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Spiritual, Anthropological Paradigms in the Patristic Tradition: *the Church and the Divine Liturgy*

Abstract

Stirred by St. Maximus the Confessor¹ and his plan as revealed in *Mystagogy*, Father Dumitru Stăniloae has looked into the theme of man as church and also into the topic of one's *liturgy* in his paper on *Spirituality and Communion in the Orthodox Liturgy*, in his examination on samples of philocalic texts written by Byzantine authors who lived in different periods. The current paper focuses on the research of two anthropological, spiritual paradigms recurrent in the Greek patristic tradition, namely *the church* and *the Holy Liturgy*, as well as



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¹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Spirituality and Communion in the Orthodox Liturgy*, Second Edition, Publishing House of the Biblical Institute and Mission of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 2004, pp. 34-44.

of the semantic correspondences between the liturgical terminology and the spiritual life. The current research embarks upon the patristic period and the first half of the second Christian millennium, insisting upon the comparative analysis of the meanings of the selected Greek patristic texts. Its aim is to bring to the fore the terminological transfer from the sphere of the liturgical life into the hermeneutic context of spiritual life, with a view to insisting on the way how the spiritual meanings of the personal liturgical life have evolved through their recontextualization.

Keywords

Liturgy, Spirituality, symbol, anthropology, recontextualizations, semantic variability, hermeneutical opening

1 Introduction

Due to their fundamental role in spiritual formation, the Church and the Holy Liturgy have been used as anthropological paradigms in writings where the Holy Fathers wanted to express the meaning of human life as an act of supreme devotion and service to God. Ever since the apostolic period, the Holy Liturgy, in its primary form, has stood for the center of the Christian life, being the divine way through which Christ manifests His presence in the middle of newly established communities. Christian monasticism knows different forms of organization in the fourth century when it witnesses an ever-growing tendency to share the Lord in Liturgy and life sacraments but above all, to internalize the experience of His presence. The patristic hesychasm until then centred around saying out loud Jesus' monologic prayer, brings now to the fore the analogy between the spiritual life and the Holy Liturgy, thus leading to an understanding of one's inward experiencing Christ as an inner liturgy. From the fourth century onwards, there appear the first patris-

tic reflections on the understanding of the Holy Liturgy as a form of spiritual life whose sole purpose is the mystical union with Christ. The Holy Liturgy is perceived as a paradigm of spiritual life, which leads to a transfer of liturgical terminology in its descriptions.

The theme of *the church* as an anthropological model expresses the human vocation to receive the presence of God in oneself and to serve Him throughout one's lifetime and through one's inner self experiences. The semantic analogies between the place of God's worshipping and man and their constituent parts connote, through an allegorical interpretation of the church, with the anthropological, spiritual purpose of transformation through grace, co-operation with God and union with Him. As a paradigm of clerical life, the theme of *the Holy Liturgy* comprises the significance of the personal liturgy, which further entails new matching meanings between the place of worship, its elements and the very Liturgy, and man as a whole, with his entire body and soul. Its main objective is to continually grow and preserve a habit of placing oneself in a personal relationship to Christ the Lord, primarily through prayer.

Although they did not write liturgical interpretations, philocalic fathers reflected on the importance of liturgical spirituality in order to cleanse of passions and perform an act of consecration. Intended to explain and reveal their understanding of the Holy Liturgy from the perspective of spiritual life, there is a specific hermeneutic pattern recurrent in their works. Not insisting on the explanation of the liturgical practice does not mean ignoring it. These fathers create analogies and suggest a synonymity entailed between the parts of the soul and the components of the place of worship, i.e., between the inner workings of the mind and the Holy Liturgy. Christ is the supreme liturgist who supports man's efforts to attain a resemblance to Him. Prevailing in these authors' reflections is the act of performing a spiritual endoscopy, i.e. spiritual life seen as a service to God within one's heart and soul.

2 The Biblical Premises of the Analogies between the Liturgical Space and Man, or the Divine Liturgy and One's Spiritual Life

The spiritual-allegorical biblical interpretation of the place of worship and the liturgy service represents the premise of including certain ecclesiastical and liturgical terms into the hermeneutics of spiritual life.

Jesus Christ, Savior of humankind, denoting to His body as „temple” (*John* 2, 19; 21: Ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔλεγεν περὶ τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ) committed to setting off ecclesial anthropology, i.e. perceiving man as a church. Saint Peter the Apostle speaks of the „hidden man of the heart” (*I Pt* 3, 4: ὁ κρυπτός τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος) whose adornment is held as the prettiest in the sight of God. Saint Peter's metaphorical language is but a paraphrase of the Old Law as embodied by the spiritual meanings of the New Testament, which places self-sacrifice on an equal footing to man's commitment to God².

Saint Apostle Paul dissociates the human person in keeping with the criterion of its psycho-physical conformation, into the „outward man” (ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος) and the „inward man” (ὁ ἔσωθεν/ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον, *II Co* 4, 16; *Rom* 7, 22) by using a symbol-based language. In anthropo-ecclesial patristic formulations, their denotations are semantically analogous to the place of worship and its most essential elements.

Saint Paul the Apostle formulates his first theories on *man* seen as a place of God (a temple of the Holy Spirit, *I Co* 3, 16-17: *Οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ναὸς Θεοῦ ἐστε καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν; εἴ τις τὸν ναὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ φθείρει, φθερεῖ τοῦτον ὁ Θεός· ὁ γὰρ ναὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ἅγιός ἐστιν, οἵτινές ἐστε ὑμεῖς; 6, 19: ἢ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν ναὸς τοῦ ἐν ἐν ὑμῖν Ἁγίου Πνεύματός ἐστιν, οὗ ἔχετε ἀπὸ Θεοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἑαυτῶν; II Co 6, 16: ὑμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς*

² Robert H. MOUNCE, *An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture. Romans*, Vol. 27 (*The New American commentary*), Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995, p. 230-231.

Θεοῦ ἐστε ζῶντος), whose inner spiritual activity transforms him into a „living sacrifice, holy and (well-)pleasing to God” (*Ro* 12, 1: παραστήσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν θυσίαν ζῶσαν ἁγίαν εὐάρεστον τῷ Θεῷ, τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν)³. The phrases „living sacrifice” (θυσίαν ζῶσαν) and „rational worship” (λογικὴν λατρείαν) connote with man’s ability to comprehend and perform his spiritual service of worship as mediated by two fundamental terms intrinsic to any liturgical service. They reflect a close relationship between spirituality and the liturgical life, which is why the selected and re-contextualized liturgical terminology have become carriers of spiritual meanings, formally resounding to their meanings to understand a liturgical appropriation of the spiritual life. This biblical theme of yielding one’s whole self to God acquires a precious exegetical/ hermeneutic value in patristic, spiritual-oriented literature.

Writing about „the glorification of God in body and spirit” [*I Co* 6, 20: δοξάσα τε δὴ τὸν Θεὸν ἐν τῷ σώματι ὑμῶν, ἃ τινὰ ἐστὶν τοῦ Θεοῦ], Saint Paul the Apostle lays the foundations of a hermeneutics of spiritual life emerged in the form of inner engagement, seen as an anthropological occurrence of the sacerdotal service at the temple.

Saint Peter the Apostle also contributes to the understanding of spiritual life as a personal service unto God by stating the figurative sense of the term *sacrifice* (cf., *I Pt* 2, 5: ἀνεύγκαι πνευματικᾶς θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους τῷ Θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).

The references in the New Testament pointing to the understanding of man as a church and of the spiritual life as a service unto God constitute the premise of introducing the anthropo-

³ Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ, Το πρωτότυπο κείμενο με μετάφραση στη δημοτική, Ελληνική Βιβλική Εταιρεία, Αθήνα, 2003: Παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ, παραστήσαι τὰ **σώματα** ὑμῶν **θυσίαν ζῶσαν** ἁγίαν, εὐάρεστον τῷ Θεῷ, τὴν **λογικὴν λατρείαν** ὑμῶν (...), p. 364.

ecclesial theme in patristic theology, which symbolizes a spiritual program of the Christian life.

It is established on the reinterpretation of some fundamental liturgical terms from a spiritual perspective and their employment in statements about the spiritual life.

3 The Patristic Evolution/ Development/ Path/ Nature of Anthro - Ecclesial and Liturgical - Spiritual Biblical Interpretations

On a special occasion avowing his Christian confession, the priest Lucian of Antioch († 312) used/ employed his chest as the Holy Communion Table, where his Christian disciples served the Divine Liturgy⁴. This case, where the chest is identified with the altar, expresses an actual liturgical interpretation of man who gives himself up to God both physically and spiritually. The example of Lucian, the Martyr brings to the fore the *man – church – liturgy* relationship as discussed primarily by the philocalic fathers, experiencing God in the depths of their hearts.

In the IIIrd century, the anthro – ecclesial theme was analyzed in the context of biblical-exegetical researches carried out by the Alexandrine scholar Origen (185-254). In the *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, he sees in the Lord's body an expression or face of the Church: Ἀμφότερα μέντοιγε, τό τε ἱερὸν, καὶ τὸ **σῶμα** τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, κατὰ μίαν τῶν ἐκδοχῶν **τύπος** μοι εἶναι φαίνεται τῆς **Ἐκκλησίας** (...) [X, 20., PG 14, 369CD].

⁴ St. SYMEON THE METAPHRASTUL, *The Lives of the Saints in January* [7], PG 114, 409D: Ὁ δὲ τράρευζαν μὲν, ἔφη, τό δε τὸ ἐμὸν ἔσται στήθος ὑμῖν, οὐ μοι δοκῶτις ἐξ ἀψύχου ὕλης ἀτιμοτέρα γενησομένη Θεῷ, ναὸς δὲ ἅγιος ὑμεῖς μοι γενήσεσθε, πανταχόθεν μεπεριστοι χισάμενοι; *SYNAXARIUM ECCLESIAE CONSTANTINOPOLITANAE*, opera et studio Hippolyti Delehaye, Bruxellis, 1902, *Mensis October*, 15, p. 197-141.

Analyzing the term „temple” which he used to designate the body of Jesus Christ our Saviour, Origen centres his arguments around the *body – church* relationship based on their common ability to receive/ carry/ take in spiritual content and presence: „Some will perhaps be cautious/ reserved to believe/ assume that all the elements of a temple [ναόν] might relate to the body of flesh, no matter how they see it, which is why I shall seek the simplest solution and say that, in both cases, the temple [ναόν] is referred to as «flesh» [σῶμα], because, similarly to the temple filled with the glory of God who dwels in it, «the first begotten of all creations» being the «image and glory of God», the body [σῶμα], that is, the Church [Ἐκκλησίαν] rightly receives the name of the temple [ναόν] of God because it embodies within the image of divinity”⁵. Starting from the image of the temple symbolizing the body of Lord [ναός – σῶμα], Origen eventually perceives His body as a prototype of Church [σῶμα – ἐκκλησία]. A reaction to this way of thinking can be seen at Saint Maximus the Confessor who, approaching the more general relationship *temple - the body of God* in terms of the more particular *church – man* relationship, devised a complex theory of the anthropologically understood church.

Philocalic parents explain spiritual life in a variety of ways. The most common resemblance is with one’s “inner struggle” on an ascending path. The Holy Church and the Divine Liturgy have inspired the priests adhering to hesychasm as a spiritual practice, hence being especially fond of inner life.

Based on the *man – church* relationship, some philocalic parents compare one’s spiritual life with one’s inner „service”. The most significant developments of this association contribute to the embodiment of a spiritual vision of man, seen as a liturgical space in which spiritual life is carried out as a liturgical service.

⁵ ORIGEN, *ΤΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΚΑΤΑ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΝ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΕΞΗΓΗΤΙΚΩΝ*, X, 23., PG 14, 380D-381A.

3.1 The Greek Fathers and their Spiritual Assimilation of the Liturgical Vocabulary/Terminology in the First Millennium

The particular characteristics of the spiritual-liturgical thinking of the philocalic parents lie in their manner of recontextualizing the notions of liturgical „space” and „time”, and of ascribing new symbolic connotations to the liturgical language while preserving their truthfulness and being exclusively driven towards the discovery of deep spiritual meanings. This recontextualization, which involves a new referentiality, engages semantic changes in terms such as a church, objects and liturgical elements. They lose their primary, denotative meaning, acquiring, by compensation, similar or different anthropological meanings. *The church* is endowed with anthropological meaning, thus becoming a symbolic framework for the man called to the sanctification of life through his cooperation with God. For the philocalic Fathers, *the Liturgy* becomes one of the most symbolic icons of man’s inner spiritual activity due to their ability to change the perception of the time spent focusing on worship services into that of a time spent in the spiritual union to God. The notion of „liturgical time” receives the meaning of „rhythm and mood” experienced on a personal level independent of the real liturgical time, which is an internalization of it. The hypothetical liturgical transfer at the level of spiritual life becomes only partially metaphoric because the same significant event is recurrent in man’s meeting with God in the deepest and most profound inner self. People of genuine spiritual perceptiveness, the philocalic parents, reveal to us their thoughts imbued with the fire of divine grace and the inner transformation of the man who experiences the presence of the Holy Trinity.

3.1.1. Saint Macarius the Egyptian (4th century) transfers ecclesial and liturgical terms into anthropological formulations

connected to the spiritual activity⁶ in a manner that marks a deep understanding of man seen as a place of God's worship. Hieromonk Alexander Golitzin has noticed the existence of the analogy between *soul* and *Church* in *Liber Graduum* and in the macarian homilies, as well as the use of worship terminology recurrent in the passages where the Divine Liturgy was interpreted as an instantiation of spiritual experiencing and gradual metamorphosis of the true Christian during his time on earth which is continued in the eschaton⁷. *Homily 52 I* sums up Saint Macarius's entire spiritual, anthropo-ecclesial conception. Its content enables for an observation of the symbolic correspondences between *man/ soul* and *church/ liturgy*⁸. Saint Macarius starts from the premise that all the church's iconomy takes place for the human soul understood as the *living and true church of God* [ζῶσα καὶ ἀληθινὴ Θεοῦ ἐκκλησία, 1, 1]. The man of God [ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος] bonds within himself four ecclesial-liturgical meanings: that of *the church* [ἐκκλησία Χριστοῦ], that of the *temple* [ναὸς Θεοῦ], that of the *true altar* [θυσιαστήριον ἀληθινὸν] and that of the *living sacrifice* [θυσία ζῶσα]. In the same bearing of Alexandrian interpretations, the cult and the Old Testament Law are presented as a shadow of the church of Christ [σκιὰ ἥν τῆς νῦν ἐκκλησίας τοῦ Χριστοῦ], while the *church is seen* [ὁρωμένη ἐκκλησία], as *the shadow of*

⁶ Cătălin PĂLIMARU, „The Spirituality of the Heart in the *Macarian Homilies*”, in *Revista Teologică*, Anul IX, no. 2, Sibiu, 2009, p. 388-393.

⁷ Hieromonk Alexander GOLITZIN, I. *Liturgy and mysticism. God's experience in Orthodox Christianity*, in vol. *Mystagogy, the experience of God in Orthodoxy. Studies of mystical theology*, trans. rom., deacon Ioan I. Ică jr., Deisis Publishing House, Sibiu, 1998, p. 64-67; IV. *The hierarchy against anarchy? Dionysius the Areopagite, Symeon the New Theologian, Nikitaa Stethatos and their common root in the ascetic tradition*, p. 147-159.

⁸ MAKARIOS/ SYMEON, ΛΟΓΟΣ NB', *Reden und Briefe*, II, Die Sammlung I des Vaticanus Graecus 694 (B), Herausgegeben von Heinz Berthold, Zweiter Teil, Die Logoi B 30-64 Register, Akademie – Verlag, Berlin, 1973, p. 138-142.

the inward man [σικιά ἐστι τοῦ ἔνδον ἀνθρώπου, τοῦ λογικοῦ καὶ ἀληθινοῦ]. The Sacraments of the Holy Church are completed in the name of the *soul*, bound to become *a holy temple of God and a church of Christ* through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has been given to the Church so that through *Baptism, Altar, the Eucharist*, and all the holy/ divine sacraments *the faithful hearts may be* stimulated by Him renewed and replanted by forbearance and re-focus on the spiritual life. Being thus renewed through the work of grace and embracing transformation [μεταβολήν] souls become apt to inherit eternal life. Based on the principle that the *ones revealed are the likes and shadow of the hidden ones* [τὰ φαινόμενα τύπος καὶ σικιά εἰσι τῶν κρυφίων], Saint Macarius grows the perception of man and of the heart, the center of inner spiritual life, as a *church* while *the one* pertaining to *spiritual life* is perceived as *an inner Liturgy* accomplished through grace on *the altar of the heart* [θυσιαστηρίῳ καρδίας]⁹. The purpose of *the parable of the church* is to enlighten on the spiritual meaning of the man summoned to temperance, rising to asceticism, purification, and the work of the Spirit to eventually become a place of the Holy Trinity.

The correspondences established by Saint Macarius according to the allegorical explanation of the spiritual meaning of man are the following:

- the living church [ζῶσα ἐκκλησία] – the soul [ψυχὴ]
- the visible church [ὁρώμενη ἐκκλησία] – the inner man [σικιά ἐστι τοῦ ἔνδον ἀνθρώπου]
- the church of Christ [ἐκκλησία Χριστοῦ] – the man of God [ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος]
- the temple [ναὸς Θεοῦ] – the man of God [ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος]
- the visible temple [ὁ ναὸς ὁ ὁρώμενος] – the heart [τῆς καρδίας]

⁹ *Ibid.*, 2, 1, p. 140.

- the actual altar [θυσιαστήριον ἀλήθινον] – the man of God [ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος]
- living sacrifice [θυσία ζῶσα] – the man of God [ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος]
- the altar [θυσιαστηρίῳ] – heart [καρδίας]
- the Holy Liturgy – the work of the Spirit in the soul [ἐνέργειαν τοῦ πνεύματος]

Saint Macarius has a double perception of the *church* [ἐκκλησία] in which one reads man's calling to be a holy sanctuary which enables for life changing meeting with God. Unlike the first two correlations which show, in a general sense, the structural ecclesial understanding of the innermost human self, there is a third spiritual analogy which denotes the spiritual extent of human, personal accomplishment in relation to Christ. In the *Word of Love*, Saint Macarius specifies the meaning which enables the soul to be seen as the church of God, transferring the particular ability of the place of worship *to gather* onto the inner work of gathering thoughts [αὐτὴ γὰρ ἡ ψυχὴ συνάγει ὄλους τοὺς λογισμοὺς καὶ ἔστιν ἐκκλησία τῷ Θεῷ]¹⁰. The four meanings of the spiritual man [ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος] primarily express the nature of Christian asceticism which emphasizes man's whole surrender to God. The analogy *altar* [θυσιαστηρίῳ] – *heart* [καρδία] is a meaningful translation of the spiritual meaning of the human self to embrace the renewing and transforming work of the Spirit [ἐνέργειαν τοῦ πνεύματος]. On a temporal – earth-bound level, the church communion with God becomes an image of the inner church that acquires the symbol value of the soul. The ecclesial – liturgical model eventually designates spiritual life whose purpose

¹⁰ *DIE 50 HEISTLICHES HOMILIEN DES MAKARIOS, OMIIA IB*, Herausgegeben und erläutert von Hermann Dörries, Erich Klostermann, Matthias Kroeger, Band 4, Walter de Gruyter & Co., Berlin, 1964, p. 116.

is the *transformation/ metamorphosis* [μεταβολήν] of man under the epictic action of the Holy Spirit.

The shift of emphasis from the meanings of the visible church onto those of the inward life does not diminish the real importance of the place of worship and its liturgical order. Taken as models, they work as indicators of the interiorization of the spiritual work carried out in the church. The semantic translation of the Holy Liturgy through a form of somatic asceticism combined with a mental one, - the purpose of which is to embrace the divine work that fulfills spiritual human interiority-, makes the Christian aware of accomplishing the spiritual purpose of life and of avoiding automatisms.

Macarius's comparisons are a lexical formula conceived of with a view to raising awareness on the meaning in which the man is called to assume the life received.

3.1.2 Saint Basil the Great († 379) semantically equates man with the place of worship as a result of his spiritual life. In the treaty *Of the Holy Spirit*, he explains the „place” of the Holy Spirit concerning the man who gives himself wholly to God: „The Spirit is truly the place of saints”. Moreover, the *saint* [ὁ ἅγιος] is the right place for the Spirit, because he offers himself as a dwelling [ἐνοίκησιν τὴν μετὰ Θεοῦ] and becomes *His temple* [ναὸς αὐτοῦ]” [XXVI.]¹¹. The anthropo-ecclesial expression used by Saint Basil is of biblical origin, and the *temple quality of the Holy Spirit* is acquired through a Christian life. In the *Ascetics [The Little Rules]*, the Cappadocian parent develops the spiritual meaning of the phrase „expressive service” [λογικὴ λατρεία] in *Romans* 12, 1, semantically identified with divine living, so pleasing to God¹². Both explanations are about the service of God through spiritual life in the spirit of the Holy Apostle Paul, who used the terms temple and service figuratively, favoring this type of interpretation and giving it new depths.

¹¹ St. BASIL THE GREAT, *ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΣ*, XXVI, 62., PG, 32,184A.

¹² *Id.*, *ΟΡΟΙ ΚΑΤΑ ΠΛΑΤΟΣ ΚΑΤ' ΕΡΩΤΗΣΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΠΟΚΡΙΣΙΝ*, 230, PG 31, 1236BC.

3.1.3 Saint Epiphanius of Salamis († 403) uses the anthropo-ecclesial symbolism in poetic forms with reference to the Mother of God whom he refers to as the „heaven and temple and throne of divinity” [οὐρανὸς καὶ ναὸς καὶ θρόνος τῆς θεότητος, *PG* 43, 492B], „the thoughtful table of faith” [νοερὰ τῆς πίστεως τράπεζα, 493B], „virgin candlestick” that casts darkness away, making the light shine [λυχνία παρθενική, 496B], „altar of sacrifice” [θυσιαστήριον, 497A] which carried „Christ-like a table” [τραπεζοφοροῦσα τὸν οὐράνιον ἄρτον Χριστὸν, 497A] giving Him to the world for the forgiveness of sins¹³.

The metaphors of Saint Epiphanius, imbued with elements of the ecclesial vocabulary, denote an understanding of the qualities and calling of Virgin Mary through their meanings, which she has assumed since her entry into the Temple in Jerusalem. In this case, one can speak of a personalization of ecclesial terms, as compared to their use in objective formulations, which is the most common.

3.1.4 Saint John Chrysostom († 407) employs the phrase „rational cult” [λογικὴ λατρεία] to denote the virtues brought to God through the soul [*PG* 63, 3., 92], and through *the absolute sacrifice* [body and soul] offered to God, i.e., martyrdom in its own and spiritual ascetic sense¹⁴. His explanation serves to carry on the meaning of the spiritual life of reasonable worship previously established by Saint Paul, the Apostle. Concerned with the liturgical life and spiritualization of Christians, St. John has included liturgical notions into the terminology of spiritual life due to comprehending the common spiritual purpose shared by the Holy Liturgy and Spirituality.

¹³ ST. EPIPHANIUS OF SALAMIS, *Ἐγκώμιος εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν τὴν Θεοτόκου*, *PG* 43, 493B-497A.

¹⁴ ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὴν πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἐπιστολήν, ἐκτεθεῖσα ἀπὸ σημείων μετὰ τὴν κοίμησιν αὐτοῦ* XI, 3., *PG* 63, 93.

In his semantic equivalence of *man* and *church*, St. John repeatedly uses the word „ναός”, particularly for the denotation of spiritual space which it acquires and encompasses. By urging for prayer in any place, St. John Chrysostom reaches a pragmatic solution for his theological vision: „You are the church of God, ye shall not look for a place” [Ναός εἶ τοῦ Θεοῦ, μὴ ζῆτει τόπον]¹⁵. In a different context, by comparing men with angels and by using the icon of the church, St. John intended driving them towards a stage of spiritual becoming. „Cherubs have become the chariots of God. Let us become the Church of God” [ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα ναός]¹⁶. When asked about God and the reason „why it is said He lives in us” [Διὰ τί ἔνοικος;], Saint John replies: „Because we are his Church [Ὅτι ναός αὐτοῦ γινώμεθα]¹⁷. The God-loving Christian is like a *church* inhabited by God and referred to as a living space where His sanctifying presence manifests.

3.1.5 The Eastern theologian of the Church, **Saint John Cassian** († 435), whose entire work is written in Latin, talks about the importance of fasting and reaches a conclusion that explains its spiritual ultimate purpose within anthropo-ecclesial boundaries: „Labor enim carnalis spiritus contritioni coniunctus *acceptissimum Deo sacrificium dignumque sanctitatis habitaculum puris mundisque recessibus exhibebit*”¹⁸. The result of asceticism is the very manifestation of the sacrifice pleasing to God. The idea of *the heart as the place of God* is stated as follows:

¹⁵ *Id.*, *ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΕΠΙΛΥΣΙΝ ΤΗΣ ΧΑΝΑΝΑΙΑΣ* 11, PG 52, 458.

¹⁶ *Id.*, Ἐπελθόντος τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μαρτύρων ἡμέραν ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ ἐπιτελέσαι, ἐλέχθη ἡ ὁμιλία ἐν τῇ πόλει εἰς μάρτυρας, καὶ περὶ κατανύξεως καὶ ἐλεημοσύνης, 1., PG 50, 646.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, ΟΜΙΛΙΑ ΕΙΣ ΕΥΤΡΟΠΙΟΝ ΕΥΝΟΥΧΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΚΙΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΥΠΑΤΟΝ, 8., PG 52, 403.

¹⁸ St. JOHN CASSIAN, *DE COENOBIORUM INSTITUTIS*, V, 21, PL 49, 239B; *id.*, *Institutions cénobitiques, Liber quintus, De spiritu gastrimargiae*, V, 21, *Sources Chrétiennes* N° 109, Texte latin revu, introduction, traduction et notes par Jean-Claude Guy, s.j., Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 1965, 29-30, p. 226/ 4., p. 227.

„Certainly, it is not just the corrupted body, but especially the pure heart [*cor mundum*] that becomes the God’s dwelling [*habitaaculum Deo*] and temple of the Holy Spirit [*templumque Spiritus*]”¹⁹.

The meaning of the divine place is limited to the heart, perceived by Eastern spirituality as the spiritual center of the human being. As opposed to Saint Macarie the Egyptian whose monastic environment he knew him, Saint John Cassian establishes a different semantic equivalence for the heart [*cor – habitaculum Deo; templumque Spiritus*]. Despite their differences, the common element in the two analogies is the emphasis placed on the interiorization of God's experience.

3.1.6 To Saint Mark the Ascetic (5th century) the ascension of spiritual awakening, overcoming the limits imposed by the carrying out of cathartic and thought to construct commandments as well as proving one’s pure thoughts to Christ, all are a form of sacrifice. This is the stage when the baptismal grace is felt and works in those who are aware of their spiritual calling: *But this grace is in us, with its face hidden, ever since Baptism, and it will only reveal itself to us long after having trodden down the path of commandments and chosen the healthy thoughts* [ἡμῶν λογισμοῦς τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ Χριστῷ ὡς θυμᾶ, 996A] *of our nature, not the ones were bitten by the beasts bringing them before Christ, the High Priest, as sacrifice (...)* *And the temple is the holy place of the soul and body, which is built by God* [Ναὸς δὲ, τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος θεόκτιστον τέμενος, 996B]. *Finally, the altar* [θυσιαστήριον] *is the table of hope placed in this temple. On it, the mind sacrifices the thought, this first-born* [πρωτογενῆς λογισμὸς ... ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦ ἀναφερόμενος θύεται] *of every occurrence just like a firstborn cub is used as a repenting sacrifice performed for the one who brings it, provided that it is unstained.*

¹⁹ *Ibid., DE COENOBIORUM INSTITUTIS, V, 21, PL 49, 239B.*

But this temple too has a place on the inside of the iconostasis. It is there that Jesus has entered as a Forerunner [Evr 6, 20] on our behalf, and lived within us ever since Baptism, provided that we are not vile Christians [II Co 13, 5]". This place is the innermost, the most hidden and the most sincere room of the heart, a room which, if it does not open through God and through rational and compassionate hope, none of us can really meet The One dwelling there and no one can tell if the sacrificed thoughts [λογικὰ ἰθυσία, 996C], had been received or not. (...) Once the faithful heart opens through the above-mentioned hope, the Heavenly High Priest [ἐπουράνιος ἄρχιερεὺς] receives the first-born thoughts of the mind and burns them down in the divine fire, of which he says: „It is fire that I came to throw into the world, and I wish it were lit” [Lc 12, 49]²⁰.

By the means of a symbolic language he designs, Saint Mark gives us another perspective on inner spiritual awakening: *mind, thoughts, heart have become key anthropological words; altar, sacrifices are „ are key symbolic-liturgical terms , and Christ the High Priest and the divine fire are the theological ones to which the first two categories converge.*

As an ecclesial paradigm to express the vision of spiritual life, Saint Mark would rather prefer the temple and the old testament cult as revealed by God to Moses, to which he adds Saint Paul the Apostle’s ecclesiastical-liturgical anthropology researches.

The semantic analogies established by Mark the Ascetic between man, place of worship, and service, are the following:

- temple – *soul* [ναὸς – ψυχὴ]
– *body* [ναὸς – σῶμα]
- sacrifice – *thoughts* [θῦμὰ – λογισμοῦς]
- liturgist – *mind* [νοῦ ἀναφερόμενος θύεται]

²⁰ St. MARK THE ASCETIC, *Ἀπόκρισις πρὸς τοὺς ἀποροῦντας περὶ τοῦ θείου Βαπτίσματος*, PG 65, 996AC; *Πρὸς Νιλόλαον νουθεσία ψυχωφελεῖς*, 5., PG 65, 1036CD.

The established semantic correspondences express a basic understanding of man as a holy place created by God. The mind's offering of *its thoughts* as a *sacrifice* brought to Christ, the High Priest, is one and the same with personalizing the meaning of the Holy Liturgy from the perspective of which man is a spiritual-liturgical being.

3.1.7 Saint Cyril of Alexandria († 444) integrates into spirituality and comments on Pauline's urge from the *Romans* 12, 1 concerning the appearance of the body as a living and pleasing sacrifice to God [θυσίαν ζῶσαν καὶ εὐάρεστον τῷ Θεῷ], understood as rational service in the spirit [λογικὴν καὶ ἐν πνεύματι λατρείαν], which he places about the verses *I Pt* 2, 5 ἢ *II Co* 2, 15, which have as common idea the bringing of the man of God as a spiritual sacrifice²¹. He continues the apostolic and patristic interpretation of that verse, highlighting the spiritual significance of the anthropological offering to God as a service to Him. His explanations denote semantic stability in relation to previous patristic reflections.

3.1.8 In *Epistle* 130, **Saint Barsanuphius** († 540) from Gaza develops the theme of ecclesial-liturgical anthropology within the confines set by Saint Paul's conception [*cf.*, *Ro* 12, 1] and the explanations recurrent with Saint Mark the Ascetic: Hence, *burn incense from this fire so that God may receive the good fragrance of your incense* [θυμιάσον, ἵνα ὀσφρανθῇ σου τῶν θυμιασμάτων] and *bring it before His Father with the life-giving Spirit for it to make a shelter within you, in your church* [παρὰ σοὶ ποιήσῃ ἐν τῷ σῶ νάῳ], where you appear before Him as a

²¹ St. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ ΕΝ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙ ΚΑΙ ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝΗΣΕΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΛΑΤΡΕΙΑΣ, I, PG 68, 169A-B; 197B-C.

living sacrifice, holy, well-pleasing to Him [ὃ παρέστησας σαυτὸν αὐτῷ θυσίαν ζῶσαν, ἁγίαν, εὐάρεστον αὐτῷ]²².

The reference to the cult of the Old Testament in *Epistle 201* does not prevent Saint Barsanuphius from expressing the heights of the Christian service in symbolical images: (...) *to serve Him in holiness and righteousness in all the days of your life* [Lc 1, 75], *in the altar of the inward man* [ἐν τῷ ναῷ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ ἔσω ἀνθρώπου], *where one brings mindful offerings to God* [ἐν ᾧ νοηταὶ θυσίαι προσφέρονται τῷ Θεῷ], Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, where the fattened calf is sacrificed and sprinkled with the honest blood of the righteous Lamb (...)²³. Emphasis is placed on the inner life of God understood as a continuous service.

The expression *in the church of the inward man* [ἐν τῷ ναῷ τοῦ ἔσω ἀνθρώπου] used in *Epistle 241* within the context of explaining the spiritual meanings of the Holy Liturgy signifies in a kernel the vision of man understood as a church in which the inner spiritual work of God's service is accomplished²⁴.

The term *λειτουργία* used in the context of explaining how the body steered according to the needs [τὸ δὲ κυβερνᾶν τὸ σῶμα] becomes an instrument of personal service [αὐτὸ ὑπουργοῦν ἡμῖν εἰς τὴν ὑπηρεσίαν τῆς λειτουργίας]²⁵, expresses an understanding of Christian life in the liturgical sense.

²² BARSANUPHE ET JEAN, *Correspondance, Sources Chrétiennes*, N° 427, Vol. I, *Aux solitaires*, Tome II, Lettres 72-223, Texte critique, notes et index par François Neyt et Paula de Angelis-Noah, Traduction par L. Regnault, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 1998, p. 488.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 636.

²⁴ *Id.*, *Correspondance, Sources Chrétiennes*, N° 450, Volume II, *Aux cenobites*, Tome I, Lettres 224-398, Texte critique, notes et index par François Neyt et Paula de Angelis-Noah, Traduction par L. Regnault, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 2000, p. 188.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, *Correspondance, Sources Chrétiennes*, N° 451, Volume II, *Aux cenobites*, Tome II, Lettres 399-616, Texte critique, notes et index par François Neyt et Paula de Angelis-Noah, Traduction par Lucien Regnault, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 2001, p. 654.

The spiritual-symbolic analogies established by Saint Barsanuphius are the following:

- church – *man* [έν τῷ σῶ ναῶ, *Ep.* 130]
inward man/ soul [τῷ ναῶ τοῦ ἔσω ἀνθρώπου, *Ep.* 241]
- sacrifice – *man* [θυσίαν ζῶσαν, *Ep.* 130]
– *thoughts* [νοηταὶ θυσίαι, *Ep.* 201]
- altar – *inward man/ soul* [έν τῷ ναῶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ ἔσω ἀνθρώπου, *Ep.* 201]

Saint Barsanuphius continues the patristic anthropo-ecclesial vision, within the context of explaining the paradigm of Christian, spiritual living. With reference to the symbolic meanings of the notions of *church* and *sacrifice*, they show constancy as compared to the previous equivalences.

The expression *living sacrifice* [θυσίαν ζῶσαν, *Ep.* 130] recurrent with Saint Macarius expresses a common anthropological conception. The phrase *mindful sacrifices* [νοηταὶ θυσίαι, *Ep.* 201] partially differs from that of Saint Mark the Ascetic [λογικαὶ θυσίαι, *PG* 65, 996C] as it signifies a common vision on innermost spiritual living.

The semantic equivalence of *the altar* with the human inner self [θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ ἔσω ἀνθρώπου, *Ep.* 201] is, unlike the one recurrent with Saint Macarius [θυσιαστηρίῳ καρδίας, *Hom* 52 I], a way of articulating spatiality by the means of an ecclesial term, i.e. the soul. The analogies established by Saint Barsanuphius express the human calling to serve God.

3.1.9 Contemporary with the hermit saints Barsanuphius and John, **Dorotheus of Gaza** († 560/ 580) commented on the *troparion* sung during the Feast of Lord's Resurrection as comprised of Saint Gregory of Nazianz's (330 – 389/390) theological expressions and established connections between the

Cappadocian theologian's urge „to bring ourselves as fruits (offerings)” [καρποφορήσωμεν ἡμᾶς αὐτούς]²⁶ and that of Saint Paul the Apostle in *Epistle to the Romans* to bring the body as a living sacrifice to God [Ro 12, 1], while explaining how to undertake the transforming anthropological path, accomplished through the disposition described in *Epistle to the Galatians* 2, 20: „I no longer live, but Christ lives in me”. The liturgical relationship *sacrifice – transformation* is recurrent in the commentary of Abba Dorotheus, seen in the context of spiritual life as a continuation of man’s assessment as a spiritual-liturgical being.

3.1.10 In his introduction to the interpretation of the Divine Liturgy [*Mystagogia*] **Saint Maximus the Confessor** (580-662) developed on the theme of man as church and on inner spiritual life as an innermost form of service to God.

The correspondences established between the three parts of the place of worship and the psycho-somatic, anthropological elements, represent the perpetuation of the patristic anthropo-ecclesial conception that denotes man as a spiritual being, called to attain the image and likeness to God through spiritual living.

The semantic correspondences established by Saint Maximus the Confessor through the contemplative interpretation [*θεωρία*] of the place of cult and of man, are the following²⁷:

²⁶ DOROTHEË DE GAZA, *Ἑρμηνεία τίνων ῥητῶν τοῦ ἁγιοῦ Γριγοριοῦ ψαλλομένων μετὰ τρόπον εἰς τὸ Ἅγιον Πάσχα*, XVI, 166, p. 458; 460-462; 168 - 170, p. 462-466, *Oeuvres spirituelles, Sources Chrétiennes*, N° 92, Introduction, texte grec, traduction et notes par Dom L. Regnault et Dom J. De Préville, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 1963; GRÉGOIRE DE NAZIANZE, *Εἰς τὸ Πάσχα καὶ εἰς τὴν βραδυτήτα*, I, 4.: Ἄλλὰ καρποφορήσωμεν τῷ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἀναστάντι, *Discours* 1-3, Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes par Jean Bernardi, *Sources Chrétiennes*, N° 247, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 1978, p. 76.

²⁷ St. MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR, *Mystagogia*, 5., PG 91, 681D-684A; 6., 684A.

- church – man [τὴν ἁγίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἐκκλησίαν/
Ἐκκλησίαν μυστικὴν – ἄνθρωπος; *Mystagogia*, 4. PG 91,
672B; 5., 672D]
– soul [εἰκόνα μόνον ψυχῆς, 5. PG 91, 672D]
- Ierateion/sanctuary – soul [ιερατεῖον – ψυχὴ, *Mys-
tagogia*, 4. PG 91, 672B]
- altar – mind [θυσιαστήριον – νοῦς, *Mystagogia*, 4. PG
91, 672B]
- naos – body [ναός – σῶμα, *Mystagogia*, 4. PG 91, 672B]

Saint Maximus provides the most developed explanation of the conception of man as a spiritual-liturgical being. The correspondences between the ecclesial and the anthropological terms also bring to the fore the spiritual functions [ιερατεῖον – ψυχὴ – ἠθικὴν φιλοσοφίαν; θυσιαστήριον – νοῦς – φυσικὴν θεωρίαν; ναός – σῶμα – μυστικὴν θεολογίαν, 4., PG 91, 672B] in keeping with the tripartite view of spiritual life as theorized by the monk Evagrius Ponticus (345-399).²⁸

While explaining the soul's resemblance to *the holy church* in a spiritual sense [κατὰ τὴν θεωρίαν], Saint Maximus highlights the analogies between the components of the soul [*mind/ νοῦς, reason/ λόγος*] and those of the church [ιερατεῖον, ναός], according to the criterion of their ranking in keeping with their spiritual role. The emphasis is placed on the role of the soul in its inward union to accomplish *the mystery that is performed on the divine altar* of the mind [πρὸς τὸ τελούμενον ἐπὶ τοῦ θείου θυσιαστηρίου μυστήριον, PG 91, 5., 981D].

The spiritual denotation of the whole man and of the soul as church where spiritual life is mediated in liturgical terms signifies or intends to look into the anthropo-ecclesial theme from a

²⁸ ÉVAGRE LE PONTIQUE, *Traité pratique ou le moine, Sources Chrétiennes*, N° 171, Tome II, Traduction, commentaire et table par Antoine Guillaumont et Claire Guillaumont, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 1971, 1., p. 498; 84., p. 674.

spiritual perspective based on the belief that the *church made by hands* [χειροποίητος ἐκκλησία] is a *spiritual model* through the *divine symbols* [θείων ποικιλίας κατὰ σύμβολον οὔσα παράδειγμα, 681D] it contains and is thus meant to lead the soul to the heights of Christian living [5., 681D-684A].

Not only is the man seen structurally, i.e., as a *church only*, but also as a spiritual project through which he accomplishes himself in his relationship to God. The inward Liturgy is an anthropological projection of the Holy Liturgy and it holds as its ultimate purpose the spiritual transformation of man through prayer, in relationship with God, in order to become in His likeness.

The symbolic similarities between man and church, spiritual life – the Holy Liturgy best suit the mystical anthropology of Saint Maximus the Confessor. He is the critic of the Holy Liturgy, who insisted on acknowledging personal participation during its service and on describing it as an icon that becomes internalized through spiritual life. Saint Maxim shares with Saint John Cassian the idea of the inner anthropological topos of the presence of God, although the names used to denote it are different. For Saint John Cassian, the place of the divine presence in man is *the pure heart* [cor mundum] while for Saint Maximus, this is *the pure mind* [μόνος ὁ καθαρὸς ὑπάρχει νοῦς]²⁹.

As far as the semantic comparison between the related terms is concerned, one can notice a recurrence of the term *ἐκκλησία* for *man*, in the general sense [ἄνθρωπος] and for the *soul* [ψυχή] in the particular sense, in the writings of Saint Macarius of Egypt. A novelty in keeping with the previous accomplishments of the anthropo-ecclesial theme is the introduction of the structural relation *ierateion/ sanctuary – soul* [ιερατεῖον – ψυχή]. During Saint Maximus, the term *ναός* correlated to the *body* [ναός – σῶμα] undergoes a process of resemantization used to designate a structural section of the place of worship. The signifi-

²⁹ St. MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR, *ΠΡΟΣ ΘΑΛΑΣΣΙΟΝ ΤΩΝ ΟΣΙΩΤΑΤΩΝ ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΟΝ ΠΕΡΙ ΔΙΑΦΟΡΩΝ ΑΠΟΡΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΙΑΣ ΓΡΑΦΗΣ*, 31., PG 90, 369D.

cance of the *altar* [θυσιαστήριον - νοῦς] differs from the ones recurrent with Saint Macarius of Egypt and Saint Barsanuphios of Gaza, but, similar to both of them. Saint Maximus uses it to denote the innermost space of the spiritual living. The hermeneutic approach made possible by means of alternative interpretations express, as with previous theologians, the investigative spirit of the author who senses new meanings.

3.1.11 Saint John of Sinai [*John Climacus /of the Ladder*] (cca. 597-649) bears in the biblical-liturgical language a psycho-spiritual explanation of philocalic life. In his writing *To Shepherd*, Saint John of Sinai had equated both the work of the spiritual confessor and the act of bringing believers to God with a „liturgy” which enables them their likeness to the angels [Τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ μόνον αἰεὶ τὸ ἔργον τῶν θείων λειτουργῶν, *PG* 88, XIII, 1193]³⁰.: „This and only this is the eternal work of those who serve God” [Τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ μόνον αἰεὶ τὸ ἔργον τῶν θείων λειτουργῶν, *PG* 88, XIII, 1193]³¹. In the footnotes, Father Staniloae would call that work „a never-ending cosmic liturgy”³².

Due to the similarities between the objectives of the spiritual life and the Divine Liturgy, Saint John Climacus prefers the term „liturgy” to render the high priest’s pastoral - spiritual mission. The text is also valuable for its references to the liturgy performed by priests and angels alike as referred to in patristic comments of the Holy Liturgy, seen as an essential part of religious life, which is why the author introduces the relationship of *liturgy – purification – offering to God*.

In another formulation, which can be understood both as a description of the stages of the spiritual life and as the partaking

³⁰ SFÂNTUL IOAN SCĂRARUL, *ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΟΙΜΕΝΑ. ΛΟΓΟΣ*, XIII, *PG* 88, 1193D.

³¹ St. JOHN CLIMACUS, *ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΟΙΜΕΝΑ. ΛΟΓΟΣ*, XIII, *PG* 88, 1193D.

³² Dumitru STĂNILOAE, note 997, to the writing *ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΟΙΜΕΝΑ*, trans. rom., in *Filocalia*, Vol. 9, Publishing House of the Biblical and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucarest, 1980, p. 450.

in the Divine Liturgy, Saint John uses two symbolic elements, taken from the terminology of the place of worship: *the Holy of Holies* [Ἁγία τῶν ἁγίων] and the *Holy Table*. The pastoral mission of the spiritual father is to lead those entrusted to him to the point of „revealing” Christ „resting on the mysterious and hidden Table” [τὸν Χριστὸν αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τῆς μυστικῆς αὐτῶν καὶ κρυπτῆς τραπέζαν ἀναπαυόμενον δεικνῦειν]³³.

The heart-mind relationship, symbolically rendered in liturgical terms, expresses the understanding of spiritual life as an inward service to God: „*It is one thing to oversee* [ἐπισκοπεῦσαι] *the heart more often, and another to lead the heart, through the mind* [διὰ νοῦς] *that rules and raises rational sacrifices to Christ as an archiereus*” [ἀρχιερέως λογικὰς θυσίας Χριστῷ]³⁴.

In the writings of Saint John of Sinai there is a clear dissociation between the *heart* and the *mind*. The semantic analogy between mind and bishop [ἀρχιερέως – νοῦς] indicates the active role of the mind in the spiritual life and its superiority in relation to other structural-anthropological elements. Due to its coordinating function of the whole human activity, the mind is similar to the "bishop" who presides over the Eucharistic assembly, in order to better bring to light the theological structure of the human person, which has multiple spiritual correspondences. The expression *rational sacrifices* [λογικὰς θυσίας] is used in the same sense as in the writings of Mark the Ascetic, being synonymous with thoughts. In another formulation, *the complete sacrifice* mentioned in the Old Testament is a symbol of the personal, *spiritual sacrifice* offered to God: “Make your burnt offerings [ὀλοκαύτωμα] without blemish. Because otherwise you didn't use anything”³⁵.

Saint John's employment of liturgical terms to explain the anthropological, spiritual, inward work expresses the comprehension of spiritual life as a service to God. From the perspective of

³³ St. JOHN CLIMACUS, *ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΟΙΜΕΝΑ*, XIV, PG 88, 1197D.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, *ΚΑΙΜΑΞ*, XXVIII, PG 88, 1137B-C.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, *ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΟΙΜΕΝΑ*, XIV, PG 88, 1197C.

semantic analogies and the emphasis placed on the role of the mind in the spiritual life, he can be considered a continuator of the spiritual thinking of Saint Mark the Ascet.

3.1.12 The bishop John of Karpathos (ca. 7th century VII) takes up the theme of ecclesiastical anthropology in a formulation in which it speaks of the "altar of the soul" as the inner place for the clean sacrificial offerings of God's prayers: „May the fire of prayers to God and the holy meditation of the words of the Spirit burn forever the altar of your soul [θυσιαστήριον τῆς ψυχῆς]" [98.]³⁶.

The expression *the altar of the soul* [θυσιαστήριον τῆς ψυχῆς] is similar in meaning to a formulation recurrent in the writings of Abbot Barsanuphius, i. e. *the altar of the inward man* [θυσιαστήριον τοῦ ἔσω ἀνθρώπου] and both expressions are used to denote the inner space of spiritual living.

3.1.13 Saint John Damascene († 749) integrates the anthropological liturgical ecclesial symbolism in the praises addressed to Virgin Mary from the homilies, which poetically explain her fundamental role in the salvation of the world. In a way similar to Saint Epiphanius of Salamis, Saint John of Damascus uses metaphors also inspired by the ecclesial-liturgical vocabulary through which he praises the Mother of God.

He thus denotes her as a „holy place of God" [ναὸς Θεοῦ, 10], „spiritual sacrifice" [τὸ νοητὸν θυσιαστριον, 8., PG 96, 693C], „shrine" [κιβωτὲ, 7., PG 96, 689B], „censer" [θυμιατήριον, PG 96, 689C], „lamp" [λυχνία, 8., PG 96, 696C]³⁷. In a formulation in which the Mother of the Lord is praised as a „place of worship" built for the Lord, based on a Psalm verse [Ἅγιος ὁ ναὸς σου, θαυμαστός ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, Ps 64, 5], Saint John of Damascus

³⁶ St. JOHN OF KARPATOS, ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΙΝΔΙΑ ΜΟΝΑΧΟΥΣ ΓΡΑΨΑΝΤΑΣ ΑΘΩ ΠΑΡΑΜΥΘΗΤΙΚΑ ΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΑ Ρ', 98, PG 85, 1856.

³⁷ St. JOHN OF DAMASCUS, Λόγος εἰς τὸ γενέσιον τῆς ὑπεραγίας Δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου VII, PG 96, 689B-696C.

highlights the effects of that building on the Son of God and his people: Christ has built *the place of worship for his own body*, and people are referred to as *the dwellings of the living God* [ἔξ οὗ ναουργῶν Χριστὸς ἑαυτῷ τὸ σῶμα, ναοὺς δείκνυσι τοὺς βροτοὺς Θεοῦ ζῶντος, 7. 689C].

The correlations between *body/ man – a place of worship* emphasize the idea that the human nature and the whole man have the capacity to fathom God, being structured in such a way as to achieve spiritual realization in communion with the Creator.

The anthropo-ecclesial symbolism in these expressions concerning the person of the Virgin Mary has the purpose of highlighting the mysterious way in which she took part in the incarnation of the Son of God.

3.2 The Continuity of the Patristic Anthropo-Ecclesial Vision and the Spiritual Liturgy in the First Half of the Second Christian Millennium

The translation of the spiritual life in terms of the Holy Liturgy related to the anthropo-ecclesial theme continues through the profound examples of the Byzantine theologians from the first half of the second Christian millennium.

3.2.1 The theologian of divine light, **Saint Symeon the New Theologian** [949 – 1022], continues the Patristic tradition of perceiving man as a church and inner life as a service. He integrates the spiritual semantics of light-bearing cult objects into the anthropological plan, thus expressing the ideal of living in Christ.

He uses the word *ναός* as a term of comparison for *the house of the soul* [οἶκος τῆς σῆς ψυχῆς] which he considers more valuable than himself [τιμιώτερος], and because of this, it is necessary for it to be „lit and to shine clearly [νοητῶς ὀφείλει φωτίζεσθαι καὶ καταλάμπεσθαι]” through the light of virtue

maintained by „the divine fire” [διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ πυρός]³⁸. The use of the place of worship lit by lamps, as a model for the soul, expresses the acknowledgement of a similarity between the ecclesial and the anthropological interior space, both sharing the element the light, but reliant on the sources of origin.

The stages of life that spiritually change the human being are explained in *Catechesis* 28 in relation with the main stages of the liturgical anaphora, in a particular way to suit the priestly service: unblemished life, self-giving as a pleasing sacrifice to God [θυσίαν τελείαν, ἁγίαν, εὐάρεστον, 266-267; cf., *Rm* 6, 16; 12, 1] in the temple of the body [ἐν τῷ ναῷ τοῦ ἑαυτῶν σώματος, cf., *I Co* 6, 19], Christ the High Priest and his offering brought to God the Father in the above altar [εἰς τὸ ἄνω θυσιαστήριον καὶ παρὰ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως Χριστοῦ προσφορά τελεία τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρὶ, 269-271], *changed* by the power of the Holy Spirit [**δυνάμει** Πνεύματος Ἁγίου **μεταποιηθέντων**] and *transfigured* into Christ [καὶ ἀλλαγέντων καὶ εἰς Χριστόν, τὸν δι’ ἡμᾶς ἀποθανόντα καὶ ἐν δόξῃ ἀναστάντα Θεότητος, **μεταμορφωθέντων**]³⁹. In this text the word *ναός* refers to *the body*, not the soul [ναῷ τοῦ ἑαυτῶν σώματος] as it does in the previous example, expressing the same idea of the anthropological capacity of inner living through God, according to the interpretation of Saint Paul’s the Apostle.

The word *sacrifice* [θυσία] refers to the spiritual state of self-denial and giving to God in the sense of its use by the Holy Apostle Paul. The term used for spiritual change [*μεταποιέω*] found in the Eucharistic anaphora, at the time of the Eucharistic

³⁸ SYMÉON LE NOUVEAU THÉOLOGIEN, *ΛΟΓΟΣ ΙΔ’* (XIV, 94-100), *Traitées Théologiques et Éthiques*, SC, 129, Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes par Jean Darrouzès, Tome II, *Éth.* IV-XV, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 1967, p. 428.

³⁹ *Id.*, *Catéchèse XXVIII*, 271-274, in *Catéchèses*, 23-34, SC 113, Introduction, texte critique et notes par Mgr. Basile Krivochéine, Traduction, Joseph Paramelle, s.j., Tome III, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 1965, p. 148; 150.

epiclesis, indicates an analogy between the most mysterious moment of the Holy Liturgy and the core of spiritual life which shows that the Eucharistic change is, in the terminology of eastern spirituality, a guiding line for the anthropological change, which does not imply the change of the human nature, but its elevation at a higher level through saintliness, cleansed passion and holiness.

The liturgical terminology integrated into the exposition of the particularities of spiritual life has a double distinguishing effect. It determines both the understanding of the spiritual life from the perspective of the idea of change, which constitutes the divine core of the Holy Liturgy, as well as the understanding of the Holy Liturgy from a spiritual-contemplative perspective.

3.2.2 Saint Nikitas Stithatos (1015–1090) illustrates the theme of spiritual life understood as an inner liturgy in high theological density texts. He also uses expressions about the liturgical terminology to

The stage of the contemplative life is called by Nikitas Stithatos the work of „liturgizing in order to purify the mystery of sight” [ιερουργήσας καθαρῶς τὸ τῆς ἐποπτείας μυστήριον], having as the ultimate effect the communion with Christ⁴⁰. The verb used [ιερουργήω] designates the holy work proper to the liturgical service and spiritual life. The idea of *spiritual transformation* comes to life with the Christian ardent to cleanse himself of passions.

The Holy Liturgy is for the Nikitas Stithatos a model for experiencing the „mysterious liturgy of the mind”, conditioned by inner unity through the work the Holy Spirit of the soul power: *As long as the nature of the powers in us is divided within, and is thus divided into many opposing parts, one cannot partake of God’s gifts which come above our nature.*

⁴⁰ St. NIKITAS STITHATOS, *ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ ΦΥΣΙΚΩΝ ΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΩΝ ΕΚΑΤΟΝΤΑΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΝΟΟΣ ΚΑΘΑΡΣΕΩΣ*, 99., PG 120, 952B.

*And not being partakers of them, one keeps oneself far away from the **mystical liturgy of the heavenly altar, done by the work of the mind** [τῆς μυστικῆς **ιερουργίας** τοῦ ἐπουρανίου θυσιαστηρίου τῆς κατὰ τὴν νοερὰν τελουμένης τοῦ νοῦς ἐργασίας]. However, when through the diligence of the holy necessities one has cleansed away the filthiness of sin and, by force of the Spirit, gathered together the divided parts of themselves, only then does one rejoice sharing [ἐν μεθέξει] of the unspoken goodness of God and bring the divine mysteries of the mystical liturgy of the mind, to the empathic altar and above God's heavens [καὶ τὰ θεῖα μυστήρια τῆς μυστικῆς τοῦ νοῦς **ιερουργίας** εἰς τὸ ὑπερουράνιον, καὶ νοερὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ θυσιαστήριον], in a way worthy of God - the Word, as true seers and priests of His immortal secrets [ὡς ἐπόπται καὶ ἱερεῖς τῶν ἀθανάτων μυστηρίων αὐτοῦ]⁴¹.*

The expressions *ἐν μεθέξει, τὰ θεῖα μυστήρια* and the term *ιερουργία* denote the author's intention to express the purpose of spiritual life in terms that designate realities of the Divine Liturgy based on the common denominator of sharing both God and his possessions. The syntagm *τῆς μυστικῆς τοῦ νοῦς ιερουργίας* expresses the active role that the mind plays in the accomplishment of the inner anthropological unity, in the spiritual life.

Achieving the *likeness of God* [Θεὸν ἀφομοιώσεως] and sharing of the mysterious possessions of God [μετουσίᾳ τῶν ἀπορρήτων τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀγαθῶν] is conditioned by the „hierarchy of the holy commandments of Christ” [ιερουργίας ἄψεται τῶν ἱερῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐντολῶν]⁴². The terms *μετουσία* and *ιερουργίας* indicate a perfect integration of the liturgical vocabulary in an expression used to denote the purpose and way of accomplishing spiritual life.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, ΤΡΙΤΗ ΓΝΩΣΤΙΚΩΝ ΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΩΝ ΕΚΑΤΟΝΤΑΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΑΓΑΠΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΕΛΕΙΩΣΕΩΣ ΒΙΟΥ, 16., PG 120, 961AB.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 34., PG 120, 968D-969A.

The act of becoming holy is called the accomplished *holy service of the mind* [ἡ νοερά καὶ θεία τῷ ἄντι ἱερουργία] mediated by the *Word of wisdom unspoken* [ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀπορρήτου σοφίας] to those who prepared for it⁴³.

Reference should be made to the preference to express the highest level of spiritual life in the proper terms of the Holy Liturgy because of the understanding the life through Christ as a sanctifying service.

Saint Nikitas Stithatos translates in liturgical terms concepts from the sphere of spiritual life, highlighting the similarity of their spiritual purposes. He continues the theme of spiritual life by exploring the anthropological inner life.

3.2.3 The Metropolitan of Philadelphia, Theoleptos (1250, Nicaea – 1324/5) has a contemplative perspective on spiritual life, which he sees as an inner liturgy. He explains the significance of pure prayer, inserting in his text, besides the biblical references about the role of prayer [Ps 74, 4; 55, 9], a verse in which the word *θυσία* [Ps 50, 18: *Θυσία τῷ Θεῷ, πνεῦμα συντετριμμένον*] refers to God's inner self-giving: *For the mind [νοῦς] and spirit [διανοίας] that appear to God through a strong feeling and a fervent prayer [θερμῆς δεήσεως] are followed by the humility of the soul. Moreover, if the mind, the word and the spirit run and fall before God, the first by remembering, the second by calling [ἐπικλήσεως], and the third by humbleness and love, the whole of the inward man worships the Lord [ὅλος ὁ ἔνδον ἄνθρωπος λειτουργεῖ τῷ Κυρίῳ]*⁴⁴. The inward liturgy

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 33., PG 120, 968C.

⁴⁴ THEOLEPTOS, THE METROPOLITAN OF PHILADELPHIA, *ΛΟΓΟΣ ΤΗΝ ΕΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΩ ΚΡΥΠΤΗΝ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΝ ΔΙΑΣΑΦΩΝ, ΚΑΙ ΔΕΙΚΝΥΩΝ ΕΝ ΒΡΑΧΕΙ ΤΟΥ ΜΟΝΑΧΙΚΟΥ ΕΠΑΓΓΕΛΜΑΤΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΚΟΠΟΝ*, PG 143, 389C. To note 66, the priest professor Dumitru Stăniloae observed that in that fragment the Metropolitan of Philadelphia gave „ a definition of the inner Liturgy worth remembering”, cf., *Word about the labors of the monastic life, Filocalia*, Vol. 7, Publishing House of the Biblical and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucarest, 1977, p. 54.

understood as an offering to God of the powers of the soul through spiritual works, expresses a core integral anthropological implication caught in the spiritual initiation of the rational-contemplative powers of the soul.

In another descriptive sequence of the spiritual life, Theoleptos also introduces the term *ναός* [*place of worship, church*] to designate the anthropological, spiritual level. Ascetic living, in ceaseless prayer, transforms the lover of God into a „church“, and the work from the depth of the mind offered to God is compared to a „liturgy“: *Therefore, walking down the path of thinking, choose the words of the prayer and tell them to God Lord, shouting strong and forever, asking constantly and with no shame, like the widow who earned the mercy of the relentless judge. By doing so, you walk in the spirit, you do not know of carnal lusts, you do not interrupt the unceasing prayer through human thoughts, and you are the church of God [ναός δὲ Θεοῦ], praising God straightforwardly. Praising [εὐχόμενος] so with thought, you succeed in taking part to God's memory [μνήμην Θεοῦ] perceiving the most hidden [ἐν τοῖς ἀδύτοις τοῦ νοῦ] and looking through mysterious ways for the Unseen On so that through acts of conscience and love to serve God alone [μόνος τῷ Θεῷ μόνῳ καταμόνας λειτουργῶν]*⁴⁵.

The incessant prayer, accompanied by the psycho-physical asceticism, brings the body to the level of spiritual space for the exaltation of the doxologies of God, the peak of the inner life being the contemplative service of God.

Theoleptos does not highlight the anthropological ecclesial structural nature but rather that of attaining the sanctified space of man through spiritual life: *He who has risen above the thoughtful nature of the present and has gone beyond the lust of the transient does not look downward, does not desire the beautiful ones of the earth, but has open views from above, looks upon the beauties of the heavens and sees the happiness of the perpet-*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, PG 143, 393CD.

ual. (...) *He also receives the love of God that descends from above him, becomes a church of the Holy Spirit [ναὸς τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος], desires the divine wills, is carried by the Spirit of God, is praised for faith, and has God seeking willingly and with pleasure⁴⁶.*

Theoleptos the Metropolitan uses the following semantic correspondences:

- Church of God [ναὸς δὲ Θεοῦ] – a devout man of the Holy Spirit [ναὸς τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος]
- the liturgy of God [τῷ Θεῷ μόνῳ καταμόνας λειτουργῶν] – spiritual life

The spiritual vocabulary of Theoleptos the Metropolitan contains expressions of anthropological relevance, being inspired by the biblical considerations and the patristic tradition of the hermeneutics of ecclesial - liturgical anthropology.

3.2.4 Saint Gregory of Sinai [1255–1346] deepens the spirituality of the heart by using liturgical metaphors. While the pure heart resembles an *altar* on which spiritual mysteries take place, the soul resembles to an altar on which Christ, the Son of God, is mystically sacrificed. Similar to Nikitas Stithatos, the work of the mind is compared to a spiritual *hierurgy*. Not unlike Theoleptos of Philadelphia, Saint Gregory the Sinaite speaks of the anthropological spiritual-ecclesial character acquired through spiritual life. Only the one who reaches the measure of inner work is called „church” and „priest” of the Spirit, which shows that the anthropo-ecclesial paradigm had long been assimilated by the Eastern spirituality for its expressive character and the similarity between the meanings of the place of worship, the Holy Liturgy and the spiritual life: *A heart without thoughts [χωρὶς λογισμῶν καρδία], worked by the Spirit, is the true altar [ἱερατεῖον ἀληθινόν] even before the next life. For all*

⁴⁶ *Id., ΛΟΓΟΣ ΤΗΝ ΕΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΩ ΚΡΥΠΤΗΝ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΝ ΔΙΑΣΑΦΩΝ*, 8., PG 143, 404B.

*things are spiritually done and spoken there. And he who has not yet acquired this is a rock for other virtues, useful for the building of the divine church [του θείου ναού], but not the church and priest of the Spirit [ού ναός, καὶ ἱερουργός του Πνεύματος]*⁴⁷.

Different expressions render the inner liturgy due to the meanings it aims at. The expression *ἡ μυστικὴ τοῦ νοῦς ἱερουργία* denotes *the beginning of the prayer of the mind, but the purifying power of the Spirit* [111]⁴⁸. P*The inner liturgy consists in the mystical participation in Christ, a communion to be achieved in the future age: The Spiritual Hierurgy [ἱερατεῖον πνευματικόν], before the future joy beyond the mind, is the work of the mind [ἡ νοερά του νοῦς] which secretly sacrifices and shares from the Lamb of God in the altar of the soul [τὸν Ἄμνον μυστικῶς ἐν ἀρράβωνι του Θεοῦ ἐν τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς θυσιαστηρίῳ καὶ ἱερουργοῦντος καὶ μετέχοντος]. And to eat the Lamb of God in the empathic altar of the soul [νοερῶ θυσιαστηρίῳ τῆς ψυχῆς], means not only to understand Him or to take part of Him [μετασχεῖν μόνον], but also to make us one as [γενέσθαι] the Lamb, taking God's face in the future. For here we take the reasons [λόγους], but there we hope to take the very realities of the mysteries [πράγματα τῶν μυστηρίων]*⁴⁹.

The Kingdom of Heaven is represented in another text by a symbolic Old Testament image in the shape of a colossal two room „tent”: the first one accommodates all those who are „priests of grace” [ἱερεῖς χάριτος], while the second, reasonably [νοητὴν], „only those who, during this life, have **serviced** [ἱεραρχικῶς ἐν τελειότητι] the Trinity like perfect hierarchs [ἱεραρχικῶς ἐν τελειότητι], in the darkness of not knowing God, while holding Jesus Christ [τὸν Ἰησοῦν τελετάρχην καὶ

⁴⁷ St. GREGORY OF SINAI, *Κεφαλαία δι' ἀκροστιχίδος Πανύ Ὁφελίμα*, 7., PG 150, 1241A.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 111., PG 150, 1277C.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 112., PG 150, 1277C.

ιεράρχην πρῶτον πρὸς τὴν Τριάδα] as the *ultimate hierarch* before the Holy Trinity⁵⁰.

The anthropological, ecclesial-liturgical symbolic correspondences established by St. Gregory the Sinaite are:

- true holy place [ιερατεῖον ἀληθινόν]– *the heart* [καρδία] worked by the Spirit [7]
- graspable altar [νοερῶ θυσιαστηρίῳ] – *soul* [ψυχὴ, 112]
- church [ναὸς]– man [7]
- hierurgy/ holy work [ιερουργία] – the work of the mind [ἡ νοερὰ τοῦ νοῦς, 111]
- the communion with Christ [μετασχεῖν] – the understanding of Christ [112]
- the eschatological resemblance to Christ [112]

As compared to previous semantic equivalences, Saint Gregory the Sinaite shows variability and relative stability. The analogy of the *altar – heart*, semantically brings it closer to Saint Macarius the Egyptian, but the use of the word ecclesial *hierateion* indicates terminological assimilation of the explanations forwarded by Saint Maximus the Confessor. The most semantically stable is the *church – human* equivalence, with the mention that Saint Gregory accepts it as an expression of anthropological, spiritual becoming. Concerning understanding the service as *a liturgy of the mind*, it manifests semantic stability about Nikitas Stithatos and Theoleptos of Philadelphia.

The holy service of God is designated by a term commonly found in the patristic formulations, *ιερουργία* [111, 112] and the verb *λειτουργῶ* [43] which occurs in rare circumstances. In the mystical liturgy, the role of Christ as the first hierarch indicates an understanding of spiritual life as an act of intersection between the Christian and Him. The use of the verb *λειτουργῶ* brings Saint Gregory closer to Saint John of Sinai

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 43., PG 150, 1252CD.

and Theolipt of Philadelphia. He resembles Saints Mark the Ascetic and Symeon the New Theologian from the perspective of presenting the hierarchical ministry of Christ in the spiritual life, differing from them in the way He presents His role to the Christian.

3.2.5 A hesychast theologian mostly appreciated for the depth of his writings, **Saint Callistos I, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople** [† 1364], uses philocalic terminology to embark upon the traditional - patristic formula of man's spiritual understanding as a place of worship and the spiritual life as an inward service. In a general sense, he highlights the spiritual, structural vocation of man seen as topos of the inward service to God: *Temple of God* [Ναὸς Θεοῦ] and *altar* [θυσιαστήριον] in the primary sense is the rational man [λογικὸς ἄνθρωπος], because in him there is mystically [τελειοῦνται] rejoiced all the sacrifices and empathetic services [τελειοῦνται αἱ νοεραὶ θυσίαι καὶ λατρεῖαι μυστικῶς] in keeping with the inward man [κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον, 3.]⁵¹.

The figurative liturgical terms mark the personal dimension of spiritual living compared to a liturgical celebration.

In describing the work of the human mind that surpassed the ethical [ἠθικὴν] level of the Christian life and advanced towards practical life [πραξίαν], Saint Callistos I introduces terms from the liturgical vocabulary, establishing similarities between the work of the mind and the liturgical service: *So, then, the mind* [ὁ νοῦς] *which will have rejected the burden of all physical movements and, so to say so, empathic movements themselves, starts to service* [ιερατεύειν] *in a dominant way* [ἡγεμονικῶς] *and to*

⁵¹ Τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου πατριάρχου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως κυροῦ Καλλίστου κεφάλαια ῥ'περὶ καθαρότητος ψυχῆς. πῶς κατὰ μικρὸν αὐτὴ καθαίρεται καὶ εἰς θεωρίαν ἀνάγεται, in Antonio RIGO, *Callisto I Patriarca, I 100 (109) Capitoli sulla purezza dell'anima* [3.], Introduzione, edizione e traduzione, *Byzantion*, Tome LXXX, Belgique, 2010, p. 346/ 347.

purify by secretly performing empathic sacrifices [τὰς νοεράς θυσίας ἐκτελεῖν μυστικῶς], for it to be *renewed, according to blessed David, by a righteous spirit* and be strengthened by a *ruling spirit* (Ps 50, 12, 14). Only then are we **transformed** [ἀλλοιούμεθα] and our faces **transfigured** [μεταμορφούμεθα] *as it is natural, by the obedience of Christ, into “complete man, to the measure of the fullness of Christ”* [Ef 4, 13]⁵².

Comparing the activity of the ascetic mind, which works for its spiritual renewal through a sanctifying service, expresses the appropriateness of the liturgical vocabulary for the stages of spiritual life. The secret performance of the *empathic service* is paralleled in the liturgical plane by the Eucharistic Prayer, and the spiritual *transformation* and *metamorphosis*, by the epiclesis and Eucharistic transformation. Anthropological, spiritual change is, in keeping with the explanation of Callistos I, the elevation to a higher level of living, in line with the statement of Saint Paul the Apostle expressing the ideal of Christian living.

In another text, Patriarch Callistos I emphasizes the ecclesiastical function of the mind, expressing himself literally when describing its spiritual activity: *Brother, understand that the controlling mind of the soul* [τὸν ἡγεμονεύοντα νοῦν τῆς ψυχῆς] *is a priest* [ιερέαν], *and the servant is the thought* [διάνοιαν], *quite sharp at perceiving Spirit and its manifestations, for whom the mind* [νοῦς] *that beautifully distinguishes all, weaves garments for the soul in a divine way* [στολὰς ἐξυφαίνει θεοειδεῖς τῆ ψυχῆς]” [4.]⁵³. The garment of the soul woven by the mind indicates an element of the liturgical clothing terminology, and its achievement is expressed by means of an adjective preferred by Saint Dionysius the Areopagite in his liturgical reading [PG 3, 425B-445C].

The interiority of the soul [τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ταμεῖον], in which the mind [νοός] penetrates and performs the union with God, thus attaining its *likeness* [ἐνωθεῖσα ἕξομοιοῦται Θεῷ] with Him, is

⁵² *Ibid.*, [2.], p. 346/ 347.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, [4.], p. 348.

semantically equated by Saint Callistos I with the *empathic altar of God* [τὸ λογικὸν θυσιαστήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ, 30.]⁵⁴. In this formulation one can easily observe the active role of the *mind* in spiritual life as well as the identity of the purposes of the Holy Liturgy and of inward Christian living, oriented towards spiritual, human perfection. The resemblance of the *soul* to the *altar* has deep spiritual connotations, suggesting the way the soul must become, only to be turned into a place of spiritual worship that culminates in the union and likeness with God.

The correspondences established between the terms of spiritual life and those of the liturgical service in the church are:

- *temple of God* [ναὸς Θεοῦ] – *man* [λογικὸς ἄνθρωπος] [3.]
- *God's rational altar – soul* [τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ταμεῖον] [30.]
- [λογικὸν θυσιαστήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ]
- *priest* [ιερεύς] – *mind* [νοῦς] [2.]
- performing sacrifices and empathic services – spiritual life [νοεράς θυσίας ἐκτελεῖν, 2; νοεράι θυσίαι καὶ λατρεῖαι, 3]
- transformation [ἀλλοιούμεθα] – accomplishment through Christ [cf. Ef 4, 13; 2.]
- the likeness with God [ἐνωθεῖσα ἕξομοιοῦται Θεῷ, 30.]

The semantic translations of Patriarch Callistos I express continuity of the patristic equivalences of liturgical terms in the descriptions of spiritual life. His correspondences maintain relative stability about the previous tradition of anthropo-ecclesial thinking.

3.2.6 Callistos Cataphygiota [XIV century] is another Byzantine hesychast theologian who used a liturgical terminology to explain states and higher levels of spiritual life. In a philocalic writing, Callistos used liturgical terms to describe the emotions

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, [30.], p. 360.

felt by the one experiencing spiritual power „spring in heart” and enact silence:

*For it is only then that the sacred service [τελεῖται λατρεία] and worship of the mind [προσκύνησις τῷ νῷ] are performed unto God in Spirit and truth in a tacit way*⁵⁵.

According to Callistos, the syntagm *holy service* designates a special mystical experience in which the governing part of man is wholly directed to God.

3.2.7 On the verge of the decisive fall of the Byzantine Empire under Ottoman occupation, **Saint Mark Eugenikos, the Metropolitan of Ephesus** [† 1444/5], revisits the anthropo-ecclesiastical theme also assumed by the Jesuit theologians. Restating the famous biblical place *I Tes* 5, 17 [*Pray without ceasing/ ἀδιαλείπτως προσεύχεσθε*] on which hesychasm is based, *In* 6, 23, *Lc* 17, 21, *I Pt* 2, 5 and *I Co* 3, 16 describe the spiritual life of the work of the mind in its innermost form: *That is, we must always stay close to the altar of the mind [τῷ νοητῷ προσεδρεύειν θυσιαστήριῳ], bringing unto God and placing on this altar our spiritual sacrifices and our thoughts [τὰς πνευματικὰς τε καὶ λογικὰς θυσίας προσφέροντας ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ τῷ Θεῷ] (I Pt 2, 5), in keeping with (the word) The Apostle, if indeed we are dwellings of the Living God [ἐσμὲν ναὸς Θεοῦ ζῶντος], and should the Spirit of God dwell in us (I Co 3, 16)*⁵⁶.

The semantic analogies stemming from Saint Mark's statement are as follows:

- temple/ church [ναὸς Θεοῦ ζῶντος] – man [ἄνθρωπος]
- the empathetic altar [τῷ νοητῷ θυσιαστήριον] – mind
- spiritual and rational sacrifice [θυσίας πνευματικὰς τε καὶ λογικὰς] – thoughts

⁵⁵ CALLISTOS ΣΑΤΑΡΗΓΙΟΤΑ, *ΣΥΛΛΟΓΙΣΤΙΚΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΥΦΗΛΟΤΑΤΩΝ ΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΑΙΟΝ ΤΑ ΣΩΖΟΜΕΝΑ ΠΕΡΙ ΘΕΙΑΣ ΕΝΩΣΕΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΒΙΟΥ ΘΕΩΡΗΤΙΚΟΥ*, 59, PG 147, 896B.

⁵⁶ St. MARK OF THE EPHEBUS, *ΕΞΗΓΗΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣΤΙΚΗΣ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΑΣ*, PG 160, 1164A.

The correspondences set by Saint Mark express relative semantic stability concerning the previous tradition. The expression *empathetic altar* by which the *mind* is understood denotes a spiritual understanding of intelligence as an inner center of spiritual life. He expresses spiritual life in liturgical terms that mark the character of deliberate personal sacrifice unto God. The anthropo-ecclesial theme is an integral part of the conception of spiritual life understood as service.

4 Conclusions

From the anthropo-ecclesiastical, liturgical, biblical, and patristic formulations one can notice that man is exhorted to develop in himself a spiritual service according to the model of the Holy Liturgy. The *Prayer of the heart* has become the *Liturgy of the heart*, the former standing for the „epiclesis” that transforms human nature and the latter for spiritual life understood as inward Liturgy.

Connections established between the ecclesiastical and resemanticized liturgical terms (*church, temple, altar, sacrificial, naos*), specially chosen to explain spiritual life by the means of with paradigmatic anthropological elements that stand for spirituality (*soul, mind, heart, body*), produce a new time of reflexivity focused on the personal growth of the liturgical, gradual, sanctifying and transforming rhythm. They represent the theologians who coined them by designating at the same time their hermeneutical intentions, particularly related to spiritual life.

The semantic stability and variability of the patristic lexical correspondences demonstrate freedom of thought and expression and hermeneutic openness. Beyond all semantic correspondences that remain stable or vary from author to author, the aim pursued by those who apprehended them is a spiritual-didactic one, focused on rendering the idea that should man

meditate on the idea that, structurally, he not only represents, but he is also called to become a "church" through spiritual life, he would then fulfil himself as a spiritual being and would not conceive of thoughts and actions that come in contradiction with his spiritual-ecclesial nature.

The chronological presentation of the opinions belonging to influential Eastern spiritual theologians on the spiritual, anthropological, ecclesiastical - liturgical motif, confirms the importance that the Church and the Holy Liturgy have had in their lives and in the Christian communities from different times, which is why they created the novel symbolic analogies, entailed by terminological interferences, symbolic reception and spiritual interpretation. They show that one can speak of an anthropological conception from the perspective of spiritual foundations of the Christian tradition. The recurrence of the anthropo-ecclesial theme in the description of the spiritual experiences indicates the outline of a vivid patristic vision of the man called to unite with God.