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J. DAY and M. VINZENT

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The *Commemoratio pro vivis* of the Roman Canon: A Textual Witness to the Evolution of Western Eucharistic Theologies?

Thomas O'Loughlin, Nottingham, UK

ABSTRACT

The *commemoratio pro vivis* as it is traditionally found in the Eucharistic Prayer of the Roman Rite presents many difficulties, both of its text and its interpretation, and this is still a problem for those who seek to study the prayer in the contemporary *Missale Romanum* or translate it into a modern language. This article explores these difficulties by seeing the prayer as the result of layers of accretion over centuries, each of which brought with it a distinct understanding of the nature and practice of the Eucharist: it uses a method of textual archaeology comparing the variations in extant manuscript sources to establish which were the stable elements in the prayer and which were subject to variation and development. By examining these layers in turn, we can see how the various difficulties arose – for example, a rubric being incorporated within the body of the prayer, observe how attitudes to the Eucharist changed between the later fourth and the early ninth centuries, and witness changes in the understanding of who is offering the prayer in that there is a shift from seeing the prayer as the expression of the concern of the whole church, the *circumstantes*, to it being a prayer by the priest praying on behalf the church. Removing the various layers permits us to see what the prayer was like in its most primitive form, and this affords us a glimpse into an obscure period in the history of the Roman liturgy.

A Problem of Evidence

For as long as we have manuscript evidence, the traditional Eucharistic Prayer of the Roman Rite has had, prior to its institution narrative, a special *memento* for those who are alive and who are offering the actual sacrifice of praise being celebrated. In the present missal, and that of 1570, it takes this form:[1]

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[1] This transcription ignores the 'scored for reading' marks which were inserted in the 1570 Missal and retained in the 1969 Missal (at least in the 1969 Missal these had some utility in that the prayer was intended to be said aloud); the punctuation and lining follow the 1969 Missal (while this, particularly its use of the colon following sixteenth-century usage, might be thought idiosyncratic, it would distract from this paper's purpose to alter it). Furthermore, the more recent editions of the Missal of Pope Paul VI make no changes to the text or its presentation. In this transcription, rubrical items are underscored.

Commemoratio pro vivis
Memento, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum
N. et N.
Jungit manus et orat aliquantulum pro quibus orare intendit; deinde manibus extensis
    prosequitur:
et omnium circumstantium,
quorum tibi fides cognita est et nota devotio,
pro quibus tibi offerimus:
vel qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis,
pro se suisque omnibus:
pro redemptione animarum suarum,
pro spe salutis et incolumitatis suae;
tibique reddunt vota sua
aeterno Deo, vivo et vero.

This text has attracted little attention in studies of the Canon for it appears to be simply an intercessory prayer, on this occasion for living persons, for which we have parallels not only in the Roman Canon itself but in many other ancient Eucharistic Prayers. Apparently, the most distinctive feature of the prayer, in contrast with other similar intercessions (excepting the naming of emperors, popes, and other bishops) being its provision for the insertion of the names of people towards its beginning. We can see this feature, together with an instruction, in the early ninth-century *libellus missae* known as 'The Stowe Missal'[2] which, being an exception to the normal text found in our early witnesses, has:

Hic recitantur nomina uiuorum
Memento etiam Domine famulorum tuorum.n. famularumque tuarum et omnium cir-
    cum adstantium quorum tibi fides cognita est et nota devotio
qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis
pro se suisque omnibus
pro redemptione animarum suarum
pro stratu seniorum suorum et ministrorum omnium puritate
pro intigritate uirginum et continentia uiduarum
pro aeris temperie et fructum fecunditate terrarum
pro pacis reditu et fine discriminum
pro incolimitate regum et pace populorum ac reditu captiuorum
pro uotis adstantium
pro memoria martirum
pro remisione pecatorum nostrorum et actuum emendatione eorum ac requie defuntorum
    et prosperitate iteneris nostri

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[2] On this liturgical book, see Thomas O'Loughlin, 'The Praxis and Explanations of Eucharistic Fraction in the Ninth Century: the Insular Evidence', *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 45 (2003), 1-20; and *id*., 'Division systems for the gospels: the case of the Stowe St John (Dublin, R.I.A. D.ii.3)', *Scriptorium* 61 (2007), 150-64.

*pro domino papa episcopo et omnibus episcopis et prespeteris et omni aeclesiastico
    ordine*
pro imperio romano et omnibus regibus christianis
pro fratribus et sororibus nostris
pro fratribus in uia directis
*pro fratribus quos de caliginosis mundi tenebris dominus arcisire dignatus est uti eos
    in aeterna summae lucis quietae pietas diuina suscipiat*
*pro fratribus qui uaris dolorum generibus adfliguntur uti eos diuina pietas curare
    dignetur*
pro spe salutis et incolumitatis suae;
tibique reddunt uota sua
eterno Deo, uivo et uero.[3]

This text is exceptional in several ways. First, it does not present us with the syntactically awkward phrase *pro quibus tibi offerimus: vel*, which stretches translators of every shade to the limit, and provides us with a grammatically sound sentence. Second, its inclusion of *etiam* at the prayer's beginning may make the connection with what preceded more smooth vocally, but it also may be an assimilative error of memory since *memento etiam* is the normal opening of the prayer for the dead. Third, its addition of *tuorum* removes the grammatical idiosyncrasy of a feminine adjective including the masculine, but this is probably a hypercorrection. Fourth, its additional fourteen petitions for specific needs and classes of Christians show that there was a tendency to add further specification to *famuli famulaeque* and may help explain the origin of the three clauses beginning with *pro* that we find in the common text. Fifthly, and what made this text seem exceptional to scholars such as Jungmann,[4] it has the instruction which assumes that the president will actually recite the names of living people at this point in the liturgy, and we have already the marker *.n.* for *nomina* that is still found in the liturgy today. Lastly, but of key importance at this point in this study, Stowe's variations show that the *Commemoratio* was an unstable text; one that was far more unstable in the tradition than has been generally noted.[5] However, before proceeding further, let us note the state of scholarship on the *memento* and those aspects of the text that have attracted attention.

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[3] Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, D.ii.3, fols 11v-12r, see edition: George F. Warner, *The Stowe Missal* (London, 1906), 2, 11. I have followed the orthography of the manuscript as it is not the details of the additions, but their presence that is my concern here.

[4] Josef A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Missarum sollemnia* (New York, NY, 1955), II 163[19]; this has been compared at every point with the final (fifth revised) German edition: *Missarum Sollemnia: Eine genetische Erklärung der römischen Messe* (Freiburg, 1962).

[5] Jungmann who normally is very sensitive to unstable texts does not draw attention to any such difficulties, and I have been unable to find any more recent commentator who has noticed problems with the text.

The *status quaestionis*

In contrast to other parts of the Roman Canon this text has drawn few, if any, specialist studies.[6] The focus of what has been written was set out by Jungmann in his *Missarum sollemnia*, and has been followed by more recent writers:

The decisive factor which brought about in the Roman Mass the division of the Great Prayer and the insertion of the intercessions was, as we learn from a letter of Pope Innocent I, the desire to mention *inter sacra mysteria* the names of those offering. The precise setting for this mention of names is the prayer that follows, *Memento Domine*, along with the *Communicantes*. In the intercessory prayer of oriental liturgies the same words *Mnestheti kurie* are used to introduce a whole series of petitions commending to God various groups of the faithful; these were at one time closely linked with the names from the diptychs. In ecclesiastical life, especially in oriental Christendom, the diptychs have played a major role since the fourth century.[7]

The issue of naming names has become the key theme followed up in scholarship. This assumed that the prayer as we have it, or at least the opening part of it with its deliberate gap for *nomina nominantur*, is an integral unit and the idea that a gap for individuals' names was not there from the prayer's inception has not been raised. From this basic assumption, the focus of investigation has tended towards the origins and role of the diptychs – itself a much larger archaeological question that also affects hagiographical studies – in ritual practice east and west. From this flowed several consequences. Firstly, that the origins of the prayer lie in the desire to name names in the actual canon. Secondly, that the prayer can be seen as contemporary with the practice of naming the names, and for evidence of this there is a useful piece of Hieronymian diatribe – whom Jungmann delicately refers to as *der Einsiedler von Bethlehem* – which implies that the practice was one more new fangled idea of the late fourth century that originated in, and would to lead to an increase of, human vanity. This dating of the origins of the prayer is seemingly confirmed by the fact that Innocent I had to explain the practice in his celebrated letter of 16 March 416 to Decentius of Gubbio (Eugubium) implying that it was not yet universally accepted.[8] Thirdly, that the practice of actually naming names eventually, for a variety of

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[6] The nearest we have is Alfred Stuiber, 'Die Diptychon-Formel für die Nomina offerentium im römischen Messkanon', *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 68 (1954), 127-46. It is worth noting that the fundamental work on the manuscript evidence of the prayer was done by Edmund Bishop, 'On the early texts of the Roman Canon', *JTS* 4 (1903), 555-77 (reprinted in *Liturgica Historica* [Oxford, 1918], 77-115).

[7] J.A. Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia* (1955), II 159 (in the final German edition II 199-207, Jungmann added no further details).

[8] The patristic texts concerned can be conveniently found in Anton Hänggi and Irmgard Pahl, *Prex Eucharistica* (Fribourg, 1968 [third enlarged ed., 1998]), 428-9². Note that Robert Cabié in Aimé Georges Martimort (ed.), *The Church at Prayer: The Eucharist* (Collegeville, MN, 1992 [one-volume ed.]), 80-1 makes this case for dating the prayer in its most explicit, yet concise, form.

reasons,[9] became omitted 'either because it was deemed unimportant or because it was found too bothersome.'[10] This inconvenience, Jungmann implied, may have been origin of the general inclusive formula of *famulorum famularumque tuarum*. Jungmann continued:

Something like this [he had been dealing with a piece of Mozarabic evidence] must also have occurred in the Roman canon where the oldest manuscripts in general [he notes that Stowe is an exception] *no longer* [my emphasis] have any indication whatever of an explicit listing of names after the words: *Memento Domine famulorum famularumque tuarum*.

This conclusion certainly made sense as an outcome of his argument, and agreed with both the disappearance of diptyches in practice, and the fact that the Tridentine formula (and, indeed, that of the Missal of Pope Paul VI) is ambivalent about names: are names to be named, or is the priest to pray silently thinking of the person concerned?[11] However, it left one problem – Stowe, in indicating names by *.n.*, Jungmann saw as 'an exception' contrary to oldest manuscripts[12] – because the actual scribal and subsequent printers' tradition that led down to Trent still had room for names (no matter what the priest was to do at that point) in that it contained the formula: *N. et N.* Jungmann, continuing, explained this feature of the written form of the prayer thus:

But since the formula [*i.e.* the formula: *Memento Domine famulorum famularumque tuarum*] obviously implies it, the indication[13] for such an insert was later restored, some way of other, even soon after the Roman Mass was transplanted to Frankish soil. In his *Admonitio Generalis* of 789 Charlemagne decreed: The names should not be publicly read at some earlier part of the Mass (as in the Gallican rite), but during the canon.[14]

One senses a note of exasperation in these comments, but collectively 'some way or other' this solution seemed to give a coherent shape to the contradictory evidence.

This approach which saw the whole prayer evolve from, and revolve around, the desire to list a name or a string of names also fitted with the investigations of the Eucharist carried out by canonists and rubricians. These groups' writings were concerned with the licitness of orally producing a name's sound in the canon, the relationship between what the priest intends (as in the rubric *orare intendit*) and the stipend, the number of people one could pray for, whether or not one could also pray for pagans, heretics, schismatics, or those excommunicates

[9] See Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London, 1945), 498-502.
[10] J.A. Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia* (1955), II 163.
[11] For an example of the background rubricians' debate, see Nicholas Gihr, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass: Dogmatically, Liturgically and Ascetically Explained* (London, 1942), 600 [the original German edition dates from 1902].
[12] J.A. Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia* (1955), II 163[19].
[13] The German text reads *der Vermerk* which is better translated 'the marker'.
[14] J.A. Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia* (1955), II 163.

deemed to be *vitandi*, and whether during this time of silent prayer the priest acted as a canonical person – in which case his prayer must be canonically lawful – or as a private person – in which case he could pray for whoever he likes so long as they are not dead.[15] These concerns found historical expression in questions about whether those named were those who had presented gifts for the church, seen as an earlier form of Mass stipend, or those who were the patrons, sponsors or protectors of a particular church.

If we leave aside the implausibility of the last move in Jungmann's construction of the prayer's history, viz. that the actual naming of names – which was the prayer's original rationale – having dropped out through redundancy was subsequently reinvented out of the internal logic of the generic formula that replaced it, we are still left with questions:

(1) The prayer's opening word, *memento*, echoes one of our most ancient eucharistic sources and has given rise to many similar intercessory prayers both east and west. This was implicitly recognised by Jungmann in his opening remarks on the prayer, although he did not take it into his argument.

(2) The prayer employs the phase *famuli famulaeque* which is unusual in that words such as *servi* are used elsewhere, and in that it employs both masculine and feminine cognate nouns; elsewhere in the liturgy the feminine has to be presumed to be included in the masculine. Moreover, in other sets intercessions we get classes – and the only classes of women that are mentioned are those of virgins and widows – while here we have Christians, men *and women* designated as such and not as a consequence of canonical status (as distinct from their ecclesial status as *baptizati / baptizatae*).

(3) The awkwardness – if that is not too weak a term – of the prayer's Latinity in places. Jungmann recognised this in passing towards the end of his treatment, but did not suggest any remedy.[16] Surprisingly, this does not seem to have raised problems for more recent commentators or translators who have looked at the prayer.[17]

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[15] There is a lengthy discussion in N. Gihr, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass* (1942); and a similar treatment in Adrian Fortescue, *The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described* (London, 1930, third revised ed.), 57-8.

[16] J.A. Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia* (1955), II 167.

[17] The current, 2010, official English translation avoids the main problem by rendering *pro quibus tibi offerimus: vel qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis* as if it read: … … *tibi offerimus … … … hoc sacrificium laudis* = 'we offer to you this sacrifice of praise…'; while the proposed new translation moves forward blissfully unaware of any problem: 'Remember, Lord, your servants N. and N. and all gathered here, whose faith and devotion are known to you. For them and all who are dear to them we offer you this sacrifice of praise or they offer it for themselves and all who are dear to them, for the redemption of their souls, in hope of health and well-being, and fulfilling their vows to you, the eternal God, living and true' (http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal/ RomanCanon.pdf accessed 10 Nov 2009).

(4) The addition to *famuli famulaeque* of the phrase *et omnium circumstantium* or *circum adstantium*. Again, while commentators have noted that it indicates the prayer's origins in the time before kneeling became ritually acceptable at the Eucharist, Jungmann's comment was confined to noting that '*circum* is not to be construed as though the faithful ever completely surrounded the altar' because he held that the altar at the time of the prayer's appearance was located between the presbytery and the nave, hence there was a 'semi-circle' or an 'open circle.'[18]

The remainder of this article is an attempt to construct this historical evidence in a different manner such that a more consistent picture will be given of all the pieces, that does not need to invoke any implausible developments, and which provides us with a coherent solution to the text's various problems. In the process, we may be provided with significant insights into the evolution of understandings of the Eucharist within the culture of early Christian Rome and subsequent changes in theologically formulated beliefs.

The Formula and Notion of *memento*

While the whole formula of the *Commemoratio pro vivis* is without parallel in ancient extant liturgies, its opening phrase *Memento, Domine* is widely attested.[19] We first encounter it in the Eucharistic Prayer in the *Didache* where we have the intercession: 'Remember, O Lord (*mnésthéti kurie*), your church, save it from every evil and make it complete in love' (10:5). Later, in the *Liturgy of St Mark* we find the phrase introducing a series of intercessions. Firstly, one for the whole church, civil officers, the sick, and some other special needs. Then, secondly, the phrase is used six times for series of intercessions: those with special status in the church; the city and its Christians; Christians in need of God's mercy; Christians who are prisoners; the sinful community; and lastly for the unworthy celebrant himself.[20] We can find a similar set of intercessions in the *Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* with, at least, five uses of the phrase.[21] However, these are insignificant compared with the fourteen uses in the *Liturgy of St Basil*,[22] or the twenty-eight uses of in the *Liturgy of St James*.[23]

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[18] J.A. Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia* (1955), vol. 2, 166.

[19] The Missal of 1570 gave the prayer the heading '*Commemoratio pro vivis*,' but the term often used in older books, *memento vivorum* is actually a better name for the prayer as it stresses that the prayer is formed on this ancient and ecumenical model.

[20] A. Hänggi and I. Pahl, *Prex Eucharistica* (1968), 104-6 and 108.

[21] *Ibid.* 228 (depending on how one counts, one could find six uses).

[22] *Ibid.* 238-42.

[23] *Ibid.* 250-60.

From this quick survey one fact comes clearly into view: the use of *Memento Domine* in the Roman Canon in the *Commemoratio pro vivis* – leaving aside the parallel usage in that *pro defunctis* – must be seen as linked with widespread and ancient liturgical usage in a eucharistic context. In these intercessions it is the church of the living – identified either as a whole or by portions / individuals with distinctive status, or by particular need – that is the focus. Those assembled for the Eucharist are praying for these living people using the formula of asking God to bring them to mind.[24]

The Formula: *famuli famulaeque*

The Roman prayer's most distinctive feature is that it specifies those for whom it wishes to pray, in effect, this is primarily the community itself, in the widest possible terms: simply men and women Christians. This is unusual, quite apart from the choice of the word *famulus*, in several ways. All the other intercessory prayers pray for specific individuals (*e.g.* pope, patriarch, bishop, emperor) or groups (*e.g.* bishops, priests, deacons) and further designate these by rank (*ordo* in the full late antique sense) or task (the judiciary or the military). Here, by contrast, we simply have people, the whole community, whose only characteristic is their relationship to God as *famuli*. True, the *Liturgy of St Mark* mentions 'the laity' (*laikón*) as a group but does this having mentioned the clerics, virgins, widows by groups: now 'laity' takes in all the rest. The 'laity' in the context is not the whole people but that sub-group in the church that is in no way special as Christians.

The inclusiveness of our prayer when examined against the highly stratified nature of Roman society is extraordinary. Moreover, as a generation of scholarship has revealed, the churches were not immune from this stratification but rather became as stratified as the rest of society.[25] This is most clearly expressed in the Christian adoption of the notion of *ordo* as the designation of its ministries and their desire to relate their clergy to the *ordo*, and the stratification is expressed in all of the intercessions, this case alone excepted, found in ancient eucharistic texts.[26] Nor is the Roman Canon excluded from this fascination with

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[24] See Thomas O'Loughlin, *The Didache: A Window on the Earliest Christians* (London, 2010), ch. 5.

[25] See, for example, Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven, CT, 2003 [second ed., first published: 1983]), 51-73; and with particular emphasis on how this stratification affected the churches internally, see Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity* (Edinburgh, 1982), 69-120 (especially 96-8 for the liturgy); and we might note that it was probably problems relating to stratification in late first-century Corinth that occasioned the letter we call 1*Clement* and to which we shall refer to shortly.

[26] Our best Latin evidence for the adoption of the secular notion of *ordo* (thus making them '*clerici*' and those to whom we can refer by the term '*ordinati*') by those who presided in the

the imperial class-structures in that its first intercession, before the *Memento pro vivis*, mentions the church, then that *famulus* which is the pope, then the presiding bishop along with the orthodox and apostolic teachers ('*una cum famulo tuo papa nostro N. et antistite nostro N. et omnibus orthodoxis atque catholicae et apostolicae fidei cultoribus*').

Moreover, in our culture which celebrates inclusiveness there is even more good news: women are included on an equal footing with men – one suspects that recent translators missed an opportunity at this point to score some credits for the Roman Rite; they missed their chance by imagining the text read *plebs* for they opted for the phrase 'your people.'[27] The inclusion of women *qua* women is unique to this prayer. In other liturgies there are references to specific groups, most commonly virgins but sometimes virgins and widows, *but only here* are women referred to in terms of their relationship as *famulae* to God and using the same terminology as that applied to men: this is inclusiveness with attitude! And, we should not forget that there was no need to mention women specifically at all: it is a commonplace of ancient speech that the masculine can include the feminine, so the text would be inclusive, but silently so, as if it read: *Memento Domine famulorum tuorum et omnium circumstantium*.

That the two groups, *famuli* and *famulae*, are to be seen as equal (*i.e.* we are referring to both simultaneously rather than one in succession to the other) is demonstrated by the use of the enclitic conjunction. *Famuli ET famulae* could be read in the same way we read phrase 'the officers and other ranks', 'the bishop and the chapter' where clearly there is a need to distinguish successive gradation; but *famuli famulaeQUE* implies both are subgroups forming a collectivity of equal parts, as in 'we need both carpenters and plumbers for this job' or in our colloquial phrase 'boys and girls: it's time to go.'

If this phrase is so out of keeping with those major concerns of ancient society, civil and ecclesial, the stratification of *ordines* and classes and the invisibility of women such as we see in most eucharistic intercessions, then where did it come from? I have only been able to find two parallels, but both are most appropriate to the context. The first is from the *Didache* 4:9 where Christian slave owners are forbidden to treat either their male slaves or female slaves (*douló sou é paidiské*) in such a manner that they are so scandalised that they cease to be God-fearers. Here we have inclusiveness but it is hardly that of the Eucharistic Prayer in that both males and female are equal in that they together belong to the lowest stratum of society, in the words of a later time: they are

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churches come from Elvira in Spain where at a synod held there in the early fourth century these ministers took upon themselves all the trappings of the *ordo*: see Samuel Laeuchli, *Power and Sexuality: The Emergence of Canon Law at the Synod of Elvira* (Philadelphia, 1972); and on how these forms entered the liturgy, see Josef A. Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy to the Time of Gregory the Great* (London, 1960), 130-3 for examples.

[27] Or in the case of the proposed new translation, the even more jejune and impersonal: 'and all gathered here.'

'in the dust … equal made.' However, there are strong indications that the
Didache was originally learned by rote by Christians.[28] Therefore, this phrase,
doulos kai paidiské,[29] may have become a stock phrase among Christians. The
second usage, possibly derived from the *Didache*, is even more appropriate.
It comes from the letter sent by the Roman church to the Corinthian church,
probably at the end of the first century, that we commonly call '1*Clement*'.[30]
In this text, in a prayer addressed to the Father asking forgiveness for the
church, we find: 'do not recall any sin committed by your male slaves or
female slaves (*doulón sou kai paidiskón*) but make us clean with your truth'
(60:2). The prayer is an intercession for the whole church by the whole church,
and those praying identify themselves as the church in relation to the Father by
this phrase. Furthermore, we know that the prayer was an existing prayer used
within the church of Rome in the later first century rather than simply the
author of 1*Clement* altering his genre to that of prayer. The evidence for this
lies in the prayer text's inclusiveness. While the prayer identified both men and
women, 1*Clement* itself is not inclusive: when it addresses the church in
Corinth as people it always does so using the term 'brethren' (*adelphoi*) or
'gentlemen brethren' (*andres adelphoi*):[31] this is the only occasion when men
and women are mentioned together. Here, surely, in a phrase echoing the
Didache, we have the Greek origin of the phrase in the Roman Canon; and it
comes from a time *before* the church in Rome had adopted the common cultural
language of varying respect.[32] By the latter decades of first century, this church
in Rome had already developed a custom of referring to themselves collectively
in prayer by the simple designation of 'God's male and female slaves.' While in
society there were few issues as important as one's place in the social order, in
the rhetoric of the church, people were made equal before the Father as 'servants'.

We can now move to the next problem: why was this Greek phrase rendered
in Latin by *famuli / famulae* when there are the far move common words, such
as *servus* and *ancilla*, to render them: *servus*, for example, translates *doulos* in
Rom. 1:1; while *ancilla* renders *paidiské* in *John* 18:17. It is worth recalling
that Latin has a rich lexicon of words for servants of one sort or another – there

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[28] See Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Faith, Hope, and Life of the Earliest Christian Communities,
50-70 C.E.* (New York, NY, 2003), 70-6; while it is possible to fault Milavec's arguments in numer-
ous details, his major premise that the work has to be seen in terms of apprenticeship formation
is well founded.

[29] While *paidiské* taken with its most formal meaning refers to a young female slave, it very
often has the connotation of prostitute, and we should note that derived noun, *to paidiskeion*,
indicates a brothel.

[30] For the *status quaestionis* regarding this text, see Andrew Gregory, '*I Clement*: An Intro-
duction', *Expository Times* 117 (2006), 223-30.

[31] Here is a sample of such usage surrounding the prayer text: 45:1; 45:6; 46:1; 52:1; and 62:1.

[32] Robert Jewett believes that the problems that stratification produced for Christians – or, at
least, theologians like Paul – was a major factor in the background to the *Letter to the Romans*;
see his *Romans: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN, 2007).

are many based on the archaic form *famul* alone – which we have a tendency to translate with just a few words: slaves, servants, maids, and handmaids. But while it would be futile to attempt to differentiate the grades of servant implied in the Latin lexicon as if these were used on every occasion with precision, we can broadly determine what sort of service was implied by various terms. Furthermore, for Christian usage in the liturgy we have the assistance of seeing how terms were translated from Greek in the various versions of the Scriptures in Latin. Indeed, in the searches of the translator for the apt word, one can often see the subtleties of a word one would not notice in a piece of original prose. Broadly, *famulus* / *famula* suggest servants that are close to their master and often those providing the sort of service we would now expect from an 'assistant'. This is confirmed by biblical usage, both in the Vetus Latina and in the Vulgate, where *famulus* is someone who had been made the Lord's servant, the Lord's minister. Thus Moses is the *famulus Domini* and referred to as such on thirteen occasions;[33] he is implied as the people's intercessor in *Wis.* 18:21 and described as *famulus*; and, significantly, as *famulus* he is presented as being able intercede for the people of the Lord's household in *Heb.* 3:8. Other leaders of Israel are referred as *famuli Domini*,[34] as indeed are the whole people.[35] Hannah in her prayer for a son describes herself as a *famula Domini* (1*Sam.* 1:11). The term *famulus* also can be used to describe the king's assistants, literally, his ministers (*e.g.* 1*Kgs.* 1:26); while *famula* is used for the concubines of the patriarchs (*e.g. Gen.* 33:1). While we have both words used for ordinary slaves (*e.g. Lev.* 25:39) and to provide verbal variation for *servi* / *ancillae* (*e.g. Jer.* 34:11), on the whole, these are the words used for the intimates of the master, those with a special relationship with the master as ministers, and those who can come before God as his chosen servants.

So the choice of *famulus* and *famula* in the Roman Canon to render *doulos* and *paidiské* can be seen as a definite choice that achieves several ends. It is one thing to refer ritually to oneself as a 'slave', but quite another to render that notion with a word like 'minister'. While all may be made equal before God, it is less shocking when that fact does not have to make one also seem to share that status with the lowest in society! The 'sting' of the prayer contained in 1*Clement* is removed in the Latin usage that has come down to us. Moreover, these words were becoming rich in Christian ears by their use with reference to such figures as Moses and Hannah as words that could describe the position of Christians before God in prayer of petition. When the people assembled and prayed for their needs, their relationship found in *famuli* / *famulae* an appropriate terminology with the wider resonance of their use translating the Scriptures into Latin.

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[33] *Josh.* 1:13; 1:15; 8:31; 8:33; 11:12; 12:6; 13:8; 14:7; 18:7; 22:2; 22:4; 2*Chr.* 1:3; and *Neh.* 1:8.
[34] For example: *Juds.* 2:8; 1*Kgs.* 8:25; 1*Chr.* 17:23; 2*Chr.* 6:21.
[35] For example: *Num.* 32:5.

The notion of the *circumstantes*

Most scholarship on this prayer, having begun from the premise that its primary concern was with a list of names of those who had somehow contributed to the sacrifice, saw the reference to the servants as a reflex replacing actual names – a postulate for which I have no use – and then assumed that the phrase *et omnium circumstantium* was an addition to the list of names: in effect, two separate petitions joined by '*et*.' Having asked the Lord to remember the named individuals (or, later, the substitute phrase), there was the additional need to ask the Lord to remember those actually there at the Eucharist. Then these *circumstantes* were imagined in a basilica with the *presbyterium* on one side, the people (*laici / laicae*) on the other, and so they formed – though clearly the word *circum* troubled Jungmann – a sort of circle. If on the other hand, the *famuli famulaeque* formula is part of an ancient Christian prayer, then the *famuli / famulae* being remembered at the Eucharist *and* those who are *circum adstantes* are identical: one and the same group gathered at the Eucharist.

This might seem to pose a linguistic difficulty in that having prayed for the *famuli / famulae*, why add *ET omnium circumstantium*: is this not a redundant tautology? This difficulty is more apparent than real and can be easily resolved. It is a feature of the Latinity and style – which some think is derived from Latin legal style – of the Roman Canon that it uses linguistic doublets: ideas are presented twice using different words / phrases linked by a conjunction. This stylistic feature is already visible in the prayer for the living in the doublet: *quorum … fides cognita est et nota devotio* (whose faith is known *and* whose devotion is noted).[36] Such a stylistic reading would make perfect sense here, with *et* having in this case the value of 'indeed'. On this assumption *et omnium circumstantium* is a subsequent addition to the text; and the resulting sentence in Latin, as we can see from a simple comparison of reading the text first with *et omnium circumstantium* and then without it, is more rotund, but also more rhetorically balanced.[37] We could render it thus:

Remember O Lord, your man servants and your woman servants,
Indeed, all who stand around here,
To you their faith is known and their devotion obvious…

[36] There are other examples of this linguistic phenomenon later in this prayer. Note there is a doublet in the phrase *pro spe salutis et incolumitatis suae* (health is the same notion as 'well being'); there is another in the use of both *sacrificium laudis* and *vota sua*; and another in identifying God as *vivo et vero* (in the latter cases the influence of doublets in scripture can be seen as the precedent for the doublets in the prayer).

[37] Compare:
      Memento, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum
      quorum tibi fides cognita est et nota devotio.
  with:
      Memento, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum
      et omnium circumstantium,
      quorum tibi fides cognita est et nota devotio.

If it is the case that this is an evolution from the basic mention of *famuli* / *famulae* in the prayer and that *famuli* / *famulae* is earlier than the naming of individuals (*i.e.* it is not the case that this phrase postdates the practice of naming names which appeared in the later fourth century), then conceivably the reference to the *circumstantes* is older that the basilican buildings' form that was assumed by Jungmann.[38] Therefore, we can speculate afresh as to its meaning.

Much recent work on the origins of the Eucharist has stressed the links between the Christian meal and the banqueting culture of the Hellenistic world.[39] That culture supposed the diners seated at table or reclining on couches around the room. This is not only the most natural interpretation of the posture of Jesus' meals, but these were the postures that was remembered for what became the paradigm meal for the Eucharist, the 'Last Supper'. In the *Gospel of John* the posture was recalled as reclining; while in the *Gospel of Luke* the posture was assumed to be sitting at table.[40] We cannot pinpoint when this posture of seating changed to that of standing, but in Justin, mid-second century, we have a reference to the presider as *ho proestós* which implies that the whole group was standing.[41] Why this change came about is even more obscure: my instinct is to assume that such changes begin with practical, rather than theological, concerns. Therefore, we might speculate that the reason was the need to accommodate a larger group at the meal than could be given couches or seats at a table. However, once that change had occurred it would quickly have found its theological rationale. By the mid second century Ignatius of Antioch had begun the process of interpreting the eucharistic table as the Christians' 'altar' (*thusiasterion*);[42] once that theological step had been taken, the way was open for the community to see itself as the new priestly people who could stand around the new altar and offer the new sacrifice.[43] The new people were in Christ the new priesthood: and the priesthood stood in the temple as they performed their ministry. So to stand at the Eucharist was no longer the practical matter that more people can stand at a meal than sit – a fact we still appreciate in our adoption of the buffet for larger groups than we could

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[38] A position whose basis is strengthened by recent research which has shown that celebrations in houses in Rome continued long after the appearance of the first basilicas.

[39] See, for example, Dennis E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist: The Banquet in the Early Christian World* (Minneapolis, MN, 2003).

[40] *John* 13:4; 12; 23; and 25 – it is this Johannine imagery of reclining that we recall in St Thomas's hymn, *Pange lingua*, in the line *recumbens cum fratribus*. *Luke* 14:15 is a good example of how Luke recalled the meals of Jesus as meals eaten while sitting at a table.

[41] *Apologia I*, 67, 4-5.

[42] *To the Philadelphians* 4:1 is an example.

[43] This notion of the community is found in the early second-century text, 1*Peter*; while in the *Letter to the Hebrews* (arguably of roughly the same date) we find the life of Jesus interpreted through the imagery of the perfection of Temple sacrifice: just as Jesus' identity could be explored using that Temple, so too was their own liturgy.

cope with at a 'sit down dinner' in a normal house – but was the theological statement that they were standing around the altar as the new elect, the new nation, the royal priesthood (1*Pet*. 2:9) interceding, in the Christ, with the Father. Such an understanding would allow those at the gathering to be described as the *circumstantes* or the *circum adstantes* just as they already called themselves as the *famuli famulaeque Domini*. Whether or not they stood around in a circle or a semi-circle or an 'open circle' probably depended on the shape of the room, the size of the table, and the number present at a particular Eucharist, the important implications of the term lie elsewhere. If the assembly are collectively described as the *circumstantes* then this reinforces the inclusivity implied in *famuli famulaeque*: they see themselves as a single integrated unit and not one made up of different grades and *ordines* assembled by rank to make up a differentiated unity. *Omnes circumstantes* indicates the whole group. Furthermore, insofar as the *circumstantes* are identical with the *famuli* along with the *famulae*, we have to presume that there was no differentiation in the term between men and women. A woman, and all the women in the church, could see and describe themselves as a *circumstans* or, plurally, as *circumstantes* at the Eucharist, and locate themselves appropriately.

This final point will seem of little importance to many today, but such equality of image and location cannot be assumed from any of our developed ancient liturgical texts,[44] including the Roman Canon in its fullest form. While for those who come from a Roman Catholic background it is worth recalling that it is still only a generation ago that it was as an emergency provision that one could have a woman 'answering from the rails'.[45] For most of the history of the non-Protestant churches the area around the table has been, during the Eucharist, a female-free zone; and when that history is recalled by historians it is imagined in just that way, but here in the Roman Canon we have, in all likelihood, the echo of an earlier phase in Christian practice.

The presence of names in the canon

As we have noted, the starting point of scholarship on this prayer has been the need to name names and refer to the 'intentions' of the offerers (who could be distinct from those actually participating in the Eucharist).[46] This naming of individuals appears from the references to the practice in Jerome and Innocent

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[44] The *Didache*, however, being excluded from this statement.

[45] *Codex Iuris Canonici* (1917), canon 813,2 envisaged the possibility of a woman answering the priest, but only as an emergency provision, and she was not to enter the sanctuary.

[46] See, for a recent example, Robert Cabié, *The Church at Prayer* (1992), 80 who begins his section on 'the meaning of the offering' with a sub-section: 'the intentions of the offerers and the "reading of the names".'

to be a matter of the late fourth century which then progressively spread through the Latin west. However, this left the problem of the absence of any marker for names in the oldest manuscripts of the Canon or the marker's location somewhat out of proper position in a *libellus* such as Stowe. This conundrum was resolved by postulating that the naming of names generated the prayer, then the practice ceased due to its inconvenience (hence the absence of the markers in the manuscripts – with Stowe seen as an erratic insular product), and then it was re-introduced in Carolingian times (ignoring the fact that Stowe is from the first decades of the ninth century when Charlemagne was at the height of his powers) as clergy discovered that *famuli famulaeque* was not specific enough for those intentions they wanted to recall.

There is, however, a simpler solution. Originally, the prayer did not have any naming of names but was similar to the prayer we find in 1*Clement*: all in the gathering were equally the Father's servants and none was identified by name as special. Even when this practice of including names had appeared, it was quite some time before the actual practice generated the marker in the manuscripts (such scribal conservatism when a book was always a copy of an older book is in no way surprising; though in a liturgical context it is usually the survival of rubrics that no longer related to practice that we note). When, finally, the marker was introduced to the page, there was some instability as to where is should occur. On this reading, Stowe is not an exception among the oldest manuscripts, but a Carolingian-age harbinger of what became, and still remains, the norm: a text with a provision marked for names to be read out.

Whether or not Jerome was correct in suggesting that this new practice pandered to vanity is beyond the scope of the historian, however, it did generate a significant change in the understanding of the prayer. Now the prayer linked the priest not to the group with him at the Eucharist but to an individual or several individuals who may or may not have been present in the assembly. From being the prayer of the group for the group, it became the presider's prayer for others, and the Eucharist had an 'intention' and an effect distinct from celebration itself and the act of those engaging in the action of offering thanks to the Father.[47] It is not, to my mind, accidental that the period from which date the first detailed regulations about naming names in the Canon is also roughly the period in which we see the development of the private Mass[48] and what has been termed by Nussbaum '*zahlbare Werkfrömmigkeit*' ('a payable works piety')[49] and Häussling '*Kumulationserscheinung*' ('the phenomenon of

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[47] How this view coheres with the eucharistic theology of Isidore of Seville who saw the Eucharist as a discrete action which had as its primary goal the making of Christ present on the altar needs to be examined further.

[48] See T. O'Loughlin, 'Treating the "Private Mass" as Normal: Some Unnoticed Evidence from Adomnán's *De locis sanctis*', *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 51 (2009), 334-44.

[49] See Otto Nussbaum, *Kloster, Priestermönch und Privatmesse: Ihr Verhältnis im Westen von den Anfängen bis zum hohen Mittelalter* (Bonn, 1961).

accumulation')[50] – and it was in this spirit that the *Commemoratio pro vivis* was discussed by rubricians until recently. Perhaps this is the real price of the practice castigated by 'the hermit of Bethlehem'.

The prayer's conclusion

Let us now jump to the end of the prayer,

tibique reddunt vota sua
aeterno Deo, vivo et vero

and it feels as if we are entering a completely different world. Now the imagery is drawn entirely from the Scriptures and the theology is a direct adaptation to the situation of the Eucharist of that used for the sacrifices in the Jerusalem temple. This biblical background is obscured in the current translation which simply has: 'we pray to you, our living and true God' while it inverts the order of the petitions.[51] We could render it thus:

To you they [the *circumstantes*] pay their vows
to the eternal God, living and true.

But what does it mean to say 'to you we pay our vows'? The notion of paying a vow, the literary form: *redde vota tua*, is often found in the Scriptures, and is particularly prominent in the *Psalms*,[52] while the general notion is found in many other places besides.[53] These 'paid vows' were understood in early Christianity as the perfect sacrifices prescribed in *Lev*. 22:18-22 which would make the whole people acceptable in the sight of God: the gifts would be their best products which were offered as part of the service of God and their fulfilment of the covenant.[54] Whether those who used this prayer thought of their gifts in

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[50] See Angelus Häussling, *Mönchskonvent und Eucharistiefeier: Eine Studie über die Messe in der abendländischen Klosterliturgie des frühen Mittelalters und zur Geschichte der Messhäufigkeit* (Münster, Westfalen, 1973); see also Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, *The Celebration of the Eucharist* (London, 1967) [original German ed., Freiburg, 1966] which examines the theological implications of, and how theological reflection was used as justification for, this development.

[51] The proposed new translation recognises the biblical language of the first phrase and the study text has added a footnote to *Ps*. 115:14, 18 and a pointer to *Ps*. 22:26; 50:14; 56:13; 61:9; 65:2 [presumably a misprint for v. 1]; and 66:13; however, it does not note the biblical background for the second phrase.

[52] *Nah*. 1:5; *Job* 22:27; *Prov*. 7:14; 1*Esdr*. 2:6; *Jdt*. 16:22; *Ps*. 22:26; 50:14; 56:12; 61:9; 65:1 and 13; 115:14 and 18.

[53] *Ex*. 36:3; *Num*. 15:3; 29:39; 30:6; *Lev*. 22:18 and 21; *Deut*. 12:6; *Jonah* 1:16; and *Amos* 5:22.

[54] See the very concise summary of the question by Michael D. Guinan in David Noel Freedman (ed.), *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI, 2000), 1361, s.v. 'Vow.'

terms of the Church's sacrifice of praise or of their many actual gifts brought to the Eucharist as being the new 'paying of vows' we cannot be certain, but clearly by their frequent encounters with the phrase in the psalms they would have been able to imagine the whole assemblage of their actions as part of the history of a people offering praise, as his due, to God for his goodness.

This phrase *tibique reddunt vota sua* has a doublet in *aeterno Deo vivo et vero*; and as with the other doublets both elements have to be read together if it is not to appear that the *tibi* of prayer in the first member is not distinct from the *aeterno Deo* of the second member. This concluding comma, *aeterno Deo vivo et vero*, is taken from 1*Thess.* 1:9 where the church in Thessalonica is praised by Paul for having turned from offering to idols to offering gifts to the living and true God ('*seruire Deo uiuo et uero*'). The praise is most apt in the context, for while *tibique reddunt* identifies the assembly as the people of the covenant – in eucharistic language the people of the *noui et aeterni testamenti* – offering what they have committed themselves to offer; this phrase identifies them as the church which has turned from false offering to true worship. Lastly, whence comes the adjective *aeternus* applied to God? Any single adjective applied to God is liable to sound strange for we are far more familiar with constructions such as '*omnipotens aeterne Deus*.' The source is probably *Rom.* 16:26 where Paul's coda has the phrase: *praeceptum aeterni Dei ad oboeditionem fidei*, and so there was 'authority' for an adjective that gives the perfect set of balanced final stresses: *aternó Deó vivó et veró*.

The presence of additional intentions

Now we can come to some of the specific needs mentioned in the prayer that are asked for the living – note that the prayer assumes that there are specified needs the living have which are mentioned, and that it is not the case that by being named those people can draw on the 'fruits' of the sacrifice. In the most common, historically attested, form of the prayer there are three such intentions:

pro se suisque omnibus:
pro redemptione animarum suarum,
pro spe salutis et incolumitatis suae.

But, as we have noted above with reference to Stowe, this is also an unstable part of the prayer.[55] In the Roman Canon as it stands there is no logical connection

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[55] The instability is not confined to the fact that the number of intentions vary, but the content of some of them: Stowe's further fourteen intentions cover such needs as the health of the older monks, the purity of the ministers, the integrity of the virgins, good weather, and a fruitful harvest. Now while some of these needs were constant such as the health of the older monks (at least in a monastic setting such as that which produced Stowe) and the preservation of the purity of the

between the three that are common to all the manuscripts, and I translate them as referring as much to everyday needs as spiritual realities:

For themselves and all that belong to them;
For the redemption of their souls;
For the hope of health and for their well being.

These factors, the instability of the text and the ordinariness of two of the common petitions, suggest to me that this was a development of the original prayer at a time when 'the sacrifice of praise' was seen to be a powerful petition to God – which could be focused on specific needs – independent of the actual intercession of the assembly in the action of offering thanks. In the first section of the prayer it is the assembled church that makes intercession as a priestly people, in Christ, for itself; now it is the sacrifice which makes the intercession and the people as petitioners merely ask where its graces might fall. The community are associated by presence at the sacrifice, and now here in the petitions are the needs for which they are offering it! It is a short step intellectually to the position where they, or one of them, were/was having the sacrifice offered for (*pro*) this or that person or need.

As we find them in the Canon, these petitions (and the others found in *libelli* such as Stowe) can be seen as a replacement for, the by then omitted, Prayer of the Faithful. But this 'replacement' should not be seen simply as a transition of ritual form and location from the earlier Universal Prayers; it also reflects a significant transition in theology. From a priestly people standing in the presence of God interceding for themselves, the church, the world, and special needs (the theological basis of the Prayer of the Faithful as we find it described in early sources such as Justin); we have in these petitions the situation of a people who are asking the priest to offer the sacrifice *for* these and other needs. The Eucharist is now primarily the priest's action; and the Eucharist is an act in itself, independent of the community. The Eucharist is an action, at which the community is present, that produces effects: and an important 'fruit' is that it makes a powerful petition for specific needs – and the Church is involved only in so far as it has the priest acting on its behalf. This was a position which itself would come to be seen to denigrate the dignity of ordained ministry, such that later theology would stress that he acts *in persona Christi* towards the laity rather than on their behalf (which might imply that he was their deputy or minister).

While we do not know when the first Mass stipend was given to a priest on the understanding that *he* offered Mass for a living intention, in these prayers we can find the theological 'space' which that development presupposed.

ministers, others may have been seasonal: one may have prayed for good weather in stormy times and for a fruitful earth at the time of planting or harvest.

The presence of the formula: *pro quibus tibi offerimus: vel*

No passage in the whole of the Roman Canon is as problematic for a translator as:

pro quibus tibi offerimus:
vel qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis.

The current liturgical translation simply, and wisely, ignores the difficulty and gives instead: 'we offer you this sacrifice of praise.'[56] We can see the difficulties by translating it word for word:

(to you their faith is known and their devotion obvious), for whom we offer to you or who offer to you this sacrifice of praise[57]

What are we to make of this rather involved sentence, if it is a sentence? We must turn again to the manuscripts.[58] Let us begin by reminding ourselves that the early ninth-century manuscript, the Stowe Missal, which normally expands the text, has simply:

quorum tibi fides cognita est et nota deuotio
qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis

and so, in this case, there is no difficulty.

The problematic words were added by Alcuin in sacramentaries just before the year 800. Jungmann has narrated the process:

[*qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis* implied that the faithful] are not idle spectators, even less a profane crowd; rather they are all together sharers in that most sacred action with which we stand before Thee, O God. But in more recent times, when by reason of language and spatial arrangement the celebration of the priest is markedly withdrawn from the people, who can follow the service only at a certain distance, this unrestricted expression apparently looked too bold, and so the words *pro quibus tibi offerimus* were prefixed … The point made by this phrase was that the priest at the altar (surrounded by his assistants) was primarily the one who offered the sacrifice.[59]

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[56] That in the proposed new translation, see above, not only does not recognise the problem in the Latin text, but assumes the text's inerrancy by translating it as if the text meaningfully referred to two possible activities.

[57] I have not set this in sense lines, as the sense lines found in missals since 1969 are themselves an attempt to give these words a meaningful interpretation; and it seems to have been the attempted logic of those sense lines that stands behind the proposed new translation.

[58] The fundamental work exposing both the problems of this text and the origins of those problems is that of Edmund Bishop, 'On the early texts of the Roman Canon' (1903), and anyone wanting to understand this prayer must go back to that article: all those others who have worked on the problem such as Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (1945), and Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia* (1955), have based themselves on Edmund Bishop's work. However, it is a salutary lesson on how little the work of scholars is heeded by those who promulgate liturgical books in that more than sixty years after Edmund Bishop exposed the need for the emendation of the canon's text, nothing happened in the 1969 missal – nor since!

[59] J.A. Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia* (1955), II 167.

This expresses eloquently how the prayer is an indicator of shifting theologies of the church, of the Eucharist, and of ordained ministry; but it does not explain the actual linguistic problem of changes of subject within the sentence nor the presence of the word *vel* which seems to undermine the possibility the sentence having a consistent meaning. The answer lies in the fact that Alcuin, unhappy with the notion that *they* (*i.e.* those 'at' Mass other than the priest) were offering (*offerunt*) the sacrifice, added an alternative phrase changing the action's subject to the priest (along with the sacred ministers) who was also uttering the words (*offerimus*). But since tampering with a most sacred text, or appearing to change or even correct such a text, was considered suspect, the change took the form of an addition – indeed of an optional addition.[60] So the celebrant could say *qui tibi offerunt hoc sacificium laudis* or (*vel*) he could say *pro quibus tibi offerimus*; but the cautious scribe and the cautious celebrant wanted to lose nothing and therefore recited both, including the rubric which became a part of the most sacred prayer.[61] It may have been meaningless grammar, but it was part of the *oratio periculosa* and so it was safer to keep everything![62] And, as such, it was the action of saying, not the understanding of what was said nor its linguistic meaningfulness, which confected the *opus operatum*.

The prayer originally gave expression to the notion that it was the prayer offered by the whole community that constituted the community's sacrifice of praise. It is not accidental, therefore, that this term, *sacrificium laudis*, comes from *Heb*. 13:15. This picks up the liturgical theology we have already seen underlying the opening words of the *Commemoratio pro vivis* of the church as the priestly people offering the perfect sacrifice in union with Christ in the new temple on the new altar. As the author of *Hebrews* expressed it:

For here we have no lasting city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.

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[60] On the intellectual culture of the eighth century and its fears of 'innovation' in textual matters – where those innovations were actually what they thought of as 'corrections' to sacred texts, see Thomas O'Loughlin, *Teachers and Code-Breakers: The Latin Genesis Tradition, 430-800* (Turnhout, 1998), 305-11.

[61] It may seem, to some, beyond imagination that a rubric could slip into a sacred text and become indistinguishable from it. Surely, they argue, the Church's most sacred texts are preserved inerrantly from such corruption! To that position, that this prayer cannot contain a simple blunder that needs correction, I should point out that there is a well-known parallel in the case of the formula of absolution (*i.e.* in 'the *forma sacramenti*') in the Tridentine ritual. The formula contained these words: … *Dominus noster Jesus Christus te absolvat: et ego auctoritate ipsius te absolvo ab omni vinculo excommunicationis, suspensionis, et interdicti, in quantum possum, et tu indiges. Deinde ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis, in nominee Patris, et Filii, + et Spiritus Sancti, Amen*. In this formula, the word *deinde* (meaningless in the sentence) originated as a rubric but through a simple graphical mistake came to be heard by countless penitents until the arrival of the reformed rite in 1973.

[62] On this notion of the prayer having a power, indeed a danger, within itself, see J.A. Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia* (1955), II 205. This is a theme in the history of the Latin liturgy that needs a thorough investigation.

Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise[63] to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name (*Hebr*. 13:14-5).

But the world of post-Isidorian theology was one where offering sacrifice was the work of priests, and this became their defining, distinguishing characteristic, as distinct from other Christians who, *a definitione*, could not offer sacrifice. The presbyter was no longer the *proestós* nor the president, but the *sacerdos*. He could act on behalf of those others and they could share spiritually in the sacrificial fruits – whose direction could be effected in a more specific way through the notion of 'Mass intention' and a stipend – and, lest there be confusion, Alcuin even gave this new theology verbal expression in the prayer. It is still there in the Latin text, along with what was once its rubric, and the whole assemblage is prayed, as if it formed a sentence, whenever this Eucharistic Prayer is used in Latin.[64]

What might the prayer have looked like originally?

The process of dissecting the prayer, and laying bare its textual stratigraphy, is now complete. Now we can see what the prayer probably looked like in the later fourth century, without gaps for names and without later theological additions:

Memento, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum
et omnium circumstantium,
quorum tibi fides cognita est et nota devotio,
qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis,
pro se suisque omnibus,
pro redemptione animarum suarum,
pro spe salutis et incolumitatis suae;
tibique reddunt vota sua
aeterno Deo, vivo et vero.

In this form it has a unity and a more or less consistent theological vision of the whole church gathering, offering its sacrifice of praise to the Father while asking for the divine face to look toward the people of the covenant whose covenantal gifts and praise are given voice by the president of the Eucharist. There is, however, one jarring note in this: the presence of the three (or possibly more) specified intentions which draw the focus away from the Eucharist

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[63] In both the Vetus Latina and the Vulgate this is rendered '*sacrificium laudis.*'

[64] At present the problem does not exist in most vernacular translations, but this unfaithfulness to the canonical text is proposed for remedy if the new translations get final approval from Rome – then the grammatical and theological jumble will be shared with congregations worldwide in a way impossible in Latin!

itself and the community standing around. So we can postulate that at an earlier time (now wholly hidden from us) that the prayer was simply this:

Memento, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum
et omnium circumstantium,
quorum tibi fides cognita est et nota devotio,
qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis,
tibique reddunt vota sua
aeterno Deo, vivo et vero.

Here we have a coherent and consistent prayer, theologically and linguistically, with a remarkable rhetorical balance making it ideal for proclamation, and it is a combination of biblical memories and linguistic items that are consistent with early Christian practice – and even with a link to the earliest liturgical fragments we have from 'the church of God temporarily resident in Rome.'[65] For these reasons, I am convinced that it was the prayer in this shorter form that was the basis for subsequent developments.

Conclusion

It is always surprising to note just how little we know about the early Roman liturgy. We see the final shapes; we deduce from what we know of the general Christian situation what the liturgy in Rome must have been like in the earliest times; and then we attempt to build bridges over the gaps in our evidence.[66] But it is a difficult business. Here I have attempted a different approach, more akin to that of an archaeologist moving down through the strata of successive periods of building to observe the changes that occurred and left their traces in an edifice over time.[67]

By the time we have plentiful manuscript evidence, the *Commemoratio pro vivis* exists in all but its present shape and it coheres, on the one hand, with a theology of the nature of the Eucharist, ordained priesthood, and Church that is long familiar and seen as the 'traditional' Catholic position on these issues. And, on the other hand, it is a prayer which fits with liturgical practice and popular understanding / practices relating to the Mass; it belongs to the world of stipends, 'Gregorian Masses', 'Foundation Masses', the notion of celebrants'

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[65] 1*Clement*, greeting. The phrase '*he ekklesia tou theou he paroiokusa* [in some place]' is a common one in the opening greeting of early Christian letters.

[66] The work of Enrico Mazza, *The Origins of the Eucharistic Prayer* (Collegeville, MN, 1995), 98-176, is an example of this method.

[67] Moreover, as with an archaeological survey where we can have a clear succession of strata giving the relative dates of the parts to one another, but where absolute dates are problematic; so here we can be fairly confident about the sequence of strata in the prayer development but cannot give these dates except that the naming of names appeared in late fourth century, and the whole prayer had more or less its present shape by the later eighth century.

intentions, and that the 'fruits' of the sacrifice. However, even a little probing shows that this prayer is a product of evolutionary change. Far from being a consistent unit in the present form, it is like a building that has been knocked about and had many bits randomly added on by various builders and architects each with their own ideas and tastes: it is an edifice showing the scars of time and battle. However, more consistent probing can reveal earlier stages of the prayer, and indeed point out elements that may go back to the very earliest times of Christian liturgy in Rome in the first century. Studied in this way we not only have the prayer's stratigraphy revealed, but, more importantly, we have an index to earlier theologies and understandings of the Eucharist and the Church. Here lie the real surprises of the prayer. It exhibits a theology of the Church and of sacrifice that coheres closely with that which we see in the later documents of the canonical collection, and in particular *Hebrews* and 1*Peter*. It is the whole people themselves offering their sacrifice of praise; the whole local church, women alongside men who act as the Christ's priesthood standing before the living God. It exhibits a corporate theology of the Church that is likewise, very early; and along with this an attitude to women and men, as Christians, with a distinct view of themselves as a group eschewing distinctions of 'honour' within the larger society, that is even earlier. Men and women considering themselves equal in the assembly in a new relationship with God, deliberately ignoring the *cursus honorum* that bound the larger society together. And, lastly, it allows a glimpse at the gathering standing around the Lord's table at a time before the great building programmes of the fourth century. It is little wonder that the prayer was thought in need of additions and improvements later, for it echoed from a distant moment in the church's history, then long forgotten.