

The participatio plena et actuosa in the Light of sacra potestas

Abstract

This study intends to confront two central concepts: *sacra potestas* is significant for the traditional idea of liturgy; *participatio* is basic for the liturgical reform of the 20th century. The study shows that the concept of *participatio* makes sense properly in its distinction from the liturgy as *actio sacra praecellenter* (SC 10) and therefore implies the *sacra potestas* of the ordained ministers. The importance of authorized liturgical ministers (clerics) results from the liturgical will of the Second Vatican Council as well. – On a principal level *sacra potestas* is also proper to all the faithful. That is mainly how liturgy comes into relation with the world. This leads to the question of cult-power. In this light the *sacra potestas* of the clerics and the essence of the authorized liturgical act are theologically explained. The latter is principally based on the liturgical remembrance (*anamnesis*), whereby the liturgical word becomes relevant as the core issue of the cult-power. The structure of the hierarchical *Ordo* has the character of word as well. How explicitly this structure retraces the *sacra potestas* is therefore relevant for the cult-power. All this leads to explaining the term *participatio* in a nuanced light. – After the Second Vatican Council, however, tendencies arose to amalgamate *participatio* and *actio* to *celebratio* as a novel synthesis. This is symptomatic of a mental attitude by which the two basic terms are no longer seen as complementary but as subliminally concurrent with each other. In the new synthesis their former significance is attenuated. This has consequences for the concept of the hierarchical *Ordo* and for the relation between liturgy and world.