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THE MEMORY OF BAPTISM IN THE INTRODUCTORY RITES OF THE HOLY MASS

Abstract. Sprinkling with water as a sign of covenant and purification is rooted in the Old Testament. Although Christians accepted the biblical symbolism of water, sprinkling with it in the liturgy encountered resistance. In ancient times that reluctance resulted from the similarity of sprinkling to pagan rites, in the Middle Ages and during the Reformation from the danger of treating this rite in the liturgy as a repetition of baptism. The rite of sprinkling initially had no connection with the liturgy of the Mass, later it became the rite preceding the Mass (Asperges) and it was of purifying and penitential character. The development of the introductory rites in the Mass led to the formation of the penitential act among them, which in the post-Tridentine Missal took the form of the Confiteor. The post-conciliar Missal of Paul VI included Asperges in the introductory rites of the Mass providing for the possibility of replacing the penitential act on Sunday with Asperges, and at the same time treating it as the memory of baptism. The analyses of the subsequent editions of the post-conciliar Missal indicate, among others, the connection of Asperges with the liturgy of baptism during the Easter Vigil. The prayers of Asperges also highlight the baptismal character of the common priesthood of the faithful. The service which completes the rite of Missal Asperges is Vespers of Resurrection Sunday connected with the sprinkling of baptismal water.

Key words: sprinkling, Asperges, blessed water, baptism, Holy Mass, introductory rites, penitential act, Missal of Paul VI.

Fathers of Vatican II in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* called for such a reform of liturgical rites so that they were distinguished by “a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetitions; they should be within the people’s powers of comprehension, and normally should not require much explana-

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tion.”¹ Following those indications, significant changes to the rite of Asperges, associated with the Holy Mass on Sundays, were made during the implementation of the post-conciliar liturgical reform. The rite, which had preceded the Mass before, became an integral part of it. This study shows the path of the formation of the modern Missal Asperges.

1. USING WATER FOR SPRINKLING IN THE LITURGY

In the Old Testament the rite of sprinkling first concerned the use the blood of sacrificed animals as a sign of sacrifice, covenant and ritual purification (cf. Exodus 12,7; 24,8; 29,16.20–21; Leviticus 1,5.11; 3,8.13; 4,6.17; et al.). In parallel, there were instructions on purification by sprinkling with water (cf. Numbers 8,7; 19,13), and sometimes immersion in it (cf. Numbers 19,18). That rite referred to the exit from Egypt through the waters of the Red Sea.² The religious idea of water purification was developed in the later period, as reflected in the Psalms (cf. Ps. 50[51],9), and in the visions of the prophets (cf. Ezekiel 36,25; 45,19). The immersion in water practiced by John the Baptist, which was a figure of the baptism of the New Testament, constituted a penitential rite (cf. Matthew 3,6).³ St. Paul writing to Timothy about raising clean hands in prayer (cf. 1 Timothy 2,8) probably referred to the ritual purification in water made by the Levites (cf. Exodus 30,19–20). Although the biblical symbolism of water was generally accepted,⁴ sprinkling with water in the liturgy aroused strong opposition of St. Justin (100–167). That was because it resembled the practice used by the pagans, and even two centuries later sprinkling with water was treated as one of the Donatists’ errors.⁵

¹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* [=SC] no. 34.

² Cf. Bogusław NADOLSKI, “Aspersja, pokropienie wodą pobłogosławioną [Asperges, sprinkling with blessed water],” in IDEM, *Leksykon symboli liturgicznych* [*Lexicon of liturgical symbols*] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Salwator, 2010), 69.

³ Cf. Augustyn JANKOWSKI, *Biblijna teologia Przymierza* [*Biblical theology of Covenant*] (Katowice: Księgarnia św. Jacka, 1985), 38–39; F. AMIOT, “Chrzest [Baptism],” in *Słownik Teologii Biblijnej* [*Dictionary of Biblical Theology*], ed. Xavier Léon-Dufor (Poznań: Pallottinum, 1994), 131.

⁴ Dorothea FORSTNER, *Świat symboliki chrześcijańskiej* [*The world of Christian symbolism*], trans. Wanda Zakrzewska, Paweł Pachciarek, Ryszard Turzyński (Warszawa: PAX, 1990), 65–82.

⁵ Cf. Józef BOGUNIOWSKI, “Aspersja niedzielna w rozwoju historycznym [Sunday Asperges in historical development],” in *Mysterium Christi. Msza święta* [*The Holy Mass*], ed. Waclaw Świerżawski (Kraków: Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne, 1992), 204.

At the end of the second century there appeared the custom of sprinkling lay people's dwellings with holy water.⁶ Gnostic apocrypha *Acta Petri* (about 190) and *Acta Thomae* (about 250) contain the information on sprinkling with holy water, the aim of which was to remove an evil spirit from houses. *Sacramentarium Gallicanum* of the eighth century, in addition to drinking holy water, mentioned the custom of sprinkling with it. The blessing of water was generally performed in private homes, and in the seventh century it was eventually transferred to church buildings.⁷ Initially, water blessing took place only through prayer. But as early as in the sixth century *Liber Pontificalis* mentioned that Pope Alexander added blessed salt to water while blessing it.⁸

St. Cyprian from Carthage (200–258) confirms the existence of the custom of baptizing sick catechumens by sprinkling them with baptismal water. Afterwards, at the turn of sixth and seventh centuries there appeared the custom of sprinkling the faithful with baptismal water in the days of administering baptism—Holy Saturday and the Vigil of Pentecost. The water was blessed by mixing Chrism with plain water. The celebrant sprinkled the baptismal font and the people with it, and then he administered baptism. In the eighth and early ninth centuries, the faithful used baptismal water for sprinkling their homes, vineyards, fields and the fruits of the earth. From the middle of the ninth century, the water was taken for that purpose before it was mixed with sacred Chrism. There exists the source which mentions that in the tenth century the faithful were sprinkled with water not mixed with chrism. Since in the Middle Ages in some churches of France that rite was regarded by the people as re-baptism, priests did not perform it.⁹

Using baptismal water to sprinkle the faithful had an impact on using holy water not only at homes but also in the liturgy. Since the eighth century holy water has been used in churches and in places where the sick stayed. Before the anointing of the sick, priests sprinkled them with water. In Franconia the practice of blessing water at homes was noted to have disappeared,

⁶ Widely prevalent practice of sprinkling with holy water associated with blessing families clearly refers to baptism and belonging to Christ and concerns His Paschal Mystery. Cf. "Doroczne błogosławieństwo rodzin w ich domach [The annual blessing of families in their homes]," in *Ob-rzędy błogosławieństw. Dostosowane do zwyczajów diecezji polskich [The rites of blessings. Adapted to the customs of Polish dioceses]*, vol. 1–2 (Katowice: Księgarnia św. Jacka 1994).

⁷ Cf. BOGUNIOWSKI, "Aspersja niedzielna", 207–209.

⁸ Cf. Bogusław NADOLSKI, *Liturgika*, Vol. 4: *Eucharystia [Liturgics, Vol. 4: The Eucharist]* (Poznań: Pallottinum, 2011), 173.

⁹ Cf. BOGUNIOWSKI, "Aspersja niedzielna," 209–210

and therefore it was often done in churches, even on every Sunday before the principal Holy Mass.¹⁰ In monastery churches of the eighth century it was customary for the priest on duty (*hebdomadarius*) to perform that liturgical rite in the chancel before a conventual Mass, then he sprinkled the altar with holy water and all people gathered in the church. After that, the entire religious community went off in procession to the cemetery and monastic buildings. During the procession, the priest, saying prescribed prayers and accompanied by singing of the faithful, sprinkled the graves in the church and the cemetery. Singing and prayers were of penitential character.¹¹ Such shape of Asperges could have been affected by the rite of blessing water on the feast of the Epiphany well-known as early as in the fourth century. In that rite the cross was dipped into the water and the faithful were sprinkled with it. Purifying and apotropaic character of sprinkling with water was emphasized in the ninth century by Rabanus Maurus (784–856), who indicated purification, brightness, tears of grief, or fear of God symbolized by water and baptism.¹²

2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTRODUCTORY RITES OF THE MASS

The earliest descriptions of the liturgical assembly of Christians in the celebration of the Eucharist did not contain the introductory rites. St. Justin, giving an account of the Sunday liturgical assembly in the middle of the second century, made no mention of any introductory rites before readings that could be a regular part of the liturgy.¹³ Even St. Augustine noted in 426 that the celebrant after leaving the sacristy just greeted the faithful and immediately started reading the Bible.¹⁴

Introductory rites developed under the influence of the solemn papal liturgy, which in basilicas was preceded by numerous processions of the clergy. The processions associated with stational liturgy in Rome were another source of complex rituals preceding the celebration of the Mass. They

¹⁰ Cf. NADOLSKI, *Liturgika*, 174.

¹¹ Cf. BOGUNIOWSKI, "Aspersja niedzielna," 210.

¹² Cf. NADOLSKI, *Liturgika*, 174.

¹³ Cf. JUSTYN MĘCZENNIK, "Apologia [Apology]," in Marian MICHALSKI, *Antologia literatury patrystycznej [Anthology of Patristic literature]*, Vol. 1 (Warszawa: PAX, 1975), 97.

¹⁴ Cf. NADOLSKI, *Liturgika*, 163–164.

were formed under the influence of the East and were celebrated on specific days of Lent and ember days. They were accompanied by prayers sung in the form of a litany with *Kyrie eleison* acclamation. The procession was ended in *colecta*.¹⁵ At the turn of the fifth and sixth centuries, at the time of the disappearance of the liturgy with the catechumens, so-called Gelasian litany developed and it accompanied long processions *ad introitum*. That liturgy took over the function of the prayer of the faithful closing the Liturgy of the Word and preceding the Liturgy of the Eucharist.¹⁶ However, those solemn processional rites could not be celebrated in smaller communities and therefore they were simplified.¹⁷ Even in Rome itself, due to the difficulty in completing the choir, Pope Gregory the Great (590–604) allowed for the reduction, in weekdays, of solemn intercession songs and Gelasian litany leaving only the response *Kyrie eleison*.¹⁸

Later, along with the forming of the opening songs (*ad introitum*), greeting the altar (kissing, incensing), the sign of the cross and greeting the faithful, there appeared richer musical forms associated with intercessory *Kyrie eleison* and *Gloria* hymn.¹⁹ The first formulas of the penitential act were well-known in the East at the turn of sixth and seventh centuries. They became popular in the West under the influence of the Franconian liturgy in the eighth century. The regular formula *Confiteor*, as a celebrant's private prayer, was used in the Latin liturgy in the eleventh century.²⁰ Post-Tridentine Missal of Pius V (1570) normalized the presence of the penitential act, in the rites constituting the assembly, in the form of the universal confession recited twice—by the altar server and celebrant.²¹

¹⁵ Cf. *ibidem*.

¹⁶ Cf. Piotr KULBACKI, "Modlitwa powszechna jako modlitwa wiernych [The universal prayer as the prayer of the faithful]," *Roczniki Liturgiczno-Homiletyczne* 1(57) (2010): 145–146

¹⁷ Cf. NADOLSKI, *Liturgika*, 164

¹⁸ Cf. KULBACKI, "Modlitwa powszechna," 145.

¹⁹ Cf. Bogusław NADOLSKI, "Introit [Introit]," in *Leksykon Liturgii [Lexicon of Liturgy]*, ed. Bogusław Nadolski (Poznań: Pallottinum, 2006), 567–569.

²⁰ Cf. NADOLSKI, *Liturgika*, 172

²¹ Cf. *Missale Romanum*. Editio iuxta typicam (Novi Eboraci–Bostoniae–Cincinnati–Chicagoae–Sancti Francisci: Benzinger Brother Inc., [1962]), 223–224

3. SUNDAY RITE OF ASPERGES

The parish churches of the ninth century were familiar with the tradition of Asperges introduced by the Archbishop of Reims Hinkmar (806–882). In the commentary of Rupert of Deutz (1075/76–1129) on the liturgy of the Mass and the liturgical year, Asperges was interpreted as the memory of baptism.²² All priests before the solemn Sunday Mass blessed water and sprinkled the people entering the church. That water could be taken home with the aim of sprinkling fields, vineyards, cattle, feed, food and beverages. That Sunday ceremony, well-known in the Franconian kingdom spread in Italy in the tenth century, and the pontifical of Płock from the twelfth century confirmed the existence of that custom in Poland. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Sunday Asperges was commonly regarded as the memory of baptism. When at the end of the Middle Ages the practice of Asperges disappeared, which was the result of attempts to shorten the Mass, the then synods called for supporting it.²³

In the sixteenth century the Protestant environment expressed opposition to the sprinkling of holy water, seeing it as a repetition of baptism. At that time there was simplification of that rite—the water was blessed in the sacristy, and the Asperges procession was only retained in certain circumstances, eg. in the summer and during Easter. Sprinkling was accompanied by Ps 50[51] with the antiphon *Asperges me hyssopo* (cf. Ps. 50[51],9), and during the Easter period Ps 118[117] with the antiphon *Vidi aquam* (cf. Eze-kiel 47,1–2.9).²⁴

Post-Tridentine Missal placed Asperges before the Holy Mass as a rite of penance—purifying, not giving this rite a baptismal trait.²⁵ The priest in the sacristy first exorcised salt, and then blessed water and added salt to it. The prayers of exorcising salt (could be used for blessing water many times) and water blessing indicated the following effects: 1° Satan’s expulsion from the places contaminated with his presence and repelling misfortunes brought by him; 2° expelling Satan from the people, places of residence and the things they use; 3° healing the sick; 4° the presence and help of the Holy Spirit for

²² Thomas SCHUMACHER, *Die Feier der Eucharistie* (München: Pneuma Verlag, 2009), 37.

²³ Cf. BOGUNIOWSKI, “Aspersja niedzielna,” 211–212.

²⁴ Cf. *ibidem*; see Andrzej RUTKOWSKI, “Eklezjologia liturgiczna Psalmu 118[117] w uroczystości, święta i wspomnienia świętych pasterzy. [The liturgical ecclesiology of Psalm 118[117] on solemnities, feasts and memorials of saints pastors],” *Liturgia Sacra* 19 (2013): 39–50.

²⁵ Cf. “*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam*,” in *Missale Romanum* (1962), (241)–(242).

the good of the soul and body.²⁶ Therefore, one could find the definition of Asperges as exorcism.²⁷ Sprinkling with water was made by the celebrant who celebrated the principal Mass. He did that in his Mass vestments, without a chasuble and maniple—only in a cope. Accompanied by the suitable antiphon, according to the liturgical season, the priest knelt on the lowest step of the altar and sprinkled it (as long as the Blessed Sacrament was not exposed on it), then he did the sign of the cross on his forehead with an aspergillum, after that he sprinkled those who assisted him in celebrating the mass and the clergy in the choir. The faithful could be sprinkled by a minister. It was not until the prayer closing Asperges was said that the priest put on a maniple and chasuble. The prayers during the rite of Asperges, except for the antiphon *Vidi aquam* during the Easter season, did not refer to baptism, although the rubrics mentioned—where there was the baptismal font—the possibility of using water (blessed during the Paschal Vigil) on Resurrection Sunday—*ante infusionem oleorum separata*. In Poland, it was customary to hold the procession after Asperges, which was followed by putting on the other Mass vestments.²⁸ Immediately after the Second Vatican Council, Asperges initially underwent atrophy in Poland, as it was not mentioned in transitional liturgical books.²⁹

4. ASPERGES INSTEAD OF THE PENITENTIAL ACT IN THE MISSAL OF PAUL VI

The post-conciliar reform made significant changes in the introductory rites of the Mass,³⁰ among other things, it introduced, in addition to *Con-*

²⁶ Cf. *ibidem*; Antoni NOWOWIEJSKI, *Msza święta [The Holy Mass]*, Vol. 1–2 (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Antyk, 2001), 462–463.

²⁷ Cf. Mateusz MATUSZEWSKI, “Formy wspomnienia chrztu: aspersja podczas niedzielnej Eucharystii i nieszpory chrzcielne [The forms of the memory of baptism: Asperges during Sunday Eucharist and baptismal Vespers],” *Anamnesis* 14 (2008), no. 2(53): 72.

²⁸ Cf. NOWOWIEJSKI, *Msza święta*, 463–467; “*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam*” (1962), (243).

²⁹ Cf. *Mszal Rzymski Łacińsko-Polski [The Roman Missal in Latin and Polish]* (Paris: Éditions du Dialogue, 1968), (4), (136)–(138); BOGUNIEWSKI, *Msza święta*, 212.

³⁰ Cf. *Missale Romanum*. Editio typica (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970), 33–35, 48–49, 385–387, 889–892; “*Institutio generalis Missalis Romani*,” no. 46–54, in *Missale Romanum*. Editio typica tertia. Reimpressio emendata (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 2008), 17–86. The penitential act can be omitted while celebrating other liturgical actions—eg. on Ash Wednesday—cf. *ibidem*, 197, reciting psalms from the Liturgy of the Hours—cf. *Institutio generalis*

fiteor said only once, other formulas of the penitential act, including abandoned in the Post-Tridentine liturgy supplication with the acclamation *Kyrie eleison*. The other change referred to the possibility of replacing the penitential act by Asperges, which was interpreted in baptismal terms.³¹

Permission to celebrate Asperges before the Holy Mass in a chasuble—included in the second executory instruction to the Constitution on the Liturgy (1967)—indicated the planned full integration of Asperges with the Holy Mass.³² In 1969, the Sacred Congregation of Rites explaining the importance of Asperges emphasised its theological context associated with Sunday and remembrance of baptism, and it announced that the rite of Asperges would be closely linked to the penitential act in the forthcoming post-conciliar Missal.³³ As a result, in *Missale Romanum*, promulgated in 1970 by Pope Paul VI, Asperges was given *explicite* symbolism of baptism.³⁴ It provided for the possibility of introducing Asperges not only during the principal Sunday Mass in the parish church, but in all churches and chapels during each Sunday Mass. This instruction also applies to the Sunday Mass celebrated on Saturday evening.³⁵ Clarity of the symbolism of Asperges in the renewed liturgy was confirmed by the post-conciliar study of liturgical formation.³⁶

The renovated rite of Asperges—*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam*, identical in the first and second typical edition of the

de Liturgia horarum, no. 94–95 (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1971), rites performed at the baptismal font—cf. *Obrzędy chrztu dzieci. Dostosowane do zwyczajów diecezji polskich [The rites of baptism of children. Adapted to the customs of Polish dioceses]*, no. 111 (Katowice: Księgarnia św. Jacka, 2009), the greetings of nupturients—cf. *Obrzędy Sakramentu małżeństwa. Dostosowane do zwyczajów polskich [The rites of the sacrament of marriage. Adapted to the customs of Polish dioceses]*, no. 52 (Katowice: Księgarnia św. Jacka, 1996).

³¹ Cf. “*Institutio generalis Missalis Romani*,” no. 51–52.

³² Cf. SACRA CONGREGATIO RITUUM, *Instructio Tres abhinc annos* (4 mai 1967), no 26, AAS 59 (1967): 442–448.

³³ Cf. “Documentorum explanatio. Ad Institutionem Generalem Missalis Romani,” *Notitiae* 5 (1969): 403.

³⁴ Cf. “*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam*,” in *Missale Romanum* (1970), 889–892.

³⁵ Cf. *ibidem*, 889; “*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam*,” in *Missale Romanum* (2008), 1249; “Obrzęd poświęcenia wody i pokropienia wiernych [The rite of blessing water and sprinkling the faithful],” in *Mszal Rzymski dla diecezji polskich*. Wydanie drugie poszerzone [*The Roman Missal for Polish dioceses*. Expanded second edition] (Poznań: Pallottinum, 2009), (2); see *Codex Iuris Canonici*, can. 1248.

³⁶ Cf. Piotr KULBACKI, *Eucharystia i ewangelizacja młodzieży [The Eucharist and evangelization of youth]* (Łódź: Archidiecezjalne Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1998), 231–232.

post-conciliar Missal (1970, 1975), was included in the section forming the Appendix. The previous name of the rite from the Missal of Pius V was retained.³⁷ In the third typical edition (2002) in the rite of Asperges, which constitutes Appendix II,³⁸ only the first rubric was changed. It was repeated when and where the rite could be used. In addition, the following term was used: *benedictio et aspersio aquae benedictae in memoriam baptismi*.³⁹ In the case of the use of sprinkling, *Ordo missae* suggests it in the place provided for the act of penance (*loco consueti actus paenitentialis*). The Missal proposes the rite of Asperges, which is included in the Appendix, instead of the penitential act.⁴⁰

Blessing water follows the greeting. The priest, standing in the place of presiding, blesses the water with which the faithful will be sprinkled in the memory of their baptism. The priest also emphasises the aspect of fidelity to the received Holy Spirit. This text is a repetition of the call addressed to the faithful during the Easter Vigil, when there is no baptism, and therefore before the renewal of baptismal promises the priest only blesses the water to sprinkle the faithful.⁴¹

The Missal contains three formulas for blessing water, and one of them is optional at Easter. The first of formulas emphasizes that the life-giving water used for purifying has to become a source of purification of the faithful and give them eternal life. The purpose of the ceremony is to renew the source of God's grace, the defence of the body and soul against all the evil so that a man can approach God with a pure heart and can receive salvation.⁴²

The second formula is addressed to God, the source and the beginning of the life of the body and soul. The aim of using blessed water is to beg the forgiveness of sins and defence against any disease and snares of the devil. This formula refers to God's mercy, which can cause the spring of living

³⁷Cf. "*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam*" (1970), 889–892; "*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam*," in *Missale Romanum*. Editio typica altera (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1975), 917–920; "Obrzęd poświęcenia wody i pokropienia wiernych," (2)–(5).

³⁸"*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam*" (2008), 1249–1252.

³⁹Cf. *ibidem*, 1249.

⁴⁰Cf. *ibidem*, 505.

⁴¹Cf. *ibidem*; "Wigilia Paschalna w Wielką Noc [Easter Vigil in the Holy Night]," in *Mszal Rzymski*, 177; see Rudolf PIERSKAŁA, "Misterium Paschalne w znakach liturgii Wielkiej Nocy [The Paschal Mystery in the signs of the liturgy of Easter]," *Liturgia Sacra* 1 (1995), no. 1-2: 71.

⁴²Cf. "Obrzęd poświęcenia wody i pokropienia wiernych," (2).

water to gush forth for the salvation of man making his inner purification and protecting him from all dangers of soul and body.⁴³

The third formula, prescribed for the Passover period, is a repetition (with a correction omitting the placing of prayers during the vigil of the holy night) of blessing water used only for sprinkling the faithful before the renewal of baptismal promises at the Easter Vigil. This formula contains the remembrance of the work of creation and redemption. Water from the perspective of creation is seen as fertilizing the earth, strengthening and purifying the body. Water also became a tool of God's mercy in the history of salvation, during the exit of God's people from Egypt and their journey through the desert. For the prophets it was a sign of the expected New Covenant. The water of the Jordan sanctified by Christ became a source of a baptismal bath reviving the fallen human nature. The purpose of this water is to remind the received baptism so that one is able to rejoice with the neophytes.⁴⁴

After blessing water, if there is such a custom, it can be mixed with blessed salt, the aim of which is protection against attacks of Satan.⁴⁵ This rite is not currently used in baptism of adults or children. However, the same form of blessing salt, performed depending on the circumstances, is included in the Roman Ritual while blessing water during the celebration of the rite of a ceremonious exorcism (former "exorcism" of salt).⁴⁶

Then the Missal specifies that the priest takes an *aspergillum*, sprinkles himself, the ministers, clergy and congregation, possibly walking through the church. It is not intended to perform the sprinkling by the concelebrants, or ministers, or giving it to the clergy.⁴⁷

The first and second typical edition of the Missal (1970, 1975), while sprinkling—besides the period of Easter—indicated singing antiphons taken from Psalm 51 [50],9, and Ezekiel 36,25–26 and the anthem based on the text of the 1 Peter 1,3–5, whose character resembles a fragment of the baptismal homily.⁴⁸ The Polish edition of the Missal (1986) proposes singing

⁴³ Cf. *ibidem* p. (3).

⁴⁴ Cf. *ibidem*; "Wigilia Paschalna," 177–178.

⁴⁵ Cf. "Obrzęd poświęcenia wody i pokropienia wiernych," (4).

⁴⁶ Cf. *De Exorcismis et supplicationibus quibusdam*. Editio typica emendata, no. 21 (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 2005), 43.

⁴⁷ Cf. "Obrzęd poświęcenia wody i pokropienia wiernych," (4); *Ceremonial liturgicznej posługi biskupów* [*Ceremonial of liturgical ministry of bishops*], no. 133 (Katowice: Księgarnia św. Jacka, 2013); Stanisław SZCZEPANIEC, *Ceremonial posług liturgicznych* [*Ceremonial of liturgical ministry*] (Kraków: Kuria Metropolitalna, 1987), 66; BOGUNIOWSKI, "Aspersja niedzielna," 214.

⁴⁸ Cf. "Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam" (1970), 891-892; "Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam" (1975), 919-920; "Ordo ad faciendam et asper-

Psalm 51 [50],3–5. 11 with the antiphon: “Sprinkle me, O Lord, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow“ (cf. Ps. 51[50],9).⁴⁹ At Easter there were originally three antiphons in the typical edition. The first one based on the text of Ezekiel 47, 1–2.9; the second one directly taken from 1 Peter 2,9; and the third one is a reflection of the different themes of the Bible *E latere tuo Christe, fons aquae prorumpit, quo abluntur mundi sordes et vita renovatur, alleluja*.⁵⁰ The third typical Latin edition (2002) adds two antiphons. One of them is based on a compilation of the texts Zephaniah 3,8 and Ezekiel 36,25, and the other one on the text-Daniel 3,77.79.⁵¹ The Polish Missal (1986), during Easter, proposes singing Psalm 107 [106],1–2.21–22 with the antiphon: “You were washed. You were sanctified. You were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the Spirit of our God. Hallelujah.”⁵² Penitential character of Ps 50[51] and the Paschal Antiphon Ps 107[106] are complemented in a closing prayer after sprinkling. It stresses the purification of sins enabling the faithful to participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which prepares them to duly participate in the heaven feast.⁵³ It is also worth noting that the post-conciliar texts of the rite of blessing water outside the Mass help to deepen the theology of the Sunday Mass Asperges.⁵⁴

The paschal dimension of Mass Asperges is complemented in the liturgy of baptismal Vespers, dating back to the seventh century, celebrated on Resurrection Sunday, and on the subsequent Sundays of Easter or Pentecost Sunday. Vespers are accompanied by the rites celebrated at the baptismal font, the procession to this font, and sprinkling with holy water.⁵⁵ Post-

gendam aquam benedictam” (2008), 1251; *Pismo Święte Starego i Nowego Testamentu [The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments]*, ed. Michał Peter, Marian Wolniewicz, vol. 3 (Poznań: Księgarnia św. Wojciecha, 1987), 573–574.

⁴⁹ “Obrzęd poświęcenia wody i pokropienia wiernych,” (4).

⁵⁰ Cf. “*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam*” (1970), 892; “*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam*” (1975), 920.

⁵¹ Cf. “*Ordo ad faciendam et aspergendam aquam benedictam*” (2008), 1252.

⁵² “Obrzęd poświęcenia wody i pokropienia wiernych,” (5).

⁵³ Cf. *ibidem*.

⁵⁴ “Obrzęd błogosławieństwa wody poza Mszą świętą,” in *Obrzędy błogosławieństw*, no. 1085–1096.

⁵⁵ Cf. Stefan CICHY, “Nieszpory niedzielne w okresie wielkanocnym [Sunday Vespers during the Easter season],” *Liturgia Sacra* 1 (1995), no. 1-2: 97–103; Marek ADASZEK, Stanisław ARASZCZUK, Piotr DĘBSKI, *Święte Triduum Paschalne. Materiały liturgiczno-pastoralne dla duszpasterzy i zespołów liturgicznych [The Sacred Paschal Triduum. Pastoral and liturgical materials for priests and liturgical teams]*, Legnica: Wydawnictwo MARIA, 2008), 82–85; see MATUSZEWSKI, “Formy wspomnienia chrztu,” 74–77.

conciliar *Liturgy Horarum* (1971),⁵⁶ *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* (1984)⁵⁷ and the circular letter *Paschalis Solemnitatis* (1988) encourage people to maintain this tradition where it has survived, and the letter even calls for the introduction of this custom.⁵⁸ Also, celebrating Sunday as the weekly celebration of the Passover lends credence to Asperges as a form of the memory of baptism.⁵⁹

5. THE MEMORY OF BAPTISM AND THE COMMON PRIESTHOOD SIGN

Historical development of Asperges originates from the ritual washing and sprinkling of purifying nature. Over time, it was associated with the liturgical actions and about the eleventh century Asperges associated with the Holy Mass was interpreted as the memory of baptism. However, the Protestant reformers had a negative attitude towards Asperges, for they feared it to be interpreted as a repetition of baptism.

In the Post-Tridentine period Asperges was mainly associated with its purifying and apotropaic nature, the aim of which was to prepare respectively: the altar as a place for celebrating the Holy Sacrifice, the celebrant, ministers, clergy and people. Only in the Missal of Paul VI Asperges ceased to be a preparatory liturgical action performed at the beginning of the Mass. Doing it in the place of the penitential act refers to the purifying nature of the Mass Asperges. However, sprinkling with baptismal water during Easter and with blessed water outside this period, emphasizes repentance and purification in the power of the Holy Spirit made in Baptism, which gives grace enabling man to live in faith, confess it, listen to the Word of God and participate in the Sunday Eucharist.⁶⁰ The rite of Asperges contains the request for help in maintaining fidelity to the Holy Spirit received in baptism, which emphasises that this gift is not a single event, therefore sprinkling is an anamnestic sign of inclusion in the mystery of Christ. Understood

⁵⁶ Cf. *Institutio generalis de Liturgia horarum*, no. 213.

⁵⁷ Cf. *Ceremonial liturgicznej posługi biskupów*, no. 388.

⁵⁸ Cf. CONGREGATIO PRO CULTU DIVINO. Littera *Paschalis sollemnitatis* (16 January 1988), no. 98.

⁵⁹ Cf. Roger BÉRAUDY, "L'initiation chrétienne," in *L'Église en prière*, ed. Aimé Georges Martimort [et al.] (Paris–Tournai–Rome–New York: Desclée, [1965]), 583-584.

⁶⁰ Cf. IOANNES PAULUS PP. II, Epistula Apostolica *Dies Domini* (31 May 1998), no. 25.

in such a way, it is reflected in the song often sung in Poland during sprinkling: „Com przyrzekł Bogu przy chrzcie raz, dotrzymać pragnę szczerze” [What I promised God at baptism once, I would like to sincerely honour],⁶¹ which refers to receiving baptism and its consequences in life. This memory of baptism at the beginning of the celebration of the Mass helps permanently to recognize the sacrament of Christian initiation in the Eucharist.⁶²

The new rite of *Asperges* and new possibilities of its use results from the orientation of the whole conciliar reform. The reformers continued the development of the tradition of the Mass *Asperges* and at the same time gave it a new meaning deepening a call for conversion, not only through the recognition of sinfulness, but also through the recognition of man's dignity resulting from the baptismal character of the common priesthood.⁶³

Referring to the baptismal dimension of *Asperges* in the post-conciliar Missal also allows for deepening the pious practice of using a stoup at the entrance to the church, or home stoups before going out “to the world.”⁶⁴ It is not about reducing this sign to simple apotropaic rites, but it is about the dynamics of fulfilling the baptismal vocation to pursue the common priesthood of the people of God. Using a stoup at the entrance to the Church resembles the union of Christians with the priestly sacrifice of Christ in the Eucharist, and using a stoup while leaving home is a sign of a priestly mission of Christians in the world conducted with the help of the Holy Spirit.

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In history, the evolution of the introductory rites of the Mass led to discovering the issues arising from the inclusion of the penitential rite in the liturgy. The post-conciliar reform integrated the memory of baptism with the Sunday Mass, and it treated baptism as deliverance from sin, and obligations arising from the baptismal covenant and the common priesthood of the faithful.

⁶¹ *Exsultate Deo... Śpiewnik mszalny [A missal songbook]*, ed. Gizela Maria Skop (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Światło-Życie, 2010), 375; cf. Bogusław NADOLSKI, *Imieniny i urodziny w tradycji chrześcijańskiej Europy [Name day and birthday in the Christian tradition of Europe]* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Święty Wojciech, 2007), 115.

⁶² Cf. Piotr KULBACKI, *Liturgia w formacji człowieka ku wolności [The Liturgy in the formation of man towards freedom]* (Lublin: Polihymnia, 2013), 351–353.

⁶³ Cf. CCC 1141.

⁶⁴ Cf. CCC 1185, 1668.

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WSPOMNIENIE CHRZTU
W OBRZĘDACH WSTĘPNYCH MSZY ŚWIĘTEJ

Streszczenie

Pokropienie wodą jako znak przymierza i oczyszczenia sięga korzeniami do Starego Testamentu. Choć chrześcijanie akceptowali biblijną symbolikę wody, to pokropienie nią w liturgii napotykało na opory. W starożytności wynikały one z podobieństwa do rytów pogańskich, w średniowieczu i okresie reformacji – z niebezpieczeństwa traktowania tego obrzędu w liturgii jako powtórzenia chrztu. Ryt pokropienia początkowo nie miał związku z liturgią Mszy św., później miał miejsce jako poprzedzający Mszę św. obrzęd (aspersja) o charakterze oczyszczającym i pokutnym. Rozwój obrzędów wstępnych we Mszy św. doprowadził do ukształtowania się wśród nich aktu pokuty, który w mszale potrydenckim przybrał postać spowiedzi powszechnej. Posoborowy Mszał Pawła VI włączył aspersję do obrzędów wstępnych Mszy św., przewidując możliwość zastąpienia aktu pokuty w niedzielę aspersją, zarazem nadając jej charakter wspomnienia chrztu. Analiza kolejnych edycji mszału posoborowego wskazuje m.in. na łączność aspersji z liturgią chrzcielną w Wigilię Paschalną. Modlitwy aspersji podkreślają także chrzcielny charakter kapłaństwa wspólnego wiernych. Dopelnieniem obrzędu aspersji mszalne są nieszpory niedzieli Zmartwychwstania Pańskiego, połączone z pokropieniem wodą chrzcielną.

Słowa kluczowe: pokropienie, aspersja, woda błogosławiona, chrzest, Msza święta, obrzędy wstępne, akt pokuty, mszał Pawła VI.