

## Litany as a Genre of Piety

“When the Christian soul, in its deep distress, can find no more words to implore God’s mercy, it keeps on repeating the same invocation with a vehement sense of faith. Reason can go no further. Faith alone can pursue its flight aloft.”

*Jehan Alain*

A litany (from Gk. *litanea*, *litē*: prayer)<sup>1</sup> is an archaic genre, which basis lies in a series of invocations with alternate praying responses characteristic to many ancient rituals. Litanies are also found in various Christian traditions. A classical litany of the Roman Catholic church, so-called invocation litany or great litany, consists of invocations of God and all the saints with supplications for their help. This would be impossible without believing that life extends far beyond the palpable and unsustainable reality to the invisible, supernatural and eternal existence, face to face with God, angels and our ancestors.

Invocations of single saint (first of all to the Blessed Virgin Mary; the most widespread among them is the Litany of Loreto – *Litaniae lauretaniae*) or God’s mystery (e.g., litanies of the Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Name of Jesus, the Most Precious Blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit) started gaining prevalence in litanies of Catholic piety since late 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>2</sup>. The litany petitions enumerate the virtues of the addressee, theological and historical images and titles, which are admired as if contemplating the shine of a gem<sup>3</sup>. Litanies of the saints of the Church are still being created to this day<sup>4</sup> and those created earlier are being supplemented with new invocations. The Litany of the Saints is most commonly recited on the most important occasions of the renewed Catholic liturgy (baptism at the Easter Vigil, ordinations, dedications of churches etc.), while other litanies are chanted on such solemn occasions as church’s title celebrations, anniversaries of particular saints or monkhood ceremonies, solemn canonisations of new saints<sup>5</sup>.

### Musical settings of the litany

A monodic litany represents chanting based on formulas similar to those of psalms. Polyphonic settings more or less continued to follow the structure of litany text until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, by delivering the *cantus firmus* melody in the tenor’s part or upper voice’s part, or developing the melody through imitation; sometimes litanies were combined with other melodies<sup>6</sup>, too.

17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries evidenced the palmy days of litanies in Italy: they included strictly liturgical settings for four voices, polychoral, *concertato* (with or without instruments) settings, sometimes litanies were composed using abbreviated texts or combined with antiphons and motets. The *Litanies à la Vierge* (Litany of the Virgin) for choir and *basso continuo* by Marc Antoin Charpentier (France, late 17<sup>th</sup> c.)<sup>7</sup> exemplifies a functional and

<sup>1</sup> “Litany – a prayer form, usually characterized by the announcement of varying invocations (e.g. names of deities or saints) or supplications (Lat. *deprecationes, preces* etc.) by a leader, each of which is followed by a fixed congregational response. This genre may be distinguished from other responsorial forms by the relative brevity, sometimes parity, of the call and response elements, giving it something of an insistent quality. Often quite rhythmic, litanies frequently accompany processions” (Grove Music Online: Litany. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>).

<sup>2</sup> B. Stäblein, *Litanei // Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik* (hrsg. von Friedrich Blume), Bd. 8, Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1989, S. 1001.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the structure of litany texts (catalogue, variant and repetitive verses or the principle of recurrence), see Катунян М., Сакральный канон как архетип минималистской композиции // *Muzikos komponavimo principai. Teorija ir praktika*. Kronta, 2001, c. 100-101, 107.

<sup>4</sup> For instance, the Litany of the Holy Ghost (created by S. Šalkauskis), Litanies of Saint Casimir, Blessed Jurgis Matulaitis, Saint Paul the Apostle, Litany of Humility, Litany to Mother of Beautiful Love.

<sup>5</sup> In a course of time, some litanies have entrenched themselves as non-liturgical devotional practice of folk devotion (e.g., in Lithuania, May prayers in honour of Virgin Mary and June prayers in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus are additional common services).

<sup>6</sup> Allan W. Atlas mentions some sacred works (*Vray dieu d’amours/Sancte Iohanes baptista/Ora pro nobis* by J. Japart, *Fortuna desperata/Sancte Petre/Ora pro nobis* by H. Isaac and the anonymous *Ich zie den claren dach/Sancte Johannes baptista/Ora pro nobis*), which all are in five parts, with the Litany of the Saints occupying two of the inner voices (see Grove Music Online: Japart).

<sup>7</sup> Charpentier wrote nine litanies (for 3-8 voices), including three with instruments. *Litanies à la Vierge* belongs to the period he spent as master of music at the Jesuit church of St Luis (from about 1688 to 1698).

concurrently artistic composition representing a creative approach to the litany text: solo voices flexibly alternate with polyphonic ensemble and choir in the composition lasting up to 6 minutes. The composer refused of repetition of words (beginnings of invocations and responses) and grouped invocations so as to form “musical waves” of different sizes that are performed as if in one breath. For example:

*Sancta Maria, Dei genitrix, Virgo virginum, mater Christi [...], catissima, inviolata, amabilis, admirabilis, Creatoris, Salvatoris, ora pro nobis. [...]*  
*Regina angelorum, patriarchum, prophetarum, apostolorum, martyrum, confessorum, virginum, sanctorum omnium, ora pro nobis.*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s litanies written nearly a hundred years later (Salzburg, 1771–1776) represent five times longer multi-part musical cantatas for soloists, chorus and orchestra, each part of which usually consisting of a series of repeated invocations with responses. Mozart combines and repeats litany words to an extent and in the manner required for musical development, often for the sonata form (without development)<sup>8</sup>. *Cztery Litanie Ostrobramskie* (Four litanies of the Gate of Dawn) for soloists, choir and orchestra were written by Stanisław Moniuszko in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1. F-dur, 1843, 2. F-dur, 1849, 3. e-moll, 1854, 4. C-dur, 1855). These four cyclic compositions with different moods embodied the continuation of the concert liturgy tradition with the elements in an opera style. Other famous composers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century who, inter alia, created church music, have not composed any litanies<sup>9</sup>. However, Franz Schubert’s song “Litanei auf das Fest Allen Seelen” (1816)<sup>10</sup> represented the beginning of the quasi-litany (secular or pseudo-religious) line, which was further continued by 20<sup>th</sup> century composers.

#### Litanies in 20<sup>th</sup> and the early 21<sup>st</sup> century compositions

The genre of litany has for ages embodied a secular dimension in addition to that of religion (e.g., *Laudes regiae* tracing back to the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century<sup>11</sup>). In ordinary languages not using the religious dimension, the word “litany” now/today is more often used in its negative meaning to describe monotonous and repetitive mentioning of something or never-ending complaints. Contemporary compositions called as “Litany” reveal various aspects of the litany (besides invocations of something divine): mysteriousness and sublimity, often linked to the “objectivity” of the archaic past<sup>12</sup>, long enumerations, monotony of speaking or instrumental music playing which turns into eternity meditation<sup>13</sup>, dramatic, desperate or magic cry<sup>14</sup>, and finally, rhythmic or serial solutions relating to the old music composing techniques, or simply the use of *ostinato*<sup>15</sup>, etc.

<sup>8</sup> Out of four litanies by Mozart, two are Marian – setting of the Litany of Loreto (*Litaniae Lauretanae*, KV 109 B-dur, KV 195 D-dur) and two of the Litany of the Holy Sacrament (*Litaniae de Venerabili altaris Sacramento*, KV 125 B-dur, KV 243 Es-dur).

One can support Abert’s opinion that Mozart pays no attention at all to the text in some litanies. The ritornello-type structure of litany text has nothing in common with the form of sonata. The Salzburg tradition of church music, which has prevailed until these days, represents a unique phenomenon of using liturgical texts in forms based merely on musical laws, i.e., concert liturgy. (Г. Аберт, В. А. Моцарт, Москва: Музыка, 1978, с. 389)

<sup>9</sup> Apart from representatives of the Cecilian movement – composers and church organists who composed simple and modest settings of litanies for the rituals of churches. Two litanies (for four voices or for one voice with organ) by Česlovas Sasnauskas should most probably be also attributed to this type.

<sup>10</sup> It is a poem-based composition (on text by J. G. Jacobi) with each part/strophe containing a refrain “ruh’n in Frieden alle Seelen” (“All souls rest in peace”). In about 1840, this song was transcribed for piano by Ferenc Liszt; he also composed “Ora pro nobis. Litanei” for organ (1864).

<sup>11</sup> *Laudes regiae* – a set of acclamations sung initially of, and in presence of, the king or emperor, later eventually adapted for bishop or pope, also used at Easter or Pentecost, perhaps simply as festival observance.

<sup>12</sup> E.g., “Stone Litany. Runes from a House of the Dead” for mez. and orch. by P. Maxwell Davies, 1973; “Litany of the Galactic Bells. Leo” from “Macrokosmos Vol. II. Twelve Fantasy-Pieces after Zodiac” for amplified piano by G. Crumb, 1973; String Quartet “Litania” by T. Bräm, 1992.

<sup>13</sup> “Litanei” for 3 cellos by H. Zender, 1976; “Litany for the Whale” for two voices by J. Cage, 1980; “Litanei: Des Pilgers schlechtes Schuhwerk” from Trio for 3 Clarinets by M. Schütter, 1992; “Litanijos” for oboe by J. Juzeliūnas, 1997; “Litany” in memory of M. Vyner for piano by T. Takemitsu, 1950/1989; Meditation for organ “Litany of the Forgiving Light” by R. Dubra 1999, Sound performance “Uždraustojo vaisiaus litanija” by K. Venskūnas and R. Venckus, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> “Litany of the Victims of War” by T. de Marez Oyens, 1985; “A Litany” by G. Lloyd, 1995; “Litanies” for organ by J. Alain, 1937; “Litany to Thunder” for tenor, bass, male choir and bass drum by V. Tormis, 1974.

<sup>15</sup> “Litany of our Time” by T. de Leeuw, 1965-68; “Litany” for double str. orch. by P. R. Fricker, 1955; “Litanies en sol mineur” from “Huit Petites Pièces pour Piano” op. 32 by R. Falcinelli.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century is very chary of litanies with Christian content: just a few more noteworthy litanies of this type could be found. All three compositions to be mentioned below do not use the text of official church litanies. Laconic compositions by Francis Poulenc and Karol Szymanowski were provoked by serious shocks, such as unexpected loss of close people<sup>16</sup>. Poulenc seems to have used a local Marian litany – he adapted the text from the recitations of one of his fellow pilgrims – which climactic invocations to the Black Madonna of Rocamadour ask her to intercede for France. Szymanowski chose religious lyrics for his litany with poetic invocations to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The religious dimension is conveyed in his music through a moderate elegiac pattern, melodious solo lament with slow and ascetic instrumental accompaniment.

As for Zbigniew Kozub's *Litania ad Spiritum Sanctum* (1998), it is a massive composition for soloists, reciter, chorus and orchestra lasting for an academic hour, created for the First National Festival of the University Choirs in Poznan. The composer used a figurative litany to Holy Spirit by Roman Brandstaetter<sup>17</sup>. The litany serves for conveying topical issues by the author: millennial interface, globalisation, consumership, the world of nuclear fission and decaying morals. Though supplications intrinsic to the genre of litany are prevailing in all parts, the mood keeps changing: sorrowful – *De profundis* – enumeration of all lingering troubles (parts I–IV) are followed by emphasising all-recreating power of God (parts V–VI), while the final part (VII) represents wisdom, harmony, peace and the newly created man.

Contrary to the litanies by Szymanowski and Poulenc with prevailing piety expressed in gloomy tones, prolonged sounds and temperate melodic pattern, the Kozub's composition is like a musical drama encompassing the whole emotional scale (from despair to hope, from helplessness to might, from desperation to ecstasy), which is used by the composer to show a resort: returning to a dialogue, restoring the "I (We)-You" relationship<sup>18</sup>. This is inevitable in the genre of litany, which is based on a mere interchange of invocations and responses. That's why the litany – sometimes externalised in a modern religious composition for no other reason but inner necessity – might be safely called the genre of piety. This is also evidenced by compositions of Sergej Rachmaninov and Arvo Pärt which represent another line of litany – Orthodox liturgical litany<sup>19</sup> (analogous to "small litany" in Catholic Church).

### The litany in Lithuanian contemporary compositions

Having recovered the freedom of religion after 50 years of atheistic dictatorship, Lithuanian composers stepped into the unknown space of religious art with curiosity. Along with other sacred genres, 4 litanies were composed within the period at issue<sup>20</sup>: *Litany of Blessed Jurgis Matulaitis* for choir by Algirdas Brilius (1992), *Litany of Saint Francis* for choir (1996) and *Litany of Divine Mercy* (2007) by Algirdas Martinaitis, *Litany of the Saints* (2008) by Onutė Narbutaitė. Designed to be used in a liturgical context, two litanies (composed for choir) are for church purposes, while the other two constitute the parts of larger religious concert compositions<sup>21</sup>. Yet, they all are based on the canonical litany text instead of poetry.

<sup>16</sup> Poulenc did not practice the Catholic faith seriously until his close friend was killed in an auto accident in 1936. He made a pilgrimage to the Marian shrine of Rocamadour and himself was deeply moved by his experience there. The *Litanies à la Vierge noire* for female choir and organ (1936) marked a turning point in his compositional career as well as his return to the Catholic faith.

Szymanowski wrote *Litania do Najświętszej Marii Panny* for soprano, female chorus and orchestra op. 59 (1930–33) inspired by the death of a young poet Jerzy Liebert, who was the author of the litany text.

<sup>17</sup> Original text in Polish is translated into the Latin language – a traditional and usual sign of the universal Christian sacrality. The Holy Spirit is invoked to save "us" (i.e., civilised humanity) from stupidity that feigns wisdom, reverence that is nothing but veiled arrogance, etc.

Parts of composition: 1. Respite, Spiritus Sancte, 2. De profundis clamamus ad te, 3. Descende, 4. Circumvola super nobis, 5. Adveni, 6. Da nobis aures perfectas, 7. Ed tum nos crea.

<sup>18</sup> Religious feelings (and creative work) of Szymanowski and Poulenc were induced by unexpected losses, while dynamics of the music and text in Kozub's litany suggest that namely the experienced fragility, vulnerability and scarcity remind a man of the primary form of prayer, i.e., asking for help.

<sup>19</sup> "Augmented Litany" op. 31 (1910?) on liturgical text of St John Chrysostom in Church Slavic by Sergej Rachmaninov, "Litany Prayers of St John Chrysostom for Each Hour of the Day and Night" for soloists, choir and orch. (1994) in English by Arvo Pärt. J. Harper also mentions Dobri Khristov, Aleksandr Nikolskij and Lozko Stoyanov among other composers of Orthodox liturgical litanies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (see Grove Music Online. Litany, 7. Polyphonic litanies after 1600).

<sup>20</sup> Also were composed 2 instrumental pieces for oboe solo: "Litanijos" ("Litanies", 1997) by Julius Juzeliūnas and "Lithuania" (2001) by Ričardas Kabelis. And a vocal-instrumental "Litanei von der Demut" (Nuolankumo litanija, S-Mez-org, 2003, 10', text by Vilius Orvydas, in German) by Arūnas Navakas, too.

<sup>21</sup> "Litany of Divine Mercy" is the fourth part of the oratorio "The Altar of Divine Mercy" (2007, S-Mz-satb-orch) by Algirdas Martinaitis and "Litany of the Saints" is the third part of cycle "Lapides, flores, nomina et sidera" (2008, in Latin, satb-1-4picc-tp-tb-perc) by Onutė Narbutaitė.

What the measures are used by the Lithuanian authors for revealing the content of the sacred prayer? Their approach is similar to that of the primary, sacred conception of the litany:

- 1) The text structure is not changed – it is displayed in its entirety from the beginning to the end, including initial invocations *Kyrie eleison* and final invocations *Agnus Dei*<sup>22</sup>.
- 2) The tempered simplicity of the melody, which is similar to the ancient one, and more or less varied repetition of melodic formulas.
- 3) The principle of antiphonic pattern (invocation – response) is maintained: church performance of litanies usually incorporates at least congregational responses (analogous to *Kyrie eleison* or *Agnus Dei* of the Mass). Such a dialogue between one-voiced and homophonic multi-voiced singing is used as a basis in the first litany by Martinaitis. The antiphonic pattern is somewhat less expressed in choral polyphony (case of Brilius)<sup>23</sup>. In concert compositions, the antiphonic pattern is disclosed by the authors by alternating different groups of choir and the whole choir (Narbutaitė) or solo-choir chanting (Martinaitis).
- 4) Long duration of homogeneous development. A classical litany is a long-lasting contemplation. This long duration of the litany serves as a lift to the spiritual sphere or its extending materialisation here, in the prayer.

It is obvious that all Lithuanian authors base their compositions not on the musical laws, but rather on the dynamics of a prayer. In litanies and other long-chanted prayers of a similar structure (rosaries, chaplets), intensification of prayer is latently concealed as spiritual power: eventually a person gets more and more immersed with his entire being in the communication with God or saint whom he invokes to. Composers express this dynamics in music by dynamising the initial elements of their music: developing the melody line into a polyphonic texture (Brilius), accelerating the tempo (Brilius, Narbutaitė), extending the harmony vertical (sound-interval-triad-polychord, in the first litany by Martinaitis), intensifying harmony alterations (the second litany by Martinaitis) and raising the melodic intonation (litany by Narbutaitė<sup>24</sup>).

After the petition, the prayer returns back, in silence, to the trivial round. This dynamics of entering the spiritual sphere and withdrawing from it must be expressed in musical compositions. Therefore, all the litanies at issue, except for Narbutaitė's litany (with passages to silent recitation of prayer *Pater noster*), embody long rising towards culmination (in the first *Agnus Dei*) and short descent – reversion of pitches, tempo, dynamics and texture back to the original state (sometimes in the last *Agnus Dei* only)<sup>25</sup>.

### Prospects of litany compositions in Lithuania

The history of music can offer contemporary composers a variety of models of litany settings (from liturgical up to merely concert ones) with litany texts offering the whole range of emotional colours. However, no artistically valuable litanies have been composed so far in honour of the most prominent Lithuanian saint, prince Casimir, Blessed Virgin Mary in the most prominent Marian shrines in Lithuania (Blessed Virgin in iluva, Mother of Mercy of Au ros Vartai – Our Lady of the Gate of Dawn), also litanies for celebrations (e.g., Litany of the Holy Ghost).

Writing of church litanies appears to be perspective by employing *alternatim* to combine choir and congregation for chanting alternately. Here the widest potential is seen for another variety of this genre, the so-called “small litany” or *Preces*-type litany, which has been also developing from the very first ages of Christianity and is characteristic to orthodox and catholic liturgy as well as to prayers of other Christians<sup>26</sup>. In the Catholic Church, such intercessions, the so-called Prayer of the Faithful, each time conclude the Liturgy of the Word

<sup>22</sup> Only the Martinaitis' Litany of Divine Mercy is based on a selection of sixteen invocations from the text of Litany.

<sup>23</sup> The alternate octaphonic texture of Brilius' litany contains some manifestations of antiphonic pattern: the response (“pray for us”) is chanted separately by sopranos or by tenors (in canon, unison or two-part singing), sopranos and altos, sopranos and tenors, altos and tenors. Antiphony of the three final litany lines (“O Lamb of God”) is particularly prominent: I. the whole choir – male group, II. the whole choir – female group, III. male group – the whole choir.

<sup>24</sup> Rising invocations (melody h-d-es-f-d, later alternation d-f-ges-as-f, etc.) and continuously rising responses (*ora/orate pro nobis*):

melody d<sup>1</sup> es<sup>1</sup> d<sup>1</sup> es<sup>1</sup>... f<sup>1</sup> ges<sup>1</sup>... as<sup>1</sup> a<sup>1</sup>... a<sup>1</sup> b<sup>1</sup>... c<sup>2</sup> des<sup>2</sup>... des<sup>2</sup> d<sup>2</sup>... d<sup>2</sup> es<sup>2</sup>... es<sup>2</sup> e<sup>2</sup>... es<sup>2</sup>  
 harmony h<sub>3</sub> c<sub>3</sub> h<sub>3</sub> c<sub>3</sub>... d<sub>3</sub> es<sub>3</sub>... f<sub>3</sub> fis<sub>3</sub>... F<sub>3</sub> Ges<sub>3</sub>... F<sub>3</sub> Ges<sub>3</sub>... Des<sub>3</sub> D<sub>3</sub>... d<sub>3</sub> es<sub>3</sub>... c<sub>3</sub> cis<sub>3</sub>... c<sub>3</sub>

<sup>25</sup> For example, Brilius' litany starts with a quiet monody (*Kyrie*), turning later on into more vivid polyphony, then – intensive monodic *alternatim* (*Agnus Dei* / “O Lamb of God”) and quiet, slow monody (in the last *Agnus Dei*). In culmination point of Martinaitis' Litany of St Francis (the first “O Lamb of God”) invocation melody is changed, then dynamics go down.

<sup>26</sup> E.g., see: <http://www.liuteronai.lt/Liturgijos-projektas/Pasaulieciams/Litanija>.

at Mass; likewise, the Intercessions (Preces) constitute a part of the Divine Office (in Lauds and Vespers). Masses mostly lack simple and laconic setting of the litanies (for choir or solo with congregational response or with choral responses), while ornate and artistic compositions for choir *a cappella* or with instruments on texts of Lauds or Vespers (with litany comprising a part of the cycle) could be performed in Catholic churches as a prelude to Feast Mass or a concert-meditation after the Mass.

## Santrauka

### Litanija kaip maldingumo žanras

Pranešime apžvelgiami litanijos kaip bažnytinės maldos bruožai, jos išdailos (bažnytinės muzikos istorijoje) bei pateikiami šiuolaikinės lietuvių kūrybos pavyzdžiai.

Litanija – viena archajiškiausių maldos formų. Savo sandara ji užima tarpinę vietą tarp kitų formulinių maldų – psalmodijos, kuriai būdingas nuolatos kintantis tekstas, ir rožinio ar panašių praktikų, pagrįstų daugkartiniu *ostinato*.

Visų šventųjų litanija – gražiausių Bažnyčios narių žiedo (Triumfuojančios Bažnyčios) kontempliacija, Mergelės Marijos ar kitų šventųjų litanijų kreipiniai – gėrėjimasis atskirų asmenų dorybėmis tarsi brangakmenio žėrėjimu. Todėl litanijos emocinis laukas driekiasi nuo desperatiško pagalbos šauksmo, maldavimo iki šlovinimo ekstazės.

Litanijos muzikinių išdailų būta pačių įvairiausių: pagrįstų responsorine monodija (t. y. solo invokacija, bendruomenės atliepas-prašymas; viduramžiai), daugiabalsių motetinių, polichorinių (Renesansas), riturnelinių (barokas), kantatų solistams, chorui ir orkestrui ar vargonams, kurių atskiros dalys yra sonatos formos, ir kitokių ciklų (klasicizmas ir vėlesni laikotarpiai).

XX amžiuje litanijų kūryba sunyko. Kasdienėje, religinio matmens neturinčioje kalboje „litanija“ dažniau vartojama neigiama prasme, šiuo žodžiu apibūdinant monotonišką, įkyrų ko nors vardijimą ar nesibaigiančius skundus. Todėl šiuolaikinėje religinėje kūryboje litaniją galima pavadinti „maldingumo žanru“, kuris kyla iš tikėjimo gelbstinčia Dangaus galia. Tokio žanro kūrinys paprastai gimsta kaip kompozitoriaus gilaus religinio išgyvenimo rezultatas ar kaip tikėjimo išraiška (pvz., K. Szymanowskio, F. Poulenco, Z. Kozubo, A. Përto opusai). Pasak J. Alaino, sukūrusio Litaniją vargonams, kai krikščionio siela savo varguose neberanda naujų žodžių maldauti Dievo gailestingumo, ji su karštu tikėjimu nesiliauja kartojusi tą pačią maldą. Protas pasiekia savo ribas, vien tikėjimas veržiasi toliau, iki Dangaus.

Lietuvoje po Atgimimo sukomponuotos 4 litanijos (A. Briliaus *Palaimintojo Matulaičio litanija*, A. Marti-  
naičio *Šv. Pranciškaus ir Dievo Gailestingumo litanijos*, O. Narbutaitės *Visų šventųjų litanija*), neskaitant dviejų instrumentinių kūrinių. Pranešime analizuojama, kokiomis priemonėmis lietuvių autoriai atskleidė pasirinkto teksto turinį. Taip pat aptariamos šio žanro kūrybos katalikų liturginėms apeigoms galimybės.