

The Liturgical Work of Alexander Schmemmann and its Significance for the Eastern Orthodox Church

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„In Rome, even in the seventh century, although the number of Christians made several gatherings inevitable, only one eucharist was performed, and the consecrated gifts were distributed by the deacons to the other assemblies. This underscores the meaning of the sacrament as the sacrament of the unity of the Church – as the overcoming of the sinful shatteredness and division of the world“ (A. Schmemmann, The Eucharist–The Sacrament of the Kingdom, Crestwood 1988, pp. 95 f.)

I. In Memoriam

On December 13, 2003, twenty years have passed since Alexander Schmemmann, a thoroughly outstanding and one of the „most important theologians of the twentieth century church“¹, fell asleep in the Lord. „His untimely death“² deprived the parish and the sanctuary of a worthy and esteemed minister, the university of an eminent professor, brilliant lecturer and pedagogue and the Liturgy of the Church of an astonishing exegete, whose „vertiginous theology“ (ἰλιγγιώδης θεολογία)³ can be compared and equated in content to the theology of the great Fathers of the Patristic era. The present article, written in his memory, while not a biography, merely offers some brief, subjective and incomplete reflections on his work and its importance to contemporary Orthodox worship. It does not attempt, therefore, to present his whole liturgical work, but only those points, which, in our opinion, are of paramount importance to our

¹ T. Fisch, Schmemmann's Theological Contribution to the Liturgical Renewal of the Churches, in: T. Fisch (ed.), *Liturgy and Tradition: Theological reflections of Alexander Schmemmann*, Crestwood 1990, p. 10. Hence quoted as *Liturgy and Tradition*.

² John Meyendorff, *A Life Worth Living*, Postscript in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 145.

³ I have borrowed this term from Christos Yannaras, Ἐπικαιρικά ἐπώδυνα, *Kathimerini*, 28. April 2002. Rendering mine.

Orthodox liturgical life and piety and to which, even though he brought them to the fore long ago, it seems that proper attention has not been paid.

Schmemmann was born in Estonia, in 1921, into a Russian family but moved to Paris in his early childhood, where he studied at the University of Paris and at the Orthodox Theological Institute of St. Sergius. In 1946, he was ordained to the priesthood and taught Church History at St. Sergius. As a young theologian, he was influenced by the members of the Russian „Paris” school of theology which included A. Kartashev, N. Zernov, C. Kern, N. Afanassiev, G. Florovsky and the luminaries of the Liturgical Movement, such as L. Bouyer, J. Danielou and others. However, the accumulation of all these scholars in Paris and the continuing migration of peoples from Eastern Europe to America, with the growing needs of the Church there which it implied, made the young Schmemmann, after the settling there of G. Florovsky (1949), follow him in 1951. In the United States, he taught Liturgical Theology at St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York, and lectured as Adjunct Professor at Union Theological Seminary, at General Theological Seminary and at Columbia University. In 1962, he assumed the post of Dean of St. Vladimir's Seminary, where he served until his departure in the Lord (1983)⁴. He gained broad recognition as a dynamic and well-versed teacher of the Orthodox Church. Through his lectures on various occasions and places in America and abroad, his radio broadcasts to Christians in the former Soviet Union and through his books, he succeeded in interpreting the truth of the Gospel to the contemporary world, making it something to be lived and experienced. For Schmemmann was a man of theory and praxis, of virtue and knowledge, a prophetic voice in the turbulent years of our era.

II. The Writings of Alexander Schmemmann

Schmemmann was a prolific and creative writer as well as a powerful speaker. Each one of his writings constitutes a lucid and innovative intervention and problematic in the field of Theology. It is no exaggeration to say that his entire experience in the vineyard of Christ stemmed from his diakonia at the holy sanctuary. Worship in general, the Eucharist in particular, shaped his worldview.

Schmemmann's scholarly work began with the publication of the small classic "Sacraments and Orthodoxy", New York 1963, which was soon after revised, expanded and retitled as "For the Life of the World", New York 1965. This earned him a prominent place both among scholars of liturgical and sacramental theology as well as simple believers. His other writings include: "Of Water and the Spirit", Crestwood 1974. This is a liturgical study of Baptism and Chrismation. "Great Lent", Crestwood 1974: A journey to Pascha, based on and explaining the Church's Lenten season. "Introduction to Liturgical Theology", Crestwood 1996. This is an excellent study commenting on and analyzing the Church's *lex orandi*, beginning with the worship of the early Church as the New Israel and then dealing with the formation of the liturgical cycles and the Typikon [the Ordo] and ending with its – so-called – Byzantine synthesis. His "His-

⁴ A concise biography of A. Schmemmann is found in *John Meyendorff, A Life Worth Living, Postscript in: Liturgy and Tradition*, pp. 145-150; it is also reflected in: *The Journals of Father A. Schmemmann 1973-1983*, Crestwood 2002. Hence referred to as *The Journals*.

torical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy", Crestwood 1977, is a concise handbook of Church history, while "Ultimate Questions", Crestwood 1977, aims to give to those who are studying Russia, her history, literature and religious life, at least a general idea of that area of Russian culture which Russians usually define as 'religious philosophy'. As excellent commentaries on our faith there are the three small volumes entitled "Celebration of Faith", vol.1 "I Believe", Crestwood 1991, vol. 2 "The Church Year", Crestwood 1994 and vol. 3 "The Virgin Mary", Crestwood 1995, whose reading should be accompanied by "Our Father", Crestwood 2002, a profound commentary on the Lord's Prayer. "The Eucharist-The Sacrament of the Kingdom", Crestwood 1988, is a precious commentary on the Divine Liturgy, which may be considered as the culmination of his work.

These studies are pioneer works in the field of liturgical theology and orthodox spirituality. Of equal importance are the books comprised chiefly of articles or lectures and papers presented to various audiences. Many of them were originally published in theological magazines, such as St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly, the Greek Orthodox Theological Review, the Ecumenical Review, Cross Currents and others: "Church, World, Mission", Crestwood 1979, a remarkable work which addresses with deep theological insight contemporary spiritual, liturgical and canonical problems. "Liturgy and Tradition", (edited by Thomas Fisch), Crestwood 1990, contains his theological reflections and, "Liturgy and Life: Christian Development through Liturgical Experience", New York 1974, is a general introduction to the study of Orthodox worship and its place in religious education. Finally, we should not leave out the lately published small but rare book, "O Death, Where is Thy Sting", Crestwood 2003. This is a collection of talks delivered as broadcasts to Russia on Radio Liberty from New York and concentrates on the apostolic affirmation „the last enemy to be deposed is death" (1 Cor 15: 26). A special book of its kind is "The Journals of Father Alexander Schmemmann 1973-1983", Crestwood 2002, which reflects in the form of a diary his thoughts, spiritual struggles, etc.

Almost all of these works have been translated into a number of languages and have undergone many publications. Perhaps there still exists unedited material. Schmemmann wrote mostly in Russian and English, though some writings are also in French. Evaluated properly, it is obvious that beyond the rich theological, liturgical and spiritual messages, which they convey, they can equally be well appreciated as tokens and paradigms of a marvellous English literature.

III. The Liturgical Work of Alexander Schmemmann

(a) General Remarks

As noted earlier, Schmemmann was a priest and a professor of liturgics. Inspired and influenced from his early ministry by the aims and goals of the Liturgical Movement, he became not only an active member, but in effect its leader, at least in the Orthodox theological field. „Reflection on the theological aspect of the liturgy was the focus of A. Schmemmann's intellectual life. He intuitively grasped and insisted upon the essentially theological character of all liturgical renewal. He recognized that the renewal of the churches requires a rediscovery of the liturgy's own inherent theology, that same theol-

ogy which once informed the whole of the church's life as well as the teachings and writings of the leaders of the Patristic age⁵. According to P. Meyendorff, he „was never entirely comfortable in purely academic and intellectual circles“ and „it would be no exaggeration to say that he was the driving force behind a renewal of eucharistic and liturgical life which continues in America and abroad to this day“⁶. The old adage *lex orandi lex est credendi* (the law of prayer expresses the law of faith), dominates his thought. Both in his sermons and also in his class lectures it was conspicuous that, for Schmemann, true and genuine Christian faith and life stem from the living fountain of the Church, i.e. her prayer, where God and man are united together through the God-man Jesus Christ and where man foretastes the trans-temporal reality of the heavenly Kingdom. He was not concerned with moralities, but always in a unique and joyful manner conferred the truth of the Church, challenging the mind of the auditor with the essential matters of faith. In this way he vigorously denounced, as few among contemporary orthodox theologians did, the secularization of the Church⁷; the defects of our „liturgicalness“⁸; the adaptation from our theology of categories and forms alien to Orthodoxy⁹; the divorce between theology, life and the Church; the triumph of clericalism¹⁰; and, what is the natural outcome of all these, „the complete disintegration of Communion as a corporate act“¹¹. With the same strength he fought against the notion of the „transformation of the Church into an organization, into an institution for attending to the ‚spiritual needs‘ of the faithful, into an organization on the one hand subordinated to these ‚needs‘ and on the other defining them and governing them“¹². The related passages are, indeed, too many to mention and, for this reason, we only refer here to some of them since in the following lines we shall give specific examples.

Thus, he was bound up with the conviction that „in every Liturgy the Church meets the coming Lord (as vanquisher of Satan and death) and has the fullness of the Kingdom, which is coming in power and that in her everyone who hungers and thirsts is granted, here, on this earth, in this age, the contemplation of the imperishable light of Tabor, the possession of perfect joy and peace in the Holy Spirit“¹³. With this conviction, he was able to transmit to us and all his future readers, the joy of this victory that makes life manifest and triumphant. Joy and the emphasis on unity in faith char-

⁵ T. Fisch, Schmemann's Theological Contribution to the Liturgical Renewal of the Churches, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 4.

⁶ Paul Meyendorff, The Liturgical Path of Orthodoxy in America, *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 40 (1996) 50, 51.

⁷ See A. Schmemann, *Worship in a Secular Age*, appendix 1 in: *idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, pp. 117-134. *Idem*, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, pp. 7-66. *Idem*, *Holy things for the Holy - Some Remarks on Receiving Holy Communion*, appendix in: *idem*, *Great Lent*, Crestwood 1974, pp. 107-133. *Idem*, *Liturgy and Theology*, in: *idem*, *Liturgy and Tradition*, pp. 52, 53.

⁸ These can be traced in all his work, but more precisely in A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist - Sacrament of the Kingdom*, Crestwood 1988, especially pp. 243-244. Hence referred to as *The Eucharist*.

⁹ A. Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Crestwood 1996, pp. 7-30. *Idem*, *The Eucharist*, pp. 9-48. *Idem*, *Of Water and the Spirit*, Crestwood 1974, p. 76 ff. *Idem*, *Sacrament and Symbol*, appendix 2 in: *idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, pp. 136, 145, 150.

¹⁰ A. Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, pp. 16, 130, 144, 170. *Idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, pp. 90-93. *Idem*, *Liturgical Theology, Theology of Liturgy, and Liturgical Reform*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 41. *Idem*, *Liturgy and Theology*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, pp. 49-68.

¹¹ A. Schmemann, *Theology and Eucharist*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 74. *Idem*, *The Eucharist*, p. 229 ff.

¹² A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, p. 242. *Idem*, *Great Lent*, Crestwood 1974, pp. 109-110.

¹³ A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, p. 90. Cf. *idem*, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 134. *Idem*, *Great Lent*, Crestwood 1974, p. 46.

acterize his whole work.¹⁴ It is perhaps only for this reason that he even used the most terrible of all accusations against Christians, made by Nietzsche, when he said that God is dead because Christians had no joy, to illustrate his point. This positive interpretation of Nietzsche will remain unique in contemporary Ecclesiastical history.¹⁵

It is evident, then, that his work cannot be taken as a systematic treatise per se on Orthodox liturgical theology. In some cases it takes an apologetic form: defending Orthodox liturgics as a theological discipline from what he calls „school or academic theology“, „which took hold in the Orthodox East in the dark ages of the Church's western captivity“¹⁶. For this, he holds wholly responsible the „overwhelming majority of Orthodox for their striking ignorance of the Scriptures, the absence of interest in them“¹⁷ and in worship. This ignorance has been brought about partly by the elimination of the biblical element from our services,¹⁸ which led to the „rapid and extravagant growth of hymnody and complicated system of church singing“¹⁹ and partly by the problems created, as we shall see, by our lack of proper catechesis before and after Baptism. Furthermore, he underlines our insufficient theological education. It is important to cite here his profound observation about contemporary Orthodox theology, that „as it operates today it is better and better equipped to fight heresies defeated some fifteen centuries ago, but apparently unable not only to fight but even to detect and to name the real and truly destructive heresies permeating our modern secularistic culture“²⁰. Secularism! This is „primarily a heresy about man. It is the negation of man as a worshipping being, as homo adorans: The one for whom worship is the essential act which both posits his humanity and fulfils it“²¹. In the same vein he pointed out the real dangers of our infatuation with nationalism, „the tragic division of Orthodoxy

¹⁴ In The Journals, the joy of the celebration of the mysteries is „the true substance of life“: A. Schmemmann, The Journals, p. 8.

¹⁵ A. Schmemmann, For the Life of the World, Crestwood 1973, p. 24.

¹⁶ Western captivity of Orthodox theology is a term used first by G. Florovsky (1893-1979). Schmemmann refers to it innumerable times. It denotes „the unfortunate results and expressions of the *pseudomorphosis* suffered by Orthodox theology after the breakdown of the patristic age when tragic conditions of ecclesiastical life forced upon Orthodox „intellectuals“ a non-critical adoption of Western theological categories and thought forms. The result was a deeply „westernized“ theology, whose tradition was maintained by theological schools“: A. Schmemmann, For the Life of the World, Crestwood 1973, pp. 135-136, 150. *Idem*, The Eucharist, pp. 12-14, 27-28, 66. *Idem*, Church, World, Mission, Crestwood 1979, pp. 15-16, 132-133, 135, 140. *Idem*, Ultimate Questions – An Anthology of Modern Russian Religious Thought, Crestwood 1977, p. 8. *Idem*, Of Water and the Spirit, Crestwood 1974, p. 76.

¹⁷ A. Schmemmann, The Eucharist, p. 74: „in our Church the *akathist* is immeasurably more popular than the scriptures“

¹⁸ For Schmemmann „no less than eighty percent of the material printed in modern liturgical books is hymnody“: A. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, Crestwood 1996, p. 173. And again, „the Byzantine liturgy has been and remains literally inundated with hymnography and, as we all know, often this is to the detriment of other essential elements of the liturgical celebration, in particular of its biblical dimension“: A. Schmemmann, Liturgical Theology: Remarks on Method, in: Liturgy and Tradition, pp. 140-141. Cf. A. Baumstark, Comparative Liturgy, Mowbray 1958, p. 24: „The biblical element (in the Odes of the Canon at Matins) has succumbed under the weight of the new element of poetry“.

¹⁹ A. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, Crestwood 1996, p. 121.

²⁰ A. Schmemmann, Church, World, Mission, Crestwood 1979, pp. 19, 22.

²¹ A. Schmemmann, For the Life of the World, Crestwood 1973, pp. 118, 119. According to Schmemmann, a secularist „may be a ‚very religious‘ man, attached to his Church, regular in attending services, generous in his contributions, punctual in prayer. He will have his marriage ‚solemnized‘ in the Church, his home blessed, his religious obligations fulfilled. But all this does not in the least alter the plain fact that his understanding of all these aspects of his life is derived not from the creed he confesses in Church...but from ‚philosophies of life‘ having virtually nothing to do with that creed, if not directly opposed to it“: A. Schmemmann, Great Lent, Crestwood 1974, p. 108.

into national Churches each indifferent to the other²². Actually, its exaggeration today gives priority to the national 'inheritance' of each nation and is thus negative to the Orthodox presence in the West: „The main vocation of the Diaspora... is the preservation of the various 'cultural heritages' proper to each 'Orthodox world'... The Orthodox 'establishment' and the vast majority of the Orthodox living in the West do not realize that the 'heritage' which they claim to preserve is not that only heritage which is worth being preserved and lived by: the vision of God, man and life revealed in the Orthodox faith²³. It is for this reason that he – together with other theologians such as G. Florovsky and J. Meyendorff – laboured very hard for the establishment of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church in America (OCA) in 1970²⁴.

In other areas his work is more ecclesiological, Christological, dogmatic and spiritual. In fact, his entire output can be assessed as the best contemporary chapters in the field of ecclesiology and Christology. Eucharistic Ecclesiology would be the proper context for understanding his thought. This term originally belongs to the thought of N. Afanassiev „whose ideas are reflected in many of Fr Schmemmann's writings²⁵. According to this vision, – first found in some the ancient patristic texts, such as the Didache²⁶, in Ignatius of Antioch²⁷ and Irenaeus of Lyons²⁸, but also in Maximus the Confessor²⁹ and N. Kavalas³⁰ – „the Church has been established in this world to celebrate the Eucharist, to save man by restoring his Eucharistic being³¹. „This was the vision that Schmemmann was to champion for the rest of his life, striving constantly to translate this principle from theory into practice³². Thus, recapitulating all the various strata of patristic theology (both the Greek and Latin Fathers) he presents their message to us fresh and pure. On the other hand, by combining the historical, philosophical and social trends of our time, he penetrates the contemporary situation in an apocalyptic way, bringing to the fore all church problems and distortions to our piety. Indeed, he perceives the present condition of the Orthodox Church as being in a „profound liturgical crisis³³. Because these two themes, piety and liturgical crisis, appear constantly in his writings, we must say a few words about each.

²² A. Schmemmann, The Idea of Primacy in Orthodox Ecclesiology, in: J. Meyendorff, N. Afanassieff, A. Schmemmann, N. Koulomzine, The Primacy of Peter in the Orthodox Church, London 1973, p. 55.

²³ A. Schmemmann, Church, World, Mission, Crestwood 1979, pp. 13-14.

²⁴ See his A Meaningful Storm, in: A. Schmemmann, Church, World, Mission, Crestwood 1979, pp. 85-116, especially pp. 85-86. Cf. John Meyendorff, A Life Worth Living, Postscript in: Liturgy and Tradition, p. 151-153. K. Ware, The Inner Kingdom, (The Collected Works, Vol. 1), Crestwood 2000, pp. 19-20.

²⁵ J. Meyendorff, A Life worth Living, Postscript in: Liturgy and Tradition, p. 148. *Idem*, Church and Ministry, in: J. Meyendorff, Catholicity and the Church, Crestwood 1983, p. 53. Cf. A. Schmemmann, The Eucharist, pp. 14-18.

²⁶ IX, 4: BEP 2, p. 218.

²⁷ BEP 2, p. 281.

²⁸ Contra Haereses IV, S. 18: PG 7, 1028 A.

²⁹ Mystagogie: PG 91, 8 CD.

³⁰ PG 150, 593 D-600A.

³¹ A. Schmemmann, The Journals, p. 25. *Idem*, Theology and Eucharist, in: Liturgy and Tradition, pp. 86-88; cf. note 80 below.

³² P. Meyendorff, The Liturgical Path of Orthodoxy in America, *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 40 (1996) 50.

³³ A. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, Crestwood 1996, p. 27. Cf. *idem*, Church, World, Mission, Crestwood 1979, pp. 126-127, 129ff.

(b) Liturgical Piety and Pietism

Liturgical piety is described as „the psychological acceptance of worship, its refraction within the consciousness of the believer“³⁴, which is manifested in beauty: architecture, singing, hymnography, vesting, iconography, ritual, solemnity, incense, fragrance etc³⁵. This ‚refraction‘ has cosmic and historical dimensions. It never attains an arbitrary or individual character, has nothing to do with „emotionalism and sentimentality“³⁶, but is the manifestation of the catholic and apostolic faith of the Church by virtue of which those who participate are saved³⁷.

However, „liturgical piety has the strange power of ‚transposing‘ texts or ceremonies, of attaching a meaning to them which is not their plain or original meaning“³⁸. It is upon this basis that Schmemmann frequently warns us about distortions of church piety by pietism. This is at the antipodes of piety, i.e. a Bible-centered individual moralism, rejecting the liturgical tradition. As it has „no root“ (Lk 8:13), it is very much associated with secularism. Thus pietism takes the form of an ecclesiological heresy and undermines the truth of the Church³⁹. In this context he analyzes and discusses every issue affected by pietism, nominalism⁴⁰ and religious indifference. „Liturgical piety“, he says, „has become thoroughly individualistic, and the most eloquent testimony to this is the contemporary practice of receiving communion, which is completely subordinated to the ‚spiritual needs‘ of the individual believer. No one apprehends it in the spirit of the Eucharistic prayer itself: ‚And unite all of us to one another who become partakers of the Bread and Cup in the communion of the Holy Spirit.‘“⁴¹ Distortions of liturgical piety are seen in his reference to the present liturgical status of the Church, characterized as ‚liturgical crisis‘.

³⁴ A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Crestwood 1996, p. 97.

³⁵ A. Schmemmann, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 145. *Idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, pp. 29-30.

³⁶ A. Schmemmann, *The Journals*, p. 98.

³⁷ Among many examples, the following illustrates at best this point: „The celebrant of the sacrament of joy will appear in a beautiful chasuble, because he is vested in the glory of the Kingdom, because even in the form of man God appears in glory“. A. Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, p. 30. *Idem*, *The Eucharist*, pp. 25, 26; cf. note 104 below.

³⁸ A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Crestwood 1996, p. 98. Our present-day celebration and understanding of Baptism and Eucharist, as we shall see below, is an ample corroboration to this remark.

³⁹ For the history of Pietism see Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, New York 1958, pp. 128-129; R. G. Clouse, *The Church in the Age of Orthodoxy and the Enlightenment*, St. Louis Missouri 1980, p. 75ff. D. W. Treadgold, *A History of Christianity*, Belmont MA 1979, pp. 170-171. Christos Yannaras, *The Freedom of Morality*, Crestwood 1996, pp. 119-131.

⁴⁰ By nominalism he means „the peculiar divorce of the forms of the Church's life from their content, from that reality whose presence, power and meaning they are to express and, as a consequence, the transformation of those forms into an end in itself so that the very task of the Church is seen as the preservation of the ‚ancient‘, ‚venerable‘ and ‚beautiful‘ forms, regardless of the ‚reality‘ to which they refer. Such divorce, permeates the entire life of the Church in the canonical area, in the liturgical life etc...What is tragic is the acceptance of that nominalism as normal, as ‚expressive‘ of Orthodoxy itself“. A. Schmemmann, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, pp. 23-24, 14, 131.

⁴¹ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 12. *Idem*, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 135.

(c) Liturgical Crisis

In his own words, this crisis can be summarized as follows: It consists primarily in the mistaken concept of the Church and the function of her worship, „in the profound metamorphosis in the understanding of worship in the mind of the Church“⁴². We are „trying consciously or unconsciously to reduce her (the Church) to values, philosophies of life and world-views profoundly different from, if not totally opposed to, her vision and experience of God, man and life“⁴³. Following these deep in meaning remarks, a) worship has ceased to be understood as the *Λειτουργία* of the Church, in order to express her faith. On the contrary, the existence of the Church herself has come to be understood as a hierarchical institution for sacred worship. b) In the contemporary approach to worship there is the characteristic absence of an understanding of it as the expression, creation and fulfilment of the Church, and thus through worship her participation in God's Kingdom. c) Thus the individual believer, entering the Church does not feel he is a participant and celebrant of worship, does not know that in this act he, along with the others, is called to express the Church as new life and to be transformed again into a member of the Church. d) The parish does not know that worship, as an expression of the parish, transforms it into the Church, gives it those ‚dimensions‘ which it does not and can not have naturally.⁴⁴ e) Because all these factors have a direct and immediate impact upon the Divine Liturgy, changing the perception of its very essence, he speaks of a „eucharistic crisis“⁴⁵. We will turn our attention now to some examples from his treatment of the Sacraments, the Liturgy of Time and the Typikon, where the fundamental value of his contribution to the Church can be seen.

(d) Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist

Schmemmann may be called the contemporary theologian of the Eucharist par excellence. His study, *The Eucharist – Sacrament of the Kingdom*, can be viewed as the masterpiece of his whole ministry. Here the Divine Liturgy is envisaged not simply „as one of the Sacraments, as our ‚school‘ theology and piety wants it, but as the sacrament of the assembly“⁴⁶. As such „it is constructed on the principle of correlation – the mutual dependence of the celebrant of the service and the people, or in the words of N. Afanassiev, on their co-serving or concelebration“⁴⁷. It becomes then the Church's passage⁴⁸ or ascent to that place where Christ ascended, to the homeland of the heart's desire and this denotes „the heavenly nature of the eucharistic celebration“⁴⁹. When the Church „in the Eucharist leaves the world and ascends to Christ's table at His Kingdom, she truly sees and proclaims heaven and earth to be full of His glory as having,

⁴² A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Crestwood 1996, p. 28.

⁴³ A. Schmemmann, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, pp. 9, 126. See also pp. 129-132, where he speaks of a double crisis of liturgy and theology.

⁴⁴ A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Crestwood 1996, pp. 27-30.

⁴⁵ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, pp. 11-26, especially p. 9.

⁴⁶ A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*, pp. 12, 28, 215ff. *Idem*, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, pp. 138. *Idem*, *Of Water and the Spirit*, Crestwood 1974, p. 58.

⁴⁷ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 14.

⁴⁸ A. Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, p. 31. *Idem*, *Liturgy and Eschatology*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 96.

⁴⁹ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, pp. 36, 60, 165. *Idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, pp. 28, 44. *Idem*, *Great Lent*, Crestwood 1974, p. 47.

filled all things with Himself"⁵⁰. Through our Synaxis „in one place“(Acts 2:42) around the table of the Lord, with the bishop or presbyter as His visible presence, we enter into the Kingdom. That is why – and Schmemmann insists on this – the eucharistic gathering was from the very beginning the basic and fundamental element of the church's structure, which made her the Church of God⁵¹. Without this assembly of the people of God, the assembly of the baptized and chrismated with the „Seal of the omnipotent and adorable Holy Spirit“⁵² – which, by the way, today has ceased to be self evident – nothing can happen. It is only here that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are distributed and so all the sacramental acts of the Church are directly performed and integrated inside the Eucharist, for it is according to the Fathers „the fulfilment of all sacraments“⁵³. Therefore, the Eucharist is the experience of the Church as the sacrament of the Holy Spirit. It is then „the sacrament of the beginning and the end“⁵⁴, for the coming down of the Holy Spirit is connected with „the last days“(Acts 2:17), the eschata. „It is always this eschatological reality, this foretaste of the Kingdom which is offered to us by the liturgy“⁵⁵. Through the Eucharist the Church is manifested „as the new aeon and participates in the Kingdom as the Parousia, as the presence of the Resurrected and Resurrecting Lord“⁵⁶. Because of this „eucharistic realism“⁵⁷, Schmemmann rejects categorically all the symbolisms of the Liturgy which explain its parts as representations of the earthly ministry of Christ since the time of N. Kavalas⁵⁸ (fourteenth century onwards).

So in order to experience this heavenly role of the liturgy, he urges us to rediscover the

⁵⁰ A. Schmemmann, *Worship in a Secular Age*, appendix 1 in: *idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, p. 123.

⁵¹ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 11. Cf. the strong phrase of J. Meyendorff „the Eucharist is the ultimate criterion and basis of ecclesial structure“: J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, New York 1983, p. 206.

⁵² Prayer of the Confirmation.

⁵³ *Dionysios Areopagita*: PG 3, 424c. *St. Symeon of Thessalonica*: PG 155, 85b. Cf. A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 219. For the connection of the Eucharist with the other sacraments, see P. N. Trempeles, *Ἡ Θεία Εὐχαριστία κατὰ τὴν συνάθροισιν αὐτῆς πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα μυστήρια καὶ μυστηριοειδῆς τελετάς*, in: *Εὐχαριστήριον. Τόμος πρὸς τὴν Ἀ. Ἀλιβιζάτου*, Athens 1958, p. 462 ff.

⁵⁴ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 36. According to Metropolitan John Zizioulas, „the Eucharist is an image (εἰκόνα) of the Kingdom of God, an image of the eschata“: J. Zizioulas, *Εὐχαριστία καὶ Βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *Synaxis* 49 (1994) 7. Rendering mine.

⁵⁵ A. Schmemmann, *Liturgical Theology: Remarks on Method*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 143.

⁵⁶ A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Crestwood 1996, p. 72. *Idem*, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 30.

⁵⁷ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 37 ff. *Idem*, *The Liturgical Revival and the Orthodox Church*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 103ff.

⁵⁸ The reason for this is that Schmemmann perceives a discontinuity in the theology of the liturgy between Byzantine and late or post-Byzantine liturgical tradition, whose principle is theological. As he writes „for St. Maximus (for example), the liturgical symbol is validated by a consistent theology of the liturgy, which, in turn, applies to liturgy a comprehensive and consistent theological vision. The late Byzantine and post-Byzantine symbolism has ceased to belong to any theological context, to reflect any theology of the liturgy“: A. Schmemmann, *Symbols and Symbolism in the Byzantine Liturgy*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 124. Cf. *idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, pp. 135-151. *Idem*, *The Eucharist*, pp. 18-22, 31, 38-40, 243. Schmemmann's thesis is endorsed by J. Zizioulas, who observes that a) „After the Resurrection, the symbolism of worship no longer moves between the natural and intelligible worlds or simply between the events of the Old and New Testaments, but principally between the Resurrection of Christ and the Second Coming.“ b) The „later (Byzantine) commentators give greater weight to the imaging events of Christ's earthly life and thus the eschatological orientation of liturgical symbolism is gradually attenuated“: J. Zizioulas, *Συμβολισμός καὶ Ρεαλισμός στὴν Ὁρθόδοξη Λατρεία*, *Synaxis* 71 (1999) 17-18. My translation.

true meaning of Theology, which will support our liturgy and lead to true piety. For „Theology is always an invitation to ‚taste and see‘ (Psalm 33:9), an announcement and a promise to be fulfilled in communion, vision and life“⁵⁹. From this dynamism of theological truth incarnate in the liturgy, there emerge his constant agony and ambition: How can contemporary man be liturgized properly? It is in this context also that he wanted the words of sacred scripture to be understood. Thus it is not accidental that he considers the gradual ‚reduction‘ and ‚decomposition‘ of scripture, especially in the history of western Christianity and its „dissolution in more and more specialized and negative criticism, as a result of its alienation from the Eucharist – and practically from the Church herself – as an experience of spiritual reality. This same alienation deprived the sacrament of its evangelical content, converting it into a self-contained and self-sufficient ‚means of sanctification‘“⁶⁰. Particular attention should be paid to the fact that he sees as a major defect inflicted upon the Liturgy the custom which prevailed in the Church whereby the prayers read by the priest mainly that of anaphora, should be said inaudibly, silently: „For centuries now, the laity, the people of God, whom the apostle Peter called a ‚chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people‘ (1 Pt 2:9), have simply not heard and thus do not know this veritable prayer of prayers, through which the mystery is completed and the essence and calling of the Church herself are fulfilled“⁶¹.

The eschatological character of the Eucharist, „incompatible with the days of Lent“⁶² leads to its immediate relationship with the day of its celebration, i.e. Sunday, the first and the eighth day, which occupies a prominent place in Schmemann’s thought. This is „the day of the Kyrios“⁶³, „the day on which the Church fulfils itself as new life“⁶⁴ and which, „far from being a Christian substitute for the Jewish Sabbath, places all of time in the perspective of the Kingdom, makes it a ‚passage‘ to the ‚day without evening‘ and thus fills each moment of it with meaning and responsibility“⁶⁵.

It is the thesis of this paper that his entire work points to „the sacrament of sacraments“. Therefore, we should not forget that one of his early studies, a „seminal work“⁶⁶ unique in sacramental theology, *For the Life of the World*, begins with the theme of food as the symbol of the Eucharist⁶⁷ while his last one deals with the Church’s entry into the Kingdom. Thus, Schmemann restored and reaffirmed to us the liturgy’s ecclesiological and eschatological dimension – characteristics which were lost

⁵⁹ A. Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 143.

⁶⁰ A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, p. 66.

⁶¹ A. Schmemann, *ibid.*, pp. 57, 172, 243. *Idem*, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 145. For the history of the reading of the prayers in the liturgy and other ceremonies, see the study of G. N. Filias, *Ὁ Τρόπος Ἀναγνώσεως τῶν Εὐχῶν στῇ Λατρεία τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας*, Athens 1997, where further bibliography.

⁶² A. Schmemann, *Great Lent*, Crestwood 1974, pp. 49-52.

⁶³ A. Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 151.

⁶⁴ A. Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, p. 51. *Idem*, *Great Lent*, Crestwood 1974, pp. 46-47. *Idem*, *Of Water and the Spirit*, Crestwood 1974, pp. 122-123. *Idem*, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Crestwood 1996, pp. 75-80, 183-184, 215.

⁶⁵ A. Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 30.

⁶⁶ P. Meyendorff, *The Liturgical Path of Orthodoxy in America*, *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 40 (1996) 53.

⁶⁷ Schmemann begins this book with the statement of the German materialistic philosopher Feuerbach (1804-1872) ‚man is what he eats‘ (p.11) and recapitulates with this theme of food the Fall of man to sin and death (Gen.2:16) and Salvation through partaking of the body and blood of Jesus Christ (John 6:53-58 etc.), (pp. 11-22).

or even forgotten long time ago in our faith and piety – as we shall see below. This is obvious, for example, in the initiative that he undertook and endorsed in the Orthodox Church of America, which can be considered as a great liturgical reform: on Sundays and other great feasts, Baptism and Chrismation started again to be connected with and celebrated inside the Eucharist in a single ceremony⁶⁸. This meant that, these sacraments, which after their separation from the Eucharist suffered the consequences of individual piety and came to be „absent from our liturgy, and hence, absent from our life or in other words taken for granted“⁶⁹, gradually found their ecclesiological place again and were to be celebrated properly inside the Eucharistic celebration, as they were in the early Church.

It is to these sacraments that the study *Of Water and the Spirit* is devoted. It begins with an unprecedented introduction: an appeal to each of us to rediscover Baptism as our paschal sacrament, as the sacrament of our second birth, our „birth from on high“ (John 3: 3-8). The author makes it clear that this meaning of Baptism is „absent from our life“, hence „absent from the Church's liturgy and thus naturally absent from our piety“. For „today it takes some fifteen minutes to perform in a dark corner of a church, with one ‚psaltist‘ giving the responses, an act in which the fathers saw and acclaimed the greatest solemnity of the Church: a mystery ‚which fills with joy the angels and the archangels...‘, a mystery for which the church prepared herself by forty days of fasting and which constituted the very essence of her paschal joy. A decadent liturgy supported by a decadent theology and leading to a decadent piety“. This „absence is the root of many tragedies in the Church today“⁷⁰. The real danger lies in the fact that we do not want to recognize in Baptism the death of our ‚old Adam‘ as the presupposition for our entrance into the Church. Here, heavy responsibility is placed on the role of sponsors, „whose choice has become a purely family matter and more often than not they are selected for reasons having nothing to do with the Church, her faith and the spiritual responsibility for the baptizant“⁷¹. The same attitude is shown to the sacrament of Chrismation, „the personal Pentecost of man“⁷². But „no one can partake of the ‚new life‘ without dying in the baptismal death, no one can have Christ as his life unless he has died and is constantly dying to this world“⁷³. „Thus there appeared a certain discrepancy between Baptism itself – its liturgy, its texts, rites and symbols – on the one hand, and the various theological explanations and definitions of Baptism on the other, between the act and its explanation, the sacrament and its comprehension. This is alarming for if, as we believe, our whole life as Christians depends on Baptism, is given to us in Baptism, and must constantly be referred to Baptism, the proper understanding of this sacrament is not merely an intellectual but indeed an existential necessity for us. The most striking aspect of this discrepancy is the inability of modern or post-patristic theology to explain the correlation between Baptism

⁶⁸ According to the *Typikon* of St. Savas, Sunday Matins is to be celebrated right after Vespers on Saturday evening. This rite is followed today by the monasteries of Mt. Athos and the Slavic churches. The Greek churches, following the Constantinopolitan *Typikon* (composed by G. Violakis in 1888), celebrate Matins on Sunday morning before the Liturgy. In the latter case, unless properly fixed, chances are slim for Baptism to be performed inside the Eucharist.

⁶⁹ A. Schmemmann, *Of Water and the Spirit*, Crestwood 1974, p. 8.

⁷⁰ A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*, pp. 8-11. Cf. *idem*, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 138. *Idem*, *The Eucharist*, p. 85.

⁷¹ A. Schmemmann, *Of Water and the Spirit*, Crestwood 1974, p. 161.

⁷² A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*, p. 79. *Idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, p. 75.

⁷³ A. Schmemmann, *Theology and Eucharist*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 78.

and the Death and Resurrection of Christ, a relationship clearly affirmed by both liturgy and Tradition⁷⁴.

The book ends with an important passage: „It is time for us to return to the baptismal sources of true Christian spirituality, to re-evaluate – in the light of the sacrament of regeneration by Water and the Spirit – the spiritual confusion of our time and the numerous pseudo-spiritual recipes offered as its solution and cure. For like doctrine and liturgy, ‚spirituality‘ is not a separate and self-contained pursuit whose techniques it suffices to master in order to succeed in it. Ultimately it is the new life itself, stemming from the Church and thus having its source and its criteria where the Church herself has them: in the death in Christ of the old man, in the rising again in Christ of the new life, in the gift of the Holy Spirit (i.e. Chrismation), which makes us ‚kings, priests and prophets‘ in the participation of the hidden, yet real life of the ‚eighth day‘ the day without evening of the Kingdom“⁷⁵. Actually this practice of Baptismal Liturgy tends to be undertaken today by a large number of Slavic churches both in the USA and abroad and is beginning to be used albeit with great caution, in the Greek churches⁷⁶.

Earlier we said that the eschatological character of the Liturgy has for a long time not been given appropriate attention in the piety even of the Orthodox. Here is an observation of the Metropolitan John Zizioulas, a well known liturgiologist: „It would take a whole volume in order to describe the distortions of our Liturgy in the hands of its clergy...The way in which our Eucharist is celebrated, does not any more represent the eschatological Synaxis ‚in one place‘. With the multiplication of the eucharistic gatherings in the parishes, chapels, monasteries etc and the absence of the bishop as the head of the Synaxis ‚of the entire church‘ in one place because of extensive dioceses, the term Synaxis has lost its meaning. But then, we should speak about the Diaspora of believers, than Synaxis in one place“⁷⁷. There are other indicative signs also within the Liturgy, where the eschatological content seems to be thrown away or simply forgotten⁷⁸, but there is no need for us to discuss this here⁷⁹. Schmemmann, how-

⁷⁴ A. Schmemmann, *Of Water and the Spirit*, Crestwood 1974, p. 54.

⁷⁵ A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*, pp. 153-154.

⁷⁶ Prof. I. Fountoulis is in favour of celebrating Sunday Matins together with Saturday evening Vespers (at least in a tentative way) in the church of Greece. This perhaps will give room to the performance of Baptism inside the Liturgy on Sunday morning. See I. Fountoulis, *Λειτουργική Α΄. Εισαγωγή στη Θεία Λατρεία*, Thessalonica 1993, p. 287. Hence quoted as *Λειτουργική Α΄*.

⁷⁷ J. Zizioulas, *Εὐχαριστία καὶ Βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ*, 14, 15. My translation.

⁷⁸ This occurs because „in the Eucharist and the sacraments... everywhere one finds the same pattern: a ‚selection‘ of certain elements, a rejection of others; a selection, however, based not on the principles of the *lex orandi* itself but on considerations totally alien to it“. A. Schmemmann, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 131.

⁷⁹ A very serious remark for the Antiphons in the Liturgy is made by Fr R. Taft, which may as well refer to the fate of the eschatological content of the Eucharist: „Today the three antiphons have been reduced to a few scraps of their original form, and the troparia after the third antiphon have been so multiplied as to take on an independent existence detached from the psalmody which they were originally destined to serve as refrains. This exemplifies another common development in liturgical history: the process whereby ecclesiastical compositions multiply and eventually suffocate the scriptural element of a liturgical chant, forcing, in turn, the decomposition of the original liturgical unit, so that what we are left is simply debris, bits and scraps of this and that, a verse here, a refrain there, that evidence no recognizable form of unity until they are painstakingly reconstituted into their original structures by piercing together the remaining scraps, then filling in the blanks, sort of like doing a jig-saw puzzle with only a tenth of pieces.“ See Robert Taft S J, *How Liturgies Grow. The Evolution of the Byzantine Divine Liturgy*, in: *idem*, *Beyond East and West: Problems in Liturgical Understanding*, Rome 1997, pp. 214-215.

ever, has left us with a passage on this subject, which we think is of paramount importance for the life of the Church; it is at the end of the book on the Eucharist and may be understood as his testament: „What concerns the Eucharist concerns the Church and what concerns the Church concerns the Eucharist so that any ailment in the liturgy reflects on our faith and on the whole life of the Church“⁸⁰. This means that any distortions or accretions in the order of the liturgy – such common phenomena in our contemporary individualistic piety – have a direct impact on the Church⁸¹.

(e) Marriage and Priesthood

Although it was relatively easy for Baptism and Chrismation to be included once again and celebrated within the Eucharist, it seems that it was not as easy for the mystery of love, i.e. marriage. Perhaps Schmemmann realized that time had not yet come for this, mainly because of our inconsistency as Christians due to conditions of our secular society. Nevertheless, he envisaged this sacrament as being fulfilled only in this way: „By taking the ‚natural‘ marriage into ‚the great mystery of Christ and the Church‘, the sacrament of matrimony gives marriage a new meaning; it transforms, in fact, not only marriage as such but all human love“⁸². „The early Church“, he continues, „apparently did not know of any separate marriage service. The ‚fulfilment‘ of marriage by two Christians, was their partaking together of the Eucharist. As every aspect of life was gathered into the Eucharist, so matrimony received its seal by inclusion into this central act of community“⁸³. „As long as we visualize marriage as the concern of those alone who are being married, as something that happens only to them and not to the whole Church, and, therefore to the world itself, we shall never understand the truly sacramental meaning of marriage: The great mystery to which St. Paul refers when he says, ‚But I speak concerning Christ and the Church‘“⁸⁴.

However, we live in a changed world and the crisis that exists already for other sacraments unfolds here too, in an equally peculiar manner, „with modern approaches to marriage ... leaving no room for the sacrament“⁸⁵. Priority is given to psychological, social and family matters – whereby both the love and joy of marriage are usually lost. The blessing is considered by many as a custom or obligation. People laugh when the reading of St. Paul from Ephesians (Eph 5: 20-33) is heard! It is as if they are attending a public theatre! In this, he makes the following redolent and meaningful statement: „We do not even remember today that marriage is, as everything else in ‚this world‘ a fallen and distorted marriage and that it needs not to be blessed and ‚solemnized‘ – after a rehearsal and with the help of a photographer – but restored. This restoration is in Christ and this means in his life, death, resurrection and ascension to heaven, in the Pentecostal inauguration of the ‚new eon‘ in the Church as the sacrament of all this... We must understand that the real theme, ‚content‘ and object of this sacrament is not ‚family‘, but love. Family as such, family in itself can be a demonic distortion of

⁸⁰ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 244.

⁸¹ Schmemmann is critical of contemporary liturgical practice both in the Greek and the Russian church for omitting the Augmented Litany and the litany of the Catechumens respectively: A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, pp. 81, 85.

⁸² A. Schmemmann, *The Mystery of Love*, in: *idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, p. 88.

⁸³ A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*; cf. *idem*, *Theology and Eucharist*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 81.

⁸⁴ A. Schmemmann, *The Mystery of Love*, in: *idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, p. 82.

⁸⁵ A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*

love – and there are harsh words about it in the Gospel: ‘A man’s foes shall be those of his own household’ (Mt. 10: 36). In this sense the sacrament of matrimony is wider than family. It is the sacrament of divine love, as the all-embracing mystery of being itself, and it is for this reason that it concerns the whole Church and – through the Church – the whole world⁸⁶. In order for us to understand this he does not develop an Orthodox ‘theology of love’ but begins his comments with the person who has always stood at the very heart of the Church’s life as the purest expression of human love and response to God – Mary, the Theotokos⁸⁷.

Now this truly cosmic significance of marriage as the sacrament of love can be expressed in the best possible way in its liturgical similitude with the liturgy of ordination, the sacrament of the Priesthood. If the assembly as the Church is the image of the body of Christ, then the image of the head of the body is the priest. The priest is married to the Church and this makes him the minister of that Love which alone transforms the world and reveals the Church as the immaculate bride of Christ⁸⁸. Schmemmann was aware of all the problems surrounding this office today, the chief of which is clericalism and its various manifestations. Summarized in a few words it can be formulated as the domination of the priestly element in the Church, „with a unique and specifically ‘sacred’ vocation while laity, layman became little by little synonymous with a lack of something in man, or his nonbelonging“⁸⁹. In the same context, as it is in contemporary piety, it marginalized the office of the deacon, „made him to be in essence unneeded,“ in other words „his presence in every church community has ceased to be perceived as necessary and self-evident, as one of the conditions of the fullness of church life, and the ‘diaconate’ has been converted into a certain ‘decorative’ appendage (particularly in the hierarchical service) and likewise a ‘step’ on the way to the priesthood“⁹⁰. However, this too can be overcome in the following way: „We must remind ourselves of the fundamental task to which the Church is called and how she is commanded to carry it out. The point is, being the new people of God, gathered, redeemed and sanctified by the Lord Jesus Christ, the Church is consecrated by him for witness about him in the world and before the world“⁹¹. Meanwhile, we tend to ignore this in everyday life.

(f) Penance and Healing

In the Appendix of his Great Lent „Holy Things for the Holy – Some Remarks of receiving Holy Communion“ Schmemmann analyzes the place and role of sacramental confession as a way of preparation for Communion. Here, again, he first clears the road from the distortions and defects under which the Orthodox doctrine of the Church about this sacrament has been accepted, after it gradually took the form of a private service. They are three: 1) the belief that Communion for the laity is impossible without sacramental confession and absolution. 2) The influence within the Church of monastic confession and 3) the influence of Western scholastic and juridical under-

⁸⁶ A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*

⁸⁷ A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*, pp. 83-87.

⁸⁸ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, pp. 24-25. *Idem*, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, pp. 91-92.

⁸⁹ A. Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, p. 92. *Idem*, *The Eucharist*, p. 58f.

⁹⁰ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, pp. 108, 121.

⁹¹ A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*, p. 90.

standing of Penance. Thus he proposes the „rediscovery of the true meaning of preparation as the very focus of our spiritual life, as that spiritual effort which always reveals to us our unworthiness and makes us therefore desire the sacrament of healing and forgiveness, and which by revealing to us the unfathomable depth of Christ's love for us, makes us love Him and desire to be united with Him“⁹².

Penance and Healing are also discussed in his *Liturgy and Life: Christian Development Through Liturgical Experience*, whereupon we should caution ourselves at least on two very crucial points: First we should never understand them in magical or miraculous terms (as many of us would like to accept them today) and, secondly, not as self-contained ‚means of grace‘, but always in the sacramental proposal of Orthodoxy aiming at the sanctification of our life and based on the evangelical virtues of repentance and humility. For it is only when we are truly disgusted with sin and decide to change that our Christian life can be a constant transformation of defeat into victory⁹³. In fact he put this into practice and combined harmoniously pastoral care for the flock with his great love and firm confidence in the inheritance of the Fathers of the Church. Following the model of the ancient Church, he endorsed general confession as a supplement to individual confession⁹⁴.

(g) The Liturgy of Time and the Typikon

This essay cannot obviously refer to all of Schmemmann's liturgical work, for such an effort would require a more attentive study than this one. Herein we gave some examples about the sacraments, albeit subjectively and tentatively. Nevertheless his work is extended to the whole *lex orandi* of the Church and embraces such themes as the Theology and liturgy of time (the cycles aimed at the sanctification of life), heortology, the Sanctorale and Lent, the role of hymnody, monasticism and monastic worship, the Typikon in its parish and monastic versions etc. Out of these we shall consider for a while his Great Lent, for it is in this work that we may discover for ourselves „that in this world nothing is as beautiful and deep, as inspired and inspiring, as that which the Church, our Mother reveals and freely gives to us once we enter the blessed season of ‚Lenten spring‘“⁹⁵. As a Journey to Pascha, he meditates on and exposes here the movable cycle of the liturgical year of the Church from the beginning of the Triodion until Holy and Great Saturday. Among the ‚dialectics‘ of this pilgrimage are the preparatory themes of Lenten worship, its ‚Bright sadness‘, the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts⁹⁶, Saturdays and Sundays of Lent, the Holy Cross, the canon of St Andrew of Crete, etc. Given the fact that we Orthodox often are „so accustomed as to take these things for granted“⁹⁷, this study, as an expla-

⁹² A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*, pp. 107-133, especially p. 132.

⁹³ See A. Schmemmann, *Liturgy and Life: Christian Development through Liturgical Experience*, New York 1974, pp. 90-101. Cf. *idem*, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 135. *Idem*, *Great Lent*, Crestwood 1974, p. 9.

⁹⁴ See P. Meyendorff, *The Liturgical Path of Orthodoxy in America*, *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 40 (1996) 52.

⁹⁵ A. Schmemmann, *Great Lent*, Crestwood 1974, p. 9.

⁹⁶ For the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, see also the classical work of P. N. Trembelas, *Αἱ τρεῖς Λειτουργίαι κατὰ τοὺς ἐν Ἀθήναις Κώδικας*, Athens 1982. D. N. Moraitis, *Λειτουργία τῶν Προηγιασμένων*, Thessalonica 1955. I. Fountoulis, *Τελετουργικά Θέματα*, Athens 2002, pp. 83-87; *idem*, *Λειτουργική Α΄. Εἰσαγωγή στή Θεία Λατρεία*, Thessalonica 1993, pp. 98, 265-269.

⁹⁷ A. Schmemmann, *Great Lent*, Crestwood 1974, p. 78.

nation of one of the most important seasons in the liturgy of time, constitutes in itself a guide for our own 'passage' into the new life of the Risen Christ.

The remainder of the themes mentioned above are analyzed in the Introduction to Liturgical Theology. Based on the legacy of the Jewish Synagogue and the Temple of Jerusalem to the Church as the 'true Israel', the 'new Covenant', Schmemmann stresses again in an edifying manner the eschatological character of Christian worship and points out its doctrinal and theological importance: „The whole meaning, the whole point and uniqueness of early Christian eschatology is just this, that in the light of the coming of the Messiah and the 'drawing near' of the Messianic Kingdom, the light of its manifestation in the world, time becomes truly real, acquires a new and special intensity. It becomes the time of the Church: the time in which the salvation given by the Messiah is now accomplished⁹⁸. „It is this eschatological experience of the Church that shaped and determined the entire development of the Christian liturgy, and not only of the sacraments but also of the liturgical cycles of time, i.e., the year, the week, and the day⁹⁹. This truth stems from the Resurrection of Christ and, hence Pascha as its yearly commemoration. Thus „the entire worship of the Church is organized around Easter, and therefore the liturgical year, i.e., the sequence of seasons and feasts, becomes a journey, a pilgrimage towards Pascha, the End, which at the same time is the Beginning: the end of all that is 'old'; the beginning of the new life, a constant 'passage' from 'this world' into the Kingdom already revealed in Christ¹⁰⁰. What today, however, is regrettable when we consider the situation of earlier generations, who „not only intellectually, but with their entire being...received along with their faith a radically new understanding of life“,¹⁰¹ is that in our piety we fail to experience this eschatological spirit, to realize in our worship our procession towards the Kingdom and to „relate through the 'liturgy of time', all time, all cosmos – its time, matter and life – to Christ who is to, fill all things with Himself¹⁰². We think of it only as a doxology to God in order to fulfil our duty. In this perspective, his words are, again, fraught with meaning: „and if today it is necessary for us to 'rediscover' all this that is because the essential tragedy within the history of the Church has been the very total eclipse of the eschatological 'content' and inspiration which are so evident in the faith and life of the primitive Church¹⁰³.

This 'content' is apparent for example, in the Orthodox services of Vespers and Matins, which are, after the Divine Liturgy, the basic services in the weekly cycle of the 'liturgy of time' and where four subjects follow one another in accordance to the divine economy. Beginning with Vespers we have: 1) the theme or doctrine of Creation, expressed by Psalm 104: 'Bless the Lord, my soul' (Προοιμιακός).¹⁰⁴ 2) The theme

⁹⁸ A. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, Crestwood 1996, p. 72.

⁹⁹ A. Schmemmann, Symbols and Symbolism in the Byzantine Liturgy, in: Liturgy and Tradition, p. 127.

¹⁰⁰ A. Schmemmann, Great Lent, Crestwood 1974, p. 13. Cf. *idem*, Church, World, Mission, Crestwood 1979, pp. 48-49.

¹⁰¹ A. Schmemmann, Of Water and the Spirit, Crestwood 1974, p. 9.

¹⁰² A. Schmemmann, Church, World, Mission, Crestwood 1979, p. 136.

¹⁰³ A. Schmemmann, Liturgical Theology: Remarks on Method, in: Liturgy and Tradition, p. 143.

¹⁰⁴ In the Monasteries of Mount Athos and the Slavic churches candles are to be put out during the reading of this Psalm, while the *Typikon* of St. Savas regulates that the faithful should stand in absolute silence. See *Τυπικὸν τῆς Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Ἀκολουθίας τῆς ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις Ἁγίας Λαύρας τοῦ Ὁσίου καὶ Θεοφόρου Πατρὸς ἡμῶν Σάββα*, 1771, p. 7. Thus the darkness inside the church and this Psalm, which is a magnificent recapitulation of the account of Creation in Genesis, express the dogma of the Church about

of the Fall, expressed in Psalm 141: 'Lord I call to you, come to my aid quickly'. 3) The doctrine of salvation expressed through the procession of the priest with the censer and the singing of the ancient hymn 'O gladsome light...' and 4) the doctrine of the Eschaton, expressed in the prayer of Symeon, 'Now, Lord you are releasing your servant in peace...' (Lk 2: 29-32). In Matins there are the same themes, though in the opposite order: 1) the theme of the Eschaton and of the Second Coming of Christ, expressed through the Six Psalms (3, 38, 63, 88, 103, 143 - Ἑξάψαλμος) and Psalm 118. 2) The doctrine of divine economy, expressed through the reading and veneration of the Gospel. 3) The theme of the Fall, with Psalm 51 (the Psalm of repentance) which follows immediately and 4) the theme of Creation (Psalms 148, 149, 150) and the accompanying Doxology¹⁰⁵.

In all this Schmemmann stresses the role of the Typikon. "Our Church knows no worship which is not according to Ordo"¹⁰⁶. Its austere and composite requirements, so that our worship is according to St Paul's admonition "all things should be done decently and in order" (1 Cor 14:10), signify its twofold importance: a) As a rule and a shield against any kind of effort and desire to assimilate the worship of the Church into the conditions and demands of 'this world'. b) As a witness of inner and unbroken continuity of liturgical tradition and the content of worship. However, "the Church should not hold and insist on a blind absolutization of the Typikon in all its details", but discern "what is truly fixed and eternal in this Ordo which has come down to us through such a complicated process, and which includes so many various layers of material"¹⁰⁷.

IV. The Significance of Schmemmann's work for the Orthodox Church

The Orthodox Church is today witnessing a liturgical renewal, which is expressed and experienced in many ways both in her worship and in piety¹⁰⁸. This has occurred, on the one hand, because of the fact that Orthodox theology - especially in the second

Creation *ex nihilo*. The same τάξις is prescribed for the reading of the Exapsalm at Matins. All this can be seen as well as an expression of liturgical piety mentioned above.

¹⁰⁵ A. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, Crestwood 1996, pp. 216-17; cf. *idem*, For the Life of the World, Crestwood 1973, p. 143.

¹⁰⁶ A. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, Crestwood 1996, p. 33ff.

¹⁰⁷ A. Schmemmann, *ibid.*, p.213. *Idem*, Symbols and Symbolism in Byzantine Liturgy, pp. 127-128.

¹⁰⁸ See Josef A. Jungmann, The Early Liturgy, London 1963, p. 2. "The liturgy of the Catholic Church is an edifice in which we are still living today and in essentials, it is the same building in which Christians were already living ten or fifteen or even eighteen and more centuries ago. In the course of all these centuries, the structure has become more and more complicated, with constant remodelings and additions, and so the plan of the building has been obscured - so much so that we may no longer feel quite at home in it because we no longer understand it. Hence we must look up the building plans, for these will tell us what the architects of old really wanted, and if we grasp their intentions we shall learn to appreciate much that the building contains and even to esteem it more highly. And if we should have the opportunity to make changes in the structure or to adapt it to the needs of our own people, we will then do so in such a way that, where possible, nothing of the precious heritage of the past is lost". See Louis Bouyer, Eucharist, Notre Dame-Indiana 1968, p. 1: "Our understanding of 'eucharist' here is exactly what the word originally meant: the celebration of God revealed and communicated, of the mystery of Christ, in a prayer of a special type, where the prayer itself links up the proclamation of the mirabilia Dei with their re-presentation in a sacred action that is the core of the whole Christian ritual".

half of the 20th century – rediscovered the spirit of the Fathers¹⁰⁹ ‘so actually’ „nothing of the precious heritage of the past is lost“, as Jungmann contends above. On the other hand, it is because we have realized the impasse to which our infatuation with secularism, pietism and nationalism have or eventually will lead us. Schmemmann acknowledges this fact and is optimistic about the future¹¹⁰. By liturgical renewal we do not just mean here only the later tendency of receiving more frequently Holy Communion and what is associated with it. As we said above, baptism has already started to be celebrated within the Eucharist¹¹¹ and so is marriage, though to a lesser degree.¹¹² Encouraging signs of this metabole may also be, in the case of architecture, the reestablishing of the Synthronon¹¹³ in the altar, the low iconostasis¹¹⁴, the baptisterion¹¹⁵, etc as organic parts of the church building and hence, the celebration of the corresponding services properly. Together with this goes the bringing back of some of the marginalized biblical element into the services¹¹⁶, the replacing of the sermon within its liturgical context, so that we may understand the meaning of the services, as well as the recovery of the true spirit of iconography. The growth of publications in theological treatises and the revival of monasticism should also not be overlooked. However, we still have a lot more to do. The jurisdictional pluralism stemming from nationalism has not yet been resolved. The language problem with texts and ceremonies, combined with that of clericalism, still lie at the bottom of today’s religious indifference (especially on the part of the youth) and even of secularism itself. There are, nonetheless, a number of dangers here – and Schmemmann warns us against them – the „chief of which consists in the deeper ‚sacralization‘ of the Church“¹¹⁷, i.e. her becoming a religious institution as we already stated earlier and, secondly, seeing and expressing in all this

¹⁰⁹ See A. Schmemmann, *Theology and Eucharist*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 84. *Idem*, *The Task of Orthodox Theology Today*, in: *idem*, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 122. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, Crestwood 1996, p. 170.

¹¹⁰ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 242. *Idem*, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, p. 15. *Idem*, *The Liturgical Revival and the Orthodox Church*, pp. 101-114.

¹¹¹ A diagram of this service is in I. Fountoulis, *Λειτουργική Α΄. Εισαγωγή στη Θεία Λατρεία*, Thessalonica 1993, pp. 287-289.

¹¹² For the connection of marriage with Eucharist, see J. Meyendorff, *Marriage – An Orthodox Perspective*, Crestwood 2000, pp. 42-43; I. Fountoulis, *Λειτουργική Α΄. Εισαγωγή στη Θεία Λατρεία*, Thessalonica 1993, pp. 297-298. The theological meaning of the connection of the Sacraments with the Eucharist is also strongly emphasized by Metropolitan Zizioulas: „The sacraments when not united with the Eucharist are a blessing and confirmation which is given to nature as biological hypostasis. United, however, with the Eucharist they become not a blessing and confirmation of the biological hypostasis but a rendering of it transcendent and eschatological“. J. Zizioulas, *Personhood and Being*, in: *idem*, *Being as Communion*, Crestwood 1985, p. 61.

¹¹³ For the Synthronon and its abolition in Byzantine times, see K. D. Kalokyris, *Εισαγωγή εις την Χριστιανικήν καὶ Βυζαντινὴν Ἀρχαιολογίαν*, Thessalonica 1970, p. 63. J. Zizioulas, *Συμβολισμός καὶ Ρεαλισμός στὴν Ὁρθόδοξη Λατρεία*, *Synaxis* 71 (1999) 19.

¹¹⁴ For the role of iconostasis and its problems, see A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, pp. 20-21. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, New York 1983, pp. 204; L. Ouspensky, *The Problem of the Iconostasis*, *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 8 (1964) 215.

¹¹⁵ On the baptisterion, its meaning and function in the baptismal liturgy, see W. M. Berad, *Symbolism of the Baptismal Font*, Washington 1951; H. Leclercq, *Baptistère*, in: *Dictionnaire d'Archeologie Chretienne et de Liturgie* 2. 1, 382-469; K. D. Kalokyris, *Εισαγωγή εις την Χριστιανικήν καὶ Βυζαντινὴν Ἀρχαιολογίαν*, pp. 82-84. I. Fountoulis, *Λειτουργική Α΄. Εισαγωγή στη Θεία Λατρεία*, Thessalonica 1993, p. 45.

¹¹⁶ In the church of Greece, for example, we may refer to the restoration of the proper Antiphons in the Liturgy (Psalms 92, 93 and 95) instead of an abridgment of the ‚Typica‘ and the Alleluia with its verses, after the Epistle reading in some parishes, as well as the reading aloud part of the Anaphora.

¹¹⁷ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 242.

„the rediscovery of the ‚social‘ and the ‚organic‘ as essential dimensions of the Church“¹¹⁸.

Undoubtedly, the work of our great Russian theologian, on the basis of what we have discussed so far, occupies an overarching role in this renewal. His greatest contribution to the Orthodox Church and the world, as is generally acknowledged today, is that, on the one hand, he bequeathed to both the gift of what would be called after him ‚liturgical theology‘, whose heart is the understanding of the indissoluble unity between the rule of prayer (*lex orandi*) and the rule of faith (*lex credendi*)¹¹⁹. As excellent chapters in Christology, Ecclesiology, Doctrine, Worship, Church History, Spirituality etc, his writings are read with considerable academic interest. They help both orthodox and non-orthodox readers alike, both clergy and laity, to rediscover their true vocation in the Church. They, thus, constitute a source of continuous supply of orthodox liturgical experience and spirituality for anyone who thirsts for truth. „For Schmemmann is that rare, great theologian whose theology is always and only about life, for it is rooted in the One who is Life“¹²⁰. Whether the leadership of the Church will be able to respond to his spirit or not remains to be shown, even now.

On the other hand, we must acknowledge that he made us realize and rediscover the role and importance of the Eucharist in the spirit of this indissoluble theological bond, i. e. to understand it as „the core of the whole Christian ritual“, in the words of L. Bouyer. „To ‚rediscover‘ the Eucharist means to recover its ecclesiological and eschatological ‚fullness‘, to know it again as the Sacrament of the Church“¹²¹, „as the presence here and now of the future Parousia, as the epiphany of that which is to come, as communion with the ‚world to come‘“¹²². Then „salvation could be nothing else but the restoration of life as ‚eucharist‘“¹²³. In fact, nowhere in his writings are we taught about eschatology as a separate chapter of Christian theology, but as a present experience, offered to us in Christ through the Eucharist. „I am convinced“, he writes, „that the genuine revival of the Church begins with eucharistic revival, but in the fullness of this word“¹²⁴. „It is in the Eucharist, in its *ordo* and movement, in its connection with all other sacraments and cycles of worship that one discovers the only true and catholic source of ecclesiology in its cosmical as well as eschatological, institutional and sacramental dimensions“¹²⁵.

This single statement is the key to our understanding of his message and indicates clearly the state of mind through which we should contemplate his work for our and the world's salvation. After all, in the Eucharist we are offered solutions to the liturgical crisis that we continue to face and which he so charismatically unveiled to

¹¹⁸ A. Schmemmann, *Theology and Eucharist*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 75.

¹¹⁹ N. Lossky, *Postscript*, in: *John Meyendorff, The Orthodox Church*, Crestwood 1996, p. 230. See also Bernard Botte, O.S.B., *The Role of Liturgical Theology: A Debate*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 26. W. Jardine Grisbrooke, *Liturgical Reform: A Debate*, p. 32. T. Fisch, *Schmemmann's Theological Contribution to the Liturgical Renewal of the Churches*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 5.

¹²⁰ A. Vinogradov, *Introduction*, in: *Alexander Schmemmann, O Death Where is Thy Sting?*, Crestwood 2003, p. 11.

¹²¹ A. Schmemmann, *Theology and Eucharist*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 86.

¹²² A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 43. „Inasmuch as this unity in Christ with God is also unity in Christ with all, inasmuch this new and eternal life, eternal not only in duration but also in ‚quality‘ is the goal of creation and salvation, the Church in herself has no other ‚business‘ than the incessant acquisition of the Holy Spirit and growth into the fullness of Christ, who lives in her“: *ibid.*, p. 90.

¹²³ A. Schmemmann, *The Liturgical Revival and the Orthodox Church*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 111.

¹²⁴ A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, p. 242.

¹²⁵ A. Schmemmann, *Church, World, Mission*, Crestwood 1979, pp. 142-143.

us. Only in this way will the parish again retain its ecclesiological dimension becoming the living cell of the Church. In the liturgy we will find the cures to today's problems, especially those of multiculturalism, atheism, nihilism (which are spread not only in the West) and the challenge of eastern religions. He clarifies it very well: After the Communion and having seen the true Light and received the heavenly Spirit, „the time has come for us to return to the world ... We are sent back ... And it is as witness of this Light, as witness of the Spirit that we must ‚go forth‘ and begin the never-ending mission of the Church. Eucharist was the end of the journey, the end of time. And now it is again the beginning, and things that were impossible are again revealed to us as possible. The time of the world has become the time of the Church, the time of salvation and redemption“¹²⁶. In this sense, we should also comprehend that any prospective union of the churches in the future – in the field of Ecumenical Movement and dialogue – will primarily bring us together around this Messianic banquet. This, of course, is our great hope, joy and expectation, especially since Vatican II, the Roman Catholic Church has adopted the principles of the Liturgical Movement and proceeded to serious reformation in her worship, having as its basis the practice of the ancient Church¹²⁷. In addition, one cannot fail but see through his writings an answer to the Protestant quest for true and authentic tradition, having in mind that the Reformers of the sixteenth century in the West accepted the teachings of the Church Fathers such as St. Basil and Chrysostom, Gregory the Theologian, Athanasios, Irenaeus and others¹²⁸. So it is only in this perspective – the celebration of the Eucharist – that the following points must be made:

a) Schmemmann shows us the importance of the Day of its celebration i.e. Sunday, the weekly pascha of the Church and calls us to appreciate its privileges¹²⁹. b) We rediscovered the lost meaning and role of our baptism, as the sacrament of our ‚old‘ (sinful) and ‚new‘ (regenerated) humanity in Christ. For „the proper celebration of baptism is, indeed, the source and the starting point of all liturgical renewal and revival“¹³⁰. The same can be said about the other sacraments. c) We are able to appraise and esteem the meaning and importance of the Typikon in the structure of our ser-

¹²⁶ A. Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood 1973, pp. 45-46. *Idem*, *The Liturgical Revival and the Orthodox Church*, in: *Liturgy and Tradition*, p. 114.

¹²⁷ See E. J. Lengeling, *Die Konstitution des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils über die heilige Liturgie*, Heft 5/6, Reihe Lebendiger Gottesdienst, Münster 1964, p. 37ff. E. Theodorou, *Zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, in: *Stimme der Orthodoxie zu Grundfrage des II Vaticanums*, herausgegeben von Damaskinos Papandreou, Wien – Freiburg – Basel 1969, pp. 93-94. J. A. Jungmann, *Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*. Einladung und Kommentar, LThK, vol. II. Das Zweite Vatikanische Konzil, Teil I, Herder 1966.

¹²⁸ J. Meyendorff expresses a complaint upon this subject, which is worthy to be quoted here: „When a theological revival occurred in modern times (in the Orthodox East), Orthodox theologians, liberated from mechanical dependence upon the West, continued nevertheless to theologize with general awareness of Western Christendom: they never really withdraw from the dialogue. The same, unfortunately, cannot be said of the West, whose very success and self-sufficiency did not always leave an opportunity for ‚memory‘ of the Eastern roots of the Christian faith. The Eastern Fathers were (and still are) published, translated and studied by specialists, but are rarely taken into account by the great creative minds of Western Christendom“. J. Meyendorff, *Rome, Constantinople, Moscow: Historical and Theological Studies*, Crestwood 2003, p. 4.

¹²⁹ On the theological meaning of Sunday see also I. Fountoulis, *Τό Χριστιανικό Ἑορτολόγιο*, in: *idem*, *Λειτουργική Α΄*, pp. 119-120; J. Danielos, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, London 1978, pp. 342-343; *idem*, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, Indiana 1964, pp. 242-261; R. Taft, *Sunday in the Byzantine Tradition*, in: *idem*, *Beyond East and West*, pp. 51-71; Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, London 1945, pp. 336-337; J. A. Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy*, London 1963, pp. 19-28; Oscar Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship*, Philadelphia 1978, pp. 88-92.

¹³⁰ A. Schmemmann, *Of Water and the Spirit*, Crestwood 1974, p. 38.

vices¹³¹. d) We have realized the true meaning and power of worship, of its cosmic, ecclesiological and eschatological dimensions and content. This of course, implies study, education and effort. e) We are offered a new perspective on our church year and heortology. f) With his remarkable insights into contemporary problems and distortions of our piety by secularism, pietism, nominalism, nationalism etc, we can experience properly the fullness of our liturgical tradition. Without his work it would be impossible to do this. g) With his criticism of the weaknesses and shortcomings of our theology, he clears the way to getting rid of the spirit of sufficiency and complacency, so imminent in our theological cycles. h) Finally, his distinctive ability in use and quotation of many of the works of modern and contemporary philosophy, literature and culture, besides encouraging us to be acquainted with and open to the Western world, shows what can be accomplished by combining many of the trends of Western intellectual life with aspects shaped by Orthodox liturgical vision¹³².

All of these underline the point we made in the beginning, that Alexander Schmemmann was a 'prophet' of God, for he truly had the „mind of Christ“ (1 Cor. 2:16): „The prophet is the one who hears God and therefore can convey God's will to the world, the one who 'reads' all events, all 'situations' with God's eyes and therefore can refer all that is human and temporal to that which is divine and eternal – the one, in other words, for whom the world is transparent to God“¹³³.

¹³¹ It is sad but we must underline here that proper attention is not paid, even today, to the prescriptions of the Typikon, on the part of many orthodox clergy and chanters.

¹³² See A. Schmemmann, The task of Orthodox Theology Today, in: *idem*, Church, World, Mission, Crestwood 1979, pp. 124-125.

¹³³ A. Schmemmann, Of Water and the Spirit, Crestwood 1974, p. 100.