Father.”¹⁴³ So the gift of God to creation (given), and from creation as received (this is to include the Incarnate Absolute), finds its purpose in the return (union with the resurrection sacramentally). All of creation, “every creature, to the very core of its existence, is received”¹⁴⁴ and in its return, presents itself as a giving-back. Any voids (lacking) caused by ulterior motives in man’s giving, including any half-heartedness, are consumed, filled-in and made complete in union with the Absolute’s sacrifice. It is not a matter of each person’s sacrifice qualifying as pure, as some separate distinct act, but man’s sacrifices are corporately attached to the Absolute.

This sacrifice is not to be construed as an over-simplification, that as all things are in relation to God, or that regardless of motive they are simply made complete by the Absolute with

¹⁴¹ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 9.

¹⁴² Certain theologies have connected the sacrifice of the cross as the completion of the Paschal supper Christ began with His apostles the evening prior.

¹⁴³ Johnstone, “The Ethics of Gift,” 12.

¹⁴⁴ Barron, “The Liturgical Self,” 27.

or without man's participation or contribution, i.e., the misunderstanding that all is grace leading to grace subverting nature resulting in an extrinsic righteousness. Neither is it legitimate to "adopt an alternative approach and allow the things of the world to confront us in their enigmatic *thereness*, suspending the idea of God as the one who creates and grants them"¹⁴⁵ thus disconnecting creation from the Creator's *ruah*. The right middle is an acceptance of Christ's *kenosis* as a necessary anthropological donative characteristic inherent in man (*imago Dei*).

3. Sacrifice: Christian Liturgical Rites and Modern Culture

The standard of donation (givenness) that is being proposed here is not only rare in modern culture, it is in fact sheerly impossible. That has been the very good point of Marion and Derrida. This particular impossibility is the difficulty that a liturgical approach is meant to correct, or to put it more aptly, only with the union of the pure sacrifice of Christ is *any* sacrifice capable of bringing satisfaction to the impossibility of man's pure self-donation. That is not to mean though that there are not instances of exemplary sacrifice which testify to the donative quality within man. "The existence of saints—or should I say, the belief that saints are possible bears witness to the wonder of gratuitous donation."¹⁴⁶ But arguably for all others who don't have an official cause or feast day on the calendar, it appears that everyday, ordinary living flat out precludes man's ability to truly 'give of himself' to the other in any radical way.

It is sometimes thought, in a rather pedestrian sort of analysis, that since sacrifice involves a destruction (a giving away), any significant self-donation leaves a deficit, and to perform such actions repeatedly is to give more than one could, or perhaps even to give more than one should. A radical self-donation can easily leave one in a state of constant uncertainty, for when one gives, one never knows how much more will be asked for in the future, or if

¹⁴⁵ Johnstone, "The Ethics of Gift," 5.

¹⁴⁶ Adriaan Theodoor Peperzak, *Beyond the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1997), 227.

another individual's sacrificial demand will erupt, or if one's own misfortune will arise in a life circumstance leaving the would-be sacrificer to 'play it safe'. All futures are uncertain.

Man craves consistency. That is his antidote in overcoming this anxiousness, and that consistency is often the enemy of sacrifice. The truth is that "to live for the other makes man escape vain repetition by the sacrifice of a *specific kind of concern for himself*"¹⁴⁷ precisely by entering an uncertain future or landscape. The gratification received in 'doing for another' is not the reward, as may be thought of in a causal relation, i.e, thinking that the gratification from sacrificing itself brings the satisfaction. Rather satisfaction is not the result of a cause, but is an *effect* that flows from the act. For instance, a child helps his mother with chores out of love and devotion, not for the purpose of winning the mother's affection, but satisfaction (affection) nonetheless appears as an affect being part of the act. The child sacrificing for his mother becomes that special kind of concern for man himself, for his own personhood. Even the ascetic who adheres to a strict temperate life, exhibiting continence in all pursuits, is not living in strict contradiction to givenness by being gratified with a sacrifice. When contributing "to [another's] well-being, man does not feel mutilated by a law of self-centered asceticism. There can be contentment in his sacrifice"¹⁴⁸ without that being the nullifying feature. Asceticism can retain a truly sacrificial disinterested posture where *the* sacrifice remains in the presence of, and in spirit of personal gratification (effect).

Rather than work out the details of a historical illustration in modern culture to make this point concrete, the fictional short story of Isak Dinesen entitled, "Babette's Feast" will appropriately serve the purpose. The story *in nuce* is the nineteenth century tale of two sisters, Phillipa and Martine. They are both the aging unmarried daughters of a Puritan-like Protestant

¹⁴⁷ Peperzak, *Beyond the Philosophy*, 187.

¹⁴⁸ Peperzak, *Beyond the Philosophy*, 187.

pastor. With their father deceased, they live out their lives in a dull grey Norwegian fishing village, eating plain peasant fare (they lived purposively as ascetics) while maintaining their father's congregational sect. Enter Babette Hersant, a French woman who "in desperate circumstances, widowed and caught up in Civil War in Paris, has fled France"¹⁴⁹ to assume the cooking tasks of their household. After some time working as their servant, Babette learns that she has won a lottery back in France and is awarded 10,000 francs. Aware that Phillipa and Martine were planning a scarce celebration for their father's would-be 100th birthday, Babette persuades the sisters to allow her to prepare a lavish meal, using her lottery winnings. Thinking that Babette would now return to France with her new found fortune, and not wishing to diminish Babette's sincere gesture, they concede to her plan with the proviso that along with the congregants of their father's sect, they will act as though they enjoy none of the delicacies. "It will be as if we never had any sense of taste,"¹⁵⁰ the sisters and congregation agreed. That is except for a visiting guest, the General Löwenhielm, who unaware of their plans to feign delight, exclaims during the meal at the exquisiteness of the amontillado wine and the luscious turtle soup. The General remarks that he cannot recall eating so well, except some time ago in France at the Parisian *Cafe Anglais*.

The festive meal evolves into more than a mere celebration, for by means of the good company, the lavish spread, the delicate foods and fine wine, old relationships are restored and division and sin are healed. Two things become disclosed to the sisters, one is that their very own Babette was "the fabled chef of the *Cafe Anglais* and [surprisingly she] will not be returning to

¹⁴⁹ Valerie O'Connell, "Babette's Feast," *Nordic Notes* Vol. 11, p1-1. 1p (2007).

¹⁵⁰ O'Connell, "Babette's Feast," 2007.

[France as] she had spent her entire lottery winnings”¹⁵¹ without regret on their feast. Babette’s sacrificial gift became and *was* their communal feast.

This tale has clear Christological overtones and dramatizes the eschatological banquet. “The progress of the supper mirrors the rhythm of the liturgical rite; the general’s examination of conscience serves as the *anamnesis*...and the miracle becomes embodied in the community gathered there.”¹⁵² Though the self-donative nature of Babette is not total, it remains supremely genuine. She did not give everything she had, but everything that was given to her (lottery winnings) she gave (returned) willingly. Thought Marion and Derrida would still find this giving diminished, at the least in considering the expected admiration of Phillipa, Martine and the villagers as the ‘reward’. But the clue to this sacrifice being gift is not that it was total (or pure), but that she withheld nothing that was given to her as gift; she gave everything she had. For Babette recognized her new-found fortune was not truly her property (*ousia*), only that she was the custodian—in that regard, her gift was total and “that she had given everything not simply for them but because within each is the cry to be given the chance to be the best they can be.”¹⁵³ That best (her meal as sacrifice-gift) satisfies her unrest. This ‘village saint,’ Babette, remained faithful and steadfast, as she understood the unrest can only be satiated in returning the *givenness* she herself had experienced as given.

This exposes and emphasizes something of man’s participation in the Eucharistic rite that is necessary to grasp for this theme of pure gift and givenness to be understood in a liturgical experience. As stated, pure givenness is not just possible, but actual. This is not because it appears or manifests in the absence of an ulterior motive. Perhaps it is not even how it remains

¹⁵¹ Wendy M. Wright, “Babette’s Feast: A Religious Film,” *Journal of Religion and Film* 1, no. 2 (October 1997), §8.

¹⁵² Wright, “Babette’s Feast.” §19.

¹⁵³ Wright, “Babette’s Feast.” §8.

free from any cycle of exchange, but in that the sacrifice as gift can be connected to Christ's givenness and His return—for all that He had, which was and is sufficient was given in sacrifice as gift. The liturgical rite in an infinitely rich way, makes that sacrifice as gift manifest in the *eternal now* (indeed the givenness of Christ returning all to the Father is continuous) not merely recalled, but present in the Kingdom for man. This is *anamnesis*, and it “is not expressed as the recovery or memory of a past event, but as the naming and celebration of a present gift.”¹⁵⁴ Here in the liturgical rite, man unites his sacrifices and devotion, limp as they may be, to the Absolute's pure gift. Man's living is truly a liturgical living, and it is brought to “the altar, where all other acts of worship find their consummation.”¹⁵⁵ The purity, if here we try to satisfy Marion's and Derrida's concern, is not in man's sacrifice as gift weighed or evaluated in isolation, i.e., not just the purity of motive. It must be determined to be pure in its intent of meaningful connection, or better yet, in how it is liturgically attached to Christ's pure sacrifice as gift. The key is to not see Christ's victory over death, or any other aspect of His return itself as the reward. With Christ's sacrifice as gift in submitting His will to the Father's will, “faithfulness is the issue, not a reward.”¹⁵⁶ So too it is then with man, any fulfillment, or completion, or satisfaction of unrest is an issue of faithfulness and not a reward as understood in the common sense of the word. It is because man himself is gift, sustained by God's *ruah*, ‘sacrificing for’ with all that was given as a ‘returning to’, prompted by the innate aspiration (*imago Dei*) to sacrifice, drawing him to the relational union of giver and Receiver (Absolute). This is richer than the “human subject undertaking mimicry of the divine society, [reducing man] merely to an

¹⁵⁴ James G. Leachman and Daniel P. McCarthy, “The Formation of the Ecclesial Person Through Baptismal Preparation and the Celebrations in the RCIA: the Collects for the Scrutinies,” in *The Liturgical Subject: Subject, Subjectivity, and the Human Person in Contemporary Liturgical Discussion and Critique*, ed. James G. Leachman (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), 182.

¹⁵⁵ Simon Oliver, “The Holy Trinity and the Liturgical Subject,” in *The Liturgical Subject: Subject, Subjectivity, and the Human Person in Contemporary Liturgical Discussion and Critique*, 2009, 235.

¹⁵⁶ Johnstone, “The Ethics of Gift,” 2004.

actor within a ritual game.”¹⁵⁷ Some ethical applications of Trinitarian modeling can easily fall prey to that scheme. It also moves above Derrida’s necessary criteria of absolute purity of the gift and the reciprocation he thought otherwise rendered that gift *impossible*. As it is connected to Christ’s *givenness*, it remains pure while existing in an economy of exchange because it is absorbed into that Divine exchange from which it itself receives its efficacy.

B. The Phenomena of Gift

1. Gift: The Presentation of Mauss

With sacrifice linked to gift, and the purity preserved in terms of the liturgical economy, Mauss discloses something more temporal concerning the phenomena of gift. Of course, it is a socio-anthropological study which he undertook, but that approach does not limit the value of a phenomenological discovery in his work. The anthropological discourse of the gift (Mauss) and the phenomenological discourse of givenness seem to belong to different spheres, with “no semantic continuity between the givenness of the given in phenomenology and the activity of giving gifts”¹⁵⁸ in anthropology. But part of this study is to entertain the notion that gift giving and the purity sought by Husserl, Derrida, Marion, *et. al.*, is not linked by the vocabulary of purity, but *via* the liturgical bridge of sacrifice as gift. That very suggestion does not reside comfortably within Mauss’ treatment, but neither does that treatment totally exclude it.

The presentation of gift with Mauss centers around the understanding of the idea of *potlatch*.¹⁵⁹ This *potlatch* signifies what Mauss refers to as the *system of total services of an agnostic type* that is somewhat exhaustively inclusive as it represents both “rules and ideas contained in a type of law and economy that obliges a person to reciprocate the [gift] that has

¹⁵⁷ Oliver, “The Holy Trinity,” 235.

¹⁵⁸ See O’Leary, “The Gift,” 9-10.

¹⁵⁹ Mauss used this term as he found it to be the “purest type of such institutions characterized by the alliance of two phratries in Pacific or North American tribes in general, where rituals, marriages, inheritance of goods, legal ties and those of self-interest, the ranks of the military and priests - in short everything, is complementary and presumes cooperation between the two halves of the tire.” See Mauss, *The Gift*, pp. 5-7.

been received.”¹⁶⁰ Part of this concept is that *potlatch* existed prior to any monetary exchanges, so it is not synonymous with currency. Gifts were given and reciprocated in the absence of any formal contract to guard against exceptions. It was the role of various cultural pressures that maintained some sort of equilibrium.¹⁶¹ The gift’s “surety lies in the quality of the thing given, which is itself surety.”¹⁶²

This *institution of total services* carries with it two obligations, “the obligation, on the one hand, to give [gifts], and on the other, to receive them.”¹⁶³ It is clear how this exchange witnesses to “a double relationship between donor and recipient. It brings the giver closer, but also creates a debt. It creates a dissymmetry, a hierarchy between giver and receiver.”¹⁶⁴ In fact to return a ‘gift’ does not cancel a debt. Rather it sets “up flows of services, mutual assistance and reciprocal obligations of solidarity” [meaning that to] give in return does not mean to repay, which is hard for a Western mind to grasp.”¹⁶⁵ Not only is reciprocation not the equivalent of repaying, but the gift given is not some bestowal disconnected from the giver. “The gift, unlike an impersonal commodity, for Mauss is too personal and very integral to the identity of the giver for someone to just reject it.”¹⁶⁶ It is an endowment of the giver himself that initiates these reciprocal commitments holding both giver and receiver accountable for the continuance.

a) Limits of Mauss: Difficulties of an Economical Approach

¹⁶⁰ Mauss, *The Gift*, 7.

¹⁶¹ See Mauss, *The Gift*, Chapter II, pp. 19-46 for a full description of this concept.

¹⁶² Mauss, *The Gift*, 35.

¹⁶³ Mauss, *The Gift*, 13.

¹⁶⁴ Maurice Godelier, “Some Things You Give, Some Things You Sell, but Some Things You Must Keep for Yourselves: What Mauss Did Not Say about Sacred Objects” in *The Enigma of Gift and Sacrifice*, eds. Edith Wyschogrod, Jean-Joseph Gouz, Eric Boynton, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 22.

¹⁶⁵ Godelier, “Some Things You Give”, 26.

¹⁶⁶ Olson, “Excess, Time and the Pure Gift,” 354.

There is much overall to be gleaned from Mauss' seminal study on the gift. It must be conceded that based on cultural observations alone though, the economical approach¹⁶⁷ his treatment displays is limited for this study. Many have found altruism, a necessary prescription for pure gift, to be found wanting in Mauss' system. The motivation is clouded by an ever present constraint, for "according to Mauss, the giving of a [gift] to someone is not a voluntary action because any gift involves obligation and economic self-interest."¹⁶⁸ This remains an enigma for those espousing the need for the gift to be free of that quality of market exchange, where as a being-in-the-world, "the contemporary Western self appears perhaps most clearly in the dynamics of the marketplace."¹⁶⁹ This is shattered only when it is understood and accepted that when one gives, what is in essence given is not truly original to the individual. Then "all the pretentiousness that otherwise is associated with giving disappears since what was received from the other is given to the other"¹⁷⁰ not in an economic exchange, but a gift cycle embodied within a community. What was given and received as a gift, is in reality being returned to its source, and that source is not the individual himself. What was given is part of creation, which itself is the gift of the Creator to no single individual, family or culture. That is to mean all creation is purposed towards a universal destination. When the gift is brought outside of the market exchange, and is motivated by a sacrifice of the individual, then and only then is man able "to establish a bond of solidarity and love that transcends the logic of market exchange."¹⁷¹ Welded to the sacrifice of the Absolute (Creator), this sacrifice does not even terminate upon its return.

¹⁶⁷ It is readily admitted here that what Mauss' observed is not identical with the Western business economy, but still it remains an economical system.

¹⁶⁸ Olson, "Excess, Time and the Pure Gift," 352.

¹⁶⁹ Barron, "The Liturgical Self," from author's footnote.

¹⁷⁰ Søren Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, 1978, 411.

¹⁷¹ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 114.

The gift is not just a return to the Creator, but “it is as though [man’s] gift breaks against the rock of the divine self-sufficiency and redounds”¹⁷² perpetuating a liturgical gift cycle.

2. Gift: Conflicts and Resolution - Derrida and Marion

The difficulties mentioned in the previous section on the limits of the gift are the very concerns of Derrida and Marion, in whether the action of giving retains any semblance to remaining a genuine gift. For both, it must overcome that horizon of economic exchange. Derrida finds that at the moment something is even identified and recognized as a gift, “it is cancelled as a gift. It is reintroduced into the circle of an exchange and destroyed.”¹⁷³ He never was able to find a way out of this conundrum. For Derrida the three elements of gift, i.e., the donor, the gift and the donee, are also the “elements of the gift against it in order to show its impossibility. [They correspond to] the annulment, the annihilation, and the destruction of the gift.”¹⁷⁴ This is not to say that man is not capable of the pure gift (there is no other for Derrida). It does assert that “the gift does not exist and appear as [being present and intuitively identified]...through this impossibility, [but that the gift] must be the experience of this impossibility, and [the gift] should appear as impossible.”¹⁷⁵

This thinking of Derrida can be and has been parsed out, and it sometimes remains unclear as to what exactly is being proposed. But it follows from his line of thinking that declaring the gift impossible (pure gift) doesn’t mean any enterprise of philosophy to get to the crux of the issue should remain untraveled. A way to grasp his thinking is to realize that Derrida used Kant’s distinction between *thinking* and *knowing* as an analogy with intentionality of the gift. He made the point that even “if we cannot *know* these things, because we reach a limit, we

¹⁷² Barron, “The Liturgical Self,” 29.

¹⁷³ Derrida and Marion, “On the Gift,” 59.

¹⁷⁴ Olson, “Excess, Time and the Pure Gift,” 359.

¹⁷⁵ Derrida, “On the Gift,” 59.

still should *think* them.”¹⁷⁶ The limits of Derrida for this study, in answer to that point, is that “the deconstruction he is trying to practice is impossible, is *the* impossible—precisely an experience of *the* impossible,”¹⁷⁷ but that *that* impossible is an eschatological reality which cannot in reality be made present. Derrida might concede that the approbation of the gift, its recognition, can be realized in the heavenly Kingdom (eschatological reality), but not in the here-and-now pre-eschatological Kingdom. This study will conclude that the liturgical *anamnesis* satisfies Derrida’s objection, but his point would continue that that experience (eschatological reality) is not phenomenologically possible as an event.

Marion’s problematic of the gift is very Heideggerian...[brought] out of the horizon of onto-theology and to take up the ‘gifting of gift’, where Derrida has to do primarily with the economy of credit and debt.¹⁷⁸ It might be deduced, that what genuinely divides Marion and Derrida is not so much their analysis of gift and whether a phenomenological analysis of the event can occur, but that they hold a “differing idea of a Messiah. For Marion it is one who has already pitched his tent among us in the flesh and for Derrida, He is structurally a Messiah who is to come.”¹⁷⁹ To a great extent, if the gift being spoken of here given by the Creator (Messiah), “is the gift of creation, then [it is not so much as there is] a debt owed to God, but the gift of creation becomes something affirmed and celebrated.”¹⁸⁰ In Marion’s schema of the gift, it is understood pure when it is reduced to givenness by means of bracketing. He means by this reduction that one thinks “the gift as gift, abstracting from the triple transcendence that affected

¹⁷⁶ Derrida, “On the Gift,” 73.

¹⁷⁷ Derrida, “On the Gift,” 72.

¹⁷⁸ See John D. Caputo’s analysis of Derrida’s and Marion’s dialogue on the matter for a fuller discussion, “On the Gift,” 77.

¹⁷⁹ John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon, introduction to “On the Gift: A Discussion between Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion” Moderated by Richard Kearney. In *God, the Gift and Postmodernism*. eds. John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon. 54-78. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), 15.

¹⁸⁰ Caputo, introduction to “On the Gift,” 15.

it, by bracketing the transcendence of gift.”¹⁸¹ Any actual object given (jewelry), token representation (grandfather's watch) or one's time (raked mom's leaves), which constitutes the usual understanding of gift are mere visual supports that make the gift concrete. For Marion though, the object appears gradually and manifests as the gift only “at the moment when the giver him considers it for the first time to be a gift or, more exactly to be givable.”¹⁸²

a) **Ulterior Motives and the Kingdom**

The ulterior motives are critiques of the gift that threaten these schemas, whether speaking of an existent object for Derrida or Marion's appearance of givenness. There is always the possibility for the apparent abuse of a potential gift. For example, it is always possible the gift itself will have power over the recipient, in how it “can be used to persuade a donee to do things he would not think of doing otherwise.”¹⁸³ Consider how the gift can become a debt leveraged against the receiver, and the gift need not be ‘good’. It can be distorted purposefully for a malevolent end. All that is required is that it supports the intent for a present or future need from the receiver back to the giver. Here is a clear, though dramatic (literally) extreme example: In the fictional novel by Mario Puzo “The Godfather,” Veto Corleone (godfather character) is approached by a man named Bonasera who is asking for a service. The legal system failed to bring justice to Bonasera's daughter when two young men, during a molestation attempt, left her permanently disfigured. Corleone offers to satisfy justice on his behalf,¹⁸⁴ referring to it as ‘performing a service’ (giving a gift?) that creates a future debt owed then by Bonasera.

¹⁸¹ Jean-Luc Marion, *The Visible and the Revealed*, trans. Christina M. Gschwandtner and others, New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2008), 89.

¹⁸² Marion, *The Visible and the Revealed*, 91.

¹⁸³ J. Van Baal, “Offering, Sacrifice and Gift,” *Numen* Vol. 23, Fasc. 3 (Dec. 1976), 167.

¹⁸⁴ The fact that Corleone was beholden to grant this request, as tradition holds that the godfather is to grant requests made of him on the day of his daughter's wedding, ironically places him too in the position of carrying out the wishes of a gift that he might otherwise turn away. The traditional *gift* of providing his ‘protection’ is given to those within his community (family) that binds him to perform nefarious services; even if he is willingly participating and perpetuating the exchange cycle.

Corleone tells Bonasera that ‘someday, and that day may never come’, he will be expected to return the favor. Here the gift persuades the receiver to agree to a possible return of ‘service’ that otherwise, in the absence of the debt created by the gift may not be met with compliance.

Certainly there are less nefarious, though universal forms of ulterior motives that one could imagine leading to abuse. A person may give a gift out of desire for prestige; many a hospital wing, school addition, scholarship, etc., bear the name of the donor in prominent bright letters. Or a person may give his time, say helping those in the neighborhood with maintenance, motivated primarily by other’s adulation, i.e., “That Tom is such a nice guy. He’s always helping others.” Another common experience is the proverbial employee who flatters his supervisor or befriends the administrator to gain favor or appear important. Stepped down a bit, there then is the teacher’s pet that subtly hopes to gain undue influence over his assessments and grades, i.e., the stereotypical ‘brown-noser’ who does his best to mask his motive as deep interest.

The last few examples are simply ‘banking’ on a debt that stems from their ‘gift’ (praise, and it need not be feigned) given merely to press for some varying degree of leverage over the receiver. The receiver may even willingly participate in the cycle (it raises esteem and control), which enhances the scandal and puts in place a corrupt system that merely encourages continued abuse. These are such common experiences (stereotypes), because they are terribly successful. It becomes the way to ‘move up the corporate ladder’ or it is often explained dismissively as how everyone ‘does business.’ All of these have the common thread of some form of self-concern motivating the gift. But the real degradation of the gift exchange is in how it mockingly imitates the pure gift. The purity (or lack of purity) of the gift is connected rather symbiotically to the human person. The gift one gives is not a neutral object, it is “rather giving an active part of

oneself, which suggests that a gift is inalienably connected to the giver.”¹⁸⁵ A full-blown charlatan may admit attachment to the manipulating gift (Veto Corleone’s son Michael dropped the pretense once in private company),¹⁸⁶ but most would not consciously expose their motive, i.e., who wants to be identified as the company schmoozer or class brown noser? With the ulterior motive present, the gift could be severed from the giver, disconnecting intersubjectivity.

But the intention behind the gift, ulterior as it may, can still be classified as rather venial. Although no one wants to be discovered a fake, once the motive is void of an intrinsic evil, the many other dynamics involved might not cripple the gift or its intersubjectivity. For example, to frown on a friend who is an opportunist, is not equivalent to stating he desires the demise of the other. And here then is the catch, and the critique of Derrida and Marion on the necessity for the gift’s purity. The possibility (purity) of the gift is not whether it is without ulterior motive, but whether the individual (a gift is connected to the person) is attached liturgically to the Absolute.¹⁸⁷ In a liturgical relation, the affect of the ulterior motive evaporates. That is only possible if the individual is within the Kingdom.¹⁸⁸ “Liturgical formation as the subject is not through speculative mimesis, which in the end, may only be an idolatrous self-projection, but rather through incorporation”¹⁸⁹ into and with the Absolute. So outside of the Kingdom, as with Corleone’s service, being it is only meant to perpetuate his own criminal enterprise, the receiver

¹⁸⁵ Olson, “Excess, Time and the Pure Gift,” 353.

¹⁸⁶ Michael Corleone said to Senator Pat Geary, “We’re both part of the same hypocrisy Senator, but never think it applies to my family.”

¹⁸⁷ It is not absolute, but the purity spoken of here is not just evidenced in the conditions of the gift or act, but since gift and person are inextricably linked, the purity is attached too and conditioned by the individual gifting.

¹⁸⁸ It would be cumbersome, and possibly bleed too far into the theological realm here to work out the necessary conditions for being *in* the Kingdom, but for clarity’s sake something should be posited. Water/Trinitarian baptism is the necessary condition for entrance into this Kingdom, though there are other forms of baptism and God’s mercy is always at work: “*God has bound salvation to the sacrament of Baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments,*” CCC §1257. Beyond this, the natural law arguments take affect, i.e., “All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law” (See Rm. 2:12-RSV). There is also the condition of remaining in the Kingdom. Certain actions (gifts) not properly ordered towards the Absolute that disconnect one from the Kingdom (Veto Corleone’s service) and others that may merely strain the relationship (the corporate schmoozer) need to be considered *in toto*.

¹⁸⁹ Oliver, “The Holy Trinity and the Liturgical Subject,” 241.

(Bonasera) becomes a reflection of the giver (Corleone) for the giver's sake and he himself is estranged from the Kingdom with or without the qualities of the subjective 'gift'.

Contrarily inside the Kingdom a genuine gift (even if impure) is never just between the giver and receiver, but in and with the Absolute. So, provided the gift of the donor, the schmoozer or the brown noser are not an objectively illicit or intrinsic evil, the good in it could not only be salvaged, but united relationally with the Absolutes' in liturgical ritual. For example, the fact that one's name is attached to every philanthropic endeavor (the name becomes a brand) may be a reflective symbol of the donor's business savvy or family wealth, but as in itself it can be venial, does not *ipso facto* present an ulterior motive that destroys the gift.

This does not mean to suggest that the Absolute rectifies gifts in the world *carte blanche*, filling in the shortcomings and smoothing over the impure motives. It simply acknowledges that Derrida has a point, and with Marion's reduction to givenness both are attempting to rectify the obvious, i.e., all gifts on this side of the horizon (save the Absolute's) are impure. It is only a matter of to what degree. Man is in the world, and that coupled with his nature leaves the pure gift always beyond reach. The horizons for man remain at a distance; earth is still his place and the World his domain. But "the experiential practice of liturgy can open up a space where neither world nor earth is interposed between man and God."¹⁹⁰ This establishes a bridge over and above any latent ulterior motives (actually in spite of them) that may even remain within the liturgical approach—for this is still man's pre-eschatological state.

b) The Liturgical Approach: Satisfying Difficulties

That liturgical approach as it is employed here, is the *liturgical rite* amplified and expanded. The ritual establishes the incorporation (relation), or as it will be understood here, pronounces the relation more acutely (liturgy is being expanded from the ritual, but never

¹⁹⁰ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 28.

disconnected from it). These rituals are crucial, for “without rituals a part of reality remains veiled for man. Ritual is part of that reality, because it participates in it.”¹⁹¹ The ritual staves off any idolatry (reflection back to the self) when the Absolute remains at its center, even if the fullness of the Absolute is veiled from man and man has ulterior motives. “It begins not with the *initiative* of the Father, but with the *self-offering* initiative of the Father in the gift-sending of the Son to and for man.”¹⁹² The return of the Son to the Father (Passion, Death and Resurrection) then becomes memorialized in the liturgical rite as man’s source and summit. But that rite is a sacrificial gift of the full Body (self-offering of the Son Jesus as Head and the members as the Body) offered at the hands of the celebrant. What is offered are “the human actions that are empowered by the same Spirit that was in Jesus [forming] a mutually self-giving, mutually self-communicating personal relationship with”¹⁹³ the Trinitarian God. This does not mean liturgical living is capable of increasing the rite’s affect or value in itself, but that it connotes something specific about intra-subjective relationality. This accessional alliance becomes both a personal and communal tone of man’s relation (returning) to God.

The Kingdom is that pre-eschatological horizon for man; everything is in the Kingdom, but not all belongs to the Kingdom. The value of the liturgical rite is renewed as relevant for man in this Kingdom, for the “liturgy will again become credible when it fulfills the condition of becoming integrated into human existence.”¹⁹⁴ Liturgical living spoken of here, rather than some panpsychistic approach, implicates the thrust of man’s vertical relation *to* God played out in the horizontal relation *for* God as his human existence. At the time “when liturgy becomes implicit

¹⁹¹ Lukken, “No Life Without Rituals,” 112.

¹⁹² Robert Daly, “New Developments in the Theology of Sacrifice,” *Liturgical Ministry* 18 (Spring 2009), 52.

¹⁹³ Daly, “New Developments in the Theology of Sacrifice,” 52

¹⁹⁴ Lukken, “Liturgy and Secularization,” 61.

in the world, [man would then be] living in a theophonic world.”¹⁹⁵ This would be fully realized kairotic time. All is indeed gift, but yet this gift must be distinguished from that ‘common energy’. In the gift, one experiences the phenomena of God’s manifestation, but this gift does not bring God to man. It is in fact the very opposite.

Perhaps one of the dynamics of gift and giving attributed to Mauss can be recognized as beneficial to the apprehension of the seemingly ubiquitous gift in the world. Mauss witnessed how the gift given had seized a life of its own, and in doing so lent itself as a socio-economic stabilizing exchange. Leaving the notion of exchange aside for this proposition, where the common gift is part of the environment (*World*) suited for man as a subject in his relation to the Absolute, that universality means every person shares the experience. This takes the sting out of any critique of Marion’s project, as Joseph O’Leary points out in “The Gift at the Crossroads of Philosophy and Anthropology”, how Marion did not adequately account that inherently “there is a pluralism in phenomenological experience.”¹⁹⁶ In a sense, he is asking if Marion’s enterprise is deficient by being too all-encompassing. But the phenomena of gift Marion proposed, suggests aptly that the gift is always present, somehow and somewhere. Here then is the parallel; in the same way that one should not think that the gift, due to its inherent pluralism in phenomenal experiences is rendered to pure subjectivity, one should not posit that the *everywhereness* of gift in liturgical living renders the stabilizing affect sterile. In liturgy it is connected to the rite that properly grounds it and feeds it (source and summit) as an ideal gift. It becomes and remains sufficient *omnibus et singulis* (for all and each).

There is an inherent hiddenness for man in this liturgy: (*leito-ergos*, loosely, the public work of the people). The people’s work is incorporated into the Father’s work, and through

¹⁹⁵ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 103.

¹⁹⁶ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2006.

participation, “the hiddenness of the Father is disclosed by making manifest where *man* cannot go, or where *man* cannot have access to without great difficulty.”¹⁹⁷ Man’s world then, as the host of the liturgical event, propels man’s desire beyond the World towards an eschatological accomplishment (the already-but-not-yet). The World as man’s sphere and the earth as man’s place align with the liturgical living (sacrifice’s sphere) and the altar (sacrifice’s place). These spheres and places are not just inter-related, but inter-dependent. “The altar has the power to make available the hiddenness and knowledge of the unknown God...it itself is *not* a place (no *re-enactment*), it is precisely what *makes places*.”¹⁹⁸

Something further could be said on this application of a liturgical approach rectifying and satisfying the difficulty of the notion of gift as the requirement for a genuine and pure gift. With Levinas the obligatory character of the gift-event was external; it was a *giving* being outside of one’s self. This always reduced the purity. That notion of this type of *giving* carried with it, perhaps not a strict requirement, but a burden that compelled the individual to give. This is something both Derrida and Marion inherited from Levinas. Derrida followed that the destruction of the gift occurred once the gift was identified as such, and Marion’s approach reduced the gift to its givenness. Marion has whittled *gifthood* down to so pure a form that its actual phenomenological apparition is condemned to be a rare and fleeting event.¹⁹⁹ This, for them either avoided an economic model from appearing, or one of the ulterior motives coming to the fore and disabling the gift from its purity. As in either outcome, there is some imbalance between giver and receiver that a hierarchy amidst the flow of those exchanges arises. Even the sociological observation of Mauss found that “the reciprocity of the gift is anything but mechanical. It is deeply affected by status differences between exchange partners, as the superior

¹⁹⁷ Hemming, “The Liturgical Subject,” 9.

¹⁹⁸ Hemming, “The Liturgical Subject,” 12.

¹⁹⁹ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 14.

gives more than the inferior.”²⁰⁰ No one simply gives something to another, or returns without comprise, i.e., the totality of the action is apparent. That superior/inferior dichotomy eventually leads to, and results in a de-stabilizing intersubjective effect.

The gift in a liturgical understanding must confront this experience in the natural attitude. Man as a being is not simple and neither is the attitude of giving. Whatever is interior seeks the language of enunciation and declaration in the World. “Any intense and serious act of the human mind and will clamors for outward expression.”²⁰¹ The gift itself is not the end, for it stand as a stark symbol that often eludes expression. And this gift as a “symbol has multiple meanings. It functions as a bridge across boundaries, referring to a deeper horizon.”²⁰² The transcendence of man in the World is manifested in this liturgical relationality, but “the relation with infinity cannot, to be sure, be stated in terms of experience, for infinity overflows²⁰³ the thought that thinks it.”²⁰⁴ So the horizon is not removed; recall that a horizon is always a perspective from one’s temporal position, receding as one draws closer. But it is not the horizon ‘moving away’ as much as it is a ‘drawing deeper’ of man to and into the Absolute. This is the role of ritual in man’s reality of his World, in terms of the purity deliberated here (either apparent and real). “Ritual condenses reality. It focuses attention on itself in a peculiar way in order to be able in and through that to reach the undefinable reality.”²⁰⁵ What eludes man (horizon) in the World, remains present with him in the Kingdom in terms of a march that takes the form of the commencement of the gift. Even in the pre-eschatological Kingdom, man becomes aware of his

²⁰⁰ Baal, “Offering, Sacrifice and Gift,” 164.

²⁰¹ Leo Francis Miller, “St. Thomas’ Doctrine on Sacrifice,” *Orate Fratres* 3, no.2 D 30 (1928), 4.

²⁰² Lukken, “No Life Without Rituals,” 89.

²⁰³ Marion’s notion of saturated phenomena can be seen expressed in this attitude.

²⁰⁴ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 25.

²⁰⁵ Lukken, “No Life Without Rituals,” 105.

impure gifting²⁰⁶ (it is his state of being), but it does not exclude him from the gift *becoming* pure any more than it would exclude him from being in the Kingdom as it too is a *not yet*. “The prelude at an altar is not simply a temporo-spatial journey, but also a *preparation of the self*.”²⁰⁷ At the altar, united with the Absolute’s Gift (the one true and pure sacrifice) man’s imperfections become perfect, his impurities are reckoned pure and the gift reaches the pinnacle of purity and return in the World of the already-but-not-yet. The donative value of man’s gift forms “a double pattern of return: the offertory is man’s return of the gift of creation, his counter-gift; the Eucharistic Prayer is man’s return of the gift of redemption.”²⁰⁸ In man’s gift then the liturgical living becomes united with Christ’s giving in the Eucharistic rite. And there one discovers “an exchange that possesses the character of asymmetrical reciprocity—*analogatum princeps* of love—[where there exists] the difference which flows the *gift*.”²⁰⁹ But as this asymmetry surfaces, it is not one of power, control or manipulation (a debt owed) that taints the gift, but in actuality the asymmetry is central to man’s participation in that pure gift of the Absolute.

c) Asymmetrical Reciprocity in the Phenomena of Gift

With the gift, there are always various layers of asymmetry between giver and receiver that surface, and each offer a certain amount of insight into this study. “The ceremonial presentations of gifts reveal a fundamental structure of reciprocity as condition of all social life in the human species.”²¹⁰ So it is true that all intersubjective relationality by nature is

²⁰⁶ One form of the Penitential Rite in the Western Eucharistic liturgy begins with *Confiteor Deo omnipotenti* (I confess to almighty God...) acknowledging among other things the unworthiness of one’s own sacrifice being presented to the Absolute. It is probably worth noting also that another factor necessary is reconciliation. In the Didache §14 it reads, “...confess your sins, so that your sacrifice may be pure. However, no one quarreling with his brother may join your meeting until they are reconciled; your sacrifice must not be defiled. For here we have the saying of the Lord: ‘In every place and time offer me a pure sacrifice; for I am a mighty King, says the Lord; and my name spreads terror among the nations.’”

²⁰⁷ Pickstock, *After Writing*, 186.

²⁰⁸ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2006.

²⁰⁹ Scola, *The Nuptial Mystery*, 296.

²¹⁰ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2005.

asymmetrical. In many ways “asymmetry...testifies that the other always remains other”²¹¹ and this is a necessary condition for sacrifice as gift. Between man and the Absolute, there is an infinite asymmetry between giving and receiving. “[Man] receives everything—the world, one’s existence—but man gives very little in return. One might say that giving sets the seal on one’s awareness of receiving, and attests eloquently to universal givenness.²¹² But even in the asymmetry of ‘God to man’ and ‘man to God’, there are aspects of that phenomena that appear in the horizontal man-to-man asymmetrical relation. This “basic asymmetry of the social relation is expressed in a phrase of Dostoyevsky often quoted by Levinas: “We are all responsible before all for everything and everybody, and I more than others.”²¹³

Above and beyond all of these lies liturgical asymmetry where gift is not determined by a zero-sum equation, utilitarian obligation or Kingdomless ulterior motives. The gift must begin in this relationship “not in the separated subject, nor in the separated object, but in the relationship of subject to subject, *via* [the sacrifice as] the act of giving.”²¹⁴ This notion necessitates asymmetry. It allows “being itself to give itself without being exhausted. In giving itself, [the Absolute] reveals (*re-velere*) itself...[where] in finite beings Being reveals itself as *promise* and *foretaste*.”²¹⁵ It is a foretaste of the eschatological fulfillment in the already-but-not-yet. In liturgical asymmetry, “the notion of ‘merit’ will no longer be thought of in terms of reward in the economic sense [exchange, not monetary], but as the completion of the divine gift”²¹⁶ where man in “the flesh completes what is lacking in Christ's afflictions” (Cl 1:24). The other remains other, and the other remains a subject. In each relation, “the cross formed by an asymmetric but

²¹¹ Scola, *The Nuptial Mystery*, 94.

²¹² O’Leary, “The Gift,” 11-12.

²¹³ Peperzak, *Beyond the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas*,” 13.

²¹⁴ Johnstone, “The Ethics of Gift,” 15.

²¹⁵ Scola, *The Nuptial Mystery*, 120.

²¹⁶ Johnstone, “The Ethics of Gift,” 16.

double devotion is the normal kind of intersubjectivity”²¹⁷ necessary for the gift to be expressed in liturgical living and rite.

III. Liturgical Anthropology

A. Man in the World

1. The World: Man’s Horizon and Context for Relation

Any context for the ulterior motives or reciprocity, any understanding of a liturgical approach satisfying the difficulties of Derrida or Marion is initiated from man’s current state of existence. This concept of ‘natural attitude’ was spoken of earlier, now it can be placed alongside man’s ‘world’ horizon to offer some context for his relationality. As all philosophy it is said, studies the obvious, then any investigation into man, his intersubjectivity and perceptions of the world must begin with what is obviously before him. It was Husserl who termed this ‘obviously before man’ idea as the *natural world*. This “*natural world*, [is] the world in the ordinary sense of the word, [that which] is *constantly* there. It is man’s *natural standpoint*.”²¹⁸ On the face of it, this appears a rather uninspiring claim, but it is a purposeful starting point. Man cannot be spoken of authentically dissected from this world and knowledge of it. It is important to note that the *world* spoken of here is not reducible to *earth*, which too has importance in this study. *World* includes that *location* (earth) as an understanding of man, because “the logic of place establishes itself as a logic of corporeal existence.”²¹⁹ The earth is where man is physically present, where the world is man’s environment, perceptions and experiences *in toto*. The distinction is that the term *world* is more expansive than corporeal existence as it further absorbs all those values and experiences both present and inherited, distant and proximate that this phenomenological thesis studies.

²¹⁷ Peperzak, *Beyond the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas*, 227.

²¹⁸ Husserl, *Ideas*, 54.

²¹⁹ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 9.

Within this world there appears a *horizon* to man that works to define his perspective. This horizon is part of man's experience, yet it is visibly distinct from the natural attitude in which he finds himself. This includes those elements and concepts that appear to be out of reach, whether prior to man or beyond him in time. Those things inherited of past-experiences and projections-forward too are part of that horizon; man's world includes a history and a future. "The world is not a collection of moving objects, it is the horizon for all the things there are, all that can be intended and given"²²⁰ to man. These things of the world, even though outside of the default perspective of man's natural attitude, are compatible with man's relation to the world. In fact it is the context for his relationally and horizon.

In addition to the natural environment being brought into man's consciousness, and man's past/future and surrounding experiences/hopes, there also must be considered how influential is the concept of the world-without-end, that consummation of all things referred to as the *eschaton*²²¹. This *eschaton* presents some final reality and is the last spoken word of the Absolute. From the earth and world man can have some conceptual glimpse of the beyond-this-life, but it is not proximate, and is fully accessible only through death. *Eschaton* always carries a certain amount of anxiety and angst for man. Knowledge about the Absolute as the Ultimate is not something that can be satisfied empirically. It remains illusive and therefore incomplete. "Every attempt we make to improve on how we speak of the Absolute is radically preceded by a veiling that it must presuppose, and which constitutes its horizon."²²² What improves this distance that man's horizon demarcates? Does not man exist in this state where he sees only through a glass dimly? Two things are found here to be universal, the relationally experienced on

²²⁰ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 43.

²²¹ This is a dynamic term. It can certainly refer to a personal eschatology, the time after death following the particular judgment. Here it is understood primarily from a more universal perspective as the time of the new heaven and the new earth, where there will be a Kingdom without end (see II Peter, 3:13).

²²² Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 108.

the earth/world stage and simultaneously its unquestionable *veiling*. There must be something that serves to bracket these contrasting presentations of earth, world and *eschaton* and without annihilating, still allow man to transcend what reaches out (unveil) from the *natural* state.

2. Liturgy: A Dialectic and Separation

Man remaining in the natural state comes not just at the expense of failing to reach towards experiencing the *eschaton*, but even the world out-there. It may appear that man cannot remain in the natural state, for such an atrophied existence would be meaningless. To only understand one's own existence in terms of biological considerations, totally imminent locked within creation, is a perspective lacking an authentic grasp of one's own humanity. Looking for a transcendental quality, there must be something outside of this Absolute reality (*eschaton*), breaking into the world of the being-there, to serve as a means of separation from the natural attitude. That dialectical tool is liturgy. It alone is totally sufficient for allowing these things of world and *eschaton* to unfold before man. Place is then bracketed [and] this bracketing is dialectic.²²³ Liturgy suggests a redefinition of place; no longer is it to be thought of as a being-there but as *being-toward*.²²⁴ Man's location, his 'place' becomes this state of *being-toward*.

This 'place' that man occupies reveals something about man. It is not simply joining world and earth, nor simply or merely transcending these locations. The location of man is essential for an adequate anthropology. This location becomes the status of "foreigner [*étranger*]" that defines man essentially rather than accidentally.²²⁵ The world is the host of the liturgical event, yet propels man's desire beyond the world towards some eschatological accomplishment. Liturgy can be broadly understood for the moment as that experience of anticipation towards that accomplishment, the *being-toward* but the *not yet*. Man as corporately

²²³ Consider how dialectic refines and peels off error or misconceptions as it moves closer to truth.

²²⁴ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 25.

²²⁵ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 12.

and relationally liturgical (the Body worships) stands as a witness to the *eschaton* which is the satisfaction of the ‘not yet.’ Passing the natural state “without leaving this world where [the Body] is *in statu viae*...[situates man] in pilgrimage to and in expectation of the Kingdom of God.”²²⁶ Being in the world does not necessitate belonging to the world. Liturgy addresses this bilocation as man transverses earth and world, “breaking the circular return from world to earth and from earth to world...meaning to think place and body as nearer to their origin or their accomplishment.”²²⁷

B. Liturgy as the Relation of God, Man and World

1. Liturgy: A Relational Work that Reflects the Creator

This dialectic between the world and earth is enriched by that third term, that of the Kingdom.²²⁸ This term has been used earlier, and left somewhat vague up onto this point. The Kingdom is a theological term, but is utilized here philosophically as it provides a means to address the location of man beyond the natural state, while both locating him in and transcending the world. This Kingdom is a pre-experience of the *eschaton*; it is the reality of the Absolute present in the World. It is a kairotic²²⁹ experience of a future fulfillment not immediately accessible. Even within this Kingdom there remains a restlessness. Man is not satisfied in the Kingdom, even if it does allow him to escape (in terms of transcendence) the world. But escaping the world involves the self-evident affirmation of realizing satisfaction is not accessible in this natural state. If liturgy serves as a means of dialectic and separation from this natural attitude and is proposed as the traversing factor, what is its origin? The origin of liturgy resides with the ‘beyond’ of man. Consider man’s innate desire to not just think thoughts, but to share

²²⁶ Alexander Schmemmann. *Of Water and the Spirit: A Liturgical Study of Baptism* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1974), 124.

²²⁷ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 32.

²²⁸ It would be premature to expand on it here, but the principle assertion will be that sacrifice uniquely allows one to traverse the world with the *eschaton*; see Lacoste, 74.

²²⁹ Understood as the Greek word Christians adopted to mean God’s time; it is used in distinction to linear time (*chronos*).

thoughts (language). Man is always pulled outside of himself and his thoughts fulfill a purpose with others; he is built to communicate. This is man's normal experience in the natural attitude even if sufficient reflection has not made him personally aware. Philosophical anthropology can demonstrate the relational characteristic of the human language in this regard, particularly the communicable nature of words themselves which build even our inner thoughts for the man in the natural state. Where the natural state is man's transcendental starting point, liturgy presents to the 'being-in-the-world' a search for satisfaction of restlessness 'beyond' the present earth and the present world, while in the Kingdom towards the *eschaton*.

Man begins by contemplating his participation in the world; man becomes conscious of who he is. Man is "ontically distinguished by the fact that in its being [he] is concerned *about* its very Being."²³⁰ Man becomes conscious of his world, conscious of the Kingdom and conscious of the lack of satisfaction found in either. Liturgical man, which it seems proper to call man at this point, enters the transcendental attitude²³¹ where "all the intentionalities that are being examined are suspended and neutralized."²³² Man as the *being-toward* the Absolute reflects (properly mimics) the Absolute as the *Being-towards* man. The dual sacramental twinning of God and Body disclose the Kingdom *within* the world and reveal (or begin to unveil) the *eschaton* in the distance which becomes acute in liturgical rite. This becomes "a horizon in which all things unfold for man. [The] sacrament is God placing Himself in the world."²³³ Man located in, and bracketing earth and world, transcends the restlessness disclosed from his natural state.

²³⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), 12.4-5, 10. Note: Here Heidegger is speaking of Dasein, contrasting the ontic from the ontological.

²³¹ Sokolowski refers to this language in the phenomenological attitude, as *transcendentalese*.

²³² Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 48.

²³³ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 45.

This breaking through of the sacramental nature of God in world is not a complete act. In fact, it may even allow the intensification of restlessness to appear more acute. The major factor is that *seeing* farther does not equal *seeing* clearer. This is especially true when the Absolute and the destiny of man is understood by the measure of divine perfection (pure gift). Man is still in the world, and ultimate truths are not directly intentional. This liturgical disclosure is not directly embedded in sensible signs. “Human reason...fails to grasp Divine things perfectly, on account of the sublimity of the truth they contain: and therefore there is need of signs by means of sensible figures.”²³⁴ But this too is not the whole of it, man is not confident of the source of his restlessness. In other words, a “restlessness does not bear clear and distinct witness to a desire for God, for it is a desire that does not know what it really desires.”²³⁵ Man continues to see through a glass dimly in the natural state. This restlessness is much more like continued thirst when the *well* is full. Man must be content with this restlessness simply bearing witness towards that beyond the earth, world, and even the Kingdom; like *man’s thirst*, the origin and location of appeasement lies ‘outside.’ Man’s restless desire reflects the presence of an Absolute outside of himself, presently unreachable.

2. Syntax Articulates Experiences: Liturgy is Evidentially Intersubjective

This liturgical disclosure of the Absolute discovered in the restlessness of man transcending the natural attitude is quite experiential. Once again, it can be said how the Cartesian method cannot adequately address this issue or offer any genuine relation of man to the world. Man’s thoughts may be his own, but they are never solely for him or from him and syntax discloses that observation. Anything that man predicates of another person, experience or

²³⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiæ*, I.II, q. 101, a. 2, ob. 2, r. 2, in *Summa theologiæ: Complete English Edition in Five Volumes*, vol. 2, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Notre Dame, IN: Christian Classics, 1948), 1053.

²³⁵ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 41.

concept is discovered as being embedded in his relationality with the outside. This relation itself predicates intelligibility. “Only within the context set by syntax do we let the intelligibilities of things become manifest to us. This illuminates the things we are experiencing, occurring in public conversation, not in isolation.”²³⁶ That was Sokolowski’s point in the earlier section, the formal structures of syntax are not merely an appendage used in the declarative proposition of what one knows, they say something deeper of his conscious relation to the world (the fourth, or philosophical level).

Here the focus is man making judgments from his experience; specifically in this study the easing of restlessness *via* recognizing liturgical relationally with the eschatological ‘beyond’ and the Absolute. If the focus of discovery of these concepts were something ‘within’ and not relational in origin, the dialectic between world and *eschaton* would be more of a discovery, an experience working on an explanation of what man already grasps. The latter would be more similar to Kant’s view. He “regarded them as applying to *a priori* objects—a conclusion which general logic is not in a position to establish.”²³⁷ That is to mean for Kant that judgments are possible in that they are *a priori* and experience triggers their understanding. This would not be fatal to man’s relation to the Absolute, but it would reduce the relation to one of effect. Rather than man recognizing the restlessness and seeking satisfaction, he would know or become aware of both the Absolute and his own restlessness simultaneously. The phenomenological reply of Husserl to Kant on this “is that the formal, logical structures of thinking arise from perception. [Man is] not born with it, but it is located in the way experience becomes transformed.”²³⁸ To further demonstrate this, extend the analogy of *man’s thirst and the well*. Man’s present state or

²³⁶ Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 156.

²³⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith, (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1965), A 80, 113. Also see Sokolowski’s *Phenomenology of the Human Person* for a further discussion and description on the inadequate explanations of Kant and modern neuroscience (also *a priori*) concerning syntax.

²³⁸ Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 53.

restlessness/thirst would be triggered by the exposure to the Absolute. There would be no room for liturgical relationality and both the Absolute and the *quenching of thirst* would remain always as empty intentions. The essence of the 'beyond-here' would not reveal man to himself as a 'being-towards.' Man's nature, his essence would remain a being-here that desires. Syntax of perception and experience overcomes that. "The essence of things comes forth through the network of syntactic unfolding."²³⁹ Both relational speech and syntactical structure provide man with the ability to articulate not just ideas in the mind, but experiences opening up to the being-towards; that is the point for this study.

This entrance of the 'beyond-here' and movement towards satisfaction of man's restlessness does not coincide peacefully with man's natural attitude and earthly location. Liturgical relation in fact does violence to man's historical world; the Kingdom is a battle zone. Observation of this, and attention to the Absolute can be termed *anamnesis*. With the reintroduction of this term, know it cannot be meant synonymously with the *memorial anamnesis* referred to in a specific liturgical rite. The type of remembrance²⁴⁰ spoken of here "concentrates on nothing that has taken place in the world and its time; it is another name for the time and attention"²⁴¹ man directs towards the Absolute. This remembrance is the acceptance of the condition of the being-in-the-world who is not a being-of-the-world. There is always a tension between the natural attitude of the being-in-the-world and the beyond-here liturgical satisfaction. This introduces liturgy as a non-event. Liturgy is wider than a rite and extends into life; it is a public memory. Unsatisfied in the world/Kingdom location, man recognizes the violence liturgy creates in this dichotomy and is powerless to overcome it. This acceptance is another dynamic

²³⁹ Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 284.

²⁴⁰ Lacoste speaks here of a non-immemorial knowledge, a transcendental ignorance.

²⁴¹ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 88.

added to man's restlessness and syntactical disclosure. It is a universal experience, i.e., he is not alone in this condition. The non-event appears and presents itself as evidentially intersubjective.

The *anamnesis* as the time and attention that liturgical man, ordained as a public memory, manifested as the Absolute's violent entry into the world/Kingdom dichotomy, recognizes the desire of man and his restlessness. Desire propels man as the *being-towards* consummation. "It is impossible to desire God empty, without that desire provoking and constituting [a movement towards] consummation."²⁴² This eschatological consummation, mimics and reflects the Absolute as the *Being-towards* man and the dual sacramental twinning of God and Body disclosing the Kingdom *within* the world while it unveils the *eschaton* in the distant horizon. What presupposes and represents the recognition of that reality of eschatological consummation in the world is the sacrificial nature of 'gift.' Liturgical man gives from his nothingness (liturgy as the non-event), initiated from the natural attitude to a consummation with the Absolute. This time of incompleteness and 'before' is man's liturgical vigil.

C. The Role of Liturgy in the World

1. The World as Man's Vigil: A Liturgical Paradox

There is no little apprehension experienced by man even in the Kingdom/eschatological dichotomy; liturgical man at vigil is between acts. Man experiences the already-but-not-yet, he recognizes the world as both a place and a non-place, and his liturgical consummation as an event and a non-event. Yet, man accepts this willingly. Man remains free to reject any transcendental glimpse and thus atrophy in the natural state. He can stay at the level of Heidegger's *Dasein* if he so desires. He may even cling to it. Consider the events of Meursault's life following his mother's death in Albert Camus' *L'Estanger*. Restlessness and uneasiness simply is accepted as the human condition, a condition filled with dread and angst detached from

²⁴² Pickstock, *After Writing*, 192.

the Absolute. As pitiable as it was and may be, like Meursault, man can be subjectively content or discontent and never transcend the *Dasein*. Disclosing this aspect is significant in how it contributes to man's base identity as a free-being. In freedom, man transcends the natural state, but then becomes content (even though it creates anxiety) in the liturgical vigil of the not-yet. "The act of vigil appears to [man] as the purest form of the self-positing itself, as the epitome of an affirmation of [his] freedom...this is the surplus of meaning given to humanity"²⁴³ as man strives for fulfillment. Any freedom of man expressed in liturgical life undermines his place in the world (a non-event) but also assures him of the potential fulfillment of his wish²⁴⁴ (a eschatological event). This vigil and liturgical life can be considered man's *eighth day*. It is an appropriate term, for there is no eighth day in the time of this world (non-event), yet it exists in the experience of the Church (liturgy, also being a non-event).²⁴⁵ It is appropriate that the Church Body sets aside the eighth day and that that day is when She acutely celebrates Her corporate sacrifice. It is the Word spoken in man's vigil life. It is man's horizon, not the last word. "The last word cannot be spoken as long as world and earth-and death-govern over us."²⁴⁶ Liturgy then is the penultimate event.

2. Liturgical Rites: Acute Points of Corporate Sacrifice

How then does historical man's penultimate liturgy relate to the corporate sacrifice expressed in liturgical rites? In previous sections concerning man-in-the-world, Husserl's approach of allowing concepts to enter man's consciousness was contrasted with the Cartesian doubt of the 'out-there.' Husserl asserted how logical structures of thinking arose from perception. But the corporate aspect of public acts as worship and sacrifice are necessarily non-

²⁴³ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 79.

²⁴⁴ Much can be elaborated on here that man is the only actor, the only act of creation that can indeed *wish*.

²⁴⁵ Schmemmann, *Of Water and the Spirit*, 122.

²⁴⁶ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 194.

private. Thus, Sokolowski stretches Husserl's approach asserting that any 'categorical forming cannot be the achievement of a single mind, but one mind working with another'²⁴⁷ offering a deeper connection of man's intersubjectivity moving beyond even perception conceived by one. That is to say that both gift and sacrifice are always corporate activities. With man's liturgical sacrifices, the acts of submitting one's will to another, the acceptance of restlessness, etc., categorically expressed as *ut meum ac vestrum sacrificium* (my sacrifice and yours),²⁴⁸ then are brought and united with the Absolutes' sacrifice. "Liturgy does not simply engage one characteristic of our being-in-the-world, but its reality in entirety,"²⁴⁹ and that reality promotes corporate sacrifice as a primary human element.

Man never sacrifices alone or for one's self. The corporate liturgical rites are not merely truncated moments of sacrifice conjoined and placed in ritual. They are acute points of personal sacrifice embedded in ritual (corporate offering) that cannot be demarcated from man's life in the public world. Since "beneath the appearance of the visible Body is hidden the mystical, the unity of Man,"²⁵⁰ what man does in the Kingdom, he does as a whole. It is humanity as a whole, not just a single man reaching out eschatologically. The Body is, or the Bodies are *beings-toward*. It is this back and forth procession that connects liturgical life and liturgical rite. The liturgical rite's conclusion itself, *Dominus vobiscum* [the Lord be with you] "implies a prologue to the wider liturgy which participants will offer continually [with] their daily lives."²⁵¹ Man is dignified in this liturgical living participation in liturgical rite. It connects man liturgically to others, the world and to the cosmos which also falls under His governance. It is this liturgy, a

²⁴⁷ Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, 61.

²⁴⁸ "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God" (Romans 12:1a).

²⁴⁹ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 72.

²⁵⁰ Jean Daniélou, *The Presence of God*, Walter Roberts (tr.). (Baltimore, MD: Helicon Press, 1960), 57.

²⁵¹ Pickstock, *After Writing*, 210.

communication through sacrifice that assumes the form of gift. This gift is God giving of His Son to man, in the form of sacrifice²⁵² being united with man's sacrifices in his world. This is perceived (remembered liturgically) as a response to God's gift of man's sonship through adoption. What is given, received and given in return is the totality of one's self. Man recognizes his essence only in position to the other. The other-worldly Man breeches the World, drawing man out of the World to the *not yet* in and through liturgy. Man's horizon as gift of self in liturgy (sacrifice) bridges the temporality of *already* with the *not yet*. "Liturgy overcomes the separation distinguished between the horizon of world and *eschaton*. The world and earth are not annulled, but overcome."²⁵³

This is taking leave of the world without annulling or dismissing the world as man's location and reference point. Man learns of the world (cosmos), and his place in the world (Kingdom), from outside the world; the origin of liturgy is outside of man and world. This illustrates the cycle present in man's restlessness of the Kingdom to which he belongs, but it remains that man finds little comfort in admitting his residency. Man's state presents itself as "the double rhythm of the Church's life; that of *withdrawal* from 'this world' into the 'eighth day' of God's Kingdom, and that of *return* into the reality and the time of 'seven days.'" ²⁵⁴ The whole liturgical non-event is a paradox; man in the Kingdom is present between acts. This *should* leave man unsettled. It offers nothing conclusive, but it mirrors the certain uneasiness man has in his knowledge of God. As was the solution then, resolution can only be found in the culmination of sacrifice as gift.

IV. Conclusion: Liturgical Living as the Gift of Self

²⁵² See John 10:17-18.

²⁵³ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 144.

²⁵⁴ Schmemmann, *Of Water and the Spirit*, 124.

A. Liturgy: Man and the World

1. Sacrifice: Liturgical Form in the Sacred and the Secular

What does it really mean to sacrifice? The clarity of a word ultimately rests in the listener. A clear understanding of the term sacrifice must be more than distinct in its meaning, it must be unmistakably unambiguous to all in the conversation. Most would agree that ‘to sacrifice’ is a laudable act interpersonally and praiseworthy among the citizenry. A mother is to sacrifice for her children, children should sacrifice to acquire discipline, teachers to sacrifice for their students, servicemen should sacrifice for their country,²⁵⁵ activists for their cause, citizens for the environment and workers for the company. What is in question, what is disputed, is if the value of the object is worthy of sacrificing for, i.e, is what will be gained worth what will be lost? Or maybe one may go on to say that ‘to sacrifice’ is still for the most part good regardless of loss or gain, but if the term is applied so readily and used so often in ordinary speech, does the *routine* sacrifice loses its value? Perhaps all can agree on what is popularly accepted, but just avoid the extremes—no self-sacrificing or sacrificing others.²⁵⁶ The point is that most use the term without a clear or distinct agreed-upon meaning, but there are common traits of the term that make these assumptions possible.

In these instances mentioned, it appears the mother, the child, *et al.*, possess some facet of deprivation. The thing ‘given up’ may be valuable goods, an individual’s family time, personal gain, or the ultimate self-sacrifice, one’s own life. Sacrifice should also involve an aim deemed higher than the self (private high school for the children), or an achievement of a larger objective (climbing the corporate ladder). There is the prevalence of thought within this schema,

²⁵⁵ For Hegel, “war, *viz.*, the fact that people are being sacrificed for the sake of their own country [renders] the ethical health of nations.” See Peter Jonkers, “Justifying Sacrifice,” *Bijdragen* Vol. 63, No. 4 (2002), 449.

²⁵⁶ Peter Jonkers makes the argument that philosophically it is far too simple to even reject self-sacrifice or the sacrificing of others *a priori* in terms of a hostage situation. See “Justifying Sacrifice,” *Bijdragen* Vol. 63, No. 4 (2002), 448.

that the categorical dispossession of a valuable good stands as the focus of the endeavor for the sake of a reward, and often the mere fact that one ‘gives up something’ is the measure of a sacrifice (eg: he worked for it), not the assessment of equity or intrinsic worth. The Western culture holds in esteem the person who ‘gave up’ so much to rise in the company, to get physically in shape, to acquire wealth, i.e., *in nuce* these are all associated with being successful. It often seems that “this secular, calculating, and unavoidably negative connotation of ‘sacrifice’ is so pervasive and deep, that it inevitably influences almost all other uses of the word”²⁵⁷ and makes general use of ‘to sacrifice’ lack any impact.

The liturgical form of sacrifice nonetheless arises from this embedded purposeful notion, distilled from the ‘negative connotation’. Even in those secular contexts, the transcendence of one’s own desires and wants can be readily sacrificed for something thought wider, greater and lasting. Even when abused, to sacrifice for something brings value upon that goal. “One of the main markers of something endowed with intrinsic value is its worthiness of genuine sacrifice.”²⁵⁸ It seems evident that “humans, as finite individuals, can never legitimately conceive their private interests are something absolute by abstracting them completely from their relation to a higher purpose.”²⁵⁹ There always seems to be a concern for, a sacrificing for this, or that. The division comes in overcoming the tendency of “defining sacrifice only by the destruction of

²⁵⁷ Daly, “New Developments in the Theology of Sacrifice,” 50.

²⁵⁸ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 99.

²⁵⁹ In fact, Jonkers offers Iphigenia’s soliloquy from *Euripides*, Act 4, scene 2 as an illustration of this notion of dispossession of ones finiteness—Listen, mother; hear what thoughts have passed across my mind. I am resolved to die; and this I fain would do with honour (sic), dismissing from me what is mean. Towards this now, mother, turn thy thoughts, and with me weigh how well I speak; to me the whole of mighty Hellas looks; on me the passage o’er the sea depends; on me the sack of Troy; and in my power it lies to check henceforth barbarian raids on happy Hellas [...]. All this deliverance will my death insure, and my fame for setting Hellas free will be a happy one. Besides, I have no right at all to cling too fondly to my life; for thou didst not bear me for myself alone, but as a public blessing to all Hellas. What! shall countless warriors, armed with shields, those myriads sitting at the oar, find courage to attack the foe and die for Hellas, because their fatherland is wronged, and my one life prevent all this? What kind of justice is that? could I find a word in answer? [...] To Hellas I resign it [i.e. my body]; offer this sacrifice and make an utter end of Troy. This is my enduring monument; marriage, motherhood, and fame—all these is it to me. See Jonkers, “Justifying Sacrifice,” 457.

a good alone, [then one may introduce a third term], precisely the other.”²⁶⁰ The *other* surfaces as a player in the schema of sacrifice, and moves the term of sacrifice closer to mutual clarity by not focusing primarily on the deprivation. With this inter-subjective introduction of the other, the term *sacrifice* opens up the meaning as not “something man ‘does’ or ‘gives up.’ For it is first and foremost, something deeply personal: a mutual self-giving event that takes place between persons.”²⁶¹ Sacrifice takes liturgical form with this *other* and in many ways becomes a demonstrable mark of an authentic and giving character of the person within the world. It is even conventional and may appear as what “one might call routine piety, provided it be understood that this routine is a mark of sincerity.”²⁶² But the key feature is that the ‘sacrificing for’ begins to take shape.

What is experienced in the secular as commonplace, alludes to the sacred as the proper liturgical expression towards the *other* in the world. “It is from within this world that liturgy takes its distance from the play of the world.”²⁶³ At a distance from the world, liturgy affords the sacred sacrificial-gifting of one’s self, one’s time, one’s gain, etc., and presents itself as liturgical living. This ‘liturgical living’ foreshadows, and indeed prepares the individual for the liturgical experience with the Absolute’s gifting of His own self; an encounter that holds sway over one’s very self, absorbing the sacrifice of the self. “Liturgy [becomes] that experience in which consciousness encounters a veiled Absolute and cannot take leave”²⁶⁴ until united. The sacrifice of the individual is brought to the altar and enters the return of the Son’s givenness to the Absolute. Yet if this sacrificial givenness in the world is non-existent, the individual’s participatory effect in the Eucharist becomes non-transforming, some anachronistic drama

²⁶⁰ Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of Sacrifice,” 3.

²⁶¹ Daly, “New Developments,” 51.

²⁶² Baal, “Offering, Sacrifice and Gift,” 168.

²⁶³ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 83.

²⁶⁴ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 63.

reminiscent of a time when ‘people use to do such things.’ If the concept of sacrificial givenness is not ‘played out’ in the world, but suppressed, then “the Eucharist becomes a retreat into a cultic enclave”²⁶⁵ and severs the individual from liturgical living, and liturgical living from rite.

2. Perpetual restlessness: Knowledge of God & Knowledge of Objects

Man’s dissatisfaction with his place in the world stems directly from the empty fulfillment of natural desires. The result of his residence in the Kingdom constitutes a restlessness that can only find appeasement in the fulfillment of supernatural longings. Once man transcends the self to the *other*, worldly satisfaction of goods and gain, even life, seem to not satisfy but stretch the horizon into the Kingdom. This need not be a conscious fact, often it is left undiscovered. This results in the phenomena of man not knowing what it is he is searching for, and becomes an idiosyncratic restlessness, which when left unrealized develops into a tortuous form of uneasiness. Man’s lot of this agitation, for the entire time he spends on the earth, does not entirely improve upon entering the ‘worldly’ Kingdom. Even in the Kingdom, the “liturgical experience prevents man from dwelling peaceably on the earth—and *every* form of liturgy must learn this lesson.”²⁶⁶ Man consistently grasps future-wise, outside of himself. This “unrest makes one desire an ‘other-than-being.’ Such a restlessness appears as a specific kind of project. The project tries to neutralize the threat of the future by anticipating the future.”²⁶⁷

This manifests as an eschatological movement towards the divine call of the Absolute, of which clarity is not a precondition. “When Abraham raised the knife over Isaac, he was answering to a divine call, even if he did not understand it.”²⁶⁸ The finite can only contain a

²⁶⁵ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2006.

²⁶⁶ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 31.

²⁶⁷ Schrijvers, “Jean-Yves Lacoste,” 318.

²⁶⁸ Fioriana Ferro, “Beyond Subjectivity: Levinas, Kierkegaard and the Absolute Other,” *Nordicum-Mediterraneum: Icelandic E-Journal of Nordic and Mediterranean Studies*. Volume 7, no. 1 (2012). at <http://nome.unak.is/nm-marzo-2012/>.

particular portion of the infinite. This is the crux of the restlessness, be it of the world or in the Kingdom. But the infinite, in liturgy breaks through (it is a violence), and “infinity manifests itself through the evidence of [the] singular existence, so that the latter is, at the same time, the object of transcendence and the condition for [the] incarnation”²⁶⁹ of the infinite in the finite. It is in this way that man comes upon knowledge of the Absolute. Knowledge is discovered not *in* overcoming the restlessness, but it is through the condition *of* the restlessness that man will find gratification. “Affectively, man is driven to direct all the energies of his person—intelligence, will, and freedom—to the other [Absolute] who provokes him, because he feels this pro-vocation to be the possibility of previously unimagined fulfillment.”²⁷⁰

This unimagined fulfillment is the *agapē* gift of *theosis*²⁷¹—man’s ultimate vocation. This *theosis*, as a gift of “*agapē* surpasses all knowledge, [and] because *agapē* alone, by definition is not known, it is not—but gives (itself)”²⁷² This is certainly a knowledge of God, but it does not satisfy the anxiety of the unknown in the way knowledge of objects in the world tends to satisfy. Object in the world are present, and remain so by the fact of being visible. But because what is known, or being known in the liturgical arena is invisible, it is thought to be absent (not in the phenomenological sense) and thus unknowable. Still the point is that the gift experienced as given liturgically, and the sacrifice put forth by man is not absent, but merely invisible. Invisibility is not synonymous with absence, and experience is not equated with knowledge. “Experience can take knowledge as its measure, but experience cannot totally govern knowledge

²⁶⁹ Ferro, “Beyond Subjectivity,” 2012.

²⁷⁰ Scola, *The Nuptial Mystery*, 381.

²⁷¹ According to Lacoste, for Hegel the subordination of worship to the practice of conceptual knowledge of God is incontestable and well known. *Theosis* is for Hegel that theoretical knowledge which constitutes the supreme experience of God, so man does not become God in the sense of deification understood here. See Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 133.

²⁷² Marion, *God Without Being*, 106.

of God—there is always a nonexperiential character of liturgy.”²⁷³ What is required for this understanding to poke through, is the knowledge of sacrifice and gift, which do not suppress man’s restlessness, but direct it toward the source for which man longs thus leading him from Kingdom to *theosis*.

B. Phenomenology: Liturgy and Man

1. Transcendental Attitude: Man’s Relation to the World and God

There is a progression from the natural attitude of the world to the Kingdom as man’s participation in the eschatological consummation, and from that Kingdom to *theosis*. Both liturgical rite and liturgical living mark the path along the vigil. The logic of this plays out in man’s present state, his lived relational experience. Phenomenology is responsive in speaking to this ‘not yet’ as the original, world-directed stance. Although man begins in the natural attitude as the default perspective, by contemplating his own participation in the world man answers his restlessness by ascending through an antiphonal encounter with the infinite Absolute. “The difficulty lies in that man has an utmost experience without the words, the significations, and the concepts able to utter, to explain it, to articulate it...this is an excess of intuitions.”²⁷⁴ Marion would use the Transfiguration²⁷⁵ as a prime example for this excess, but it need not be limited to that extreme. There are sublime moments that capture a glimpse. A man can find himself walking hand-in-hand with his toddler daughter, followed by working through the relationships of her teen-years. Then over time, the experience of sitting at the family table of the wedding reception, as his now married daughter leaves for her honeymoon. Then a few years later he is holding his toddler-granddaughter’s hand, who being a carbon copy of her mother (his daughter),

²⁷³ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 49.

²⁷⁴ Derrida and Marion, “On the Gift,” 69.

²⁷⁵ Recall that in Mark 9:5-6, Peter was overwhelmed by the experience and could only must the response, “And Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Eli’jah.” For he did not know what to say” (RSV).

he feels surreal sublimity as she is playing on the swing-set he made first for her mother twenty-three years earlier. It is a moment of excess, and he is not quite certain that time is not cyclical.

Nonetheless, in man's encounter with the Absolute, he moves from the natural attitude by restraining any conclusions as he contemplates the intentions of an experience and enters the *epochē* (phenomenological attitude), where articulation is found difficult; the sublimity of the experience often confiscates the expression. This is like negative theology where just as the intuitions about God are not lacking, they still appear overwhelming. The experience itself tests traditional metaphysics, that offers such a static profile determined primarily by the substance of the object in question. The role of the transcendental attitude allows man to transverse his finite plain and absorb the profound (any profound) experience as it is given to the individual over and above a substance.

This is a focus of phenomenology. The liturgical living 'outside of ritual' is not merely horizontal, or it need not be, as it has the ability to not just be united with the Absolute's in the rite, but in itself transcend not just the individual, but the world into a Kingdom. This Kingdom is one experiential residence in two locations (finite and infinite) existing in two times (*chronos* and *kairos*). This is a liturgical expression where neither location or time are annulled, but man as subject "attains a new horizon of selfhood *through* which provides the basis for renewed self-assertion on the basis of the subject's rediscovered embodiment."²⁷⁶ This is a *negation*, a free movement of man as the subject out of the 'loop' of the world, without leaving the world. The sublime event and experience not only foreshadows the *parousia*, but makes what is present in liturgical rite (*anamnesis*) evident in the world. This negation "functions as an entirely human self-referentiality, precisely because there is not a 'beyond' or 'transcendent' toward which one

²⁷⁶ Laurence Paul Hemming, "The Liturgical Subject," 8.

can be drawn.”²⁷⁷ This transgressing of man in the natural attitude, is not the escapism it appears to be (the man cannot wish his daughter was simply young again). As Levinas would hold, this “transcendence designates a relation with a reality infinitely distant from man’s own reality, yet without this distance destroying this relation and without this relation destroying this distance.”²⁷⁸ It has the ability to re-form man into a liturgical (ecclesial) person in the present, yet always in relation to the future.

Man remains in place cooperating with the free gift of God granted (*da*) to man, and the now “ecclesial person mediates to the world the union of God and humanity...towards the eschatological consummation.”²⁷⁹ This is the gift of God to man. “God does not grant the gift as if it were a thing, but rather the co-operation with the generous self-gift is an essential part of God’s mode of giving.”²⁸⁰ It all presents itself as a saturated intention. Indeed what is being spoken of here is divine revelation—the Absolute revealing Himself to man in digestible increments offering a transcendence within the ‘not yet’ Kingdom. The Kingdom becomes the Absolute’s presence revealed to man in the world, situated within a historical context.

Man’s restlessness in the world, or Kingdom, or with the infinite Absolute (antiphonal encounter) finds “expectation or desire for [the] *parousia* in the certitude of the nonparousiacal presence of God”²⁸¹ in his liturgical experience in both rite and liturgical living. This is Christ ‘giving’ Himself to man, which in so many ways is not simply a saturated event, but in itself foreign to the world in man’s natural attitude. It is an encounter with the God-Person Christ, and “the phenomenon of Christ gives itself intuitively as an event that is perfectly unforeseeable

²⁷⁷ Hemming, “The Liturgical Subject,” 8.

²⁷⁸ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 41.

²⁷⁹ Leachman and McCarthy, “The Formation of the Ecclesial,” 183.

²⁸⁰ Leachman and McCarthy, “The Formation of the Ecclesial Person,” 193.

²⁸¹ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 45.

because [it is] radically heterogeneous to what it nevertheless completes”²⁸² while in the ‘not yet’. This is the role of liturgical living, and why it cannot be confined to rite. For man, the world is veiled. There is often not a smooth transition between liturgical experience, saturated phenomena and articulation. The function of liturgy is to overturn²⁸³ this—there is a cognitive delay between the world of life and the world of liturgy.²⁸⁴

2. Liturgy Unfolds from Good Friday to Easter Sunday: The Non-Presence

There is quite a liturgical dialectic transpiring between God and man, world and Kingdom. In fact, the relation between man and God could be referred to by just that, a liturgical dialectic experience, because man in that relational “liturgical experience breaks with the ‘world’ and ‘earth’ to lose himself in the enthusiastic vision of God’s Kingdom.”²⁸⁵ This vision given in God’s Kingdom essentially is His revelation (or the possibility of it). It was both begun and completed in Christ’s earthly Incarnational life, but the un-veiling of the Christ-gift to man, carried from Good Friday to Easter Sunday, continues its *future* unfolding through present day liturgical rite and living. It is important to note that the Incarnational Christ being *present*, and contemporary man being “*present* cannot be conceived of as a singular moment; it must always be seen and interpreted in its relation with the future”²⁸⁶ that encompasses both *kairotic* time and for man, *theosis* with the Infinite. “This passion for divinity [*theosis*], that pushes the individual toward an incomprehensible choice, leads to [his own] transfiguration. Infinity is expressed through the existence of a finite being.”²⁸⁷

²⁸² Marion, *Being Given*, 236.

²⁸³ At the altar of incense, when the angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah announcing the birth of John the Baptist, the English translation reads that ‘he was troubled.’ But in the French it reads, ‘*il en fut bouleversé*’ meaning that he (his world) was ‘overturned’, or ‘turned upside down,’ which allows for the liturgical experience of saturation intended here. See Luke 1:12 (RSV).

²⁸⁴ See Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 103.

²⁸⁵ Schrijvers, “Jean-Yves Lacoste,” 319.

²⁸⁶ Schrijvers, “Jean-Yves Lacoste,” 316.

²⁸⁷ Ferro, “Beyond Subjectivity,” 6.

In this way, God reveals Himself to man, and man reveals the Absolute to the world by virtue of his own transfigured extension of the *Triduum*. God did not utter His last word to man on that then *present* Easter Sunday. Just as the Transfiguration is a moment of saturation for those Apostles who witnessed it in their own *present*, so too saturation of the Passion-Death-Resurrection drama unfolds as a *present* saturation experience in man's current natural state. It is too much for one to absorb, and must be accepted simply as 'being given'. This is not to assert that this saturated "transfiguration is an explanation, but it is an expression of [an instance] without words."²⁸⁸ The entire instance can be defined liturgically as a non-event and a non-experience. As a non-experience, it is a brutal confrontation with the liturgical experience's own *aporia*.²⁸⁹ It is not enough for man to have confidence of an eschatological consummation, this liturgical non-experience is a choice here and now. Man can choose to live in "the shelter given to him by the earth, i.e., man can choose to exist solely in the mode of *Dasein* or in that of the mortal."²⁹⁰ Liturgy does violence to this imitation of mortal man and breaks man free of his present time in the world. In this way, liturgy too is a non-time, "nullifying the self's preoccupation with itself in favor of an expectation and an attentiveness that divests man of [his concern] in every future made of his *own* possibility."²⁹¹

This too is a description of the Absolute God-Man on His procession through Good Friday to Easter Sunday. Liturgy, then in man's current *present*, "operates on a logic of imitation. The liturgical experience turns the believer into a mimic of Christ's death"²⁹² in the hopes of receiving his own resurrection in that eschatological experience that is available in part now 'as gift' in the present (Eucharist). This is indeed foolishness to the world, it turns the logic

²⁸⁸ Ferro, "Beyond Subjectivity," 2012.

²⁸⁹ Schrijvers, "Jean-Yves Lacoste," 320.

²⁹⁰ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 42.

²⁹¹ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 82.

²⁹² Schrijvers, "Jean-Yves Lacoste," 322.

of the world upside down (*bouleversé*). “The one who patiently endures this non-experience will share in and receive the *joy* of Easter...living the events of Good Friday with reference to Easter.”²⁹³ This then becomes the source and summit. Man unites his own penultimate sacrifice gift, gathered as he mimics Christ in and among the community (liturgical living). It is offered at the hands of the priest (united with Christ’s). It is brought back to the community, and man shares not just in the return as Eucharist, but in the perfection of his own gifts along with those of the community. These gifts, imperfect as they may be, in the Kingdom become indefectible liturgically. Just as with Babette’s Feast, “the miracle resides not only in the food itself but becomes embodied in the community gathered there”²⁹⁴ resulting in a transfiguration of man into a liturgical subject and the world into the Kingdom.

3. The Significance of Liturgy

This liturgy in world and Kingdom, is always a social action of the people. It derives meaning etymologically (*leitourgia*) from its origin, as “predicated first and foremost of actions expressing the city’s relations to the world of divine powers...of the entire people [that] shared a single destiny and a collective memory.”²⁹⁵ It appears that it has moved from the secular to the sacred, but it has done so only to be drawn back into the secular. That is not to propose that liturgy is now becoming secular, but that liturgy is *sacredizing* the secular. It is not like an invasion of the sacred into the secular (that is the Kingdom violently entreating the world) but more apt to be understood as a reclamation of what always belonged to the Absolute to be fully realized when “creation itself will be set free from its bondage” (Ro 8:21a) and the gift returned.

That does not provide a definition, it merely demonstrates an intended affect. But if, as the underlying premise of this study holds to be true, that the liturgy both unifies and defines a

²⁹³ Schrijvers, “Jean-Yves Lacoste,” 322.

²⁹⁴ Wright, “Babette’s Feast,” §19.

²⁹⁵ A. G. Martimort (ed), *The Church at Prayer* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 233.

people, it requires one to work towards a definition of liturgy. The Western Church, for very good historical and socio-political reasons, thrives on rationally *explaining* doctrine and concepts; transubstantiation is a prime example. The Eastern Church (the other lung) is much more comfortable with characterizing the sublime as mystery; something not incomprehensible, yet neither totally expressible. So how does one express, or define the un-expressible? Artists give the impressions in symbol and poets offer similes...it is like this, like that, etc. This would be a good approach to address the polyvalent character of liturgy.

The first veil to remove is that liturgy is larger than a rite. That does not in any way say that it is not a rite. Liturgy is not just a confrontation with the absent in rite, but an expression of the relation between the absent and present, both accounted for in the rite and in liturgical living. That is important because man never leaves his place (earth and world), but encounters the experience of the Absolute in the Kingdom from that natural attitude. To remove man from his place disconnects liturgical rite and liturgical living. It addresses the disconnect already discussed between world and Kingdom and often advances the error in one of two ways.

In one way, it understands liturgical rites as the hiding place of the sacred, where the priest becomes the protector from the laity of things sacred, and clericalism finds a foundation. Here the lay person and the world appear *alongside* liturgy. The opposing approach has found the liturgical rites to be archaic, and a somewhat irrelevant “degenerated general activity, [where] the ‘theo-drama’ of the liturgy is radically misunderstood and has lapsed almost into parody.”²⁹⁶ Here the lay person and the world appear as the sum of reality, again alongside of liturgy, but now in a secular kingdom.

²⁹⁶ Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2000), 175.

To counter these errors, it is first necessary to address how foreign liturgy is to the secular kingdom. Liturgy itself “not an experience of the world, but as a hypothetical ‘experience’ of the proximity or distance of God.”²⁹⁷ Liturgy overcomes the separation distinguished between the distance of the horizon of the world and the *eschaton*, but it always must address and *experience* that distance. This *experience* introduces that tension (restlessness) in lieu of the fact “the world will never be large enough to provide the means of grasping God, or the possibility of being invaded by Him.”²⁹⁸ So the separation of world and the *eschaton* is overcome, not incrementally in stages, as much as it is done liturgically. Liturgy then is an identity expressed in man, understood as “the logic that presides over the encounter between man and God writ large.”²⁹⁹ Liturgy here is the relational gift of God Himself to man, and in that expression (revelation) of God to man, man consequently is revealed to himself.

Liturgy always involves the balance of the infinite and finite, eternal and temporal, as it is “formally conceived as the tension between being-in-fact (the empirical I) and being-in-vocation (the eschatological I).³⁰⁰ Liturgy destroys the separation of the spiritual and physical as it “precludes the ruinous opposition of the interior and the exterior, of the ‘body’ and the ‘soul’ “. ³⁰¹ Liturgy does not achieve this transcendence by man’s effort alone. The word and concept of liturgy can only arrive at its dignified apex *via* revelation. This is an instance of an Absolute who “has shown Himself to human beings. This manifestation calls for their response and also makes the response possible, because it is a gift.”³⁰² The gift given in Christ (Incarnation to Paschal mystery), returned to the Father is the liturgical archetype of man’s response in gift himself to

²⁹⁷ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 46.

²⁹⁸ Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu*, trans. William Collins Sons and Co., Ltd. (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1968), 120.

²⁹⁹ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 2.

³⁰⁰ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 157.

³⁰¹ Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute*, 22.

³⁰² Martimort, *The Church at Prayer*, 240.

the Father. This gift can be, and is expressed acutely in the liturgical rite, but that rite cannot stand apart from the liturgical sacrificial living in the world and Kingdom. “The liturgy of faith always reaches beyond the cultic act into everyday life, which must itself become ‘liturgical’, as service for the transformation of the world.”³⁰³ Liturgy then may be understood as the discovery and acceptance of sacrifice as gift manifested in the world by the Incarnational Christ, and in turn transcending world to Kingdom by the individual’s sacrifices understood in terms of gift.

V. Appendix 1 - Sacrifice as Gift: An Understanding of the Human Person

This unity of man’s sacrifice with the Absolute’s presents itself as gift, and in turn speaks directly to the understanding of the human person. Man’s sacrifice is gift. There is a plethora of study on the phenomenology of gift, both Derrida and Marion were the focus of this thesis with contributions by O’Leary. Much of their thoughts appeared to springboard from the early nineteenth-century landmark study of Marcel Mauss’ sociological insights. The concept of sacrifice has being given much ink also, and not only in the theological arena with Jonkers and Halbertral, but mixed with a liturgical approach in Baal, there is the particular contribution of Jean-Yves Lacoste who specifically focused on a phenomenology of the liturgy in *Experience and the Absolute*. There is a mix of both phenomenological and liturgical understandings of the human person (anthropology) in Sokolowski, Lukken and Hemming. Barron also provided an essay on the liturgical person, but restricted his study to the liturgical rite. The various contributors have donated much to an appreciation of sacrifice as gift pointing to an understanding of the human person. But with gift, the concern of ulterior motives remains, i.e., the need for personal aspirations and other-relatedness while preserving alterity and purity.

³⁰³ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 175.

One response is to maintain that “ontological integrity and a total being-toward the other are not mutually exclusive, provided that the relationality is one of love and not domination.”³⁰⁴ But it is that expression of love-relationality in the liturgical living of givenness that makes it non-dominating. This forms what one may term a gift-oriented community. But even in the gift oriented community, competition can persist and rise as an elitist trophy. Think of the many benefit auctions, where although money for charity is raised, attendance alone is often possible only to the rich. In that scenario, and others like it, the principles of “antagonism and rivalry [stem from the] competition revolving around honor and prestige for the participants in the reciprocal pattern that creates obligations.”³⁰⁵ So rather than the brutal usurping of the other for one’s own ambition (climbing the ladder), or calculating reward (prestige and honor) “an act of selfless charity binds the recipient by ties of gratitude and guilt more effectively than a violent conquest”³⁰⁶ has the ability to complete.

With a liturgical gift, the self or the other need not be diminished (sacrificial deprivation or burden of return). “The logic of gift and the logic of sacrifice is not to be devolved; the logic of gift leads into surplus rather than loss, or surplus despite loss.”³⁰⁷ Liturgy subverts these controlling characteristics of both earth and world, but it also confirms them, resulting in a liturgical paradox. More can be returned than was given, and more can be given than one possesses. In the Kingdom, and united liturgically (rite) with Christ’s self-gift, ulterior motives evaporate, are filled-in, or are compensated for, etc. In the world, sacrifice as gift is calculating in terms of self-protection, i.e, a protection of the self from other’s ulterior motives, openness to abuse by the other, or the fear to be used for the other’s advantage. The turbulence experienced

³⁰⁴ Barron, “The Liturgical Self,” 19.

³⁰⁵ Olson, “Excess, Time and the Pure Gift,” 355.

³⁰⁶ O’Leary, “The Gift,” 2006.

³⁰⁷ Claudia Welz, “Love as Gift and Self-Sacrifice,” *Neve Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie Und Religionsphilosophie* vol. 50, nos. 304 (2008), 14.

in man's world is often founded in these rejections of sacrifice for the other in terms of gift. Because sacrifice is natural to man (ontologically), "the capacity to give is so profoundly human, its denial might turn into violence."³⁰⁸ Did not the first homicide (the fratricide of Abel by Cain) stem from just such a rejection? Liturgical ritual actually protects the transfer of sacrifice from rejection (Cain's mysterious rejection notwithstanding). Ritual "is a proscribed procedure...a protocol that protects from the risk of rejection,"³⁰⁹ and being the means of uniting man's sacrifice as gift, it becomes manifest in liturgical living.³¹⁰

VI. Appendix 2 - Friendship as a Paradigm Rather than Altruism and Egoism

This thesis attempts to work at a level prior to the ethical,³¹¹ yet it must directly lead to an understanding of human action and his ethical stance in the world. The contested dichotomy of altruism and egoism is understood by some in the Aristotelean and Thomistic sense as being dissolved by the characteristics of friendship where one is motivated not by his own interests (egoism) or simply the well-being of the other (altruism).³¹² According to Aristotle's notion of friendship (*philia*), ulterior motives would disappear where "friends are eager to benefit each other, since this is proper to virtue and to friendship."³¹³ Friendship has a very sincere theological attachment to the relation of Christ for those who love one another as Christ has

³⁰⁸ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 20.

³⁰⁹ Halbertral, *On Sacrifice*, 15.

³¹⁰ This can only fully be known by revelation. Sacrifice as gift and the understanding of the human person is "disclosed through the liturgy [that both] supersedes and completes any understanding of the human being arrived at by philosophy" but it can be discovered and expressed by philosophy. Laurence Paul Hemming, "The Liturgical Subject," in *The Liturgical Subject: Subject, Subjectivity, and the Human Person in Contemporary Liturgical Discussion and Critique*, 2009, 11.

³¹¹ "Prior to the ethical" here is intended to convey the thesis of man's liturgical impulse as something foundational in the vein of rationality, relationality, composite being, etc. Man can only act ethically by the power of his liturgical relation, or that of his rationality, relationality, composite being, etc. It is not meant, as the term *pre-moral* is used in contemporary Proportionalistic terms where the *finis operis* is narrowly construed and determined by the overall outcome of the act.

³¹² See "Egoism in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*" by Carolyn Ray, Ph.D. as to an argument pertaining to labeling Aristotle with modern terms, and specifically if his understanding of altruism is possible without disregarding surrounding texts and context. Read at <http://enlightenment.supersaturated.com/essays/text/carolynray/aristotleegoism.html>. Accessed 15 February 2015.

³¹³ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, VIII, 12, 1162b6-7, trans. Terence Irwin (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1999), 134.

loved them, i.e., His disciples (*mathētai*). Christ radically elevates the status of His followers saying, "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends" (Jn 15:15 *RSV*).

There is an issue though as to who exactly constitutes the status of 'friend'. For with Aquinas' friendship (*amicitia*), there must be a good willed one to the other which may not make the relationship exceptional, but be interpreted as quite wide and inclusive. That is "one element of *philia-amicitia* that is often considered to be at odds with modern friendship."³¹⁴ Nonetheless, Aquinas states that, "friendship is between [a] friend and friend: and this well-wishing is founded on some kind of communication."³¹⁵ This does not limit the friendship *per se*, as Aquinas has certainly expanded Aristotle's notion to include the genuine good of all persons as belonging to Christ, i.e, they are to be loved in Christ and for Christ. Though it is not original to him, "friendship provides, for Aquinas, the paradigm through which the theological virtue of charity can be best conceptualized."³¹⁶

Perhaps for this thesis, that is one of the points of dissent. It is not that the liturgical relation is free of the ambiguity that is associated with some forms of friendship, for that can be weighed against both friendship and liturgy. But liturgy is an altogether different and higher form of relation that is capable of exceeding friendship. With liturgy, there is a return, but not an anticipated reciprocation as with friendship. For Aristotle, "to [be] a friend, it is said, you must wish good for his own sake. [In the absence of this wish being returned] you would be said to have only goodwill for the other. For friendship is said to be *reciprocated* goodwill."³¹⁷ With Aquinas, this reciprocation remains, but is linked directly to virtue. Aquinas understands that

³¹⁴ Daniel Schwartz, *Aquinas on Friendship*, (Oxford University Press, 2012), 2.

³¹⁵ Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q23, a1, co., 1263.

³¹⁶ Schwartz, 5.

³¹⁷ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, VIII, 3, 1155b31-34, 121, emphasis in the original.

“since true friendship is based on virtue...whatever in [the other] is virtuous is an incentive to friendship. On this way friendship is preserved by repayment of favors, specially to the virtue of gratitude.”³¹⁸ That is not an issue in the paradigm of liturgy presented in this thesis as gift, where there is a *distinction* between return and *exchange*.

Another point of contention is if there is any reliance on *preference* in friendship. Are all known peoples considered friends, or is there some selection that allows for exclusivity? In the former, friendship more closely assumes the role of a known acquaintance. The latter, there is some discretion and preference which comes closer to the generally accepted connotation of friendship. The moral theologian Paul Wadell C.P. understands that inherent ‘preference’ as “the Achilles’ heel, the formal quality that vitiates anything else about this love that might possibly make it good.”³¹⁹ If the case for friendship were to be made, this point would need to be overcome necessarily. A liturgical relation simply does not carry any sort of tainted relation to having a ‘preference’.

Then there is the notion of choices having a complex of motives. Wadell shares Lawrence Blum’s contribution that friendship “involves a high level development and expression of the altruistic emotions of sympathy, concern and care.”³²⁰ So friendship draws each person outside of himself, to the other. That is certainly a commendable aspect of relationality, but doesn’t preserve it from ulterior motives. Sympathy, concern and care are free human choices flowing from charity. They are arrived through “a discursive act of the reason; [they are a] human choice.”³²¹ Every human choice is between alternates and one course is chosen for a reason. To choose for the altruistic good of the other in friendship is laudable, but does not

³¹⁸ Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q106, a1, co., 1643.

³¹⁹ Paul Wadell, *Friendship and the Moral Life*, (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 76. Paul Wadell understands this ‘preference’ to be a requirement for the position of Søren Kierkegaard.

³²⁰ Wadell, 80.

³²¹ Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, I, q60, a2, ad1, 299.

dissipate any ulterior motive(s) that might also be present simply because the good of the other is sought.

For example, a father may wish for his daughter a high GPA in order to procure grants and other forms of aid for college tuition. This is desiring her good in that not only does she extract the most from her present education, but it lessens her future college financial burden. In friendship, the father gives and the daughter accepts the guidance, and whatever other contributions of his that allow the plan to come to fruition. Following Aquinas, perhaps what is received by the father, and is reciprocated by the daughter is genuine gratitude. But in a complex of motives, friendship cannot discount, or account for the possible ulterior motives of having a ‘trophy’ child, or a father who himself did poorly in high school living vicariously through the daughter, or the future ‘leverage’ of having the favor returned by providing care and support for the father when he ages, or the recognition of family and friends as being a parent who ‘sacrifices’ for his children, or doing more than the mother in the case of a separation, etc. And this doesn’t even address the preferential aspect of friendship.

In the phenomenological aspect of sacrifice as gift in the liturgical paradigm, the possibility for those ulterior motives remain. But the relation is not just between the father and daughter, as the liturgical element brings in a third, that of the Absolute. The Absolute’s motives were singularly for the other, as there was nothing absent or with the ability to be improved within the Absolute, i.e., even if it stems from man’s nature, the return adds nothing. It may be argued that the ‘good’ becomes the third element in friendship. Although this has the propensity to protect it from a reflective egoism, what if this altruistic act is carried out to a stranger, or distant acquaintance. One cannot say that the relation was between friends, but simply that one *acted* as though it were between friends, or in light of the altruism carried out, they have *become*

friends. Friendship becomes the analogy for the altruism, not primarily the relation in which each had found themselves. Speaking back to the previous two points then, with the *sacrifice as gift*, preference is absent as it includes all creation and reciprocation is absorbed in the Absolute's gift.

VII. Appendix 3 - Further Explorations and Applications

There are explorations and applications of the liturgical sacrifice as gift that are perhaps obvious, and others slightly more conspicuous. What is offered here is but a brief, and certainly not an exhaustive sampling. First, there are ways that any approach, regardless of how orthodoxly it is constructed, can be used in a misconstrued way. The emphasis on the necessity of understanding liturgy in a wider context (liturgical living) could lead some to diminish the primacy of place of the liturgical rite itself. Perhaps some may see liturgical living (sacrifice for the poor, naked, imprisoned, etc.) as the real liturgy and the liturgical rite (chalices and vestments) as something humanly contrived. The logic of this would imply that liturgical living is a ship on the sea in occasional need of returning to the dock. It reduces the liturgical rite to quite a utilitarian function, that wrongly considers the *real* work in the world.

Another position, slightly modified would be that the God-man relationship is not in need of the liturgical rite whatsoever, i.e., the Kingdom has evolved past, or it has been discovered how liturgy itself is a human invention. This impoverished understanding follows the eighteenth-century's 'turn toward the subject' where "the structures of modernity press individuals to meet God first in the depths of their souls and then, perhaps if they find something congenial, to become part of a tradition."³²² It would lead many to conclude that those who adhere to a liturgical tradition are simply like-minded individuals who have not yet broken-free of an Old

³²² M. Francis Mannion, *Masterworks of God: Essays in Liturgical Theory and Practice* (Chicago IL: Hillenbrand Books, 2004), 81.

Covenant remnant and adhere to an anachronistic ritual-relationship no longer valid. These both could be seen as weaknesses easy to exploit and in order to preserve the efficacy and solemnity of the liturgical rite itself, can become fodder for dismissing the theme of this thesis outright.

Where the understanding of sacrifice as gift in liturgy prospers most, is by forwarding a much needed liturgical spirituality. Further exploration would allow a more nuanced, and relatable pastoral response to the missionary exhortation at the end of the Eucharistic liturgy, *ite missa est* (loosely translated as ‘go, you are being sent). An understanding of sacrifice as gift, liturgically expressed would help individuals to “grasp the relationship between the Mass just celebrated and the mission of Christians in the world”³²³ to overcome the dichotomy of the liturgical rite posing as a ‘charging station’ with little direct connection to liturgical living. Especially acute would be the application in making the connection between the Eucharistic and social justice seamless. It would preserve and present the actions of *Kingdomizing* the world as not merely an expression of the liturgical rite, but as it truly is, the ‘flowing from and ebbing to’ the liturgy

As for the threat of theodicy to modern man’s understanding of his relationship with God and the world, it is not contested how it has turned many a ‘believer’ into a skeptic and emboldened much of the modern atheist’s contention of the impossibility of a benevolent God. But what if it could be demonstrated philosophically that sacrifice is the meaning to life and not just part of the human condition (which is the typical response), or the cause of some unknowable greater good, but a characteristic of the human person. Without falling into any conclusion that an understanding of the human being can ultimately be arrived at by philosophy alone, it can be maneuvered argumentatively that God is not a creation of man to explain the

³²³ Pope Benedict XVI, Apostolic Exhortation on The Sacrament of Charity *Sacramentum caritatis* (22 February 2007), §51.

physics of the earth's environment (God of the gaps). But rather what was revealed in the death of the historical Jesus was simply the perfect glimpse of what has been man's lot (to suffer and die), i.e., man reflects his Creator, so he suffers (sacrifices) and offers himself as gift as the perfection of the human being.

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