

# THE LITURGY ACCORDING TO THE *DIDACHE*

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## **Abstract:**

*Tidak dapat disangkal bahwa Didache yang dikenal sebagai “ajaran Tuhan kita Yesus Kristus melalui tradisi para rasul” menunjukkan kesaksian otentik Gereja universal sejak pertengahan abad pertama hingga saat ini. Kendati, dijumpai pelbagai macam pertanyaan berkaitan dengan ajaran iman dan moral Kristiani, sesungguhnya Didache menunjukkan intisari iman Kristiani yang bersumber dari misteri Yesus Kristus dan Tradisi Apostolik. Itulah sebabnya, betapa pentingnya memahami perkembangan ajaran iman Kristiani dalam Tradisi Gereja perdana hingga saat ini. Refleksi iman Kristiani menunjukkan bahwa tak ada berubah dalam iman Kristiani, hanya cara kita mengungkapkannya yang berkembang sesuai dengan perkembangan zaman. Penghayatan liturgi Gereja, terutama Sakramen Inisiasi sejak era Didache hingga saat ini tetap, konsisten, dan dinamis, namun Tradisi mencatat adanya perkembangan yang signifikan dan kekayaan ritus liturgi Gereja sepanjang zaman.*

## **Keywords:**

The first century Christian testimony, the Initiation Sacraments, Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, the development of doctrine, and theological reflection.

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## **Introduction**

For the Christians in the East and West, liturgy has the central role of faith. It is not only a ceremony full with beautiful harmony of music and songs, the liturgy is the feast of Christian faith. The faith to God’s incarnate in the person: Jesus of Nazareth who suffered on the Cross and Rise from the death. In the liturgy, God truly sanctifies men, and men glorifies God. As mentioned by Irenaeus of Lyon “men fully alive in the contemplation of

the living God.” The question arises: Can we truly encounter with God in the liturgy? In what sense the liturgy can transform our life? How about the liturgy in the early Church? Does the liturgy nowadays truly come from the early Christian tradition? In order to respond to the problems, the paper will discuss the liturgy according to the *Didache* as one of the early Christians’ testimony. So, the writing will focus on the Context, the Sacraments of Initiation, Further Development, Theological Reflection, and Conclusion.

## The Context

The *Didache* was one of the oldest Christian’s documents in the early church. It was written in the first century C.E. It was recognized as one valuable source and origin of Christianity either in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Church. Since it had been described the life of the early Christians at the time. The *Didache* consisted important elements, namely, the baptismal catechesis, the liturgy, the church order and the eschatological conclusion. Even though the *Didache* was a short document (can take 25 to 30 minutes to read), the *Didache* disclosed the very existence of Christian life from beginning up until the present.

According to K. Niederwimmer the writing of the *Didache* had been listed in the references in Ancient Canonical Lists. There were three important sources that we could mention here. Eusebius pointed to the *Didache* as one of disputed books but it was not categorized as canonical books. Athanasius of Alexandria added the *Didache* was the recommended reading for every Christians at the time. Patriarch Nicephoros of Constantinople founded the *Didache* as the prominent document of Christian antiquity.<sup>1</sup>

Besides that, the *Didache* had been cited on the Quotations in Early Church Literature. No less Clement of Alexandria had quoted the *Didache* in his homilies and works. As well as Origen cited the *Didache* in his Gospel’s commentary. Even in the West there was a work which translated the Greek *Didache* into Latin at 300 C.E. In fact, in the fourth century C.E., the *Didache* commonly was known in the North Africa. Indeed, Augustine and his followers so familiar and use the *Didache* in their various works. These facts indicated the *Didache* had been the principle of the trusted

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<sup>1</sup> K. NIEDERWIMMER, *The Didache: A Commentary*, (translation by Linda M. MALONEY, edited by Harold W. ATTRIDGE), Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis (MN) 1998, 4-6.

source and origin of Christian faith up to current time either in the Latin and Orthodox's Church.<sup>2</sup>

However, there is an objection regarding the authenticity of the *Didache*. If the *Didache* was becoming one of the decisive sources of the Christian faith, then why the *Didache* was lost for centuries. Where is the *Didache* so far? Based on the late historical research, it seemed that the *Didache* was hidden for a long time. Actually, the *Didache* is never lost. In fact, the *Didache* is always the origin of the Christians through the century. Evidently the *Didache* is not only written on the ancient papyrus but the *Didache* had become the main part of the Christian life. Through the Tradition of the Church, the *Didache* becomes “the Letter and Spirit for all Chrstians” who believe and follow our Lord Jesus Christ.

T. O’Loughlin argued the *Didache* never really disappeared. Maybe there was some contradiction regarding the *Didache*. But actually, the *Didache* had always existed all this time. Otherwise, the message of the *Didache* pointed out the newness in the life of the Christian until the present days. It indicated that there is continually development of the *Didache*. It disclosed that the truth of faith that never changed but the way we explain it changes.<sup>3</sup> It is started when the *Didache* was found by Philotheos Bryennios, a scholar from the Byzantine Church at the library of the Monastery of the Holy Sepulchre (“Jerusalem Monaster”) in 1873. He found the *Didache* together with other documents, that is, *Synopsis Veteris et Novi Testamenti, Epistle of Barnabas, 1-2 Clement, the Books of Hebrew, the Letter of Maria of Cassoboloi to Ignatius of Antioch, Twelve letters of Ignatius, and a Discussion of the genealogy of Jesus* in one manuscript.<sup>4</sup>

In the next discovery, the text of *Didache* was found too in the *Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 1782* by B.P. Grenfell and A.S. Hunt. According to the latest research, the *Didache* had many versions such as *the Coptic Fragment: Br. Mus. Or. 9271, the Ethiopic Version, and the Georgian Version*. Then later the development revealed that *the Apostolic Constitution 7.1.2-32.4* wrote down as well the text of the *Didache*.<sup>5</sup> T. O’Loughlin emphasized the meaning of the *Didache* as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-18.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. T. O’LOUGHLIN, *The Didache: A Window on the Earliest Christians*, Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids (MI) 2010, 19-23.

<sup>4</sup> K. NIEDERWIMMER, *op.cit.*, 19; Cf. H.V.D. SANDT – D. FLUSSER, *The Didache: Its Jewish and its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity*, Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum, Fortress Press, Minneapolis (MN) 2002, 1-6.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 21-29.

It is basic information about the Christian group's lifestyle and their activities as the New People on the Way of Life. Once one had absorbed this teaching one had finished one's own apprenticeship and was ready to enter fully into the body of Christ. Then, having mastered the teaching, one was in a position, without needing books or anything else, to act as a mentor in the process of shaping others as apprentice Christians. The *Didache* was not just for teaching classed or for teachers, it was not just a set of lessons, it was meant to be absorbed so that its possessor would function as a part of Christ (cf. Rom. 12) and help others to join 'the Way' (cf. Acts 9.2).<sup>6</sup>

The next point is defining the author, the time, and place of the *Didache*. It is not easy to determine the author of the *Didache*. Because it was the oldest document in the history Christianity, no less of contradictions and difficulties. But the later research stated the *Didache* was composed from common sources at the time. In this perspective, it has similarity with the composition of the gospels. T. O'Loughlin explained the relation between the Gospels as the preaching of good news of Jesus Christ (*kerugma*) and the *Didache* as the practical discipline to be the disciples of Christ. So, the relation between the Gospel and the *Didache* are two sides of the same coin.<sup>7</sup>

Regarding the time of the *Didache* commonly many scholars agreed the time of the writing of the *Didache* was in the first century C.E. But, there are opposition's argument which stated the *Didache* was composed in the second century C.E. Some even argued in the third or fourth century C.E. These objections derived from the statement that the *Didache* dependent on the letter of Barnabas. If it was, the *Didache* was not written in the first century C.E.<sup>8</sup> However the hypothesis of K. Niederwimmer opened a new horizon of the common tradition at the time. According to this research, both the *Didache* and the Letter of Barnabas are not associated to each other. But actually, both dependent to common tradition at the time which is now has been lost. Thus, the time of *Didache*'s writing was still in first century C.E.<sup>9</sup>

At last, there are progress in dealing with the place of the *Didache*'s composition. In general Syria or Egypt become the place for the writing of the *Didache*. This invention based on to the genre of the *Didache*.<sup>10</sup> But, from the point of view the movement of Jesus' disciples at the time, it can

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<sup>6</sup> T. O'LOUGHLIN, *op.cit*, 13.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>8</sup> H.V.D. SANDT – D. FLUSSER, *op.cit.*, 48-50.

<sup>9</sup> K. NIEDERWIMMER, *op.cit*, 35-41.

<sup>10</sup> H.V.D. SANDT – D. FLUSSER, *op.cit*, 50-52.

be confirmed that the place is not in Syria or Egypt. We can focus that the disciples of Jesus wrote “The Teaching of the Lord through the twelve apostles to the nations” was written in Antioch. In that place, for the first time the Christian was being called “Catholic.”<sup>11</sup>

## The Sacrament of Initiation

### ON BAPTISM

After discussion of the context, I shall treat the first part of the *Didache*'s Liturgy, namely, Baptism. In this section, my arguments in the *Didache* 7, 1-4 was not merely the ritual, but actually it was signifying the Sacrament of Baptism in the first century of Christianity. This reality indicated even though Christian Baptism had its origin in Jewish tradition, namely, the rite of purification, indeed Christian Baptism had its own characteristics. If Jewish's rite regarding the purification from the sin, so the Baptism presents the power of the Holy Spirit who sanctifies our soul.<sup>12</sup> From this perspective the sacramental had been lived by the Christianity both in the East (Syrio-Palestine) and in the West (the testimony of Cyprian who died in 258).<sup>13</sup>

The Sacrament of Baptism really was founded in the text of the *Didache* as follows:

As for baptism, baptize in this way: Having said all this beforehand, baptize in the name of the Holy Spirit, in running water. If you do not have running water, however, baptize in another kind of water; if you cannot do so in cold water, then do so in warm water. But if you have neither, pour water on the head thrice in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit. Before the Baptism, let the person baptizing and the person being baptized – and others who are able – fast; tell the one being baptized to fast one or two days before (*Did.* 7, 1-4).<sup>14</sup>

There were three important elements, that is, pre-baptismal fasting, the baptismal water, and the baptismal clause. In regards to *pre-baptismal fasting*, every person in dealing with baptism, especially the one who being baptized need to fast because fasting was very useful for “the remission of their past sins, while we pray and fast along with them.”<sup>15</sup> The second

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<sup>11</sup> K. NIEDERWIMMER, *op.cit.*, 54.

<sup>12</sup> H.V.D. SANDT – D. FLUSSER, *op.cit.*, 271-279.

<sup>13</sup> H. VORGRIMLER, *Sacramental Theology*, (translated by Linda M. MALONEY), The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota 1992, 35.

<sup>14</sup> For the text of *Didache*, I followed the critical text from K. NIEDERWIMMER, *op.cit.*, 125.

<sup>15</sup> H.V.D. SANDT – D. FLUSSER, *op.cit.*, 279.

element was *the baptismal water*. Although we could use the pouring water in the baptism, but it is recommended to use the running water in baptism.<sup>16</sup> The last element was *the baptismal cause*: “in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” This element is very important for us because the baptism will not be valid if it is not accompanied with this clause. Evidently from the Baptism of Jesus until the mission of Disciples of Christ started with this clause: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19).

## ON CONFIRMATION

If we can easily find the rite of Baptism in the *Didache*, it was not said so for the Confirmation. It seems problematic because the *Didache* did not mention anything regarding the Confirmation. It was becoming a fundamental question for us: “Did the early church recognize the Sacrament of Confirmation? If the early Christianity knew Confirmation, why the *Didache* did not write it? How can we understand the Confirmation at the beginning of the Church? It is becoming a difficulty for us to grasp the Sacrament of Confirmation as inseparable unity with the Sacrament of Initiation.

Responding those questions, we need to comprehend the purpose of *Didache*. It was not reporting all events which happened in the first century of Christianity. In my opinion, all event needs to be understood well at the time and I think only the important events can be written in this document. Since the *Didache* had not preserved in detail the formula of faith, but only the common tradition in the early Church, such as morality, liturgy, the order of the church and eschatological dimension of the church. Besides, we need to grasp historical evidence on Confirmation in the early Christianity. I believe even though the *Didache* did not mention anything about Confirmation, indeed it had inseparable relations with Baptism and Eucharist. I will base this argument basically from the research two of these scholars who has written on the particular subject.

*First*, T. O’Loughlin pointed out that at the time of the celebration of the Baptism was followed by the Confirmation and was finalized by the Eucharist. He stated that if a converted gentile joined Christian community in the early second century, they would be guided and accompanied by a teacher. Together with the teacher, they would prepared themselves in fasting and prayer to receive baptism and would have new way of life. In

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. T. O’LOUGHLIN, *op.cit*, 61.

this sense, the new Christians would not only receive baptism, but they were sent to proclaim the Gospel through Confirmation and were strengthened by the Eucharist.<sup>17</sup>

*Second*, L.G. Walsh gave his testimony that in the early church the celebration was tied up with the Baptism and Eucharist. In the sense, the Sacraments of Initiation were truly celebrated during early centuries of the Christianity. He stated, “It is of the greatest importance that the initiation of every baptized Christian be completed by the sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist . . . In the case of child who has not yet reached the age of reason, Confirmation is given according to the same principles and norms as for baptism.”<sup>18</sup>

## ON EUCHARIST

We can find the text on the Eucharist in the *Didache* 9 – 10. From the texts, we know that the early Christian community was following the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself continued the Jewish tradition and gave it a new meaning. Jesus did not only participate in the Jewish community meal, but Jesus fulfilled it in the Last Supper. In the Last Supper, Jesus anticipated His Cross and Resurrection as the Gift of God for us through the Eucharist. So, the Eucharist is tied up with the Cross and Resurrection. For the Christians at the time, they developed *the meal of Agape* to the Eucharist. The Eucharist becomes the unity and the union for the Christian who received Baptism. They became One Body of Christ. They celebrated the Eucharist until the second coming of Christ. At the fulfillment of time, they together would have entered the eternal Supper of the Lamb.<sup>19</sup>

If we carefully read the *Didache* 9-10, we will find problems. Because it was written on the text and was pointed out that the blessing of the cup was done before the bread. The problem arises: nowadays, in the Eucharist we find that the consecration prayer on the bread is done before the cup. The next objection is we do not find the institution of the prayer of Eucharist. Therefore, the question is “Was the Sacrament of the Last Supper done like it was written in the *Didache* 9 – 10? Did the *Didache* really mention the Sacrament of Eucharist in the first century of Christianity?” Responding those problems, I think we need to read carefully and analyze the *Didache* 9-10. Only through the new

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 63-65.

<sup>18</sup> L.G. WALSH, *Sacraments of Initiation: A Theology of Life, Word, and Rite*, Second Edition, Hillenbrand Books, Chicago 2011, 145.

<sup>19</sup> T. O’LOUGHLIN, *op.cit.*, 93-99.

interpretation of the texts that we can find what the *Didache* wants to tell us regarding Eucharist.<sup>20</sup>

K. Niederwimmer disclosed his critically commentary on the *Didache*. In the *Didache* 9, he opened several important points to the Eucharist. *First*, the first benediction of the cup derived from the Jewish meal which was begun with the cup to the guests. In this context, the redactor of *Didache* showing the prayer of benediction consisted in three parts: the prayer addressed to God, praise and thanksgiving for the gift of God, and brief doxology. “As for thanksgiving, give thanks this way. First, with regard to the cup: ‘We thank you, our Father, for the holy vine of David your servant, which you made known to us through Jesus your servant. To you be glory forever’” (The *Didache* 9, 1-2).

*Second*, the second benediction of bread opened as follows: “And with regard to the Bread: ‘We thank you, our Father, for the life and knowledge which you made known to us through Jesus your servant. To you be glory forever’” (The *Didache* 9, 3). This was referring to the praise and thanksgiving to God for eternal life and His knowledge to all faithful.

*Third*, after the blessing of the cup and bread were followed by the prayer for the unity of the church to the eschatological church in the future. The redactor stated, “As this < . . . > lay scattered upon the mountains and became one when it had been gathered, so may your church be gathered into your kingdom from the ends of the earth. For glory and power are yours, through Jesus Christ, forever” (the *Didache* 9, 4).

*Finally*, the last verse stated “Let no one eat or drink of our thanksgiving (meal) save those who have been baptized in the name of the Lord, since the Lord has said concerning this, ‘Do not give what is holy to the dogs’” (the *Didache* 9, 5). At this point the *Didache* meant only the Baptist person can share and join to the community meal. Through these reasons, this meeting was not only gathering meal but it was the liturgy of the Eucharist.<sup>21</sup>

The understanding of the texts was not completed if it was not followed by the *Didache* 10. As well as the previous text showing the prayer of completed meal, in the *Didache* 10 prescribing “prayer of thanksgiving after the meal and simultaneously its function as the sacramental liturgy.”<sup>22</sup> The prayer of thanksgiving considered on three benediction prayers.

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<sup>20</sup> K. NIEDERWIMMER, *op.cit*, 139-143.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 144-154.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

*First*, the early Christian community opened the prayer as follows, “When you have had your fill, give thanks this way: ‘We thank you, holy Father, for your holy name, which you made dwell in our hearts, and for the knowledge of faith and immortality, which you made known to us through Jesus your servant. To you be glory forever’” (the *Didache* 10,1-2). The first benediction prayer described how the community gave thanks to God for His very indwelling in our being for granting salvation, knowledge, faith, and immortality through Jesus, His servant.

*Second*, the community continued the second benediction that stated as follows, “You, almighty Lord, created all things for the sake of your name, and you gave food and drink to human beings for enjoyment, so that they would thank you; But you graced us with spiritual food and drink and eternal life through <Jesus> your servant. For all things, we thank you, Lord, because you are powerful. To you be glory forever” (the *Didache* 10, 3-4). The second benediction prayer maintained the prayer of early Christian community to God the Creator and Redeemer who granted spiritual food for humankind. This exposition mainly revealed the Bread and Wine becoming the Sacrament of the Last Supper.

*Finally*, the *Didache* emphasized the third benediction prayer as follows, “Be mindful, Lord, of your church, to preserve it from all evil and to perfect it in your love. And <. . .> gather it from the four winds, into the kingdom which you have prepared for it. For power and glory are yours forever” (the *Didache* 10, 5). The last prayer of benediction was calling upon to God who revealed Himself to His chosen people of God, Israel. He had fulfilled His promises through the prophets to the Church. It is related by the fulfillment of the definitive kingdom of God at the end of time.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, the *Didache* 9-10 had connection with the *Didache* 14. The community gathering on Eucharist preceded by Confession and Reconciliation. Before the Christian community celebrated the Eucharist, each Christian needed to confess their sin in order to sanctify themselves. This conversion was needed to offer the purity sacrifices to God in the Sacrament of the Lord Suffer.<sup>24</sup> The Redactor of the *Didache* pointed out the tradition as stated follows:

Assembling on every Sunday of the Lord, break bread and give thanks, confessing your faults beforehand, so that your sacrifice may be pure. Let no one join you until they have been reconciled, lest your sacrifice be profaned. This is [the meaning] of what was said by the Lord: “to offer me a pure sacrifice in every place and time,

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 155-161.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 194-199.

because I am a great king,” says the Lord, “and my name is held in wonder among the nations” (The *Didache* 14, 1-3).

As mentioned before, the community meal in the *Didache* was not only ordinary meal, it was the ancient testimony on the Sacrament of Eucharist at the first century Christians community either in the West nor East. The objection on the missing of the institution Eucharist prayer actually is not right. H.B.D. Sandt argued that the prayer of Eucharist institution had been inserted on those texts. In addition, the meal of agape and the Eucharist were not separated on the *Didache* but indeed both ceremonies were an inseparable unity.<sup>25</sup>

## Further Development

As mentioned before, we have seen the experience of the first century Christian community celebrated the Sacrament of Initiation. On one side, we cannot deny the practice of the Sacrament of Initiation in the *Didache*. On other side, we need to further develop the Sacraments of Initiation as it has been done nowadays. As well as the *Didache*, St Justin gave his detailed testimony of the Baptism. He stated how important the preparation before baptism, that is fasting and prayer. Then, the candidates would be lead to the flowing water. At that place, they would be “washed in the water in the name of the Father and Lord God of all things, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>26</sup> After that, the new baptisms joined the Christian community. Then, they would be called brethren in a common prayer and took a part in the Eucharist.<sup>27</sup>

Next progress was found in the document of *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition*. On that document, Saint Hippolytus of Rome at 215 A.D. gave his explanations on the Sacraments of Initiation. Before the candidate received Baptism, they entered the catechumenate for three to four years. On that time, they followed teachings, examination of conscience, prayer, blessing and exorcism. During the Lent, especially Good Friday they fasted and the Holy Saturday attended the reading from Holy Scripture. At the Vigil of Easter, they entered the Baptism Liturgy. The candidates were invited to renounce evil and they were anointed with the Oil of Exorcism. After that, they went down to the water and were immersed three times, responded “I believe” every time the Trinitarian confession of faith was proclaimed. Then, the Bishop laid his hands and

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<sup>25</sup> H.V.D. SANDT and D. FLUSSER, *op.cit*, 325-329.

<sup>26</sup> L.G. WALSH, *op. cit.*, 88.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

prayed the Gifts of the Holy Spirit on them. The Bishop anointed them with the consecrated oil, sealed them in the forehead and gave them the kiss of peace. They then joined the Eucharist together with the community.<sup>28</sup>

Such experience had become common tradition since the third and fourth centuries as witnessed by Tertullian in the West and Basil in the East. This tradition has continued up till now in the East, but in the West the Sacrament of Initiation had different developments.<sup>29</sup> In the west, as the Church grows, there were many new baptisms, especially for the infants. As the consequence, the prayer, and fasting became less conducted. It affected an enriched rite of baptism, even though can risk for formalizing of it. This phenomenon brought new approaches of Baptism. The Baptism could not be longer united in the Sacraments of Initiation. This means the Baptism can be celebrated outside the feast of Easter. This situation caused the baptism was separated from Sacrament of Initiation, as well as the Confirmation and the Eucharist. In addition, the pastoral exhortation of Pope Innocent I permitted the priest to conduct the Confirmation as long as the priest used the oil consecrated from the bishop. In this case, they did not anoint the oil to the forehead of the candidates (it was only reserved to the Bishop).<sup>30</sup>

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Latin Church tried to reform the Sacraments of Initiation liturgy according to the norms of tradition. The liturgical reformation was not meant to change everything that has been done in the past. On the contrary, it was not meant to make everything totally new. However, the Churches especially in the West are trying to reach well-balanced between the meaning of tradition and the pastoral needs. On its principle we need to apply the Sacraments of Initiation as a whole. However, in the case of infant baptism, the responsibility falls upon the infant's parents to guide them in their bringing ups and to guide the "Christian nurture of the child". This is because the normal Baptism celebration is not done normally.<sup>31</sup>

In dealing with the Eucharist, Saint Justin in his *First Apology* at AD 150, stated the rite of Eucharist during the period of time. The newly baptized then joined the Eucharist at the assembly. The community presented the Bread and the Wine mixed with water. Then they offered praise and glory to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> H. VORGRIMLER, *op.cit.*, 108.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>31</sup> L.G. WALSH, *op. cit.*, 90.

deacons shared the Eucharistic Bread to all participants. They called the food as Eucharist, because it was not only ordinary food, but through the consecration prayer become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. At Sunday assembly, it was preceded by the Liturgy of the Word including homily and intercession prayer of the faithful.<sup>32</sup>

Then the witness of Saint Hippolytus in *the Apostolic Tradition* described the Eucharist as the complete Christian Initiation. It happened at the ordination of the newly Bishop and Easter Eucharist. At the moment, the Eucharistic prayers were said by the Bishop and it was followed by the priest. When the prayer over the Bread and the Wine was offered, the Bishop prayed solemnly and was followed by the priest. Simultaneously the Bishop and the priest laid their hands over the Eucharistic food. This document also mentioned the ritual communion. The Body and Blood of Jesus Christ were distributed by the priests saying: “The Bread and Blood of Heaven in Christ Jesus” and the faithful answered: “Amen.”<sup>33</sup>

Based on these documents, we can grasp the Eucharist during the fourth centuries. In later developments, there were different approaches in dealing with Eucharist for both in the East and the West.<sup>34</sup> Up to seventh century, the Greeks took the rite from the biblical sources, commonly in the Greek. Likewise, the Roman used the rite from the Greek’s literature. But when the Latin came, the Romans did not only translate it into Latin, but they had Latinized the rite.<sup>35</sup> Since the seventh century, the rite of Eucharist in Latin Church was developed in Rome in several Latin liturgies. It was found too in the African form, then Galician, Celtic, Spanish and Milanese rites.<sup>36</sup>

Along with the times, the Latin Church developed his ecclesiology because the increasing number of church members. Thus, the Latin rites are the most widely used in the West. This period was called the age of Christianity. In the middle century, the rite of Eucharist was dominated by the hierarchy order, namely, the bishops, priests and the deacons. Although there were encountered by many benefits from Latin rite but it is a ritualized liturgy. This reality had been criticized by the Reformers. Up to the Council of Trent, there was progress for a particular church to develop their own rite, but it was only becoming theological debates. After the council of Trent “the rite of Eucharist became increasingly standardized

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 231-232.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 232-233.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 235.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 236.

and Romanized in the churches of the Latin West, in keeping with Counter-Reformation ecclesiology.”<sup>37</sup>

The renewal of the Church and the Liturgy became the agenda of the Second Vatican Council. The ecclesiology of Vatican II brought the new concept of the Church as the people of God. This revival gave influence to the Liturgy. The Liturgy is no longer dominated by the hierarchy orders, but it invites all faithful to participate in the feast of faith.<sup>38</sup> There is new awareness, i.e. the center of the Liturgy was not on the clerics but to the Eucharist. Eucharist indeed is the source and the summit of the all Christian lives. The liturgical reforms since Vatican II have made the Eucharist as the encounter all faithful to God Himself. So, it needs some practical pastoral reasons, such as, re-arrangement of the liturgy calendar, and the relation between the liturgy of the Word and the Eucharist. This development brings us to the experience of the Eucharist in Roman rite as “a response of faith to the great events of the new covenant as they are told in the Bible.”<sup>39</sup>

## Theological Reflection

From the *Didache* until Vatican II, we figure out the Sacraments of Initiation never changes but those Sacraments have the development of the rites. For the reason, it is not enough to know the reality of Christian Initiation, otherwise we need their theological significance. So, in this part, I will try to elaborate the meaning of the Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

*First*, the understanding of the Sacrament of Baptism. It means to comprehend well the Baptism of Jesus. There were very different between the ritual of purification in the Jewish tradition and the Baptism of Confession which was committed by John the Baptist with Jesus’s Baptism. Jesus’s Baptism was not only dealing with the confession and forgiveness of sins, but it is related with the Cross and Resurrection. When Jesus went down to the river of Jordan (Mk 1:9), He bore all burden evil and sin of humankind on His shoulders. At this point Jesus anticipated His Death on the Cross.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 239-240.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 252.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 253-254.

<sup>40</sup> J. RATZINGER, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*, translated from the German by Adrian J. WALKER, Bloomsbury Publishing, London 2007, 17-18.

When Jesus was descended into the river, Jesus recapitulates all human history. At that time, Jesus enters the very darkness human world which was dominated by evil and sin. It was symbolized by the underworld. From within Jesus himself conquers all evil and sin which was represented by “the strong man” (cf. Lk 11:22). Jesus saves and heals humans from eternal death. He brings new life and eternal happiness to all human kind. From this perspective, Jesus anticipated His Descent to the Death and Hell.<sup>41</sup>

After Jesus came up from the river, then the Heaven “was opened” (Mk1:10; Mt 3:16; Lk 3:21), the Holy Spirit came upon Him which symbolized by the dove and a voice that gave an acknowledgement about Jesus: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased” (Mt 3:17). This event is showing us three aspects of Jesus’s life and our participation life in God. *First*, the communion and union of Jesus with His Father; *Second*, the proclamation of Jesus’s mission by His Father; *Third*, the Mystery of Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit was revealed for us. It is the calling and invitation for us to participate, encounter and dwell in the very depth Mystery of Trinity: from the Father, in the Son and through the Holy Spirit. This event is related to our task in the participation in Jesus’s mission after His Resurrection: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19).<sup>42</sup>

That is why, J. Ratzinger pointed out how the Eastern Church had developed and deepened the understanding of Jesus’s Baptism in her liturgy and her theology of icons. As regards to the Liturgy, he stated:

She sees a deep connection between the content of the feast of Epiphany (the heavenly voice proclaiming Jesus to be the Son of God: for the East the Epiphany is the day of the Baptism) and Easter. She sees Jesus’s remark to John that “it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness” (Mt 3:15) as the anticipation of his prayer to the Father in Gethsemane: “My Father . . . not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Mt 26:39). The liturgical hymns for January 3 correspond to those for Wednesday in Holy Week; the hymns for January 4 to those for Holy Thursday; the hymns for January 5 to those for Good Friday and Holy Saturday.<sup>43</sup>

Then, for the iconographic tradition, he added:

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-23.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

The icon of Jesus' Baptism depicts the water as a liquid tomb having the form of a dark cavern, which is in turn the iconographic sign of Hades, the underworld, or hell. Jesus' descent into the watery tomb, into this inferno that envelops him from every side, is thus an anticipation of his act of descending into the underworld: "When he went down into the waters, he bound the strong man" (cf. Lk 11:22), says Cyril of Jerusalem. John Chrysostom writes: "Going down into the water and emerging again are the image of the descent into hell and the Resurrection." The troparia of the Byzantine Liturgy add yet another symbolic connection: "The Jordan was turned back by Elisha's coat, and the waters were divided leaving a dry path. This is a true image of Baptism by which we pass through life" (Evdokimov, *The Art of the Icon*, p. 296).<sup>44</sup>

Following the meaning of Baptism, we shall return to *the meaning of Confirmation*. The Sacrament of Confirmation is not only the laying hand prayer asking for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, but indeed we ask the Holy Spirit as the Gift of God. We are not only praying for the grace of God, but rather the Spirit of God. In dealing with the Spirit, for a long time, the Latin Church had less spoken in regards to the Holy Spirit. It seems the Spirit was known as the missing God. The new consciousness of the Spirit was brought by the Eastern Church. In her liturgy, especially on Pentecost Sunday is celebrated the feast of Trinity. In the next day, on the Monday, she celebrates the outpouring of the Spirit, the foundation of the Church. On the next Sunday is the celebration of the feast of All Saints.<sup>45</sup> What is the meaning of this for all of us?

The Easter Church liturgy emphasizes in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit belongs to the Triune God. The Holy Spirit is never isolated with the Trinity. The Holy Spirit points to the Trinity. The Holy Spirit becomes the principle of union in God. The Holy Spirit relates us to the Father and the Son. J. Ratzinger stated as follows, "If the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is supposed to be in certain respect a corrective to a one-sided Christocentrism, then this corrective consists in the Spirit teaching us to see Christ entirely in the mystery of the trinitarian God as our way to the Father in perpetual conversation of love with him."<sup>46</sup> Since the Holy Spirit has revealed the union of God, the Holy Spirit points the union of people of God, namely, the Church, as mentioned in the Gospel of John: "that they may be one, even as we are one" (Jn 17:11b, cf. 21f).

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> J. RATZINGER, *Images of Hope: Meditations on Major Feasts*, translated by John Rock, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2006, 63.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

The calling to be as one in God and in others, *first of all*, invited us to reconcile with ourselves. Only by forgiving our own, we can make friend and shares with the others. So, we are in the communion with all the faithful, which is the church itself. In other words, there was a relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Church. As the Holy Spirit become the principle for the union of God, so the Holy Spirit become the principle of the Church. Thus, the Church is not an organization, association or institution. But the Church is animated by the Spirit. So then, the church was universal and giving birth to a particular church. The universal church becomes the mother of the local church. As well as a particular church become united the universal church as one Church of Christ.<sup>47</sup>

On account of Pentacost, the presence of the trinitarian mystery in the human world, was represented by the tongues of fire (cf. Act 2:3). The tongues of fire referred to the Holy Spirit who united all the faithful around the world in the person of Jesus Christ. This events disclosed the communion of the Church simultaneously the communion with God, the triune God. Thus, it becomes the mission for the church, to all faithful, to become catholic. It means the calling to convert. It is called the process of death. Through this process, the Christians together with the Holy Spirit yield to be united in the Church and God. This is the relation between Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Church.<sup>48</sup>

In conclusion on the Confirmation, Saint John of Chrysostom referred to the experience of the Spirit through the mission of Paul and Barnabas who healed the lame person in Lystra (cf. Acts 14: 8-18). All people were very much amazed and they supposed Paul and Barnabas were the gods of Zeus and Hermes. But Paul and Barnabas convinced the crowds that they are same with the others. Surely, Paul and Barnabas are human like us, but they are different with them. Because the tongues of fires, the Holy Spirit has come upon them and the Holy Spirit became their Spirit as they are fullfilled by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is “the living flame of love” that burns and tranforms them. The experience of the Holy Spirit in the early church brings us to the reality of the Last Supper.<sup>49</sup>

Finally, the reality of the Last Supper brings us to the meaning of the Eucharist. The Eucharist becomes the fulfillment of the Sacraments of Initiation. The Understanding of Eucharist is tied up with the mystery of Christ, that is, the Incarnation, the Cross and Resurrection. According to the Synoptic Gospels, Saint John’s Gospel and the entire tradition,

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 68-69.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 70-71.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 72-73.

essentially, the Last Supper was not the Passover meal as described in the Jewish tradition. It is the last meal, the farewell meal, even Jesus's Passover together with the twelve disciples. Jesus intended His Last Supper as the New Passover. It means Jesus Himself will be our Paschal Lamb. Through the Last Supper, Jesus sacrificed His Body and His Blood on the Cross and His Resurrection through the Eucharist for all of us.<sup>50</sup>

However, why did Jesus institute the Eucharist? Let us take a look at it from the witnesses of the apostles. In Mark (14:22) and Matthew (26:26), they both stated, "This is my body," and both Paul and Luke extended as follows, "This is my body which is given for you" (cf. 1 Cor 11:24, and Lk 22:19). Then, Luke and Paul added, "Do this in remembrance of me."<sup>51</sup> From these accounts, Jesus prayed over the bread. Jesus's Words over the bread consisted in two actions, namely, Jesus took the bread and broke the bread. Why did Jesus take two actions on the bread? As regards the *first action*, Jesus took the bread and gave His blessings and thanksgiving. These prayers derived from the *berakah*, Jewish tradition's great prayer of thanksgiving and blessing. Mark and Matthew noted these prayers in the Greek as *eulogia*. Paul and Luke emphasized the prayer of blessing and thanksgiving in the Greek term *eucharistia*. Jesus said these prayers for giving thanks, blessing and praising for the gift of God which was from earth and fruit of the vine for all of us. From this perspective, we can understand this, Jesus's prayer on the bread was not magical words, but the early church understood as "a part of her praying in *togetherness* with Jesus."<sup>52</sup>

*The second action* was called as "the breaking of bread." This action showed Jesus as the head of family who conducted the meal. This supper was not an ordinary meal, but Jesus meant to do this as the brotherhood meal. In this context, Jesus gave a good example for all Christians to practice their hospitality with others. At this point, the love of God always tied up with the love of their neighbours. Thus, we can understand the last supper becomes the *agape*, the sharing of love together with others, whereas Jesus is at the centre. Therefore, from the Last Supper, the early Christian found that Jesus instituted the Eucharist as the Sacrament of Love in the unity of His passion on the Cross and Resurrection. Based on Jesus's commandment, "Do this in remembrance of me." The early church continued the Last Supper as "the total self-giving of Jesus on the Cross

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<sup>50</sup> J. RATZINGER, *Jesus of Nazareth, Part Two, Holy Week from the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, translated by Philip J. Whitmore, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2011, 114-115.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 128. The italics is addition and emphasis from mine.

and Resurrection in the Eucharist.” From the beginning, the early church believed that the Last Supper is in the unity with the Cross and the Resurrection.<sup>53</sup>

For the reason, the early Christian can understand that Jesus was not only continuing the Jewish’ tradition on prayer, namely, the *berakah*, but Jesus gave the new meaning on the Words over bread. On the occasion, Jesus did not only refer to His Body, but indeed He intends His whole person. Through the breaking of the bread, Jesus is obviously giving His all person on the Cross and Resurrection. Jesus has begun His passion, His death on the Cross and the Resurrection in the Last Supper. In other words, Jesus anticipated His Cross and Resurrection as the Gift of New Life for us, for the world and universe through the moment of the Eucharist. At this point, the total self-sacrifice of Jesus in the Cross and Resurrection exists in the Eucharist, as the Sacrament of Love.<sup>54</sup>

After the prayer on the bread, let us consider Jesus’s Words on the chalice which has very depth theological meaning. Mark’s Gospel stated, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many” (14:24). Matthew’s account added, “for many, for the forgiveness of sins” (26:28). Its different with the letter of Paul, “This chalice is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me” (1 Cor 11:25). Then, Luke with similar expression, “This chalice which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood” (22:20). The Word’s over the chalice emphasized “the new covenant.” In dealing with the covenant referred to three text in old testament, which are Exodus 24:8, Jeremiah 31:31, and Isaiah 53:12.<sup>55</sup>

The first text of Exodus 24:8 indicated the meaning “covenant” between God and His chosen people, Israel. When the prophet Moses brought Israel from the slavery of Egypt to the promise land, “Canaan,” God gave His covenant to Israel. As the consequence, Israel will obey the commandment of God in Mount Sinai. Unfortunately, because infidelity of Israel, the covenant was broken by disobedience of Israel through the worshipping to the golden calf. The fragility of the covenant opened new hope for Israel, the new covenant.<sup>56</sup>

The hope of new covenant was not dealt with the covenant between men and God anymore. The covenant was broken by human hardness of heart. The new covenant came from God Himself. According to the

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 129-130.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 126-127.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 131-132.

prophetic message of Jeremiah, God Himself will put His law in the human heart (cf. Jer 31:33). God will call men as His children and they will call Him as their God. Through the grace of God, men can attain the encounter with God and they achieve the union of God. However, the new covenant only fulfilled in the obedience of His beloved son. This was the promise of God through his prophets. It will be accomplish if human are really faithful to God alone.<sup>57</sup>

In fact, men still remained disobedient to God. This was evidently in the history of Israel and human kind. On one side, God cannot simply ignore human disobedience and all evil tragedy. But on the other side, God always forgives men in his mercy and grace. In many ways through His prophets, God call upon His people back to the right path, especially in the age of the prophet Isaiah. In the prophecy of Isaiah, he stated the figure of the Suffering Servant who bears the sins of many people (cf. Is 53:12). This message invited us to hope for the coming of the Saviour of the world. This invitation was not simple because men must still struggle to overcome the evil and sin.<sup>58</sup>

The messianic prophecy finally comes to the reality and it is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the *Emmanuel*, God is with us. God becomes a man in a human form of Jesus Christ. At the Last Supper, Jesus gives us “the new covenant is his blood.”<sup>59</sup> This event revealed for us through the Eucharist, Jesus gives His whole life in the Cross and Resurrection. In the heart of Eucharist, Jesus has established new passover, new worship and new covenant. Through the Eucharist, Jesus has conquered all evil and sin. He has renewed all human kind, the world and universe. Eucharist becomes the source and the summit of our life as the Christians and the people of God.<sup>60</sup>

## Conclusion

As mentioned before, the *Didache* was the old document of early Christians at the first century. Even though the *Didache* only gave a small portion of the testimony on the Liturgy, but we can deny it as the seeds of the early church. Starting from the *Didache* and up to the Vatican II, the Sacraments of Initiation had never change. Only the rites are significantly improved. Based on the tradition of the Church, the Sacraments of

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*

Initiation reach its fullness in the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, Jesus anticipated His death on the Cross and Resurrection as the very Gift of God for all human kind, the world, and the universe. In other words, the Eucharist is tied up with the Cross and Resurrection. That is the reason why, for the early Christians, at the “the first day of the week – the third day of Jesus’ death”<sup>61</sup> became the Sunday morning, the Lord’s day, and the Christian worship for “the bread breaking” (Cf. Acts 20: 6-11, especially v. 7).

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

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