

THE ODYSSEY OF A FAMILIAR PRAYER

GERALD ELLARD, S.J., Ph.D.

ST. MARY'S COLLEGE

St. Mary's, Kansas

DOMINE Iesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi, qui ex voluntate Patris, cooperante Spiritu Sancto, per mortem tuam mundum vivificasti: libera me per hoc sacrosanctum corpus et sanguinem tuum ab omnibus iniquitatibus meis, et universis malis: et fac me tuis semper inhaerere mandatis, et a te numquam separari permittas: qui cum eodem Deo Patre, et Spiritu Sancto vivis et regnas Deus in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

AS often as he celebrates the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and at a most solemn moment just before communicating, every priest of the Roman Rite says the prayer just quoted. It has been an obligatory part of the Roman Mass since the missal ordered by the Council of Trent was published in 1570. For some centuries prior to that date it was a common-place, if not obligatory formula in our Mass-rite. Within our living memory a large part of the laity has adopted the use of the Missal, and so it may be said that this prayer is rapidly winning a central position in the Eucharistic piety of millions. Since it is not an original, or even an early, part of the Roman Mass, it becomes doubly interesting to ask ourselves what is known about it. We would greatly like to know who wrote it. In what context is it first met with? Under what circumstances did it win acceptance in our Missals, when no lack of other prayers for Communion have had their day and have perished? The present paper addresses itself in tentative and modest fashion to these questions. This survey must be regarded as tentative, because many of the extant sources are not now within my reach: no pretension can attach to this paper, if only for the

reason that the data for it have been supplied by others. But such as it is, it ought not be without value, since this prayer promises to go on molding the Eucharistic piety of ages yet unborn, as, in their turn, they shall show forth the death of the Lord until He come.

Most books dealing with the text of the Mass, standard works like Gühr,¹ de Puniet,² Brinktrine,³ and others, content themselves with stating that this prayer is first found in the *eleventh* century, and that by the *fourteenth* it had found its way in the Missals in use in Rome. From that place and date its diffusion is attributed to the Franciscan Friars, who had adopted the Mass-book of the Roman Curia. Cardinal Schuster's *The Sacramentary*, says of this prayer, and its two accompanying ones in our present Missal, that they appear "in the codex of Ratoldus of Corbie," which is MS BN lat 12052, a *tenth* century source.⁴ The revised edition of Eisenhofer's *Handbuch der Katholischen Liturgik* gives a ninth century date and source for the prayer.⁵ Therein he is following the lead given by Victor Leroquais, whose monumental *Les Sacramentaires et les Missels Manuscrits des Bibliothèques Publiques de France* in 1924 had signaled this prayer as part of the first fully developed *Ordo Missae* and found in an Amiens manuscript of the second half of the *ninth* century.⁶ From his minute, page-by-page investigations of the hundreds of manuscript Missals in France, and his command of the published literature, Leroquais doubtless had a closer acquaintance with such books than any one before him has achieved. At that the unique character of the Amiens *Ordo Missae* so impressed him that it drew from his pen a second and fuller account, "L'*Ordo Missae* du Sacramentaire d'Amiens."⁷ Without wishing at that time, 1927, to enter into the history

¹N. Gühr, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass* (St. Louis: Herder, 1927), 725.

²J. de Puniet, *The Mass, Its Origin and History* (London: BO&W, 1939), 181.

³J. Brinktrine, *Die Heilige Messe in Ihrem Werden u. Wesen* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1931), 228.

⁴I. Schuster, *The Sacramentary* (New York: Benziger, 1924) I, 308.

⁵L. Eisenhofer, *op. cit.* (Freiburg i B: Herder, 1933), II, 211.

⁶Leroquais, *op. cit.* (Paris, 1924) I, 30: work cited below as *Leroquais*.

⁷Cf. *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, XLI (nov ser I), 1927, 435-45.

of any single prayer in the *Ordo*, Leroquais does make the statement:

Une première remarque, c'est que, à part le prière *Quod ore sumpsimus* qui l'on trouve déjà dans les sacramentaires de Gellone et d'Angoulême, dans le sacramentaire aujourd'hui perdu de Saint-Remi de Reims et dans celui de la bibliothèque de Saint-Gall, à part le *Suscipe Sancta Trinitas*, que l'on rencontre dans le sacramentaire de Rotrade, presque toutes les autres apparaissant ici pour la première fois, comme aussi apparaît, réalisé pour la première fois le principe qui aura son plein épanouissement dans l'*Ordo Missae* du missel romain. . .⁸

I. RECORDED BY ALCUIN

Yet fifty to seventy-five years prior to this Amiens codex this formula was being used as we use it today before receiving Communion. I have before me a short memorandum I made on this prayer just ten years ago, wherein, after tabulating a few eleventh and tenth century manuscripts, as well as the Amiens' book just mentioned, there is the note, specially under-scored by reason of its early date: "In Alcuin's *De Psalmorum Usu*: cf PL CI, 508." I had not, I am sure, read Alcuin's work at that time: my note was based on some source I had failed to record. Some years later I did 'discover' the prayer in Alcuin, and then 'discover' that I had made this memorandum on its occurrence long before. How we learn by ceaselessly forgetting! It was then I resolved to pursue some day the traces of this prayer in its wanderings. Since then I recall one printed reference to the Alcuinian connection. When Adrian Fortescue's scholarly work on the history of the Mass was first published in 1912, it said of this prayer: "It occurs occasionally as early as the XIth century," and when the same work was reedited by the late Father H. Thurston, S. J., in 1937, for the sentence just quoted his fine hand had substituted: "It was familiar to Alcuin in the VIIIth century."⁹ Here is the prayer, as found in Alcuin, and set side by side with it the Amiens' text: In each

⁸Ibid, pp. 444-45.

⁹A. Fortescue, *The Mass, A Study of the Roman Liturgy*—(New York: Longmans, 1912), p. 382: (New York: Longmans, 1937), p. 382.

version we enclose in pointed brackets portions that are peculiar to the texts in question:

Alcuin: <i>PL</i> CI, 508		Amiens: BN 9432, fol. 17 ^r -17 ^v
Domine Jesu Christe, Fili Dei	1	Domine Ihesu Christe, Fili Dei
vivi qui ex voluntate Patris,	2	vivi, qui ex voluntate Patris,
cooperante Spiritu Sancto,	3	cooperante Spiritu Sancto libera
libera me per hoc <i>sacrum</i> cor-	4	me per hoc <i>sacrosanctum</i> corpus
pus et sanguinem tuum a cunc-	5	et sanguinem tuum, a cunctis
tis iniquitatibus, <et pravis	6	iniquitatibus
ac perfidis cogitationibus,> et	7	
universis malis, et fac me tuis	8	et universis malis, et fac me
obedire praeceptis, et per-	9	<Domine, Deus meus> tuis obedire
mitte me a te numquam in per-	10	praeceptis, et a te numquam
petuum separari. <i>Per Dom-</i>	11	in perpetuum separari. Qui vivis.
<i>inum.</i>	12	

Did Alcuin, who died in 804, compose this prayer? Much as one might wish, if only for definiteness' sake, to say that he did, it is just as probable that he copied it from some current source. As a fairly numerous group of surviving manuscripts testify, there was a large body of extra-liturgical prayers current in monastic and other circles. No less an authority than the late lamented Abbot Cabrol described the situation as a noteworthy feature of the ninth (and I would add of the eighth) century times. Thus Abbot Cabrol:

C'est un trait fort remarquable de l'histoire religieuse du ix^e siècle, que le piété ne se contente pas de l'expression qu'elle trouve dans la liturgie officielle de l'Eglise. Il y a tout un courant de dévotion privée, qui garde sans doute un caractère liturgique très accentué, mais enfin qui n'est pas la liturgie officielle.¹⁰

It was perhaps into this current that Alcuin reached for the prayer, *Domine Iesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi*.

What is known of Alcuin's book, *De Psalmorum Usu*, in

¹⁰F. Cabrol, "Les Ecrits Liturgiques d'Alcuin," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* (Louvain, XIX, 1923) pp. 507-521; quotation on page 519. Cabrol in writing the article on Alcuin in the *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, I, 1, 1070-1091, does not signalize the Alcuinian connection of the prayer under consideration.

which the prayer is found? There is a short *Beati Flacci Alcuini Vita*, written by a monk of Ferrières near Orleans, which abbey Alcuin had held along with St. Lupus of Troyes and St. Martin of Tours. The sketch dates prior to 829, and was written under the abbot who was Alcuin's immediate successor there as he had once been Alcuin's scholar in the Palace School. Thus, as far as time and place are concerned, the author was in a position to have his facts accurately, and he tells us he is careful about setting them forth. Well, our monk rounds out his tenth chapter with these sentences:

Docuit eum etiam, per omne vitae tempus, quos psalmos paenitentiae, cum litanis et orationibus, precibusque; quos ad orationem specialem faciendam; quos in laude Dei, quos quoque pro quacumque tribulatione, quemque, etiam, ut se in divinis exerceat laudibus, decantaret. Quod nosse qui vult, legat libellum eius ad eundem *De Ratione Orationis*.¹¹

That is a very accurate description of the work, almost in fact, its table of contents, except that it is elsewhere called *De Psalmorum Usu Liber cum Variis Formulis ad Res Quotidianas Accommodatis*. The work itself opens with a distich attesting Alcuin's writing it for Charlemagne:

*Hoc opus, hoc carmen, quod cernis tramite lector
Alcuinus Domini fecit honori sui.*

A Cologne edition of the work, of 1571, bore the title: *Alcuinus de Psalmorum Usu Hominum Necessitatibus Quotidie Emergentibus Accommodato Una Cum Variis Precandi Formulis. . .*¹² Alcuin, after arranging his Psalms to meet all possible needs in getting the monarch out of his troubles every day, and supporting his borrowings from Scripture with prayers from a wide variety of sources, finishes off the work with a chapter embodying three prayers for use before communicating. The second of these is the prayer we are here concerned with.

Are there reasons for thinking that Alcuin borrowed the prayer rather than composing it? Nothing direct that I know of, but there may be one or two little hints. One is this: this

¹¹PL, CI, 443.

¹²PL, CI, 442.

prayer, later on, will turn up in literally scores of places, but *never again* in just the same recension Alcuin provided for Charlemagne; which might suggest that he used *and changed* a current formulation. Then, there is a plain, not to say glaring, mistake in the ending of the prayer in Alcuin's book: addressed, as it is, directly to Christ, it nevertheless concludes with the formula *Per Christum Dominum nostrum*. . . . That ending, proper and in place, only when the prayer is addressed specifically to God, or God the Father, could more easily be set down by one copying a prayer from another source, rather than by one thinking through the composition. But such a slip, of course, could be the carelessness of a scribe. These are not strong reasons, but they may be possible indications that Alcuin here suggested to Charlemagne a prayer already current for use before receiving Communion.

II. NINTH AND TENTH CENTURY MASS-BOOKS

What is known of the Amiens' Mass-book in which this prayer is included in that new feature, the *Ordo Missae*? Very, very little. The manuscript, *BN lat 9432*, can be dated only roughly as of the second half of the ninth century.¹³ The great Abbey of Corbie was just at the gate of Amiens, and Corbie was the scene in the middle years of that century of the famous debate, Paschasius Radbertus *vs.* Ratramnus, on the mode of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Our MS later on belonged to Corbie, but it was not written there.¹⁴ Nor did Corbie, it would seem, know the prayer at that time, for the famous Mass-book of Rotradus was written at Corbie, about 853, *MS BN lat 12050*, and this terminates the Ordinary of the Mass in the old manner, that is to say with the *Agnus Dei*.¹⁵ From some unknown source, then, Amiens had acquired between 850 and 900 an *Ordo Missae* into which was worked the

¹³Leroquais, I, 38; L. Delisle, *Mémoire sur d'Anciens Sacramentaires* (Paris. Imp. Nat. 1886), 159-162; this work is cited below as *Delisle*.

¹⁴A. Wilmart, "Corbie, manuscrits liturgiques de," *Dict. Arch. Chrét. et Lit.*, III, 2, 2913-2958.

¹⁵Leroquais, I, 25-28.

prayer we are tracing. There are rudimentary *Ordines Missae* in other books of the period, but they show the Offertory prayers developing earlier than the Communion ones. No other extant Mass-book of the ninth century has the prayer *Domine Iesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi*. . . .

But the tenth century shows that the prayer is beginning to make its mark elsewhere. Of course in the study of the diffusion of the prayer, as based on *surviving* Mass-books, it must be borne in mind that the tenth century was the Age of Iron, an era of uninterrupted, if not entirely unparalleled destruction, continuous looting and pillage. But the very necessity of providing new books for the rebuilt churches doubtless facilitated the spread of new uses.

One of the most interesting phases of the spread of the prayer is to find it written on the margin and fly-leaves of the Mass-books that survived the general destruction of the age. Thus Le Mans MS 77, written in and for that city about 850, had two folios added at the beginning of the next century, and various Communion prayers were inscribed. Among them we find: *Oratio ad Eucharistiam: Domine Iesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi*. . . .¹⁶ More interesting far is the Paris MS BN lat 2291, a Sacramentary written for St-Amand, not far from Arras, in the late ninth century.¹⁷ Before long this book had traveled to Paris, and Delisle is of the opinion that certain *marginalia*,¹⁸ Communion prayers among them, fol, 22v,¹⁹ were added in the capital city. Leroquais adds the link that doubtless ties this all together, when he tells us that Bishop Gauzlin (died 886) was Abbot both of St-Amand and St-Denys before becoming Bishop of Paris.²⁰ The book, we would say, followed its episcopal master, and so went up in the world. The Communion prayer, whether added in Paris, or brought to Paris from Arras, took root in Paris, and in later Paris books will not be found to fail.

¹⁶Leroquais, I, 30.

¹⁷Leroquais, I, 56.

¹⁸Delisle, 149.

¹⁹Leroquais, I, 56.

²⁰Leroquais, I, 58.

The mention of Arras brings us back to the Paris MS *BN lat 12052*, the Ratold book already referred to in a preceding paragraph. Ratold, Abbot of Corbie (972-986), for some reason or other obtained a new Sacramentary written at St-Vedast, also at Arras; this book was then altered a little to bring it in line with Corbie usages. On paging through this work one may note that, if the monks of St-Amand at Arras did not use the prayer *Domine Iesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi*, their monastic brethren around the corner at St-Vedast's did.²¹ Strangely enough the prayer does not seem to have been adopted at Corbie for a long time: it fails in every other Corbie book at this period.

The extant traces of this prayer thus far mentioned all lay in the small area between the Seine and the Rhine. The next one, however, takes us far into the depths of the Germanic *Buchenwald* where Boniface made his great foundation of Fulda. Göttingen MS 231, a Fulda Sacramentary of about 975,²² is a book that presents a strange combination of things old and new. Right after its Canon are various Communion prayers, the first of which is our familiar *Perceptio*, and the second is the prayer we are here studying. The Fulda scribe has introduced a salutation, "Salvator mundi," towards the end of the prayer, but for the rest follows the then common text. At Fulda, too, the prayer would seem to have been given a coolish reception, since it fails in most of the other Fulda Mass-books of the period. Udine, MS 75, V, written at Fula for some center in Northern Germany, does embody it, but that brings us into the eleventh century.²³

So the tenth century is briefly summed up by saying that its scant surviving manuscripts witness to a restricted spread and hesitant adoption of the prayer.

²¹Leroquais, I, 79: published also in *PL LXXVIII*, 244.

²²G. Richter-A. Schönfelder, *Sacramentarium Fuldense* (Fulda: Aktiendruckerei, 1912) 4: for the dating, cf. *Zur Einführung*, xi.

²³G. Richter-A. Schönfelder, op. cit., xiii: in *Ebner*, 258-267, the signature of this MS is given as 76, V.

III. ELEVENTH CENTURY WANDERINGS

I should like to begin the eleventh century journal of this prayer by a reference to its arrival at Tours, which might be said to have had a claim on it long before, inasmuch as Alcuin lived his last years as Abbot of St. Martin's, and lay buried in that basilica. Well, in the Paris MSS *BN lat 9430* and *nov acq lat 1589* we have ninth century Mass-books from St. Martin's, in which neither our prayer nor any other special prayer for Communion occurs. But Tours MS 184, also a ninth-century book from St Martin's, later had its parchment folio 5v used for various *marginalia*. Among these is our prayer,²⁴ and also a request for prayers for a priest, Humbertus, who had died in 1012. "The hand which is responsible for all these entries," says L. W. Jones, our most recent authority on this writing, "is, then, a good sample of the script of Tours not long after 1012 A.D."²⁵ When, towards the end of the century, the Tours Mass-book, *MS BN lat 9434*, was written, our prayer went right into the text first hand.²⁶

The 'marginal lands' of other Mass-books taken up by Communion prayers during the eleventh century include the book, *MS BN lat 11589*, fol. 13v, written for the Abbey of St-Méen, in Brittany.²⁷ Then, too, there was Chartres, as we see in Chartres MS 577 (4). That book, a survivor of all the burnings and lootings of the Age of Iron, was now found to be a bit out of date. So, at folio 3^r, an eleventh century scribe brought it abreast of his age by writing in: *Oratio post Communionem: Domine Iesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi. . .*²⁸

Chartres was not the only place where the prayer was being used *after* communicating. Thus, in France, we find similar directions in the Besançon book, *MS BN lat 10500*, "post

²⁴*Leroquais*, I, 49.

²⁵L. W. Jones, "The Art of Writing at Tours From 1000 to 1200 A.D.," *Speculum*, XV, 3 (July, 1940), 286-298: quotation on page 291.

²⁶*Leroquais*, I, 149.

²⁷*Leroquais*, I, 110: It is not positive that our prayer is found, as the reference in this instance does not give the text.

²⁸*Leroquais*, I, 76.

acceptum corpus;”²⁹ the rubric is made to read “Post perceptionem eucharistiae” in *MS BN lat 12053*, a service book made for Lagny near Paris.³⁰ We shall meet the same situation elsewhere as well.

But to come back to the Sacramentaries where this prayer is assigned in the first writing for recital *before* Communion: we may note places as scattered as: ST-EVROULT, *MS Rouen 273 (A287)*,³¹ and CAEN, Bib. de la Fac. de Med., Montpellier, *MS 314*,³² in Normandy; in the Ile de France, PARIS, *MS BN lat 9436*,³³ and SOISSONS, *MS Laon 237*;³⁴ LYONS, *MS 537 (457)*,³⁵ (with its own interesting readings); and the book made at Figeac for MOISSAC, in the County of Toulouse, *MS BN lat 2293*.³⁶ So that, on adding the places and localities previously recorded, we find that by the end of this century the prayer had pretty well blanketed the land we call France.

Before pursuing this quest beyond the Alps, it pays one to note that Winchester, at that time England’s capital, had taken up our prayer by 1061, as witnessed by Corpus Christi College *MS 270*.³⁷ Nor, in the Rhineland were the monks at Epternach lagging behind the times in this small detail. At Epternach, *MS BN lat 9433*, we record in passing, that prayer was said “*Post Eucharistiam*.”³⁸ The Wolfenbüttel Library *MS Helmstadt 115* proves that the prayer had reached Minden, in Saxony, about 1030, and was there said “*post perceptionem communionem*.”³⁹ Even farther off, in Hamburg, it was being used about this same date, as we see in *MS Vallicellana B 141*.⁴⁰

²⁹*Leroquais*, I, 140.

³⁰*Leroquais*, I, 171.

³¹*Leroquais*, I, 176.

³²*Leroquaise*, I, 183.

³³*Leroquais*, I, 142.

³⁴*Leroquais*, I, 162.

³⁵*Leroquais*, I, 127.

³⁶*Leroquais*, I, 100.

³⁷The MS is partially collated in F. E. Warren, *The Leofric Missal* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1883): cf. p. 62: for the date, *Introd.*, lxvi.

³⁸*Leroquais*, I, 122.

³⁹J. Braun, “Alter u. Herkunft der sog. *Missa Illyrica*,” *Stimmen aus Maria Laach*, LXIX, 2 (1905) 143-155; E. Bishop, *Liturgica Historica* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1918), 138.

⁴⁰A. Ebner, *Iter Italicum: Quellen u. Forschungen z. Geschichte u. Kunstgeschichte des Missale Romanum im Mittelalter* (Freiburg i B: Herder, 1896), 200-01.

It was just at this time, as far as can be ascertained, that the famous *Micrologus de ecclesiasticis observationibus*, one of the greatest medieval commentaries on the Latin liturgy, was penned by Bernard of Constance. His manner of handling this prayer indicates that it was the common thing, and taken quite for granted, even though deriving from unofficial sources. He says: *Orationem quam inclinati dicimus, antequam communicemus, non ex Ordine [scil. Romano], sed ex religiosorum traditione habemus, scilicet hanc: "Domine Iesu Christe, < > qui ex voluntate Patris. . . ."*⁴¹

Bernard's statement, right after this, brings out the view that the full liberty allowed priests in selecting the prayers to be said, while quite above reproach for private Communion rites, yet did not meet the approval of the better minds, so he had been taught, when there was question of the Mass, as this was public worship. "*Sunt et aliae multae orationes, he says, quas quidem ad pacem et communionem privatam dicimus, sed diligentiores antiquorum observatores nos in huiusmodi privatis orationibus brevitati studere docuereunt potiusque publicis precibus in officio Missae occupare voluerunt.*"⁴²

But the evidence summons us to Italy, always of the greatest interest, and of the greatest weight in the early career of any usage destined to win place in the official worship manuals of the Roman West. Here the searcher finds that from the middle of the century on our prayer leaves the record of its penetration in quite a few places. The data are here presented in tabular form, the better to afford a quick survey.

⁴¹*Micrologus*, c. xviii: M. Hittorp, *De Divinis Catholicae Ecclesiae Officiis* (Parisii: MDCX), 742: also in *PL*, CLI, 989.

⁴²*Micrologus*, c. xviii.

ELEVENTH CENTURY ITALY

MANUSCRIPT	DATE	PLACE	PRAYER	RUBRIC
1. Rome, Bib V.E. MS 2116 (Sess. 136)	xi	St. Abundio, Como	In original hand	None indicated ⁴³
2. Monte Cassino, MS 426	xi ²	Albineto, near Mt. Cass.	Added in margin	Oratio post ac- ceptum corpus et sanguinem ⁴⁴
3. Monte Cassino, MS 339	1058-86 Abbacy of Desiderius	Monte Cassino	In original hand	Post acceptam eucharistiam ⁴⁵
4. Monte Cassino, MS 127 (XI, 5)	xi "Probably De- siderian" —Lowe	Monte Cassino	In original hand TWICE!	a) Sacerdos incli- natus oret: . . b) Post acceptam eucharistiam ⁴⁶
5. Rome, Bib Val- icellana, MS B 24	1075	Subiaco	In original hand	Sumpta eucharis- tia or. alia ⁴⁷
6. Bologna, Bib Univ MS 2247	xi ex.	OSB, Gorgona, near Is. Elba	In original hand	None indicated ⁴⁸
7. Florence, MS <i>Riccard.</i> 299	xi ex.	Camaldoli, D. of Siena	In original hand	Dum communicat presbyter ⁴⁹
8. Florence, MS <i>Riccard.</i> 300	xi ex.	Camaldoli, D. of Siena	In original hand	Post receptionem corporis et san- guinis ⁵⁰
9. Lucca, Bib Cap MS 606	xi ex.	Lucca	Added in margin	Or. ad Commu- nionem ⁵¹

While the table is still before us we might pause a moment to advert to this unusual circumstance: elsewhere there had been a little wavering as to usage in reciting this prayer *before* or *after* communicating, but in eleventh century Italy it was almost unanimously used after receiving. The scribe of Monte Cassino MS 127 (XI, 5), face to face with a dual tradition, cut the knot, so to speak, by tying another, since he set the prayer down for recital before *and* after. That was one way to meet all tastes in the matter.

A second glance over this table will bring out the fact that only one extant Mass-book of the early eleventh century Italy possessed the prayer in the original writing, and that was at

⁴³Ebner, 170-71.

⁴⁴E. A. Lowe, *The Beneventan Script* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1914), 350. Lowe adds the note that Sta Maria di Albineta "is about a mile northwest of Monte Cassino," (49); Cf. Ebner, 101-02. Lowe's book was consulted for me by Miss Blanche Fenwick of New York City, to whom I express my indebtedness.

⁴⁵Lowe, 349; Ebner, 100-01.

⁴⁷Ebner, 196, 339.

⁵⁰Ebner, 51, 300-02.

⁴⁸Lowe, 344, 75 note; Ebner, 98, 309-311.

⁴⁹Ebner, 13, 15.

⁵¹Ebner, 47, 299.

⁵¹Lowe, 270; Ebner, 65, 305.

Como in the Alps. Around mid-century we find that at St. Mary's in Albineta, right at the doors of Monte Cassino, it is written in second hand. Then it crops up, first hand, in a narrowly dateable Monte Cassino manuscript, and from then will not be found to fail. As the century draws to a close Tuscany was safely won, even including an island monastery near the Island of Elba. Let us glance *behind* the manuscripts.

How the table, with its bibliographical and geographical deadness, suddenly comes to life, when we open codex Monte Cassino 339 at the Canon of the Mass, folio 67^r: “. . . Abbate nostro *Desiderio* cum omni congregatione S. Benedicti. . .” it says clearly and records proudly. And therewith our little story is lit of a sudden with the radiance flashing from the circle of Hildebrand,—Gregory, the Greatest, he has been called. Of the next item in our table, MS Monte Cassino 127 (XI,5), Lowe says significantly it is “probably Desiderian” also.⁵² Of the next book, too, he says: “Owing to the relations between Subiaco and Monte Cassino it is not difficult to explain how certain entries in the Subiaco Sacramentary, e.g, fol. 101, are in the South Italian hand, although the body of the MS is in the script of Rome.”⁵³ Well, then, to come back to the book written during the abbacy of Desiderius. Benedictine annals say of him that his period of office at Monte Cassino is second only to that of Saint Benedict, that his name is bathed in imperishable splendor. Who was this Desiderius, cherished with such affection by the Benedictines? When he was baptized, as a prince of the Lombard Ducal house of Benevento, he had been named Daufar. So he had been known in his first monastic home, St. Sophia in Benevento: but his fellow-hermits in the Abruzzi had later latinized this to Desiderius. Pope St. Leo IX (1049-54) had found him a skilled and useful diplomat in dealing with the rising Norman force. During the papacy of Victor II (1055-57) he had entered Monte Cassino, and it was on Christmas Day, 1058, that he was installed as abbot in

⁵²Lowe, 344.

⁵³Lowe, 91.

that cradle of Western monasticism. The next year he was created cardinal. Such was the happy springtime of monastic observance he effected at Monte Cassino, that he was named Papal Vicar for all the monasteries in Southern and Central Italy, with full power in the interest of reform to appoint or depose not only abbots but bishops as well. During Hildebrand's flaming years as pope, 1073-85, our great prince-abbot-cardinal was constantly at the center of affairs so beneficial to his own and other abbeys. It is indicative of his position in the papal circle that he was chosen successor to Hildebrand's towering stature. He hesitated almost a year before accepting consecration. May 9, 1087, St. Peter's at Rome saw his coronation under the style of Victor III; and September 16th of the same year he breathed his last. That is why it is often said that Desiderius was far greater as successor to St. Benedict, than Victor was as successor to St. Peter—and Hildebrand! His pontificate might have been more comparable to the latter's, had it but afforded him time to grapple with its problems. But for all that a grateful (and infallible) Church preserves his memory in her imperishable White Book as Blessed Victor III.

It is in the circle of the Abbot Desiderius, and in the lands of the valiant Countess Matilda, that we find our prayer spreading in Italy. Though Victor, as pope, could not stay long in Rome, one wonders if it were not with him that this prayer went into the Mass-books of the Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles.

IV. WINNING ROME AND ITALY, TWELFTH CENTURY

Before reaching the term we have set ourselves, namely the coming and spread of the ubiquitous Friars, it will be necessary to glance back once more to ultramontane developments. But for the moment it will serve our purpose to remain in Rome, and watch the fortunes of our prayer in and from the city of the popes. And, again, for the sake of the bird's eye view, we spread all our manuscripts out before us.

MANUSCRIPT	DATE	PLACE	RUBRIC
1. Rome, Arch. Lat	xi/xii	Rome, Monastery of SS Sergius & Bac- chus, dependency of Lateran	Pacem daturus ⁵⁴
2. Rome, Bib S Petr MS F 11	xi/xii	St Peter's Basilica	Sumpta eucharistia adi- cit ista oratio ⁵⁵
3. Rome, Bib S Petr MS F 15	xii	Spoletto, near Rome	Dum sumit sanguinem ⁵⁶
4. Rome, Bib S Petr MS F 14	xii	Rome, church (altar?) SS. Trypho & Res- picius	Inclinatus dicat hanc orationem ⁵⁷
5. Arezzo, Bib Pub MS VI, 3	xii ²	Used at Arezzo, came from Monte Cassino	Post perceptam com- munionem ⁵⁸
6. Rome, Bib. Barb. MS XIII, 12	xii/xiii	Caiazzo, near Monte Cassino	Oratio ante eucharisti- am (!) ⁵⁹
7. Rome, Bib Casan. MS 1907 (B II, 1)	xii	OSB Abbey near Siena	Prayer added, xii/xiii, f. 191: Antequam communicat ⁶⁰
8. Milan, Bib Ambr MS H 225 <i>p. inf.</i>	xii	OSB Abbey near Ver- ona	Oratio ad eucharistiae perceptionem ⁶¹
9. Florence, Bib L. MS Conv Soppr 292	xii	Camaldoli, near Arez- zo	Oratio dicenda ante communionem ⁶²
10. Monza, Bib Cap MS 104	xii	Monza	Prayer added at end of Canon ⁶³
11. Bologna, Bib Univ MS 2679 (S Salv 686) S. xi	xii	OSB Abbey near Ver- ona	Prayer written in mar- gin, xii century ⁶⁴
12. Rome, Bib S Petr MS F 18	xii/xiii	St Peter's Basilica	Priusquam recipias cor- pus Domini dicas has orationes (<i>Perceptio</i> also) ⁶⁵

In this table we have abundant data for following the story of our Communion prayer. Item number two shows that it was used in Mass as said in St. Peter's Basilica at the very opening of the century, if not indeed in the closing years of the preceding one. Item number twelve shows that at the very end of the century the prayer was still in use at St. Peter's, but had by then reverted to its original place for recital before Communion; it was, too, linked with our familiar *Perceptio*. Item four of our list shows another church in Rome itself as using the prayer: numbers three, five, six and nine show once more how the propagating influence of Monte Cassino was busy in Central and Southern Italy. Eight and eleven illustrate Benedictine usage not openly traceable to Monte Cassino. Item ten shows a north Italian scribe adding the prayer, but without its customary framework, in a Monza Mass-book.

But special interest lurks in the fact that the Church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus, at the very beginning of the twelfth century, had this prayer. Towards the end of the century Cardinal Lotario de' Conte was for almost a decade archdeacon of SS. Sergius and Bacchus, just prior to his election as Innocent III in 1198. Lotario de' Conte, born an only child to Count Trasimund of Segni, at Anagni, had more than one connection in very high stations. After an early education at Rome, he had studied for some years at Paris, where he could have heard this prayer on every hand; then followed some years at Bologna, in the neighborhood of which the prayer was also known. His titular church in Rome had used it for almost a hundred years, and yet, when Lotario de' Conte, during the pontificate of Celestine III (1191-98), sat down to compose his great work, *De Sacrificio Missae*, he gives us a Mass that entirely ignored this prayer.⁶⁶

⁵⁴Ebner, 168-69. ⁵⁵Lowe, 267; Ebner, 182-83. ⁵⁶Lowe, 48; Ebner, 188-90.

⁵⁷Ebner, 187-88; 334-35.

⁵⁸Ebner, 4; Lowe, p. 334, 19, 50 mentions a MS of this signature, but of other contents.

⁵⁹Lowe, 49, 69, 365; Ebner, 150.

⁶⁰Ebner, 164.

⁶¹Ebner, 84-86; 306-07.

⁶²Ebner, 40.

⁶³Ebner, 111.

⁶⁴Ebner, 18--22.

⁶⁵Ebner, 191-93; 335-36.

⁶⁶PL CCXVII, 763 ff. An unwary reader might now be tricked by the text of the Mass as given before Innocent's work in Migne: it is a post-Tridentine addition, and does not correspond to the text of his work.

The reason for this strange omission may be this, that although a Cardinal, Lotario was not in priest's orders, and so could more easily be pardoned for not knowing this prayer. But I think more weight lies in the circumstance, as hinted by his biographers, that *he wrote this work at Anagni*. His immediate predecessor, Celestine III, held the Conte family in small favor, and Lotario was in retirement during this pontificate, leisure which he utilized for his literary labors. The oldest Mass-book associated with Anagni MS S *Petr F 13*, dates from about 1250, and it does not have our prayer.⁶⁷ Thus, if Innocent were writing at Anagni, with a local missal for the basis of his commentary, it is quite natural that he passed over this prayer in silence.

While we are waiting for Lotario to become Innocent III (1198), and then to confirm the Franciscan Order (1209), thus enabling the Fratelli to popularize what will be known as the *Missale secundum consuetudinem Romanae Curiae*, and so bring our prayer to the farthest altar in Christendom, let us glance back again to the land of the prayer's origin and early popularity. It is the throbbing period of the Crusades, and all the ferment attending them, the day of early Gothic and the Augustinian Scholasticism, the debates of Abelard and St. Bernard, the time when Peter Lombard stepped from his Paris Professorship to the Archbishop's throne of Paris, the time when Lotario de' Conte himself went off to study in Paris.

It would be tedious in the extreme to survey the list of places where the prayer made its first appearance at this time. For completeness' sake the data at hand is given in a note.⁶⁸ It is more entertaining to dwell on some of the textual variations of the prayer that now crop up, and to note how the newer religious Orders, the Cistercians and Premonstratensians, were spreading the prayer where the good influence of their first fervor penetrated.

⁶⁷Cf. Ebner, 186.

⁶⁸New appearances, twelfth century France: ANCHIN (Abbey), MS *Donai 90*, *Leroquais*, I, 351; ANGERS, MS 93(85), *Leroquais*, I, 297; MS 91(83), *Leroquais*, I, 72; APT, MS Avignon 220, *Leroquais*, I, 208; MSS Apt 10, 11, 13, 14, *Leroquais*, I, 251, 252,

But first let us share the thrill that is experienced in that dark, austere manuscript reading room of the Parisian Bibliothèque Nationale on opening its *latin MS 12056*, dating 1150-1200. It was painstakingly written and lovingly embellished with miniatures, because it was made to serve the Sacrifice of Calvary in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Page after page glows with the crusaders' ardor, in utilizing the abundant "local color" in the celebrant's surroundings. Even at this date there is something of a sigh as one sees, for instance, *Missa de Ierusalem. Omnipotens Deus, qui virtute tua mirabili, Ierusalem civitatem tuam de manu paganorum eruisti et Christianis reddidisti . . .* (f. 250). At folio 177^r we read: *Domine Iesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi . . .*⁶⁹

So our prayer had gone to the Holy Sepulchre. But it must have come back in flight to France not long after this book was written, since Jerusalem fell in 1187, after which, I dare say, this prayer was not heard in the Holy City for a long day.

It has been said of the French by one of their own greatest

253, 254: ARLES, MS BN lat 825, *Leroquais*, I, 209; MS Arles, 4, *Leroquais*, I, 328; AUTUN, MS 43(40), *Leroquais*, I, 248; MS 10(8), *Leroquais*, II, 3; BARBACHAT, MS BN nov acq 1890, *Leroquais*, I, 317; BAYEUX, Bib Maz, MS 404(729), *Leroquais*, I, 236; BEAUVAIS, Bib Ste-Gen. MS 95(BB in-fol 6), *Leroquais*, I, 197; CAHORS, MS BN lat 2295, *Leroquais*, I, 206; CAMBRAI, MS 234(224), MS 43(45), *Leroquais*, I, 222, 263; CITEAUX, MS Dijon 114(82), *Leroquais*, I, 334; CORBIE, MS BN lat 11522, *Leroquais*, I, 192; FOICY, MS BN lat 9437, *Leroquais*, I, 295; GIRONE, MS BN lat 1102, *Leroquais*, I, 332; JUMIEGES, MS Rouen 296(A 119), *Leroquais*, I, 304; LAON, MS 120, *Leroquais*, I, 229; MS 238, *Leroquais*, I, 219; LIESSIES, MS BN lat 9440, *Leroquais*, I, 213; LIMOGES, MS BN lat 9438, *Leroquais*, I, 213; MARCHIENNES (Abbey), MS Douai 81, *Leroquais*, I, 265; MS BN lat 1095, *Leroquais*, I, 221; MELAINE, St. (Abbey), MS BN lat 9439, *Leroquais*, I, 243; MENDE, MS, Avignon 141, *Leroquais*, I, 324; POITIERS, MS 40(132), *Leroquais*, I, 245; PREMONTRE, MS BN lat 833, *Leroquais*, I, 308; REIMS MSS 221, 231, *Leroquais*, I 359; ROUEN, MS Bourges 30(28), *Leroquais*, I, 287; ST-AMAND, MS Valenciennes 108(101), *Leroquais*, I 269; ST-BENOIT-sur-LOIRE, MS Avranches 41, *Leroquais*, I, 311; ST-BERTIN, MS Bourges 37(32), *Leroquais*, I, 276; MSS St-Omer 57, 89, *Leroquais*, I, 278; SOUVIGNY, MS Moulines 14, *Leroquais*, I, 322; TOURNUS, MS Autun 193, *Leroquais*, I, 320; VERDUN, MS Laon 226 bis, *Leroquais*, I, 232.

In addition to the above, one might note: Auvergne, some place in, MS, Rome, Barbarini XII, 7(2394), *Ebner*, 147; Norbonnaise, Abbey in, MS Avignon 178, *Leroquais*, I, 239; Normandy, Abbey in, MS BN lat 14446, *Leroquais*, I, 239; unidentified place in France, MS Vercelli 192, *Ebner*, 284.

⁶⁹*Leroquais*, I, 301.

liturgical writers that they have a passion for retouching their service books. This tendency is not new, and it was in full play in the twelfth century. Among the variants of our prayer then to be met with, let us mention three. There is first a book preserved at Bourges, MS 30 (28), a Mass-book of St. Ouen's, Rouen, of this date. At folio 144^r we read: *Domine Iesu Christe, qui ex voluntate Patris, cooperante Spiritu Sancto, mundum vivificasti, adoro ac venero hoc sanctum corpus tuum et hunc sanctum sanguinem tuum quod traditum est et qui effusus est pro multis.*⁷⁰ In subsequent books this promising beginning works itself out into an entirely new prayer, and is sometimes found along with the original.

Then one might cite MS BN 1890 to show how a slightly unbalanced Marian devotion in some quarter brought in a development of its own: f. 103^r: *Domine Iesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi, qui ex voluntate Patris, cooperante ex intemerata et immaculata virgine gloriosa MARIA carnem sumere et crucem subire. . . .*⁷¹ The prayer does not return to the former text at all.

Lastly Dijon MS 114 (82) is appealed to, because it happens to be *the* official norm for the entire liturgy of Citeaux as of 1175-1200. It was at Citeaux that Bernard had entered religion, from there that he had founded the famous Clairvaux. There is no earlier Citeaux or Clairvaux MS for consultation, but all subsequent Cistercian books listed in my sources show the prayer we are tracing. Bernard's brethren, too, had the text that is almost that in our current missals: *Domine Iesu Christe . . . [our present text except] . . . libera me, queso, per . . . a cunctis iniquitatibus meis . . . semper obedire mandatis et nunquam in perpetuum a te seperari permittas. Qui. . .*⁷²

It is particularly at this juncture I feel the limitations of the sources within my reach. The French Mass-books, in a ratio that must be more than two to one, show the prevalence of this

⁷⁰Leroquais, I, 287.

⁷¹Leroquais, I, 317-18.

⁷²Leroquais, I, 334.

prayer in every corner of France. If similar data were on hand for the English and German ones, I feel a similar situation would be disclosed. In passing let us note the presence of the prayer at Reichenau, MS *BN Lat 18005*,⁷³ and Laussane, MS *Lyons 5126 (B 16)*,⁷⁴ as well as at Würzburg in the ecclesiastical Province of Mayence, MS *Vat Palat 496*,⁷⁵ and Sechau, MS *Gratz Univ 479*, as of 1170.⁷⁶

Enter now the Friars, and this story hastens to its ending. It is not known, I believe, just when that document of destiny, the *ordo missalis fratrum minorum sec. consuetudinem romane curie*, was first conceived. Or when the Roman Curia decided on a fixed *Ordo Missae* for its own use. But the materials are at hand for a fairly accurate terminus for the appearance of our prayer in the Franciscan Mass-book. The Paris Bibliothèque Nationale contains a Franciscan missal, Ms *BN lat 10503*,⁷⁷ dated as of the second half of the thirteenth century. The book is remarkable throughout for its long rubrical explanations of its prescriptions. Well, in describing the celebrant's Communion procedure it outlines one *not including our prayer*, and then goes on in characteristic fashion: fol. 139^v, *Hoc supradicto modo solebat fieri in Curia. A tempore vero bone memorie pape Gregorii IX [1227-1241], signat se sacerdos patena. . .*" Under Gregory IX, then, we may conclude that the prayer was not in the Franciscan books, because not in the Curial Missal.

In another Paris library, Bibliothèque Mazarine, there is a Franciscan missal written when Alexander IV was pope, 1254-61, MS 426 (223).⁷⁸ It boasts the inscription: *Incipit ordo missalis Fratrum Minorum secundum Romane Curie*, and its prayers, before and after Communion are those of our Roman Missal. Again, the Chapter Library at St. Peter's treasures a

⁷³Leroquais, I, 114.

⁷⁴Leroquais, II, 5.

⁷⁵Ebner, 249.

⁷⁶J. Köck, *Handschriftliche Messalien in Steiermark* (Gratz u. Wien: Verlagsbuchhandlung "Styria," 1916), 17, 127.

⁷⁷Leroquais, II, 128 sqq.

⁷⁸Leroquais, II, 125.

similar Franciscan Missal, MS E 1,⁷⁹ dated as of the twelfth century, and during the pontificate of a Pope Gregory. This might refer to Gregory IX (1227-41), or to Gregory X (1271-75), but in view of the detailed statement in MS BN lat 10503, as to the curial procedure at Communion under Gregory IX, I am confident it can refer only to Gregory X. During Alexander's pontificate, (1254-61), then, or shortly before it, the Curia embodied an *Ordo Missae* containing our prayer, *Domine Iesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi*, into a book compiled to serve the convenience of Curial travel. The sons of St. Francis thereupon took it into *their* Mass-books, and have brought it eventually to us.

And so it is possible to be considerably more accurate than to state, as has been done, that by the fourteenth century this prayer had made its appearance in the Mass-books at Rome. From the middle of the eleventh, in the age and circle of Hildebrand, it is found in some Roman Mass-books. When Innocent III became pope it had been used for almost a century in his own titular church, and yet he himself seems not to have known it. But not long after the Franciscans appeared on the scene, the Curia adopted an *Ordo Missae*, embodying this prayer, for its own convenience, and that led the Franciscans to do the same. The Tridentine Fathers commissioned the pope to edit a revised Missal, which became obligatory. Into this book passed the *Ordo Missae* long popularized by the Franciscans, and thus our formulary, from Charlemagne's prayer book, achieved a permanence somewhat comparable to those luminaries called fixed stars.

⁷⁹Ebner, 176-77.

