

NOTES

OUR LADY AS INTERCESSOR FOR THE DEPARTED

A GLANCE AT LITURGICAL LIFE IN FRANCE UNDER THE ANCIEN RÉGIME

Zeal and enthusiasm in human affairs are wondrous spurs to activity. Yet zeal without prudence, and ill-instructed enthusiasm, very frequently obscure important facets of truth even as they serve the good which is immediately and professedly in view. This is a fact of observation often discernible from characteristic claims and, so to speak, "battle cries" of some who, in our own day, seek to further the splendid aims and to make better known the solid achievements of the Liturgical Revival, a movement now attracting increasing interest and ever widening support among Catholics throughout the world.

The Liturgical Revival, as it should scarcely be necessary to state, is a movement which seeks to develop among Catholics a deeper understanding of the historic forms of worship which the Church has preserved and evolved through the ages, and thus to draw souls to God in Christ by the use of those sacramental and quasi-sacramental rites and ceremonies which form the great corpus of the Christian liturgy. It is a movement most worthy in its aims, and one having the sanction and the active encouragement of the highest authority in the Church.

However, among the less responsible and more vociferous adherents of the movement, enthusiasm for "the cause," as they see it, and zeal for its propagation, sometimes outweigh not only prudent judgment concerning the most appropriate methods to be followed to-day, but also obscure their view of the past and cause them to present a false picture of certain epochs in Christian history with which they happen to lack familiarity or sympathy.

Thus, it is by no means unusual to have some of these good people speak as though the Missal and the Breviary had been entirely unknown to the Catholic laity until the reign of Pius X, and further to declare that at a designated period in history there existed in high places strangely unorthodox Catholic prelates and scholars who wished to circumscribe and to curtail the place traditionally assigned to Our Lady in liturgical prayer, and who actually—according to this declaration—left upon the liturgy of their time the distorting mark of this tendency. This latter charge is specifically made of the Church of France during the last century of the *ancien régime*.

As a matter of fact, however, and as is known to students whose understanding of the history of liturgical worship is more than superficial, Catholics in general did not have to wait for the present century to be made aware of the spiritual riches latent in the Church's liturgical books. Particularly in France, which is the subject of our present concern, it has for several hundred years been common to find editions, for lay Catholics, of Missal and Breviary. Indeed, as one distinguished modern scholar, Père Paul Doncoeur, S.J., has remarked, during the eighteenth century printings of these books were "innumerable."¹

The Liturgical Revival or Movement, as we know it to-day, had also its counterpart in the Catholic world of past centuries. During the eighteenth century—a period made the focal point of the present remarks—this idea of liturgical revival or renovation was particularly active and fruitful. Indeed, so deep and earnest was the desire among priests and people for a liturgy which would answer more adequately the needs of the time while exhibiting also some necessary consonance with a refined and polished scholarship, that many diocesan authorities yielded to the pressing demands made in books and treatises of such learned liturgiologists of the day as Jean Grancolas and Frédéric-Marie Foinard, and themselves attempted to promote a reform or recasting of the liturgy. The Apostolic See, particularly under the impulsion of Benedict XIV (1740–58), most scholarly perhaps of Popes in recent centuries, had then under consideration a wide and sweeping reform of liturgical worship to make it more suitable for its purpose. But the French bishops, especially, grew weary of those endless delays which characterize procedure at the Curia,² and many of them went forward on their own authority and issued revisions of the liturgical books for use within their own dioceses. The result was the growth of a whole series of distinct liturgical uses in which it was sought to satisfy the claims expressed by both piety and scholarship with respect to a betterment of traditional prayer forms as well as to preserve that distinctively Catholic spirit which welcomes variety in particular expressions of dogmatic truth.

These diocesan variants were, in some cases, revisions of old usages peculiar to one or another of those dioceses of France which had, like the

¹ Paul Doncoeur, S.J., "Un nouveau chapitre de l'histoire du sentiment religieux," *Études*, CCLX (1949), 47, n. 1. Complete bibliographical details in respect to official diocesan printings will be found, for the Missal, in W. H. J. Weale's standard work, *Bibliographia liturgica* (latest ed. rev. by H. Bohatta; London: Quaritch, 1928), and, for the Breviary, in Herr Bohatta's *Bibliographie der Breviere, 1501–1850* (Leipzig: K. W. Hiersemann, 1937).

² Cf. what M. Leclercq has said of "cette lenteur qui caractérise tant d'entreprises romaines" (*D.A.C.L.*, IX/2, 1666).

major religious orders, never adopted the version of the liturgy published by Pius V after the recommendations of the Council of Trent; others were newly composed selections of texts from Sacred Scripture, formed on the principle of the older models. Like the Dominican Liturgy and similar variant forms, and unlike the Ambrosian and Mozarabic Rites of more ancient times, all these diocesan uses, whether formed in the eighteenth century or earlier, were strictly Roman in their basic framework and in their construction.³ They were Roman too in the principle underlying their construction, viz., that, periodically, prayer forms need to be pruned and stripped of certain excrescences or outgrowths which overlie and in a measure disfigure the essential nature of Christian worship by branchings which, if individually beautiful and generally well-intentioned, sometimes show a tendency to assume a parasitic cast.

In the nineteenth century, under the influence of forces which appear to have prized uniformity above rubrics, these French diocesan variants disappeared as, between 1839 and 1875, one after another of the dioceses which enjoyed special liturgies abandoned them in favor of the adoption of that form or recension of the Roman Rite embodied in the Tridentine Missal and Breviary of Pope Pius V, which is now generally employed—with varying diocesan supplemental *propria*—throughout France, except in one or two places like Lyon (where, in 1864, the books published in 1771 were suppressed in favor of older versions of the distinctive Lyonnaise use), and among certain of the great religious orders.

The loss to Christendom of these forms of worship is a debatable point, some holding that the special diocesan liturgies were of questionable value, others, like the present writer, being of the opinion that for literary beauty, devotional unction, a magnificent hymnary, a remarkably wide and varied use of Sacred Scripture, and a sense of the organization of the material supreme among collections of liturgical formularies, their loss is to be regretted. More serious, however, than any disagreement in the judgment of a fact in the history of past disciplines is the consideration that certain writers and historians, in their zeal for the Tridentine-Pian recension of the liturgy, and in their enthusiasm to claim for it an ascendancy, intrinsic as well as accidental, over all other forms of the Roman rite, have allowed themselves

³ A recent historian of the Dominican use stresses the further point, which is of course not suggested here as being equally true of the French Reforms, that the Dominicans have preserved in precise detail, as well as in outline and in framework, a "purer" version of the old rite of Urban Rome than does the now widely familiar recension of Trent and Pius V. Cf. William Raymund Bonniwell, *A History of the Dominican Liturgy* (New York: J. F. Wagner, 1944), *passim*.

to obscure that fact, even pointedly to misrepresent it, when they have remarked upon the rise and disappearance of the work of the French liturgiologists of the eighteenth century.

Thus the claim is often made that one of the principal objects which the bishops and scholars of that age had in mind in their reform was that they might diminish the cult of our Lady. In a long and carefully documented dissertation which will shortly be ready for publication, the present writer has endeavored to demonstrate on a relatively wide plane, by the citation of the very liturgical books whose qualities are in question, that this contention is unfounded, and that the reverse is rather true. In the present essay the aim is to turn attention to one specific instance of the devotional spirit which the French liturgiologists of the *ancien régime* displayed toward our Lady as an intercessor for the departed, during the course of the attempt which those liturgists made to give to the Church of their day a more perfect vehicle of prayer and praise by adapting the work they had inherited from the liturgical writers of the past, and by adding to it their own contributions.

The French town of Fréjus, which is north of the mouth of the Argens in eastern Provence, was the *Forum Julii* of the ancient Romans, named in honor of Julius Caesar, and it served as their military port for the Rhône valley. Owing to changes in terrain, it is now, however, a mile and a half from the shore. Those who love Provence might not readily assent to the opinion of a modern English geographer who thinks Fréjus has "degenerated into a dreary and insignificant little town";⁴ and certainly no one who has visited its charming, if relatively small, cathedral church can remain insensible to its beauty, tastefully restored during our own generation, and to the delightful evocations of the past which its somewhat austere loveliness summons up. Its baptistery, among the most ancient in France, is the subject of an interesting dissertation, written some years ago for the School of Architecture of the Catholic University of America by Dr. Paul Augustus Goettelmann.⁵ Yet even among those who are aware of the distinction inhering in the rather severe architectural lines of this small Romanesque church dedicated to our Lady, to St. Stephen, and to St. Léonce, and who are sensitive to the softer decorative touches lent by such features as the fine baroque high altar, it is likely that there are few who suspect that little Fréjus is the possessor of certain liturgical treasures, treasures which de-

⁴ Hilda Ormsby, *France: A Regional and Economic Geography* (2nd ed. revised; London: Methuen, 1950), p. 316.

⁵ P. A. Goettelmann, *The Baptistery of Fréjus* (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1933).

serve examination for their own sake as well as for the convincing demonstration they afford of the true attitude which the French liturgists of the *ancien régime* displayed in regard to the place which devotion to the holy Virgin should take in Christian worship.

Fréjus is a suffragan of Aix-en-Provence. Prior to the Revolution it was the most richly endowed of the five suffragan sees, its revenue in those days being 28,000 livres. It was thus second to the metropolitan see, then valued at 37,000. Gap yielded 16,000; Riez and Sisteron 15,000 each; Apt was worth a mere 9,000.

The original distinctive liturgy of Fréjus was abandoned that it might be supplanted by the Tridentine-Pian recension of the Roman Rite in the sixteenth century when, during the vacancy of the episcopal office following on the death in 1587 of the Bishop, François de Bouilliers,⁶ the Canons of Fréjus determined to accept the Bull, *Quod a nobis*, although its terms of exception and exemption would have afforded them admitted ground, as they did to the Dominicans and to other orders and dioceses (to Lyons, for instance), to persist in the employment of their historic and ancient liturgical peculiarities.⁷ The modern form or recension of the Roman Rite, as thus

⁶ According to Gams, *Series episcoporum* (Leipzig, 1931), he was succeeded in 1593 by Giraud Bellanger. In the year following, Barthlémy de Camelin was nominated, being confirmed in 1599.

⁷ Dr. Joseph Antelmy, himself a Canon of Fréjus, writing in 1676, remarks: "Breviarium et Missale proprium adhibebant in divinis Officiis recitandis; sed post concilium Tridentinum et Pii V Bullam (quanquam ipsa nil in ecclesiam nostram statuerat, quae longè antè ducentos probabat consuetudinem peculiaris ritûs), canonici, sede vacante, induxerunt Breviarium Romanum et ritum qui cepit in ecclesiâ an. 1592, in festo Omnium Sanctorum, hactenûsque in eâ perseverat" ("Descriptio dioceseos Foro-Julienensis auctore Joseph Antelmy," apud Jean-Baptiste Disdier, *Description historique du diocèse de Fréjus, Manuscrits de Girardin et d'Antelmy* . . . [Draguignan: C. & A. Latil, 1872], pp. 330-31). It might easily, and unwarily, be assumed that something of the nature of this "Breviarium et Missale proprium" would be revealed by the work of Bernardus de Rubeis [B. de'Rossi], *De vetustis liturgicis aliisque sacris ritibus, qui vigeant olim in aliquibus Foro-Julienensis provinciae ecclesiis* (Venice, 1754); but, although I have been unable to come upon this volume, I incline very strongly to the view that the subject of its author's concern is rather Forum-Julii-in-Istria than Forum-Julii-in-Provincia. Although he does not go into further particulars, Dr. Goettelmann gives it as his opinion that in the early period of its history the diocese of Fréjus "undoubtedly followed the Ambrosian Rite, that is to say, that of Milan as distinct from that of Rome" (P. A. Goettelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 49). Whatever may be true of the early period, there are not in the eighteenth-century reformed liturgy any recognizable Ambrosian features beyond the use, common to the revised books of the period, of certain elements (i.e., collects) taken *e Sacramentario Ambrosiano*; the eighteenth-century Missale Foro-Julienense is distinctly Roman in general character and framework. Like the other French *tentatives de réforme* put forward under the *ancien régime*, it was in no sense a new rite, but a revision of the Roman rite incorporating some local usages.

introduced into the Church of Fréjus, maintained itself there for about two hundred years; but in the last quarter of the eighteenth century Msgr. Emmanuel-François de Bausset-Roquefort (consecrated Aug. 31, 1766; resigned 1801; died 1802), under the influence of the liturgical renaissance then in flower, determined to authorize a new liturgy for his diocese. His Breviary was issued in 1781 and again in 1787;⁸ his Missal in 1782 and in 1786.⁹ It is from a copy of this latter printing in my own collection of eighteenth-century *liturgica* that the material which is the basis of the considerations now set forth is drawn. It may be interjected here, in our mention of the liturgical interests and activities of Msgr. de Bausset-Roquefort, that the magnificent high altar in the Cathedral of Fréjus was installed during his episcopate and was a gift from the prelate to his diocese. He seems to have followed the pattern current in his time when, as Edmund Bishop has remarked, coincidently with the introduction of the new liturgies fine new marble altars frequently replaced those on the old model.¹⁰ During the "liturgical war" of the nineteenth century, a conflict inaugurated by D. Guéranger and other Romantic polemicists, the liturgical books of Msgr. de Bausset-Roquefort passed out of use; but it is pleasant to record that the enthusiasm of these zealots in the crusade to establish uniformity by obliterating the liturgical work of the *ancien régime* stopped short of the destruction of the Bishop's altar when his books were abandoned.

It is of interest to note in Msgr. de Bausset-Roquefort's Missal two distinctive features. In the prefatory *Mandatum* authorizing the new Mass Book for his diocese, the Bishop of Fréjus remarks that divergencies in the text of the Canon of his book from that of the contemporary Tridentine-Pian usage are slight, actually occurring in only two formularies. One is the addition of the phrase, "atque omnium fidelium Christianorum," in the *Memento pro vivis*, so that it reads: "Memento, Domine, famulorum, famularumque tuarum N. et N. et omnium circumstantium, atque omnium fidelium Christianorum, quorum fides tibi cognita est, et nota devotio. . . ." The other divergency is found in the formulary used at the Fraction. Here is said: "Haec sacrosancta commixtio Corporis et Sanguinis Domini nostri Jesu Christi . . .," instead of the formula, "Haec commixtio, et consecratio Corporis et Sanguinis . . .," as familiar to users of the Roman Missal now commonly employed. Fr. Bonniwell, the learned historian of the Dominican Liturgy, remarks in his recent authoritative work that the words, "atque omnium fidelium Christianorum," are to be encountered in the earliest Dominican Mass Book of which we know. This is the manuscript Missal

⁸ Cf. Hanns Bohatta, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

⁹ Cf. W. H. J. Weale—H. Bohatta, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ Cf. E. Bishop, *Liturgica historica* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918), p. 33.

in the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale (Ms. lat8884), which was written, so Fr. Bonniwell (following M. Leroquais) says, between 1234 and 1243.¹¹ Moreover, the Fréjus formulary at the Fraction, "Haec sacrosancta com-mixtio . . .," is not dissimilar to that used by the Dominicans to-day.¹² Both these usages, as Msgr. de Bausset-Roquefort points out, are characteristic of the ancient form of the liturgy employed in the Church of Fréjus.¹³

Our present concern, however, is less with these issues than with a particular aspect of the *pietas erga Mariam*, that devotion to the holy Virgin which, from very early times in history, has resulted in a special place being given her in the liturgical usages of Christians who have recognized in the Mother of God a special and unique avenue of approach to divine grace and a channel of that grace which is never failing and always worthy of confident recourse.

The Mass Book which Msgr. de Bausset-Roquefort gave to his diocese displayed, as did other examples of the so-called neo-Gallican liturgies, a fondness for great variety in the Mass texts used for the dead. This is a characteristic which these uses shared with that older liturgy, the ancient Gallican Rite dating back to times prior to Charlemagne and Alcuin (who had succeeded, by fusing qualities from each type of liturgical worship known to them, in creating a Romano-Gallican liturgy, a liturgy which was eventually to triumph, even at Rome itself, over what was the apparently more austere primitive Roman use). This Gallican inclination toward elaboration and variety has been varyingly estimated and judged; but it seems to me that it is an immense gain to the richness of devotional thought to have at hand a differing series of Mass formularies for special types and kinds of dead persons; and it is quite appropriate, I think, that there should be proper texts for the funeral of one in holy orders as distinct from those proper to a lay person, as well as there being a distinct Mass formulary for the anniversary of *one* deceased Christian in which are specially chosen petitions and texts which distinguish it from the formulary appointed to be said for *all* the faithful departed. Perhaps few who have been struck by the unvarying monotony of the formulary, "Requiem aeternam . . .," which serves in the present Roman book for so many and so diverse occasions,

¹¹ William Raymund Bonniwell, *op. cit.*, p. 35. There is a later edition of this book, published in the following year.

¹² Cf. Bonniwell, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

¹³ *Missale Forojuliense, illustrissimum et reverendissimum in Christo patris, DD. Emmanuel-Francisci de Bausset-Roquefort, Forojuliensis episcopi, auctoritate, necnon venerabilis ejusdem capituli consensu, editum* (Paris: Cl. Simon, 1786), p. vi of the episcopal *Mandatum* authorizing the book.

will wish to dispute this preference. It might be claimed, of course, that the unchanging Roman formulary offers testimony to our common human nature; but it does not follow that the French liturgists were wrong in wishing to mark the difference of function which distinguishes those who share a sameness in that nature. The Dominican Rite, although by no means approaching the generous wealth of the eighteenth-century French Missals, displays a tendency toward variety, or at least away from unimaginative repetition, by employing the Gradual, "Si ambulem . . .," instead of following the modern Roman practice of repeating the words of the Introit, "Requiem aeternam. . . ."

The Missal of Fréjus points the way to a greater enrichment in our liturgical expression of the devotion to the welfare of the departed by providing not only distinct propers for various classes of dead persons but also a choice of votive Masses to be said *pro defunctis*. One of these is a *Missae de Spiritu Sancto pro defuncto vel defuncta*; the other, which now concerns us in our examination of the thought of the French liturgiologists with respect to their ideas of what our Lady's place in the liturgy should be, is a *Missae de B. Maria Virgine pro defuncto vel defuncta*.

It might seem that in the Fréjus book these Masses are set forth as "votive" formularies, for the section in which they appear is headed, "Missae pro defunctis. Quo ritu hae Missae sint celebrandae, vide supra in Rubricis generalibus, Cap. IV," suggesting perhaps that one might use them as memorial or anniversary commemorations, inasmuch as that section of the general rubrics in the *Missale Forojuliense* deals with various kinds of votive Masses,—among which, of course, if one speak strictly, even funeral Masses are to be numbered. However, I am making a distinction not quite scientifically valid in noting here that the original character of these formularies appears to be revealed by an observation of the Abbé Augustin-Pierre-Paul Caron (to whom we are indebted for the preservation of so much of the lore of the ancient Church of Paris), in some remarks indicating that these Mass formularies once formed part of the complete funeral service rather than being simply adjunct formularies to be used *ad devotionem* when it was desired to say a Mass for the dead. M. Caron states in his analysis of the old Mass books of the Church of Paris that they included three Mass formularies *pro defunctis*. That of the Holy Spirit and that of the holy Virgin are said before the *Vigilia mortuorum* or Office of the Dead, the former of these Masses being of simple rite without either *Gloria in excelsis* or *Credo*. The second, however, is solemn: it includes the *Gloria*, Alleluia, several proses or sequences according to the varying seasons, a Tract for Septuagesima and Lent, and the *Credo* as well. The third Mass is

the *Requiem*, with the prose *Dies irae*. The custom of using these three formularies maintained itself, the Abbé Caron says, in several dioceses in his day.¹⁴ A note amplifies this information, and M. Caron instances the Missals of Sens, Rouen, and Beauvais as containing these three *propria*.

Our author gives us, too, a vivid personal reaction to these elaborate funerary rites when he remarks: "J'ai assisté à un anniversaire, dans lequel après avoir chanté les Vigiles entières, les Laudes, les Commendaces¹⁵ avec le Ps. *Beati immaculati* tout entier, les trois Messes furent célébrées solennellement. Cet Office, commencé à huit heures du matin, ne finit que vers une heure".¹⁶ M. Caron thus indicates that, although the *Missa de Scta. Maria pro defunctis* had dropped out of use at Paris, it formed part of the funeral service at Sens, Rouen, and Beauvais in his time, that is to say, about a century ago. I have not, as yet, been able to examine the Fréjus *Rituale* with a view to determining whether or not any of its rubrics would imply that this usage was followed there also. Were one to judge solely by the rubrics in the *Missale Forojuliense* (i.e., those as referred to above, "in Rubricis generalibus, Cap. IV"), there might seem justification for the opinion that this proper and that of the similar Mass of the Holy Ghost may have been inserted chiefly for "votive" use, as we think of that term in its less strict sense. Nevertheless, the fact that these formularies were put *in primo loco* among the Mass texts *pro defunctis* in the Fréjus Missal printed in 1786, might be taken as suggesting a persistence of the older usage of employing them as part of the complete funeral service.¹⁷

The *Missa de B. Maria pro defunctis* is, according to the Fréjus rubrics, to be said in white vestments. It is composed of a finely chosen selection of texts, and it has a proper Preface of unusual pertinence and beauty (a fact

¹⁴ "Il y a trois Messes marquées pour les défunts; celle du Saint-Esprit et celle de la sainte Vierge sont avant les Vigiles. La première est du rite simple, sans *Gloria in excelsis*, ni Credo; mais la seconde est solennelle: on y dit le *Gloria in excelsis*, et l'Alleluia, qui suivent plusieurs Proses selon les divers temps, et un Trait pour la Septuagésime et le Carême; on dit le *Credo*. La troisième est la Messe *Requiem* et la Prose *Dies irae* y est notée. L'usage de dire ces trois Messes subsiste encore dans plusieurs diocèses" (Augustin-Pierre-Paul Caron, *Notice historique sur les rites de l'Eglise de Paris* [Paris: Adrien Le Clere, 1846], p. 31).

¹⁵ Cf. *Rituale Metense auctoritate . . . D. Henrici-Caroli du Cambout, Ep. Metensis, S. R. I. Principis, Ducis de Coislin, Paris Franciae, etc., editum* (Metis: Typis Brixii Antoine . . . 1713), pars 3a, p. 124: "Ordo commendationis animae post Missam in officio solemnium."

¹⁶ "Ces Messes sont dans les Missels actuels de Sens, de Rouen, et de Beauvais. [Here follow the two sentences quoted above in the text]" (Caron, *op. cit.*, p. 66, note 34).

¹⁷ I have not compared the *proprium* found in this Missal with those of all the dioceses mentioned by M. Caron.

unmentioned by M. Caron with respect to the formularies of which he speaks). All of the elements in this Mass express the confident trust of the dying Christian in the prayerful aid of the Mother who stood by the cross of her Son, our Lord. The Fréjus recension does not contain the Proses to which the Abbé Caron alludes; and the Tract, as will be noted below, is to be said throughout the year. Again, unlike the formularies mentioned by the historian of the usages of the Church of Paris, the Fréjus formulary does not contain an Alleluia. Of the Fréjus formulary, as a whole, it may be confidently asserted that so directly and so inspiringly does it express the doctrine of our Lady's unique role of intercessor and mediatrix *in hora mortis nostrae* that few who are sensitive to the importance and the far-reaching implications of that doctrine will hesitate to join in the wish that such a usage as this existed in the liturgical economy of our own day.

The formulary found in the *Missale Foro-Julienne*, 1786, runs as follows:

[Missa] De B. Maria Virgine, pro defuncto vel defuncta

Introitus (Ps. 44): Concupiscet Rex decorem tuum, quoniam ipse est Dominus Deus tuus, et adorabunt eum: vultum tuum deprecabuntur omnes divites plebis. Ps. Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum: dico ego opera mea Regi. Gloria. Concupiscet.

Si Missa celebretur pro defuncto Pontifice vel Presbytero, dicetur in Collecta, famulo tuo N. Pontifice, vel Sacerdote; et sic in Secreta et Postcommunione.

Collecta: Oremus. Subveniat famulo^o tuo^o N. quaesumus, Domine, Beatae Virginis intercessio; ipsique iudicem placabilem faciat, quem mundo peperit Redemptorem Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum; Qui tecum.

Lectio libri Judith (Judith 13): Benedicta es tu, filia, a Domino Deo excelso, prae omnibus mulieribus super terram. Benedictus Dominus, qui creavit coelum et terram, qui te direxit in vulnera capitis principis inimicorum nostrorum; Quia hodie nomen tuum ita magnificavit, ut non recedat laus tua de ore hominum, qui memores fuerint virtutis Domini in aeternum, pro quibus non pepercisti animae tuae, propter angustias et tribulationem generis tui, sed subvenisti ruinae ante conspectum Dei nostri.

Graduale (Esth. 5. Luc. 1): Invoca Dominum, & loquere regi pro nobis, & libera nos de morte. V. Benedicta tu in mulieribus; invenisti gratiam apud Deum.

Quocumque tempore Graduali additur Tractus (Ps. 115): O Domine; ego servus tuus, & filius ancillae tuae. Dirupisti vincula mea, tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis, & nomen Domini invocabo. Vota mea Domino reddam in conspectu omnis populi ejus, in atriis domo Domini, in medio tui, Jerusalem.

Sequentia sancti Evangelii secundum Lucam (cap. 2): In illo tempore: Erat pater Jesu et mater mirantes super his quae dicebantur de illo. Et benedixit illis Simeon; & dixit ad Mariam matrem ejus: Ecce positus est hic in ruinam et in resurrectionem multorum in Israel; et in signum cui contradicetur; Et tuam ipsius animam pertransibit gladius, ut revelentur ex multis cordibus cogitationes.

Offertorium (1 Reg. 7): Peccavimus Domino: ne cesses pro nobis clamare ad Dominum Deum nostrum, ut salvet nos.

Secreta: Interveniatur pro nobis, Deus misericors, Beata Virgo Maria, & ejus suffragiis concede, ut aspersione sanguinis Christi, anima famulⁱ_{ae} tuⁱ_{ae} N. ab omnibus peccatis emundata, salutem aeternam consequatur; Per eundem.

Praefatio de B. Maria Virgine pro Defunctis: Vere dignum et justum . . . per Christum Dominum nostrum; qui pro salute nostra in cruce moriens, beatam Virginem Mariam genitricem suam, Matrem nobis pio favore providit; ut in hac miseriarum valle laborantibus succurreret, morientes juvaret, & in tua caritate defunctos, tibi praesentaret coronandos. Et ideo . . .

Communio (Judith 13): Per manum feminae percussit hostem populi sui Dominus Deus noster: confitemini illi omnes, quoniam bonus, quoniam in saeculum misericordia ejus.

Postcommunio: Oremus. Per haec mysteria, quaesumus, Domine, repellatur hostis ille, quem Beata Maria virgineo partu contrivit; ut anima famulⁱ_{ae} tuⁱ_{ae} N. de potestate tenebrarum erepta, transferatur in regnum Filii tui Domini nostri Jesu Christi; Qui tecum.

Although this formulary itself best bespeaks its own good qualities, it may not be amiss to point out a few notions which this interesting combination of texts presents, both in regard to their devotional content and suggestiveness and with respect to the light they cast upon what the French liturgists of the *ancien régime* seem to have thought about the place which the holy Virgin ought be assigned in the liturgical expression of devotional life.

At first consideration, perhaps the most striking idea which this proper conveys is the "dramatic fiction," so to speak, by which it pictures our Lady as present at the hour of death of the Christian, strengthening and comforting him by her presence, and as making intercession to her Son while representing vividly, as one might say, the idea that here is one of those for whom He died on Calvary in an act of His salvific will in which she was a compassionate participant (Preface). Yet, the theological content of the formulary is, upon examination, perceived to go much deeper; for while it invites us to contemplate the effect upon us of Mary becoming the Mother of the human race as there were spoken to us all, in the person of that disciple whom Jesus loved, those pregnant words, "Son, behold thy Mother," it is nevertheless on the central and fundamental note of our Lady's character and function in the divine economy of salvation that emphasis is chiefly laid.

In the Collect at the beginning of the Mass we hear the assertion of this character and function and of its consequence: ". . . ipsique iudicem plac-

bilem faciat, *quem mundo peperit* Redemptorem Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum. . . ." It is by her divine maternity that Mary occupies her unique place in Christian history and in the liturgical manifestation or showing-forth of those principles which, in the mind of God, underlie the facts and the happenings of that history. By her willingness to accept her place and function in the divine plan, the holy Virgin acquired title to the fruits and privileges of her divine election, an election brought to our remembrance in the Introit of this most wonderful Mass ("Concupiscet Rex decorem tuum . . ."). It is because our Lady accepted freely the expression of God's will in her regard (Introit Psalm verse: "Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum: dico opera mea Regi") that she becomes our Mother given as such by Christ dying on the Cross (Preface); and it is by the act of her acceptance, in freely vesting herself first with the actual Motherhood of God and then with the mystical motherhood of mankind, that she overcomes the enemy of the human race ("hostis ille, quem Beata Maria virgineo partu contrivit," says the Postcommunion).

The *Oratio secreta* provides a notable example of a prayer which is quite perfectly balanced in its expression of petition and of the dogmatic foundation upon which the intercession we invoke and the gift we ask are alike based. Its words emphatically declare our belief in the one saving redemption by which Christ purchased us in His blood (" . . . aspersione sanguinis Christi, anima famuli tui N. ab omnibus peccatis emundata, salutem aeternam consequatur . . ."): thus do we become again His own creatures newly born as it were on the bed of the Cross—that *thorus in quo nos parit* which the old French liturgists were fond of recalling.¹⁸

¹⁸ Cf. the hymn of Ch. Coffin (1676-1749) assigned in the Versailles Breviary (1828) *ad Laudes in feriis Passionis*: ". . . Pendentis e celsa trabe / Sanabit aspectus Dei. / Hic nos Olympo parturis. . ." See also that of Jean Santeul (Santolius Victorianus) which the Versailles Breviary uses in *Iis. Vesperis in Exaltatione Sctae. Crucis, die 14 Septembris*: "Tu celsa sedes, unde suos docet; / Vitalis, in quo nos peperit, thorus. . ." Cf. another hymn of the same great poet, assigned in the same Breviary *ad Laudes in Inventione Sctae. Crucis (3 Maii)*: "Tu lectus in quo nos parit / Suggestus e quo nos docet. . ." There is an interesting echo of this last in a popular Prose, found in the Lyon Missal (1771) *in festo Inventionis Sctae. Crucis*: "Lectus Dei morientis / Est cathedra nos docentis; / Simul mori discite." It is parallelisms of this kind to which M. Henri Brémond drew attention as ". . . cette transposition constante de l'hymne à la prose—un des phénomènes poétiques et liturgiques le plus curieux que je connaisse" (*Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux* [Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1932], 116). Of this particular pair of complementary liturgical poems he had previously remarked: "On voit la transition du latin savant au populaire; de *suggestus* à *cathedra*; de *tu lectus*, sans verbe, à *est cathedra*" (p. 97). Jean Santeul's brother, Claude (Santolius Maglorianus), provides us with a more

The text of this Mass stresses, too, by its appropriation of words from the book of Judith, "Quia hodie nomen tuum ita magnificavit, ut non recedat laus tua de ore hominum" (Lesson), the unique place which is Mary's; it suggests the all-embracing character of her mediation ("ut revelentur ex multis cordibus cogitationes," as we read in the Gospel); and it proclaims the childlike confidence her clients feel in the power of her intercession, so acceptable to God and hence so terrible to their enemy: "per manum feminae percussit hostem populi sui Dominus" (Communion antiphon).

Mindful, moreover, that theological truth is a body of knowledge exercising itself upon data to which nothing human is alien and to which nothing in nature can be irrelevant, the compilers of this Mass formulary gave it a character not only dogmatically sound but marked also with the attractiveness of devout humanism. It is in this sense, for instance, that the application of words from Psalm 115 is seen to be so expressive of that affective solace dear to the human heart in time of bereavement: "tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis . . . ego servus tuus et filius ancillae tuae" (Tract), a note sounded again in the *Oratio secreta* already referred to.

From the dogmatic point of view we may remark how carefully is preserved the central touchstone of orthodox Christian devotion: the primary object of address of our prayer is God Himself as the Creator and Giver of every good gift; our Lady is invoked not as the Divine Ultimate but as man's most powerful and acceptable intercessor after that only Mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ, her divine Son. Thus we find: "Subveniat famulo tuo N. quaesumus, Domine, Beatae Virginis intercessio . . ." (Collect); "Invoca Dominum, et loquere Regi pro nobis . . ." (Gradual); "Vota mea Domino reddam . . ." (Tract); "Peccavimus Domino: ne cesses pro nobis clamare ad Dominum Deum nostrum, ut salvet nos" (Offertory, in itself summing up a whole theology of intercessory prayer). Again recurring to the Secret, we recognize in the words, "Interveniat pro nobis, Deus misericors, Beata Virgo Maria et ejus suffragiis concede . . .," as well as in those of the Preface, ". . . ut [B. V. M.] tibi praesentaret coronandos," a clear acceptance of the theological truth that the ultimate source of what we ask is in God, and that it is to Him that all our petition is addressed in its termination, howsoever it be mediated. It is as if to assert this basic dogmatic concept again at the end of the Mass that we find all these ideas summed up

involved but not less meaningful "conceit" upon this theme in the hymn which the Versailles Breviary uses *ad Laudes in festo quinque plagarum Christi (feria sexta post Cineres)*: "Obstétrix penitus lancea perforat, / Quo nos parturiat, pectus amabile. . ."

in the Communion antiphon: "Per manum feminae percussit hostem populi sui Dominus Deus noster: confitemini illi omnes, quoniam bonus, quoniam in saeculum misericordia ejus."

A careful study of the *Missae de Beata Maria pro defuncto vel defuncta* yields the thought that there can scarcely be another liturgical formulary superior to this one as being distinguished at one time for the exquisite art of its form, the pith and poignancy of its affective appeal, and the careful exactitude of its dogmatic teaching: it seems to combine almost uniquely the marks of a spirit of Catholic veneration of our Lady which is at one time enlightened, devout, and firmly grounded in sound theological principles.

This beautiful Marian Mass for the departed is, of itself, a remarkable rebuke to those who seek to persuade us that the work of the eighteenth-century liturgical reformers in France was designed to uproot devotion to the holy Virgin from its honored place in Catholic worship. Yet, this formulary does not stand alone: very many other beautiful prayers and usages declaring and emphasizing the role of our Lady as mediatrix of all graces can be found in the various liturgical books published by the bishops of the *ancien régime*. The Missal of Fréjus, although outstandingly rich in the manifestation of devotion to Mary, is by no means unique among contemporary liturgical *monumenta* issued in other parts of France. An attempt is made in the present writer's documented study of the French liturgical reform of the eighteenth century in its relation to Marian theology, to deal with the whole subject in a much fuller manner than has been possible in this brief paper, and it is my hope that the publication of that essay may serve to draw attention to what I believe are erroneous notions of the history of the Western liturgy, and to suggest the advisability of the re-examination of these notions. They have been, I think, advanced without solid foundation, and my examination of the sources in question has convinced me that these notions and kindred concepts are defended most tenaciously by those whose own writings give evidence that they have not any great familiarity with the actual texts of the liturgies they so heatedly denounce.

My own opinion—that a more measured method of approach to the subject than that favored by the Romanticists will result in the attainment of a truer picture than has been given us by those detractors of the liturgical reform undertaken during the *ancien régime* in France—is based on the principle that it is by having direct recourse to authentic sources rather than by relying on the hasty opinions of polemicists that we can reasonably expect to learn what the attitude of the liturgists of the eighteenth century actually was, and what fruit their attitude bore in their work, those projects of reform

which appear to have anticipated and perhaps even to have inspired some recent actions of the Holy See in the recasting of our liturgical worship.¹⁹

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¹⁹ Among instances which—though instances in argument be dangerous things—may be considered to justify this opinion and standpoint, are: (1) the adoption of a new and more rationally arranged distribution of the Breviary Psalter, as authorized by Pius X; (2) the appointment, during the same pontificate, of New Testament lessons in the *Officium omnium defunctorum* of 2 November; (3) the increase, in our own lifetime, of the number of proper Prefaces in the *Missale Romanum*; (4) the injunction that “Flectamus genua” is intended as more than an empty formula, sharply emphasized in the rubrics of the revised Paschal Vigil Service now authorized for optative use on Easter Eve; (5) the appointment of a feast of the “interior” of our Lady, now set for the octave day of the Assumption; (6) the substitution in the Missal (*editio sexta post typicam*) put out by the Vatican Press in 1953, of “rationabile,” which makes sense in the Introit of Low Sunday, for the meaningless “rationabiles.” Every one of these changes parallels reforms instituted by the bishops of the *ancien régime* in France; scarcely one of them escaped most unsympathetic criticism from liturgists whose principles are colored by ideas beloved of the liturgical Romanticists of the nineteenth century.