By now, Usuarium is probably the world’s largest digital collection and database of Latin liturgical sources. It evolved from the rather modest need of contextualizing the earliest Hungarian evidence from the 11th century but resulted in a robust system of information from about a millennium of Christian worship in Europe. The two methodological pillars are the focus on uses, i.e. enduring local traditions instead of specific sources or ages and the concept of liturgy as a system of primarily textual items arranged in a grid of assignations to times, functions, and structural frames. The aim is a comprehensive presentation of the liturgical diversity of the Latin West from the earliest sources to the final abolition of local variants in the late 17th century. A real synthesis, however, will not emerge from the mere accumulation of data. It requires an interpretation of how our ancestors perceived their rituals, history, and identities.

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