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Title	Interactions between liturgy and politics in Old Saint Peter's, 670–741
Authors	Ó Carragáin, Éamonn
Publication date	2013-12-18
Original Citation	Ó Carragáin, É. (2013) 'Interactions between liturgy and politics in Old Saint Peter's, 670–741: John the Archcantor, Sergius I and Gregory III', in McKitterick, R., Osborne, J., Richardson, C.M. and Story, J., (eds.), Old Saint Peter's, Rome, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 177–189, available: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107300453.011.
Type of publication	book-chapter
Link to publisher's version	10.1017/cbo9781107300453.011
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Download date	2026-11-03 15:58:09
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/15303

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9 Interactions between liturgy and politics in Old Saint Peter's, 670–741

John the Archcantor, Sergius I and Gregory III

ÉAMONN Ó CARRAGÁIN

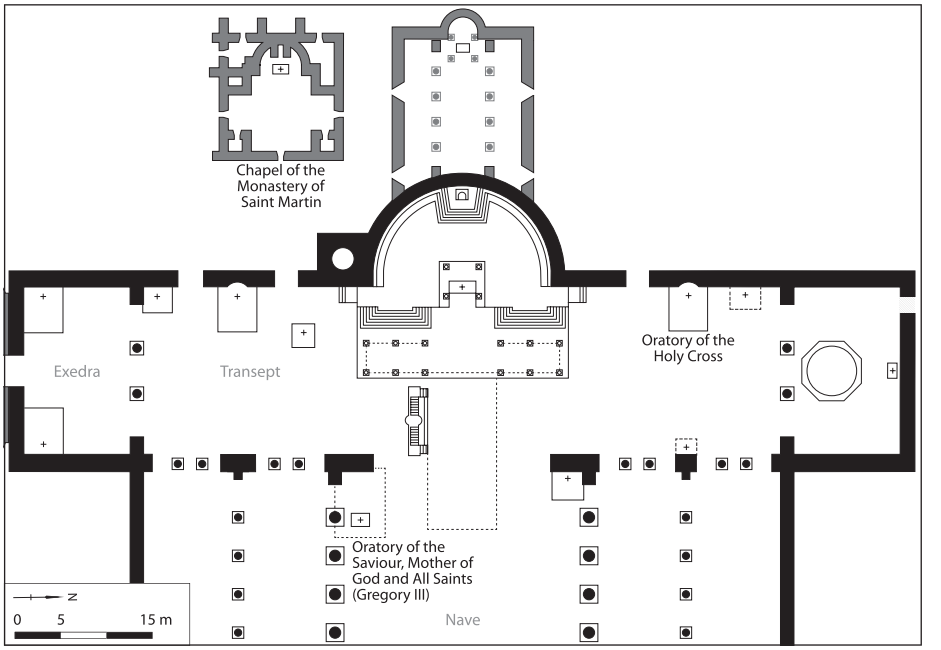


Fig. 9.1. Location of the features mentioned in Chapter 9.

Liturgical innovations associated with Old Saint Peter's show that, in the late seventh and early eighth century, the clerics of the basilica had a remarkable openness to what was going on elsewhere: in Gaul, in Constantinople and, as I shall argue, also in Naples. Indeed, we shall see that Gregory III, by means of the chapel of All Saints that he had built within the basilica, wished to make Saint Peter's a microcosm of the Christian Church, in all its diversity, in heaven and throughout the world. (Fig. 9.1.)

As a first example of the breadth of liturgical interest, we shall look at the way the new feast of the Annunciation, on 25 March, was introduced at Saint Peter's, probably in the 660s or 670s. In the great majority of years,

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25 March falls during Lent, when the Church was preparing to commemorate the Passion and Resurrection of Christ: indeed, the feast quite often falls within Holy Week itself. The new feast of the Annunciation had originated about 600 in the East, particularly at Constantinople. It was a joyful feast, celebrating the anniversary of Christ's Incarnation, which had been announced by the archangel Gabriel.[1] Before this new feast was instituted, the Incarnation was primarily celebrated in the last weeks before Christmas, when Saint Luke's account of the Annunciation was always read (and would continue to be read: the ancient pre-Christmas celebration of the Incarnation would, of course, continue).[2] There was therefore always something of Christmas about the Annunciation; and Saint Peter's on the Vatican always had a special interest in Christmas. 25 December, the eighth kalends of January, was the winter solstice in the Julian Calendar. In late imperial times, non-Christians celebrated the winter solstice as the Feast of the Unconquered Sun: the darkest day of the year when the sun, refusing to die, began once more to conquer the winter darkness.[3] It would be possible to argue that the clergy at Saint Peter's invented Christmas, at least in the sense that they helped ensure that Christmas would be celebrated as a major liturgical event in the Christian year. Already for some three centuries (that is, since the middle of the fourth century: probably, ever since the Constantinian basilica was completed), the day Mass on Christmas Day was celebrated at Saint Peter's. That was the principal papal Mass, as it were the 'high Mass', for Christmas Day.[4] A century later, in the mid-fifth century, the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore had been built on the Esquiline hill. By the 640s, Santa Maria on the Esquiline was believed to possess the relics of the crib of Bethlehem, and that basilica would henceforth be called 'Sancta Maria ad Praesepe'.[5] Since the time that basilica was built, the pope had celebrated the midnight Mass of Christmas there, *ad praesepe*, at the crib. Then the papal court made their way through the winter night to celebrate a dawn Mass in the shadow of the Palatine hill, at the

[1] For a good survey of the origins and development of the feast, see C. Maggioni, *Annunziazione: storia, eucologia, teologia liturgica* (Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae, Subsidia 56) (Rome, 1991).

[2] See A. Chavasse, *Les lectionnaires romains de la messe au VII et au VIIIe siècle: sources et dérivés* (Spicilegii Friburgensis, Subsidia 22), 2 vols. (Fribourg-en-Suisse, 1993), I, 63; II, 38.

[3] See S. K. Roll, *Toward the Origins of Christmas* (Liturgia Condenda 5) (Kampen, 1995), 107–64; M. R. Salzman, *On Christian Time: the Codex-Calendar of 354 and the Rhythms of Urban Life in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, CA, 1990), 149–53.

[4] Roll, *Toward the Origins* (above, n. 3), 152–7, 203–11; J. Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: the Origins, Development and Meaning of Stational Liturgy* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 228) (Rome, 1987), 110, 157–8; Blaauw, *CD*, 504.

[5] Blaauw, *CD*, 400–3.

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basilica of Sant'Anastasia whose feast also fell on 25 December. At the Old Saint Peter's conference, Judson Emerick vividly analysed and described the basilica of Sant'Anastasia: his analysis has implications for the present discussion. Sant'Anastasia seems to have been designed as a smaller version of Saint Peter's. When the dawn Mass of Christmas was celebrated there the ceremony may have been understood, in architectural as well as in liturgical terms, as a prelude to the arrival of the papal procession at Saint Peter's, the setting for the most ancient Mass of Christmas, the 'day Mass' (which probably began at about 10 a.m.).[6] The Eucharistic celebration of the feast of Christmas culminated with that papal 'day Mass'. Its Introit, sung as the pope went in procession up the aisle towards the altar, celebrated the birth of a Mighty Prince, 'and the government shall be upon his shoulder'.[7] When Pope Leo III consecrated Charlemagne emperor at the 'day Mass' in Saint Peter's on Christmas Day 800, he and his advisers chose the perfect time and place to celebrate the birth of what later was perceived as a new age.[8]

Saint Peter's, and the cult of its great martyr, would always be intimately associated with the sun's course. The basilica was carefully oriented on the Vatican hill, with its entrance to the east and its apse to the west; throughout the Middle Ages, the Vatican solar obelisk stood on its south side.[9] Saint Peter's official biography, in the *Liber Pontificalis,* stated that the apostle had been buried *in templum Apollinis*: if so, the *martyrium* of Saint Peter's was thought to mark the site of what was once a temple of Apollo.[10] With 25 December the date of the winter solstice in the Julian Calendar, 25 March marked the spring equinox. The new feast of the Annunciation, celebrating Christ's Incarnation on 25 March, thus complemented the much earlier feast of the Nativity on 25 December. From the late seventh century, Christ's Incarnation and birth would both be celebrated on the 'growing days', the

[6] J. J. Emerick, 'Did the Early Christian Sant'Anastasia copy Old Saint Peter's?', paper presented at the conference on Old Saint Peter's, Rome, March 2010; Baldovin, *Urban Character* (above, n. 4), 157–8.

[7] R.-J. Hesbert (ed.), *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex* (Brussels, 1935; repr. Rome, 1985), Introit *Puer natus est nobis*, p. 14, par. 11a, which contains the phrase 'cujus imperium super humerum ejus': cf. Isaiah 9.6.

[8] On the coronation of Charlemagne, see E. Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae: a Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Mediaeval Ruler-Worship* (University of California Publications in History 33) (Berkeley, CA, 1946), 75–6, 83–4, 103–4.

[9] On the obelisk, see G. Alföldy, *Der Obelisk auf dem Petersplatz in Rom. Ein Historisches Monument der Antike* (Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Jahrgang 1990, Bericht 2) (Heidelberg, 1990) and J. Osborne, this volume, 279.

[10] Biography of Peter, Life 1, c. 6, *LP*, I, 118, with notes at I, 119 and III, 71. See R. Giordano, '"In Templum Apollinis": a proposito di un incerto tempio d'Apollo in Vaticano menzionato nel *Liber Pontificalis*', *Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana* 64 (1988), 161–88.

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spring equinox and winter solstice when the sun began to grow greater than, and defeat, the winter darkness. The new feast was a striking example of the symbolic principle that 'the Saviour did all things at the appropriate places and times'.[11]

But the new feast of the Annunciation posed a serious problem. As we have seen, 25 March usually falls within Lent, and often within Holy Week. How could the joy of Christ's Incarnation be properly celebrated in the season that prepared for his Passion? Indeed, for precisely this difficulty the Spanish bishops decided in 656 not to accept the new feast day, already celebrated at Constantinople: they preferred instead to continue with the Early Christian tradition of celebrating the Incarnation, in terms of Saint Luke's account (1.26–38) of the Annunciation, in the week before Christmas.[12] Though the new Eastern feast of the Annunciation was widely adopted in the Latin West in the course of the late seventh century, only one basilica developed in its liturgy a theological rationale for the new feast. That basilica was Saint Peter's on the Vatican. At Saint Peter's, from the 670s, they celebrated 25 March as *ADNUNTIATIO DOMINI ET PASSIO EIUSDEM*, the 'Annunciation of the Lord and his Passion'.[13] The liturgists of Saint Peter's found a rationale for the new feast in an ancient Christian scholarly tradition that held that the first Good Friday had fallen on 25 March, the spring equinox.[14] Christ had therefore been conceived on the very day on which he would, some thirty-four years later, die on the Cross. At Saint Peter's (and in the 670s nowhere else in Christendom as yet), 25 March would be seen explicitly to celebrate at once the Incarnation of Christ and his Passion, and so to celebrate the unity of Christ's life, from his conception to his heroic death on the Cross.

The Saint Peter's Mass for 25 March is preserved in a single manuscript, Padua Biblioteca capitolare Cod. D. 47, known to liturgical scholars as

[11] 'Omnia propriis locis et temporibus gessit salvator': Pseudo-Augustinus (this author is also called 'Ambrosiaster' in modern scholarship), *Quaestiones Veteris et Novi Testamenti CXXVII*, Quaestio lv, ed. A. Souter (CSEL 50) (Vienna, 1908), 100; for discussion see V. Loi, 'Il 25 marzo data pasquale e la cronologia Giovannea della Passione in età patristica', *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 85 (1971), 48–69, at p. 53.

[12] The tenth council of Toledo: G. D. Mansi (ed.), *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, 54 vols. in 58 (Florence and Venice, 1759–98; repr. Paris, 1901–27), XI, col. 968; see Maggioni, *Annunziazione* (above, n. 1), 52.

[13] For the Mass, see A. Catella, F. Dell'Oro and A. Martini (eds.), *Liber Sacramentorum Paduensis (Padova, Biblioteca Capitolare, cod. D. 47)* (Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae, Subsidia: Monumenta Italiae Liturgica 3) (Rome, 2005), 260, Section LXXXV: Adnuntiatio Sanctae Dei Genitricis et Passio Eiusdem Domini. This title is clearly a clumsy elaboration of an earlier title: for example, there is no preceding noun to which Eiusdem can refer. The original title was convincingly reconstructed by A. Chavasse, *Le sacramentaire gélasien (Vaticanus Reginensis 316: sacramentaire presbyteral en usage dans les titres romains au VIIe siècle*) (Paris and Tournai, 1958), 377.

[14] Maggioni, *Annunziazione* (above, n. 1), 33–5.

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Paduensis. The manuscript is a lavish one, probably copied in Lotharingia about 840–50, for the court of the Emperor Lothar (reigned 817–55).[15] Analysis of the liturgical prayers of the manuscript has demonstrated that, together with added material from northern Italy and from northern Carolingian sources, the core of the collection comprises a 'Gregorian' sacramentary (that is, Mass-prayers used at the papal liturgy at the Lateran basilica): for example, the core collection lists the stational churches at which the pope celebrated solemn Mass on certain days each year.[16] This 'Gregorian' material is ancient: it pre-dates the mid-eighth century, and therefore pre-dates the *Hadrianum*, the copy of the 'Gregorian' sacramentary made by Pope Hadrian I for Charlemagne towards the end of the eighth century.[17] But by that time the 'Gregorian' material had already been adapted for use, not at the Lateran itself, but at a 'presbyteral' basilica, that is, a basilica in the care of priests, in Rome itself. The recent editors of the manuscript accept the conclusions of Chavasse and of Deshusses that the 'presbyteral' basilica for which the manuscript had been adapted, probably before the end of the seventh century, was Saint Peter's on the Vatican.[18]

The Offertory prayer for 25 March stated, in clear and simple terms, the unique Vatican rationale for the feast: to celebrate, on one and the same day, the anniversary of the Incarnation and of the Crucifixion:

Super Oblatam. Accepta tibi sit, quaesumus, domine, haec oblatio plebis tuae, quam tibi offerimus hodie ob incarnationem simul et passionem redemptoris nostri Iesu Christi, te supplices deprecantes, ut placatus accipias. Per eundem.[19]

Over the Offering. May this your people's offering be acceptable to you, Lord: we offer it to you today [in memory] of the Incarnation and likewise the Passion of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, humbly begging that you will graciously accept it: Through the same [Jesus Christ, our Lord].

[15] Catella, Dell'Oro and Martini, *Liber Sacramentorum Paduensis* (above, n. 13), Introduction, 59.

[16] On the added material, see Catella, Dell'Oro and Martini, *Liber Sacramentorum Paduensis* (above, n. 13), 101–32 and, on the core of Roman 'Gregorian' material, pp. 40–52.

[17] Catella, Dell'Oro and Martini, *Liber Sacramentorum Paduensis* (above, n. 13), 40–52.

[18] Catella, Dell'Oro and Martini, *Liber Sacramentorum Paduensis* (above, n. 13), 40–52: see Chavasse, *Le sacramentaire gélasien* (above, n. 13), 526–691, supplemented and updated in later articles by Chavasse, in particular by his final synthesis, 'Évangéliaire, Épistolier, Antiphonaire et Sacramentaire. Les livres romains de la messe, au VIIe et VIIIe siècle', *Ecclesia Orans* 6 (1989), 177–255, repr. in A. Chavasse, *La liturgie de la ville de Rome du Ve au VIIIe siècle* (Studia Anselmiana 112) (Rome, 1993), 153–229; J. Deshusses, *Le sacramentaire grégorien. Ses principales formes d'après les plus anciens manuscrits*, 3 vols. (Spicilegium Friburgense 16, 24, 28), second edition (Fribourg-en-Suisse, 1979–82), especially the discussion in vol. III, pp. 78–83.

[19] Catella, Dell'Oro and Martini, *Liber Sacramentorum Paduensis* (above, n. 13), 260, no. 386.

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The compilers of the manuscript provided for the Mass of 25 March an appropriate setting. The Mass comes just after a large and unified block of Masses for the movable season of Lent and Easter. The Mass that immediately precedes that for 25 March is that for the *Pascha annotina*, the day that celebrated the anniversary of the Easter of the previous year: this Mass was intended in particular for those who had been baptized on that previous Easter.[20] These two Masses thus formed a pair: each celebrated, on a fixed day, an anniversary that recalled the movable feasts of the Passion and Easter.

The Collect or opening prayer of the Mass for 25 March was a liturgical masterpiece. Both Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions, recognizing its beauty and theological richness, still use it:

Gratiam tuam, quaesumus, domine, mentibus nostris infunde, ut qui angelo nuntiante Christi filii tui incarnationem cognovimus, per passionem eius et crucem ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Qui tecum.[21]

Pour your grace into our minds, O Lord, so that we who have known the Incarnation of Christ your Son through the message of an angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of the Resurrection. Who [lives and reigns] with you . . .

It seems likely that, in composing their unique Mass 'for the Annunciation of the Lord and his Passion', the Vatican liturgists were inspired by what was done in Gaul, and in particular by what had for nearly two hundred years been the custom of the city of Tours. We know from the *Decem Libri Historiarum* of Gregory of Tours that, from the fifth century, Tours had celebrated a special vigil at the basilica of Saint Martin on 27 March, the anniversary of the Resurrection. At the cathedral, within the city walls, they celebrated Easter in the usual manner, as a movable feast. The special vigil for the anniversary of the first Easter, on 27 March, was only celebrated at the basilica of Saint Martin, outside the walls: in other words, a special interest in the anniversary of Easter, and so by implication in the anniversary of Good Friday, was a peculiarity of the cult of the great monastic founder, Saint Martin.[22] It is clear that the monks of Saint Martin at Tours arrived

[20] Catella, Dell'Oro and Martini, *Liber Sacramentorum Paduensis* (above, n. 13), 259, Mass LXXXIIII, nos. 381–4.

[21] Catella, Dell'Oro and Martini, *Liber Sacramentorum Paduensis* (above, n. 13), 260, no. 385. For Anglican use, see *The First and Second Prayer Books of Edward VI* (London, 1910), 185, 'The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary'. On the later history of this prayer, see É. Ó Carragáin, *Ritual and the Rood: Liturgical Images and the Old English Poems of the 'Dream of the Rood' Tradition* (London, 2005), 355–62.

[22] Gregory of Tours, *Decem Libri Historiarum*, Book X, 31; B. Krusch and W. Levison (eds.), *Gregorii Episcopi Turonensis Libri Historiarum X* (MGH, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum 1, Part 1), 530; see L. Pietri, *La ville de Tours du IV au VI siècle: naissance d'une cité chrétienne*

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at the idea that 27 March was the anniversary of the Resurrection by their familiarity with the ancient Christian tradition that the spring equinox, 25 March, was the anniversary of Christ's Passion.

But, in the second half of the seventh century, the liturgy of Saint Peter's on the Vatican was also in the care of monks of Saint Martin. In Alfarano's plan, the chapel of the monastery is marked: just outside the western end of the basilica, slightly to the south of the apse. Alfarano only marked the chapel of the monastery: the monastery itself, no doubt destroyed by Alfarano's time, would, even in the seventh century, have been rather more extensive.[23] In the years before 679, the person in charge of the liturgy at Saint Peter's was the abbot of the monastery of Saint Martin's, a man called John. Abbot John was the archcantor or precentor of Saint Peter's. Naturally, John and his community were interested in their patron saint, Martin of Tours, and in the traditions of Saint Martin's monastery at Tours. Indeed, when in AD 679 Abbot John agreed to accompany the English monks Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrid to Northumbria, the travellers visited Tours on their way to England, precisely because of the devotion that Abbot John had for Saint Martin.[24] At Wearmouth in the winter of 679–80, John the Archcantor taught the yearly cycle of the liturgy, as celebrated at Saint Peter's, *viva voce* to the cantors of the monastery that Benedict Biscop had recently founded there.[25] This was appropriate, because Benedict had dedicated his monastery to Saint Peter. On his way back to Rome in 680, John the Archcantor was taken ill in France, and died. His body was taken back to Tours, for burial near the body of Saint Martin, for whom John had such devotion.[26]

To sum up: in the 670s, Saint Peter's was the only basilica in Christendom to develop an explicit and coherent theology stating that the feast of the Annunciation could appropriately be celebrated during Lent, because the day celebrated both the Incarnation and the Passion of Christ. In this matter,

(Collection de l'École Française de Rome 69) (Rome, 1983), 451–3; Ó Carragáin, *Ritual and the Rood* (above, n. 21), 91.

[23] On the monastery of Saint Martin at the Vatican, see G. Ferrari, *Early Roman Monasteries: Notes for the History of the Monasteries and Convents at Rome from the V through the X Century* (Studi di antichità cristiana 23) (Rome, 1957), 230–40; Blaauw, *CD*, 518–19; P. Réfice, '"Habitatio Sancti Petri": glosse ad alcune fonti su S. Martino in Vaticano', *Arte Medievale*, 2nd ser., 4 (1990), part 1, 13–16; see also A. M. Romanini, 'Nuovi dati sulla statua bronzea di San Pietro in Vaticano', *Arte Medievale*, 2nd ser., 4 (1990), part 2, 1–49, at pp. 1–2. I am grateful to Sible de Blaauw for these references.

[24] B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (eds.), *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), 390–1, Book IV, ch. 18(16).

[25] Colgrave and Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History* (above, n. 24), 388–9, Book IV, ch. 18(16).

[26] Colgrave and Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History* (above, n. 24), 390–1 and see Thacker and Jeffery, this volume, 153 and 159.

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it is likely that the monks of Saint Martin on the Vatican looked to Tours, and found a Touraine solution for their Petrine problem. The most appropriate person to have thought of this solution presumably would have been Abbot John, who was not only the head of the Vatican monastery of Saint Martin, but also (as archcantor) in charge of liturgical celebration at Saint Peter's. It is a reasonable speculation (though only a speculation) that John the Archcantor himself may have composed the Vatican Mass *Gratiam tuam.*

For the second of my three examples of how at Saint Peter's liturgical images could be used to resolve wider issues, I wish to go forward some fifteen or twenty years, from the time of John the Archcantor to that of Pope Sergius I. The biography of Pope Sergius in the *Liber Pontificalis* tells the following story of the pope:

> In the shrine [*sacrarium:* more probably the reception-hall, outside the main entrance on the eastern façade] of Saint Peter the apostle this blessed man discovered, by God's revelation, a silver casket lying in a very dark corner; because of tarnishing during the years that had gone by, it was not even clear whether it was silver. So after praying he removed the seal impressed on it. He opened the reliquary and inside he found placed on top a feather cushion made all of silk, which is called *stauracis.* He took this away and lower down he saw a cross, very ornate with various precious stones. From it he removed the four plates in which the jewels were imbedded, and he found placed inside a wonderfully large and indescribable portion of the saving wood of the Lord's Cross. From that day, for the salvation of the human race, this is kissed and worshipped by all Christian people on the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in the basilica of the Saviour called Constantinian.[27]

[27] Biography of Sergius, Life 86, c. 10, *LP*, I, 374: 'Hic beatissimus vir in sacrario beati Petri apostoli capsam argenteam in angulo obscurissimo iacentem et ex nigridine transacte annositatis nec si esset argentea apparente, Dei ei revelante, repperit. Oratione itaque facta, sigillum expressum abstulit; lucellum aperuit, in quo interius plumacium ex holosirico superpositum, quod stauracin dicitur, invenit; eoque ablato, inferius crucem diversis ac praetiosis lapidibus perornatam inspexit. De qua tractis IIII petalis in quibus gemmae clausae erant, mire magnitudinis et ineffabilem portionem salutaris ligni dominicae crucis interius repositam invenit. Qui etiam ex die illo pro salute humani generis ab omni populo christiano, die Exultationis sanctae Crucis, in basilicam Salvatoris quae appellatur Constantiniana osculatur ac adoratur'; Davis, *Book of Pontiffs*, 83. The broad range of meanings that the word 'sacrarium' could bear is set forth by J. E. Niermeyer, C. Van de Kieft and J. W. J. Burgers (eds.), *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus*, 2 vols. (Leiden and Boston, 2002), II, 1210–11, *s.v.* In his translation, Davis follows that dictionary in assigning it to '2. The sanctuary of a church'. In the light of the discussion of buildings adjoined to the churches of this period in T. Sternberg, *Orientalium More Secutus. Räume und Institutionen der Caritas des 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts in Gallien* (Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Ergänzungsband 16) (Münster, 1991), 55–7, I prefer to understand *sacrarium* in this passage as '3. Sacristy, wardrobe of a church' or '4. Treasure-room of a church'. On the reception hall, *secretarium* or *sacrarium* of Old Saint Peter's, see Blaauw, *CD*, 469–70 and R. McKitterick, this volume, Fig. 5.1.

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The context is the institution, in the papal liturgy at the Lateran, of the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. But, though the papal liturgy of the feast would be celebrated at the Lateran, the story ties the origin of the feast firmly to the *sacrarium* or reception-hall in Saint Peter's. Why did Pope Sergius publicize this story, rather than simply decreeing that, henceforth, the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross should be celebrated at the Lateran?

The new feast had originated in Constantinople, where it was a highly political annual event. In 614, the Persians had sacked Jerusalem and captured the reliquary of the Holy Cross. The Emperor Heraclius defeated the Persians, recovered the Cross, and returned it in triumph to Jerusalem in March 631. To save it from the invading Arabs, Heraclius brought the relic to Constantinople itself in 635. At Constantinople, the feast of the Exaltation had much of the triumphal atmosphere of an imperial *adventus*, the solemn entry of an emperor into his city: the reliquary of the Cross was raised aloft to the four points of the compass, while at each of the four elevations the choir chanted Kyrie eleison a hundred times.[28]

The earliest evidence of the Exaltation of the Cross at Rome seems to originate in Saint Peter's; it probably dates from the 620s and has a rather different atmosphere: not one of the public *adventus* into an imperial city of its protecting relic, but one of private devotion to the life-giving Cross. On 14 September, after the Mass of the Day (the Mass of Saints Cornelius and Cyprian), a reliquary of the Cross was raised aloft, and the officiating priest prayed

AD CRUCEM SALUTANDUM IN SANCTO PETRO

Deus qui unigeniti tui domini nostri iesu Christi praetioso sanguine humanum genus redemere dignatus es: concede propitius, ut qui ad adorandam vivificam crucem adveniunt, a peccatorum suorum nexibus liberentur. Per dominum.[29]

FOR VENERATING THE CROSS IN SAINT PETER'S

God, who has deigned to allow the human race to be redeemed by the precious blood of your only-begotten son our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we beseech you that those who come to adore the life-giving Cross may be freed from the bonds of their sins. Through our Lord.

There is, therefore, evidence of a devotional cult of the Holy Cross at Saint Peter's, perhaps two generations before Sergius became pope.

[28] S. Janeras, *Le Vendredi-Saint dans la tradition liturgique byzantine* (Studia Anselmiana 99) (Rome, 1988), 299–300.

[29] Catella, Dell'Oro and Martini, *Liber Sacramentorum Paduensis* (above, n. 13), 328, no. 665.

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In the story of how Sergius found the Cross relic at Saint Peter's, there is great emphasis on the age of the reliquary. We are told that it was so tarnished that it was not even clear whether it was of silver, and that the reliquary had been put into storage so long ago that now, by the time of Sergius, the clerics of Saint Peter's had forgotten that it contained a relic of the True Cross. By publicizing his find Sergius reminded the people of Rome and, through this paragraph in his official biography, the peoples of Europe, that at Saint Peter's the Cross had been venerated from the earliest times, presumably from the time of Constantine and Helena. Far from being a new import from the imperial city of Constantinople, in Rome the cult of the Cross, already linked to Saint Peter's basilica, was in fact so ancient that it had fallen into desuetude. It now needed to be revived by Sergius, in his cathedral at the Lateran and in a new public form, but nevertheless the ancient link with the devotional traditions of Saint Peter's needed to be preserved, and publicized anew. Sergius may possibly have considered that Providence had given him a role akin to that of the High Priest (Vulgate, 'pontifex') Hilkiah, who had found the lost 'Book of the Law' in the Temple.[30] However that may be, Sergius certainly ensured that the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross on 14 September, a recent import from the East, would be understood in Rome, and throughout the Latin West, as an ancient and Petrine cult, going back to the traditions of Saint Peter's, so ancient as to be half forgotten, and now providentially renewed by papal edict, at the Lateran, the pope's cathedral.

To understand the *Liber Pontificalis* story, it is important to see that it tells of an *Inventio*, a providential finding. Whether or not it was intended to recall the way in which the 'pontifex' Hilkiah found the Book of the Law in the Temple, it certainly recalls the legend of Saint Helena's finding of the True Cross in Jerusalem. The standard account of Helena's find, the *Acta Cyriaci*, had been translated into Latin in the late sixth century at Naples, and from the early seventh century the feast of the Finding of the Cross was celebrated at Naples at the beginning of May.[31] A full Mass for the Finding of the Cross appears in the Old Gelasian sacramentary, under 3 May.[32] This Mass may have been composed at Naples, or at Rome, or at some point between the two. The Gelasian Mass contains reminiscences of the *Acta Cyriaci*.[33] Canon Antoine Chavasse provided evidence that, in

[30] 2 Kings 22.8–13. [31] Chavasse, *Le sacramentaire gélasien* (above, n. 13), 351–7.

[32] L. C. Mohlberg, P. Siffrin and L. Eisenhöfer (eds.), *Liber Sacramentorum Romanae Aeclesiae Ordinis Anni Circuli (Cod. Vat. Reg. lat. 316/Paris Bib. Nat. 7193, 41/56) (Sacramentarium Gelasianum)*, third edition (Rome, 1981), 138, Book II, sec. xviii.

[33] Chavasse, *Le sacramentaire gélasien* (above, n. 13), 354–7.

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the course of the seventh century, this non-papal Gelasian Mass for 3 May was celebrated at some Roman basilicas; and it is reasonable to suppose that Sergius and his advisers are likely to have known of this development within the city.[34] By publishing the narrative of how he himself instituted the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, and by emphasizing that he was responding to a providential *inventio*, Sergius ensured that at Rome the feast of the Exaltation (14 September) henceforth would be associated with the other feast of the Cross recently brought to Rome, the Finding (3 May). It was all the more natural for Sergius to associate his new papal feast of the Exaltation with the existing presbyteral feast of the Finding, because in the seventh century the gospel for the feast of the Finding told of a treasure discovered: 'The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field. Which a man having found, hid it; and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field.'[35] In the seventh century, this short lection seems to have been used for the feast of the Finding (3 May), for which it is clearly appropriate; and there is evidence that, on occasion, it was also used for the new feast of the Exaltation (14 September).[36] By associating the two feasts of the Cross, Sergius established a truly Roman rationale for the Exaltation. This rationale was quite different from that of the Exaltation at Constantinople: Sergius referred, not to imperial victories, but rather to local Roman devotion exemplified by the prayer *Ad crucem salutandum in Sancto Petro*. Once more, the traditions of Saint Peter's looked out beyond Rome, to Naples, indeed to Jerusalem (where the legend of the finding of the Cross by Helena had begun), to give a Petrine rationale for a new Roman feast. At the risk of anachronism, one might sum up Sergius's procedure by suggesting that he found an 'Old Gelasian' solution for his 'Gregorian' problem, because the Mass for 3 May celebrated in some presbyteral basilicas is now found in the Old Gelasian sacramentary, while the papal liturgy, centred on the Lateran and on papal visits throughout the year to stational churches, is reflected in Gregorian sacramentaries.[37] Sergius's (narrative and visual) theology was effective: from the year 700, the

[34] Chavasse, *Le sacramentaire gélasien* (above, n. 13), 353–4.

[35] Matthew 13.44.

[36] T. Klauser (ed.), *Das Römische Capitulare Evangeliorum: Texte und Untersuchungen zu seiner Ältesten Geschichte* 1*: Typen* (Münster, 1935; second edition 1972), 38, footnote to par. 198; see the discussion of this passage in Chavasse, *Le sacramentaire gélasien* (above, n. 13), 359.

[37] It must be emphasized, however, that the Old Gelasian sacramentary as we have it is a later compilation, of the mid-eighth century (with many Frankish additions). For a good recent account of the manuscript, its contents, and the issues it raises, see M. Smyth, *La liturgie oubliée: la prière eucharistique en Gaule antique et dans l'occident non romain* (Paris, 2003), 125–45.

https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107300453.011 Published online by Cambridge University Press

feast of the Exaltation is recorded in all Western Mass-lists.[38] Sergius found a way for the Western Latin Church to adopt the Exaltation of the Cross without reference to the Constantinopolitan feast of the same day. Rome did not need to imitate Constantinople: it simply had to discover, and recover, the devotional treasures of its own ancient Christian traditions. The *Liber Pontificalis*'s narrative of Sergius's discovery should be seen as one more example of the ways in which, at the end of the seventh century, papal Rome was asserting its intellectual and political independence from imperial Constantinople.[39]

My third and final example of how the liturgy at Saint Peter's looked out to a wider world beyond Rome is the celebration of All Saints in the chapel in front of the *martyrium* of Saint Peter, to the south side of the nave, *in parte virorum*. At the conference, members were fortunate to be able to examine one of the texts inscribed in stone for that chapel at the time of Gregory III (now displayed in the crypt of Saint Peter's, above and to the left of the tomb of Emperor Otto II).[40] Charles McClendon has written in detail on 'Old Saint Peter's and the Iconoclastic Controversy',[41] so I wish to conclude this chapter by making a single point about Gregory's project for the chapel in Saint Peter's. Gregory III planned that, to honour the Saviour and his holy mother, relics of the holy apostles and 'all the holy martyrs and confessors, perfect and righteous', resting in peace throughout the world, should be brought together in safety within his new chapel. These saints should be commemorated in a special vigil and Mass each day, not only for the saints of the day who appeared in the local calendar of feast days, but also for all saints throughout the world, including (by implication) those who were known only to God.[42]

This provision was remarkable. Saint Peter was chief of the apostles, who had been told by Christ to 'go therefore, teach ye all nations'.[43] Now, Pope Gregory III planned that all nations should send back relics of their saints,

[38] Klauser, *Das Römische Capitulare Evangeliorum* (above, n. 36), Type Delta (Roman, *c.* 740), 84, par. 223; Type Sigma (Roman, *c.* 755), 123, no. 225; and all later lists of gospel lections.

[39] See T. F. X. Noble, *The Republic of Saint Peter: the Birth of the Papal State 620–825* (Philadelphia, 1984).

[40] For a photograph, see V. Lanzani, *Le grotte vaticane: memorie storiche, devozioni, tombe dei papi* (Rome, 2010), 242.

[41] See McClendon, this volume, 214–28.

[42] Biography of Gregory III, Life 92, c. 6, *LP*, I, 417; H. Mordek, 'Rom, Byzanz und die Franken im 8. Jahrhundert. Zur Überlieferung und kirchenpolitischen Bedeutung der Synodus Romana Papst Gregor III. vom Jahre 732 (mit Edition)', in G. Althoff, D. Geuenich, O. G. Oexle and J. Wollasch (eds.), *Person und Gemeinschaft im Mittelalter. Karl Schmid zum Fünfundsechzigsten Geburtstag* (Sigmaringen, 1988), 123–56.

[43] Matthew 28.19.

https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107300453.011 Published online by Cambridge University Press

to lie near Peter's body. Gregory was perhaps inspired by Pope John IV who had died in 642, and who had, like himself, opposed an emperor (Constans II Pogonatos) when that emperor had fallen into heresy (Monotheletism). When the Avars captured Dalmatia, John IV, himself a Dalmatian, had sent envoys to gather the relics of Dalmatian saints, had these relics brought to Rome, and placed then in the newly rebuilt chapel of Saint Venantius at the Lateran baptistery, where the pope's own father, also called Venantius, was buried.[44] Now in 732, through his chapel at Saint Peter's, Gregory III would do something consistent with what Pope John IV had done some eighty years before. But Gregory planned something much more ambitious and universal, and planned that this should be done in a much more public place, at the *martyrium* of the basilica dedicated to Rome's greatest martyr and first bishop. At the height of the first imperial campaign against images, Gregory III planned that Saint Peter's should become, through its treasures, its relics and the new daily Mass and office performed in its new chapel of All Saints, a visual and liturgical image, as it were a microcosm, of the communion of saints. Gregory planned that this chapel would develop in richness and spiritual power, as more of the relics of the saints throughout the world were added to it. In the chapel each day, liturgical action and chant proclaimed the relevance of, and gave eloquent life to, the growing collection of relics and sacred images it would contain. Relics, sacred images and liturgy would daily provide an eloquent multi-media image of what the communion of saints involved: and, not incidentally, an unforgettable daily refutation of imperial iconoclasm.

[44] G. Mackie, *Early Christian Chapels in the West: Decoration, Function and Patronage* (Toronto, 2003), 212–30.

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