

INTERPOLATED AMEN'S IN THE CANON OF THE MASS

GERALD ELLARD, S.J., PH.D.

St. Mary's College

FEW things are so venerable, few so carefully guarded, as the canon of the Roman Mass. It is indicative of how highly it was regarded from the very earliest period that the oldest Latin Mass-books of Spain, Gaul, and Ireland, different as they are in so many respects, all spontaneously adopted that Roman canon, which Pope Vigilius had described in 538, shortly before Gregory the Great was born, as of apostolic antiquity: "textum . . . quem Deo propitio ex apostolica traditione suscepimus."¹ True, the canon, as we use it now, is called Gregorian in perpetuation of the memory of the revision, slight and insignificant, that Gregory gave it around 595. For all that, the canon in our Mass-book contains four interpolated amen's—at the conclusion of the prayers *Communicantes*, *Hanc igitur*, *Supplices*, and *Memento etiam*—and narrowly missed permanently acquiring a fifth one, at the end of the *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*. This article centers attention on those adventitious amen's and seeks to unravel their story somewhat more accurately than I have seen it set out elsewhere.

There is need of greater precision in the matter. Thus, Dom Bernard Botte, in his definitive *Le canon de la Messe, édition critique*, in the excellent *apparatus criticus* setting out the variant readings of the oldest texts, hinted that these four amen's came in with the edition of the canon printed at Rome in 1474.² He adduced that particular edition of the Roman Mass-book because it then issued in print for the first time and has been reprinted nowadays for our consultation. But by 1474 the Roman Mass-books had contained these amen's for over two hundred years. Similarly, an impression definitely erroneous is created by a statement in the latest edition of Monsignor Eisenhofer's monumental *Handbuch*: "The other prayers [in the canon] are a later addition, and they are even marked as such

¹ Vigilius (*PL*, LXIX, 18).

² B. Botte, *Le canon de la Messe, édition critique* (Louvain: Mt. César, 1935).

by the amen with which they are ended.”³ This clearly implies that these amen's are like the tails of the nursery-rhyme sheep (“Leave them alone, And they'll come home, Wagging their tails behind them”), that they came in with the prayers to which they are now attached and, despite all that one could do, have proved themselves inseparable from those prayers. That, of course, is a slip. No one knew the documents better than Monsignor Eisenhofer, but here, with his attention focussed directly on what was primitive in the earliest traceable canon, he ends his sentence with a flourish that carries too far. The *Communicantes*, the *Hanc igitur*, the *Supplices*, and the *Memento etiam* were all in the canon of the Mass for almost a millenium before their respective “tails” officially caught up with them. In examining, describing, and cataloguing the nine hundred hand-written missals and sacramentaries now in the public libraries of France, Victor Leroquais took pains to ascertain, particularly for the five hundred books prior to 1300, whether or not their canons had these amen's; his laconic formulae, “Aucune Amen à la fin des prières,” or “Les Amen y figurent,” recur time and again in his handy volumes.⁴ Their very frequency is a standing challenge to sift and study the data he has thus amassed, with a view to putting these amen's in the fullest light our present knowledge will permit. In 1928 Dom Pierre Salmon did publish a short essay on the matter, based in part on Leroquais and partly, I should judge, on his own investigations in Belgian libraries.⁵ But his interest in the amen's themselves was wholly secondary to his regret at the loss, over the centuries, of lay participation, and so his treatment of them is summary in the main. What, then, do the sources tell us of these amen's?

Justin's twofold explanation of the amen at the end of what we should term the canon of the Mass was calculated to impress the

³ L. Eisenhofer, *Handbuch der katholischen Liturgik* (Freiburg i. B.: Herder, 1933), II, 166: “Die übrigen Gebete sind spätere Einfügung; sie sind als solche schon gekennzeichnet durch das sie abschliessende Amen. Noch lange sträubte man sich, durch ein solches Amen das Gefüge des Kanons zu unterbrechen. Man war sich der Einheitlichkeit des Gebetes bewusst, das nur ein einziges Amen, und zwar am Schlusse vor dem Paternoster aufwies, welches schon Justin erwähnte.”

⁴ V. Leroquais, *Les sacramentaires et les missels manuscrits des Bibliothèques Publiques de France, I-IV* (Paris, 1924). Cited below as Leroquais.

⁵ P. Salmon, O.S.B., “Les ‘Amen’ du canon de la Messe,” *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, II (1928), 496-506.

readers of his *Apologia* with the somewhat extraordinary importance which Christians attached, in this connection, to this Hebrew acclamation of assent. The oldest extant forms of the canon, such as the ordination-Mass in Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition* (about 225) and the anaphora of Bishop Serapion's Prayer Book (about 350), are concluded with this same amen. Not to delay longer on the early Christian appraisal of the echoing amen, let us recall the rhetorical expressions of St. Jerome's boast about the Romans: "Where can the amen be heard to resound as it resounds at Rome, with a noise like thunder shaking the empty temples of the idols?"⁶ In Oriental and in Latin Christianity, a canon of the Mass without an amen at the end of it was unthinkable; equally unthinkable in East and West (in the sequel we limit ourselves to the West) was it to interrupt the canon with an amen. Nineteen separate sources from the seventh to the ninth century have bequeathed to us the Gregorian canon of the Mass. They show us with remarkable uniformity, not only the structural sequence of the canon as we have it now (in some cases without the *Memento* of the dead, which, it would appear, was not said by the pope in public Masses), but amazing word-for-word fidelity in conforming to a fixed text. In no single instance of that primitive tradition does the *Communicantes*, *Hanc igitur*, *Supplices*, *Memento etiam*, or *Nobis quoque* close with an amen.

In the second half of the ninth century one known copyist, at St. Thierry, Rheims, either when the book was being written or shortly thereafter, not only added amen's to these prayers, but by way of calling attention for all time to his action, wrote them in, in red ink.⁷ His bold action had no imitators, so far as we know, for a hundred years and more, but at the end of the tenth century, say about 985, another scribe in that same *scriptorium* again put the amen's into a Mass-book that has come down to us.⁸ This time, too, there is a lapse of a century, to judge by the books that survive, before another scribe allowed himself such liberty. The solitary eleventh-century instance

⁶ St. Jerome, *Commen. in epist. ad Galat.*, II, Praef. (*PL*, XXVI, 355): "Ubi sic ad similitudinem coelestis tonitruī Amen roboat, et vacua idolorum templa quatiuntur?"

⁷ Rheims, *MS Rheims 213 (E 320)*. "Les Amen figurent en lettres rouges à la fin des prières; il est possible qu'ils ne soient pas de la même main, tout en étant de la même époque" (Leroquais, I, 21).

⁸ Rheims, *MS Rheims 214 (F 418)* (Leroquais, I, 91).

known to me is a Mass-book for St.-Denys of Nogent-le-Rotrou (near Alençon in Normandy).⁹ That was about 1075. But it may be that some word of this abuse was being noised abroad; for at some time prior to 1085 Bernold of Constance, that great friend of Hildebrand's, wrote his famous *Micrologus de Ecclesiasticis Observationibus*. Dealing with the *Communicantes* and *Hanc igitur*, he states that no one but the pope would dare make any addition to, or interpolation of, the canon of the Mass: "nec nos apostolicae auctoritatis reos efficiamus, si, quod soli apostolicae auctoritati competit, canonem nostris interpositionibus augmentare praesumamus,"¹⁰ and more in the same strong tone. As regards the *Communicantes*, Bernold's severe strictures could also refer to the practice of inserting additional names into that prayer; but for the *Hanc igitur* there could only be question of adding the unauthorized amen at the end.

Another stalwart among Hildebrand's supporters, the man we now invoke as St. Peter Damian, must be quoted here, since a little expression of his was freighted with a destiny he could scarcely have foreseen. Writing about the same time as Bernold and speaking of the *Supplices* prayer, the holy Benedictine *Doctor Ecclesiae* ended his paragraph with these words: "Hinc etiam evidentiter apparet quod *angeli* in sacrificio *semper assistunt*."¹¹ The words I have italicized will meet us more than once in the sequel.

The distant grandeur of Hildebrand also touches the next author in our story, Bishop Odo of Cambrai. Born at Orléans, he was educated at Tournay and there became an Augustinian. When he was elected Bishop of Cambrai in 1105, he refused investiture at imperial hands and so was packed off to exile. He died at Anchin (near Douai) in

⁹ Nogent-le-Rotrou, *MS Le Mans 23* (Leroquais, I, 178). Dom Salmon says: "Au XI^e siècle, sur 18 mss. étudiés, 2 ont les amen intercalaires" (*art. cit.*, p. 498); his *second* one may possibly refer to a manuscript preserved in a Belgian library.

¹⁰ Bernold of Constance, *Micrologus de Ecclesiasticis Observationibus* (ed. Hittorp, *De Divinis Officiis* [Parisii, 1610], coll. 738-39), xii: "Nimis autem temerarium videtur, ut nos aliqua Canonum ad nostrum libitum adjiciamus, nisi quae a sanctis Patribus adjecta, vel adjicienda esse cognovimus; praecipue cum inter ipsos sanctos Patres nulli aliquid adjecisse legantur, nisi qui et apostolica auctoritate praediti hoc facere potuerunt. Optimum esse videtur ut in hac causa terminos nostrorum Patrum non excedamus, nec nos apostolicae auctoritatis reos efficiamus, si, quod soli apostolicae auctoritati competit, Canonem nostris interpositionibus augmentare praesumamus."

¹¹ St. Peter Damian, *Expositio Canonis Missae* (PL, CXLV, 887).

1113. Part of his legacy is an *Expositio in Canonem Missae*, a sober work remarkably free from the allegorism then in vogue. In dealing with the *Communicantes*, the *Hanc igitur*, and the *Nobis quoque*, he says nothing one way or the other about the interpolated amen's. But he quotes and treats as part of the official text the amen's after the *Supplices* and *Memento etiam*.¹² Thus, in the Low Countries, as the twelfth century opened, even a careful scholar was accepting the interpolated amen's as authentic. In that area at least there was little chance then of stopping their further spread. For other localities it may be that Bernold's strong words in the *Micrologus* were responsible for the fact that in the next fifty years, 1100–1150, only two new instances are known in which the amen's were introduced into Mass-books then being written. Of these one is at St.-Martial's, Limoges, the other, in far-away Apt, which hides in the folds of the Maritime Alps below Avignon.¹³

Then in mid-century the dikes of restraint gave way. Between 1150 and 1200 the amen's we are dealing with swept freely over the Low Countries and France and beyond the seas. Thus, within a radius of some seventy-five miles from Rheims, which is the earliest known source of this interpolation, they are met with to the south at the priory of Foicy (diocese of Troyes),¹⁴ to the northeast at Marchiennes,¹⁵ and nearby St.-Amand,¹⁶ to the northwest at Liessies,¹⁷ in the diocese of Cambrai, and in Cambrai itself.¹⁸ Let us not forget to mention lordly Amiens on the Somme, where our amen's made something of a two-point landing; for they were not only put into a new book then being made (*MS Amiens 154*)¹⁹ but were now entered into the old book (Paris *MS B N lat 9432*), which had got along for three hundred years without them.²⁰ They were also at Anchin by the end of the century.²¹

¹² Odo of Cambrai, *Expositio in Canonem Missae* (PL CLX, 1067–68).

¹³ Limoges, *MS B N lat 822* (Leroquais, I, 203); Apt, *MS Avignon 220* (Leroquais, I, 207). There are four other twelfth-century MSS from Apt, all containing these amen's; cf. Leroquais, I, 250, 252, 253, 254.

¹⁴ Foicy, *MS B N lat 9437* (Leroquais, I, 294).

¹⁵ Marchiennes, *MS Douai 81* (Leroquais, I, 265).

¹⁶ St.-Amand, *MS Valenciennes 108 (101)* (Leroquais, I, 269).

¹⁷ Liessies, *MS B N lat 9440* (Leroquais, I, 260).

¹⁸ Cambrai, *MS Cambrai 43 (45)* (Leroquais, I, 263).

¹⁹ Amiens, *MS Amiens 154* (Leroquais, I, 279).

²⁰ Amiens, *MS B N lat 9432* (Leroquais, I, 38).

²¹ Anchin, *MS Douai 90* (Leroquais, I, 350).

Within a similar circle around Nogent-le-Rotrou, our second oldest source of infection, so to speak, we meet these amen's at Chartres²² and Angers.²³ Deep in the heart of France, not far from Limoges, we meet them at Souvigny.²⁴ It is but a tiny part of the *Gesta Dei per Francos* that a missal of this period, made to be used at the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, has the amen-interpolated canon in the original draft of its writing.²⁵ If the sweep of events could so swiftly carry the amen's all the way to the Holy Land, could they not get to Rome and find a welcome there? In 1198 Innocent III became pope, shortly after writing his once so popular *De Sacrificio Missae*. He had studied in Paris and traveled through the progressive Low Countries, and, consciously or unconsciously as it may be, he put the interpolated canon into his treatise.²⁶ His canon shows, not only the four amen's after the *Communicantes*, *Hanc igitur*, *Supplices*, and *Memento etiam* but also one after the *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*. Of the final fortunes of this last we shall have a word to say in a moment.

What had happened in mid-twelfth century to cause such a break with the past? I imagine it was just a triumphant *Zeitgeist*. Never was newness more to the fore than then, in the hour of Europe's truest renaissance: new depths of psychological insight were tempting the mystics; new intellectual horizons were beckoning to the scholars; and there was never such a dotting of hand-me-down i's and crossing of inherited t's as with the Schoolmen. The crusaders were extending "Europe" over the whole known world. New and widely differing forms of the religious life held out an appeal to such varied vocations as the Carmelites for total seclusion, the Templars for consecrated military service, the Norbertines for the combination of the ministry and canonical life; and then there were Bernard's ubiquitous Cistercians. When the whole world was on the move, small wonder that in the hustle and bustle a few little amen's stole almost unnoticed into the Mass canon.

But there was to be something of a skirmish before the intruders were accorded recognition, and in that struggle one of the amen's—

²² Chartres, *MS Evreux 27* (Leroquais, I, 292).

²³ Angers, *MS Angers 93* (85) (Leroquais, I, 296).

²⁴ Souvigny, *MS Moulins 14* (Leroquais, I, 322).

²⁵ Jerusalem, *MS B N lat 12056* (Leroquais, I, 301).

²⁶ Innocent III, *De Sacrificio Missae* (PL CCXVII, 769-70).

that after the *Nobis quoque*—was thrust out and died. The new strategy of concerted attack on that particular amen meets us, again near Rheims, at Laon, at the very opening of the thirteenth century. A Mass-book, *MS Laon 234*, entered a restraining rubric at the end of the *Nobis quoque* as follows: "Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Hic respondent angeli Amen."²⁷ This angelic chorus, very faint as yet, will grow and swell until it prevents at least the fifth amen from securing permanent recognition.

"It would be interesting," says Dom Salmon, "to know when the usage was adopted at Rome, but it is pretty difficult to say: probably in the course of the thirteenth or fourteenth century."²⁸ A much narrower range can be assigned. I think it will be found that the amen-interpolated canon had received something of a pragmatic sanction in Rome by being taken into the new *Missale Romanae Curiae*, around 1230. St. Francis' first direction to his friars had been that they should celebrate their Mass and recite their Office according to the rite of the locality in which they found themselves, and the first Dominicans had a parallel provision; but it was soon seen in both Orders that such a scheme would not work. In 1223, St. Francis directed his followers to adopt the Roman mode of reciting the Office. But what was *the* Roman mode? The Curia had a newly arranged Office of its own, the Lateran and most of the basilicas still had their ancient manner, and the canons of St. Peter's were using still a third method. The upshot was that the Franciscans took the new curial Office, further modified and shortened it and got approval for its use everywhere in their order. Then, as Abbot Cabrol puts it, "the same thing happened with regard to the Missal," with such success in Franciscan circles that "Gregory IX, from the year 1240, had thought of imposing it on the Universal Church."²⁹ Roundly speaking, we might say that the Franciscans spared him that trouble; for they took the new books everywhere and everywhere agitated for their local adoption. A selling point lay in the very name, ab-breviated Office. In 1277, Pope Nicholas III did definitely impose the Franciscan breviary on all the diocese of Rome and in 1280, the Franciscan missal as well.³⁰ The

²⁷ Laon, *MS Laon 234* (Leroquais, II, 16).

²⁸ Salmon, *art. cit.*, p. 501.

²⁹ F. Cabrol, *The Mass of the Western Rites* (St. Louis: Herder, 1934), p. 184.

³⁰ S. Morison, *English Prayer Books* (Cambridge: University Press, 1943), p. 26.

day of liturgical uniformity and the Sacred Congregation of Rites were thus refigured.

The Friars Preachers meanwhile, a little fearful of losing their liturgical liberty, as Father Bonniwell has suggested, decreed in 1240 that a Committee of Four should restore uniformity in what was already being regarded as a Dominican Rite. The Four duly set about their task. Although the product of their labors was officially approved no less than five times in General Chapter, it encountered much opposition in the Order and eventually required the strong hand of Master General Humbert over a period of years to carry it through to acceptance.³¹

In this twofold approach to the problem of liturgical uniformity in their respective Orders, the Franciscans and the Dominicans took opposite attitudes towards the amen's in the canon. We find the Franciscans from the very outset spreading the amen-interpolated canon, which was then being used at the papal curia, while the Preachers vigorously set their faces against these amen's, only to find the movement too strong for them in the end.

The Franciscan evidence is soon in. The Bibliothèque Mazzarine in Paris possesses in its *MS 426 (223)* a Franciscan Mass book, *Ordo Missalis Fratrum Minorum secundum consuetudinem Romane Curie*, which, fortunately, can be securely dated as of the pontificate of Pope Alexander IV (1254-61). It embodies the amen-interpolated canon; that amen-canon is henceforth found in all the Franciscan and in all the Roman books which Leroquais catalogues.³² Whatever other trials and sorrows befell their Order, in this little amen-corner, so to speak, the Franciscans and the Holy See had but one mind and one voice.

The Dominican side of the matter is far more complex and diversified. Act One of that domestic drama came in the making of the

³¹ W. R. Bonniwell, *A History of the Dominican Liturgy* (New York: Wagner, 1944), pp. 60-90.

³² Franciscan missal, *MS Maz 426 (223)* (Leroquais, II, 125). Other Franciscan missals of later date are: *MS B N lat 10503* (Leroquais, II, 128) and *MS B N lat 757* (Leroquais, II, 361); Roman missals: *MS B N lat 826* (Leroquais, II, 201), *MS B N lat 828* (Leroquais, II, 288), *MS B N lat 838* (Leroquais, II, 301), *MS B N lat 853* (Leroquais, III, 35), etc. An Ambrosian missal of this period, although not embodying these amen's, has this interesting variant of the great doxology at the end of its canon: ". . . Est tibi Deo Patri omnipotenti, ex ipso et per ipsum et in ipso, omnis honor, virtus, laus et gloria, imperium, perpetuitas et potestas in unitate. . . ." It is *MS B N lat 856* (Leroquais, III, 144).

missal, now *MS B N lat 8884*, which dates as of 1240–43,³³ the oldest known Dominican Mass-book. It did not have the amen's within the canon. It was at Paris for use there very shortly after being made.³⁴

Act Two presents that great Dominican, Hugh of St.-Cher (*a S. Caro*), who was one of the most prominent churchmen of the thirteenth century. From 1230 to 1238 he had been professor of Scripture at Paris, then provincial of the French Province and still resident at Paris, then Vicar General of the whole Order, 1240–41. From then until his death in 1263 or 1264 he was a trusted adviser of popes, was created a cardinal, and acted as papal legate more than once. Hugh of St.-Cher, one would say, rose about as high as one could rise both in his religious family and in the Church. He wrote, among other things, a little treatise on the Mass, *Speculum Missae*,³⁵ which offered him a chance to speak his mind on these adventitious amen's. Dealing with the *Communicantes*, the first of the amen-prayers in the canon, he delivered this blow: "Terminatur autem haec particula 'Per Dominum nostrum,' sicut omnia per Filium facta sunt, ita omnia per ipsum habent reparari et terminari. Nec debet dici 'amen' secundum quosdam usque ad fractionem, quia angelorum chori tanto mysterio assistentes respondent."³⁶ We may note that St. Peter Damian's angels, who were then merely assisting, have now become altar-boys, in that they are the only ones to make the responses within the canon.

Act Two has a second scene, St. Albert the Great, *Doctor Ecclesiae*, writing between 1250 and 1270, in all likelihood at Cologne, his *De Sacrificio Missae*. He too had been in Paris, taking his master's degree in 1248, it would seem, after three years of residence there.

³³ Dominican missal, *MS B N lat 8884* (Leroquais, II, 104).

³⁴ Bonniwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 29–35.

³⁵ Hugh of St.-Cher, *Tractatus super Missam seu Speculum Ecclesiae*; a new and handy edition is available in *Opuscula et Textus*, Series Liturgica (ed. G. Sölch, O.P., Aschendorff: Monasterii, 1940).

³⁶ In this citation I embody a bit of textual emendation—"fractionem," or possibly "perfractionem," instead of the printed "praefationem," which in the context does not make sense. Father Sölch says that he had a task in establishing the true readings: "Numerosa sunt manuscripta, valde numerosiores autem corruptiones textus per transcriptores factae." The reading "fractionem" is suggested by echoing passages in Durandus and Biel.

So it hardly surprises one that Albert found it sufficient to echo the words of the great Cardinal St.-Cher in the amen-question:

[*Hanc igitur*]: 'Per Christum Dominum nostrum' est conclusio ad quam nullus respondet amen, nisi angeli qui in ministerio esse dicuntur. . . .

[*Supplices*]: . . . Quod autem sequitur, 'Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum' conclusio est saepius exposita, cui nemo respondet amen loco idiotae, quia hic, sicut et in aliis secretis conclusionibus, angelis relinquitur, qui assistunt Sacramento, sicut dicit beatus Gregorius.³⁷

But Act Three of the Dominican development was enacted one day there in Paris when a friar went to the sacristy, got down *MS B N lat 8884* (it was in the fourteenth century, Leroquais says),³⁸ and inserted the amen's in the canon. There they remain to this day as a war-memorial—of a battle that was lost; for, as Father Bonniwell sums up, the trend in the Dominican Order at that time was all for greater conformity with Rome: "The Dominican liturgists (of whom Humbert was one) were fighting to *Romanize* more fully the Dominican rite. Hence the battle. They were upsetting the liturgical customs of the largest and most influential monastery of the Order, St.-Jacques at Paris."³⁹

Our inquiry is thus seen to corroborate the paradoxical position, which the late Abbot Cabrol, among others, defended, on the basic character of the Dominican Rite. "This liturgy is not," he says, "as has been thought, a Gallican, and more specifically, a Parisian liturgy. It is simply Roman, dating from the thirteenth century, and has not evolved as the actual Roman liturgy has done. . . . The Dominican liturgy is more Roman than that of Rome herself."⁴⁰

That waning thirteenth century had one more strong voice raised against the surreptitious amen's, that of Durandus, Bishop of Mende, who, in repeating what had been said before, thought it well to stiffen medieval symbolism with more modern logic. In his *Rationale*

³⁷ St. Albert the Great, *De Sacrificio Missae*, III, 9, 2; 16, 2 (ed. Borgnet, *Opera Omnia* [Paris: Vives, 1890], XXXIII, 116, 130-31).

³⁸ Leroquais, II, 104. It was not to conform to the use of Paris that the amen's were added; there are literally dozens of Paris missals extant, and not a single one of them, except this, has been characterized as having the amen's.

³⁹ Bonniwell, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

⁴⁰ Cabrol, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

Divinorum Officiorum he stated that people really ought not to interrupt the canon with these amen's, but that some people nevertheless do so:

[*Communicantes*] Secundum quosdam non debet hic responderi 'amen,' neque usque ad fractionem hostiae: quia angelorum chorus sancto ministerio assistens, respondet 'amen.' Hoc tamen non ubique servatur. . . .

[*Nobis quoque*]: Hic non respondetur 'amen,' tum quia angeli, qui semper assistunt, respondent, prout in fine tertiae particulae dictum est; tum quia haec tacite dicuntur, nec respondentes audire possunt; tum quia verba sequentia, 'Per quem haec omnia,' istis conjunguntur, et ab eis dependent: ideoque nihil interponi potest.⁴¹

The present Roman canon was not generally imposed on the Western Church until 1570; but as early as 1250, one would say in summing up, the four amen's we are dealing with were securely anchored at Rome, and were spreading freely everywhere. The only subsequent debate concerned the propriety of that amen creeping in after the *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*. Other missals and service books in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries waver considerably about admitting that amen; there are, for instance, three Salisbury books of the period 1300-1320: two of them admit it; the third rejects it.⁴² But at Rome we find the books steadily opposed to it; in *MS Avignon 140* (52) we find the caution written in the old familiar strain: "Hic angeli respondent amen."⁴³ When Rome first printed its missal, in 1474, it admitted the first four amen's to the canon, but barred the path of the one after the *Nobis quoque* with the bolt: "Hic non dicitur amen."⁴⁴ Sixteen printed editions of the Roman Missal between that of 1474 and the "uniform" and obligatory one of Pius V have been collated, and in this matter of the amen's they show an unwavering front.⁴⁵ The amen-story is at an end.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Durandus, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, quoted from Dom Salmon, *art. cit.*

⁴² Salisbury, A. *MS Arsenal 135 (134 T L)*, ca. 1300 (J. W. Legg, *The Sarum Missal* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916], pp. 221-24); Leroquais, II, 132 is silent on the amen's. Salisbury, B. Bologna University *MS 2565, saec. xiv in.* (Legg, *loc. cit.*). Salisbury, C. Morris Missal, Morgan Library *MS 8*, ca. 1320 (Legg, *Tracts on the Mass* [London: Bradshaw, 1904], pp. 10-13).

⁴³ Rome, *MS Avignon 140* (52) (Leroquais, II, 330).

⁴⁴ *Missale Romanum 1474* (London: Bradshaw, 1899), Text, pp. 206-208.

⁴⁵ *Missale Romanum 1474* (London: Bradshaw, 1907), Notes, pp. 110-11.

⁴⁶ "For some reason, the explanation of which is not obvious," wrote the late Father Thurston (*The Catholic Encyclopedia, s.v., "Amen"*), "the amen immediately after the

As an epilogue, the innocent-looking amen's provoked a furious storm in the eighteenth century at the bitter end of the long Jansenist struggle. Those heretical-minded "reformers" were for changing the Church in all sorts of archaic ways, one of them being that the canon of the Mass should be recited aloud. Someone noticed our amen's in mid-canon, and it was therefore argued that of course the canon had been said aloud; the amen's alone were proof apodictic! At that, the fat was in the fire for years, because in the historical dispute both sides were right to this extent, that in very early times the canon had been said aloud, but the presence of the amen's we have been considering had nothing to do with the loud recitation of the primitive canon. But meanwhile, in 1709, a Jansenist missal was published at Meaux calling for these mid-canon amen's to be said aloud by the server and so causing the canon to be said aloud by the priest, contrary to Trent.⁴⁷ Dom Salmon gives this part of the story in fine bold strokes. But by-and-by ritual silence settled once more over the sanctuary, leaving the amen's in the canon in peaceful possession.

Pater Noster is omitted in the solemn Mass celebrated by the pope on Easter day." I am not sure that I have the explanation, but I believe there is a hint in the foregoing. Cardinal Hugh of St.-Cher, in the thirteenth century, who was friend and counsellor to more than one pope, held that there should be no amen until the Host had been broken, and his saying was later echoed by Durandus, Gabriel Biel, and others. Maskell (*The Ancient Liturgy of the Church of England*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1882) collates two manuscript missals, a Bangor Missal of ca. 1400, now in the British Museum, but whose signature is unknown to me, and a York Missal of 1517 (Cambridge: St. John's College Library), which rigorously observe the rule of having no amen in this part of Mass until after the fraction of the Host. I think I have seen other books making the same provision. It may well be that the strange fact mentioned by Father Thurston preserves the memory of a time when Rome, too, was carrying out St.-Cher's direction of no amen until after the fraction. How the thunder mentioned by St. Jerome has died away!

⁴⁷ DB, 956.