

The typology and history of the *Ordo Missae*

Dom Cassian Folsom, O.S.B.¹

I'm honored to be a speaker at this 15th Colloquium of the Centre Internationale d'Études Liturgiques. The topic this year, "The *Offertorium* in Christian Liturgical Traditions" is worthy of scholarly study; it has been a point of controversy, and often good scholarship can shed light on thorny liturgical issues.

1. Introduction

My task is to present the *Ordo Missae* in the Roman tradition. I will try to do this in 45 minutes, so as to leave some time for discussion.

Much of what I will say can be found in my recent publication on the Liturgical Books of the Mass, as well as my study guide to recent scholarship on the *Ordo Missae*, available on the book table.

2. Terminology

First of all, we should clarify some terminology: what is the *Ordo Missae* and what is it not? Strictly speaking, the term *Ordo Missae* refers to a somewhat flexible sequence or order in the private prayers and gestures of the celebrant during three parts of the Mass: the entrance, offertory and communion rites. The initial period of the growth of this genre extends roughly from the IX-XIII centuries. The *Ordinarium Missae*, on the other hand, refers to the full development of what were previously optional and somewhat flexible elements of priestly piety into an established and invariable structure which then became obligatory. From the XIII century onward, this *Ordinarium Missae* became progressively more refined and stable, with a gradual clarification of rubrical instructions, until its culmination in the *Missale Romanum* 1570. The terminology is variable, however, since in the medieval period, no title of any kind was given to these elements of the Mass. The MR 1474 uses the term *Ordo Missae*. In the MR 1570 the expression used is *Ordinarium Missae*. The MR 1962 again uses the term *Ordo Missae*, and the expression *Ordo Missae* is maintained in the various editions of the post-Vatican II Roman Missal.

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In the *Missale Romanum* of 1970, there is a definite reaction against the detailed rubrical directives of the post-Tridentine period, but there's also an important change in literary genre. While the name *Ordo Missae* is maintained, the contents are modified to include now not only the words and gestures of the priest, but also the words and gestures of the people. In theory, this fundamental change was to have reduced the subjective piety of the priest and fostered the objective participation of the assembly. In actual practice, however, there is a great deal of confusion about this balance between objective and subjective. The elimination of the more subjective priestly piety of the former *Ordo Missae* has frequently led to the explosion of subjectivity in other forms. A study of the history of the *Ordo Missae* can help to dispel some of the confusion.

3. Typology

The historical development of the *Ordo Missae* corresponds to various typologies. For example, the *Ordo Missae* can be found as a *libellus* of variable length, which could circulate independently, or could be bound together with other juxtaposed elements of a liturgical book, but was not integrated into the missal. Another example is an abbreviated or simplified text, often with local variants, inserted into the missal in the margins or blank pages. Finally, the words and gestures which were formerly optional expressions of priestly piety are now inserted into their proper place in the missal and become more or less obligatory ².

4. History

The most important study of this topic is that of B. Luykx (1955) ³; in fact all subsequent research takes its starting point from his pioneer work in this area⁴. In his article, Luykx describes the contrast between the Roman *ordines* with their succinct and sober style, and Franco-Germanic priestly piety, which emphasized a greater subjective participation of the priest

² B. LUYKX, *De oorsprong van het gewone der mis* (De eredienst der Kerk 3), Utrecht-Antwerpen 1955; «Der Ursprung der gleichbleibenden Teile der heiligen Messe», *Liturgie und Mönchtum* 26 (1960) 72-119; «El origen del Ordinario de la Misa (*Ordinarium Missae*)», in *Estudios sobre «Ordo Missae» medieval* (Cuadernos Phase 268), Barcelona 2022, 7-64. There is also a forthcoming Italian translation: C. Folsom, *L'«Origine dell'Ordinario della Messa» di B. Luykx*, Editrice Domenicana Italiana, Napoli 2026.

³ Cf. LUYKX, *De oorsprong van het gewone der mis*, 45-47.

⁴ One can find references to the 1951 doctoral thesis of Luca Brinkhoff, O.F.M., *De Ordine Missae a saeculo X ad saeculum XIII*, which was never published. Cf. P. TIROT, «Histoire des prières d'offertoire dans la liturgie romaine du VII^e au XVI^e siècle», *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 98 (1984) 148-197; 323-391. The reference to Brinkhoff is on page 148.

in the objective celebration of the Mass. There were three “soft points”⁵ in the Mass ritual (to use an expression of Robert Taft), which invited a more personal expression of priestly piety. These were 1) the simple entrance procession from the sacristy to the altar, 2) the somewhat plain and unadorned offering of the elements of bread and wine at the Offertory and 3) the practical organization of the communion rite. These “soft points” were soon filled with the personal prayer of the celebrant. Luykx has the merit of identifying three types of this kind of priestly prayer: the apology type, the Frankish type and the Rhenish type.

In the organic development of this genre over the centuries, Luykx describes two great movements: first from objective to subjective, and then from excessive subjectivism to a more balanced objectivity⁶. The first movement consisted in supplementing the sobriety of the Roman *ordines* with prayers expressing sentiments of personal unworthiness and compunction for sin, using a more exuberant style than that of the more restrained Roman orations. The priest wanted to participate in the awe-inspiring sacrifice of the Mass in a more personal way. That fact that this genre was so subjective, however, sometimes led to a certain excess, and the dynamism of subjective prayer was soon inserted back into a more objective structure of words and gestures which was called the *Ordinarium Missae*.

The apology type

The first type of *Ordo Missae* is the apology type⁷. Luykx describes these prayers as «rather long declarations of guilt with the invocation of the mercy of God»⁸. Cabrol adds that such self-accusations had the purpose of preparing the priest to celebrate the sacred mysteries⁹. These

⁵ The expression “soft points” is not from Luykx, but from Robert Taft; cf. R.F. TAFT, «How Liturgies Grow: The Evolution of the Byzantine ‘Divine Liturgy’», *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 43 (1977) 355-378. It is interesting to note that, although the details of the Roman rite and the Byzantine rite are different, the experience is the same. Taft («How Liturgies Grow», 357) writes: «Note that in the primitive liturgy there are three points of action without words: 1) the entrance into the church, 2) the kiss of peace and transfer of gifts, and 3) the fraction, communion and dismissal rites. What could be more natural than to develop the ceremonial of these actions, cover them with chants, and add to them suitable prayers?».

⁶ Cf. LUYKX, *De oorsprong van het gewone der mis*, 9-17, where he describes the transition from the “uncontaminated” rite of the city of Rome, to the new synthesis created by Carolingian piety. His insight about the dynamic between objective and subjective elements of the Mass can be found on page 32.

⁷ One of the earliest studies of this genre is that of F. CABROL, «Apologies», in *Dictionnaire d’archéologie chrétienne et de Liturgie* 1/2, Paris 1907, 2591-2601, which remains an important point of reference. One of the most recent studies is by A.-P. YAO, *Les “Apologies” de l’Ordo Missae de la liturgie romaine: Sources, Histoire, Théologie* (EOSR 3), Napoli 2019. The work contains abundant historical information, analytical charts and an ample bibliography. A substantial part of the book is dedicated to the apologies in the *Ordo Missae* of Paul VI.

⁸ Cf. LUYKX, *De oorsprong van het gewone der mis*, 15.

⁹ Cf. CABROL, «Apologies», 2591.

apologies are found in Carolingian prayer books (IX century), which are eclectic compositions containing orations, hymns, psalm verses, apologies and litanies, not intended necessarily for use during Mass. Some of these apologies entered into the *Ordo Missae* and have remained until this day¹⁰. This genre is not unique to the Roman rite, but is found in the non-Roman western liturgical families as well. Alain-Pierre Yao describes the presence of such apologies in the Celtic, Gallican, Hispanic and Ambrosian rites¹¹. The influence of the Gallican rite on the Roman rite is especially important. Apologies are found in the *Missale Gothicum* (late VII-early VIII century)¹², the *Gallicanum Vetus* (VIII century)¹³, and the *Stowe Missal* (late VIII-early IX century)¹⁴. Gelasian sacramentaries of the VIII century also include prayers of this kind¹⁵. The apologies were gathered together into three groups, corresponding to the three “soft points” of the Mass liturgy: prayers before the altar, prayers at the moment of offering the gifts, and prayers during the communion rite¹⁶.

¹⁰ For example, the prayers in preparation for communion *Domine Iesu Christe fili Dei vivi* and *Perceptio corporis and sanguinis tui*, are already present in the IX century *Libellus Turonensis*, as found in *Precum libelli quattuor aevi Karolini*, ed. A. Wilmart, Roma 1940, 141.

¹¹ Cf. YAO, *Les “Apologies” de l’Ordo Missae de la liturgie romaine*, 60-68.

¹² Cf. *Missale Gothicum* (*Vat.Reg.lat.317*), ed. L.C. Mohlberg (*Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta. Series maior, Fontes 5*), Roma 1961, 70-71 (number 275), where there is a long “*apologia sacerdotis*” beginning with the words *Ante tuae immensitatis conspectum*. Because this prayer was rather widespread, it will serve as a good example of the style of these prayers. The excerpt given here is abbreviated: «*Ante tuae immensitatis conspectum et ante tuae ineffabilitatis oculos, o maiestas mirabilis, scilicet ante tuos sanctos vultus, magne deus et maxime pietatis et potestatis omnipotens pater, quamlibet non sine debita reverencia, attamen nulla officii dignitate, vilis admodum praecator accedo et reus conscienciae testis adsisto, quidne rogabo quod non mereor? [...]*». Cf. the more recent edition of E. Rose: *Missale gothicum e Codice Vaticano Regiensis latino 317 editum*, ed. E. Rose (*Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina 159D*), Turnhout 2005.

¹³ Cf. *Missale Gallicanum Vetus* (*Cod. Vat.Pal.lat. 493*), edd. L.C.Mohlberg-L.Eizenhöfer-P.Siffrin (*Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta. Series maior Fontes 3*), Roma 1958, 94 (number 346), where there is good example of a “*Suscipe sancta Trinitas*” prayer: «*Suscipe, sancta trinitas, hanc oblationem, quam tibi offero per imperatore nostro [...]*».

¹⁴ Cf. *The Stowe Missal*, vol. 1, ed. George F. Warner (Henry Bradshaw Society 31), London 1906, 14-15, where there is a prayer attributed to St. Ambrose: «*Ante conspectum divinae maestatis tuae Deus [...] miserere mihi domine homini peccatori luto feccis inmunde inherenti [...]*». For the complex question of dating, cf. in particular page xxxvi.

¹⁵ Cf., for example, *Liber sacramentorum Engolismensis*, ed. P.Saint-Roch (*Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina 159A*), Turnhout 1981, dated around 800. Formulary CLXVIII is entitled *Incipit accusatio sacerdotis quomodo se ante altare accusare debeat* (page 143, number 964). Formulary LXXVII, in the second part of the sacramentary, is similar: *Incipit oratio quam debet sacerdos dicere cum venerit ante sanctum altare cum flecterit humiliter caput ante mensam Domini statim arripiat collectam quae subsequitur* (page 341, number 2191).

¹⁶ Cf. LUYKX, *De oorsprong van het gewone der mis*, 18.

The Frankish type

In the Frankish type, a clear development can be seen. No longer are we dealing with isolated apologies, even those organized according to the three parts of the Mass mentioned above, but an orderly series of prayers, each introduced by a brief rubric, and inserted in its proper place in the structure of the Mass¹⁷. The oldest example of this type of *Ordo Missae* is found in the sacramentary of Amiens, which Leroquais, following Delisle, dated to the second half of the IX century¹⁸, and all sorts of conclusions were drawn from this early dating. In 2025, however, the young scholar Georg Taubitz published a new edition and study of the *Ordo Missae* of Amiens¹⁹, dating the manuscript to the second half of the X century, one hundred years later. This has important implications. In particular, it would appear that the distinction of various types of *Ordo Missae* is not so much chronological as geographical. Luykx calls this ancient model “Frankish” because of its geographical origins in the area of north-eastern France, just south of the present Dutch and Belgian borders. Some of these prayers or their variants eventually entered into the Roman Missal and remained there until MR 1962²⁰; a few remained in the MR 1970 as well²¹.

The Frankish type *Ordo*, with its many variants, gradually moved south into ancient Gaul, that is, the central and southern part of present day France, and could even be found in some centers in Spain. In 2022, Francisco Javier Espinoza Ayala²² edited three texts of the Frankish typology: from the sacramentary of Lyon²³, the sacramentary of Limoges²⁴ and the missal of Rennes²⁵. Espinoza’s comparative analysis shows that what Luykx called the “Frankish type” is by no

¹⁷ Cf. LUYKX, *De oorsprong van het gewone der mis*, 20.

¹⁸ Cf. «L’*Ordo Missae* du sacramentaire d’Amiens», ed. V. Leroquais, *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 41 (1927) 435-445. The manuscript is housed in the Bibliothèque National of Paris, ms. lat. 9432, folii 10-17.

¹⁹ Cf. G. TAUBITZ, *Der Ordo Missae des Sakramentars von Amiens: Edition und liturgiehistorische Einordnung* (Ecclesia orans. Studi e ricerche 10), Editrice Domenicana Italiana, Napoli 2025.

²⁰ Cf., for example, the vesting prayers for stole and chasuble; the *Suscipe sancta Trinitas* and the *Orate fratres* at the Offertory, the *Placeat tibi sancta Trinitas* before the final blessing.

²¹ Cf. the private prayers of the priest *Domine Iesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi* before Communion and the *Quod ore sumpsimus* afterwards.

²² *El Ordo Missae Romano-Franco: edición e análisis del Ordo Missae del sacramentario de Lyon, del sacramentario de Limoges y del Misal de Rennes*, ed. F.J. Espinoza Ayala, in *Estudios sobre «Ordo Missae» medieval* (Cuadernos Phase 268), Barcelona 2022, 65-170.

²³ Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, n. 537, XI century.

²⁴ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. Lat. 821, XI century.

²⁵ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. Lat. 9439, XII century.

means a coherent or unified tradition; there seems to be no archetype. There is a great deal of variety from one manuscript to another, with some prayers in common, and others specific to the text in question²⁶.

The Rhenish type

The Rhenish type *Ordo Missae*, which developed from the X century onward, takes its name from the Rhine river, and the important centers of ecclesiastical and liturgical life located on or near the Rhine, especially St. Gall, Reichenau and Mainz. While there is variety also in the Rhenish type of *Ordo Missae*, this category constitutes a more easily definable whole, both because of its structure and its contents. In terms of structure, the rubrics and prayers are now more clearly integrated into the framework of the Mass. In terms of content, there is a greater commonality in the prayer repertoire from one manuscript to another, so that a certain “family likeness” is recognizable. As Luykx observes, the Rhenish type *Ordo Missae* was originally intended for a solemn episcopal Mass, and was later simplified and adapted to the private Mass of a priest²⁷.

Between 1999 and 2011, Prof. Michael Witzak, with the collaboration of Daniel J. Merz, edited four important *Ordines Missae* from the St. Gall tradition, with the title: “St. Gall Mass Orders: Searching for the Origins of the Rhenish Mass Order”²⁸. The subtitle is important, because it indicates the present state of research. While Luykx was the first to point out the importance of these four manuscripts from Sankt Gallen and to link them to the Roman-Germanic Pontifical and the Ottonian liturgical center of Mainz, Witzak points out the need for more research, saying: «A recent consensus is that a more thoroughgoing testing of Luykx’s

²⁶ Other research in the area of the Frankish type is being done by Francesco Phan. In his *Lectio coram* (2025) at the Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, Phan edited four Frankish-type *Ordines Missae* to add to those edited by Espinoza: namely those of Soisson, Méen, Tours and Beauvais.

²⁷ Cf. LUYKX, *De oorsprong van het gewone der mis*, 24.

²⁸ «St. Gall Mass Orders (I): Ms. Sangallensis 338: Searching for the Origins of the Rhenish Mass Order», ed. M. Witzak, *Ecclesia orans* 16 (1999) 393-410; «St. Gall Mass Orders (II): Ms. Sangallensis 339: Searching for the Origins of the Rhenish Mass Order», ed. M. Witzak-D. Merz, *Ecclesia orans* 22 (2005) 47-62; «St. Gall Mass Orders (III): Ms. Sangallensis 340: Searching for the Origins of the Rhenish Mass Order», ed. M. Witzak-D. Merz, *Ecclesia orans* 24 (2007) 243-261; «St. Gall Mass Orders (IV): Ms. Sangallensis 354: Searching for the Origins of the Rhenish Mass Order», ed. M. Witzak-D. Merz, *Ecclesia orans* 28 (2011) 197-224.

hypothesis is necessary, and that to accomplish this, more texts of the *ordo missae* need to be published from the many manuscripts still not edited»²⁹.

With the publication of the St. Gall *ordines missae*, it is now possible to make more accurate comparisons with the previous tradition³⁰. From the Frankish tradition one can use the newly revised *Ordo Missae* of Amiens; from the Rhenish tradition, one can choose one of the representative texts of St. Gall. By comparing the text of Amiens with St. Gall 338, for example, it is immediately evident that the Rhenish tradition is far more developed than the Frankish tradition. In the St. Gall 338 text, there is usually a short rubric accompanying each prayer. There are no apology prayers before or during the Canon, which is to say that the style is more objective. The offertory and communion rites have a far richer repertoire of prayers than their Frankish counterpart. In the Rhenish tradition, the third and last “soft point”, that is, the entrance rite, is now filled with Psalm 42, the *Confiteor*, *preces* and orations, whereas in the Amiens *ordo* there are simply two apology prayers at this point.

It is useful to compare the four St. Gall *ordines missae* with each other. The first three (338, 339 and 340) represent what Luykx calls a sober and balanced type, which follows the flow of the Mass step by step; whereas St. Gall 354 is a more exuberant kind of *ordo*, which serves as an anthology of texts for the choice of the celebrant³¹.

In the same genre of an anthology of prayers for the celebrant to choose from as he sees fit, is the Prayerbook of Sigebert of Minden (1022-1036), also known as the *Missa Illyrica*, although that name is rather misleading³². This *libellus precum* was commissioned by Sigebert, bishop of Minden (in northern Germany, near Hannover), along with a whole series of liturgical books. Sigebert had the important role of counselor to the emperor, hence it is probable that his request went to the imperial center of Mainz, where it was “sub-contracted” to the scriptorium of St.

²⁹ «St. Gall Mass Orders (I): Ms. Sangallensis 338», 396. Witczak states that «[t]he long-desired final goal of this project is to offer a comprehensive analysis of the extant prayers and rubrics of the *ordo missae*, both at St. Gall and in other sources» («St. Gall Mass Orders (IV): Ms. Sangallensis 354», 199). The publication of sources is a step toward this goal.

³⁰ Baroffio and Dell’Oro list the principal characteristics that distinguish the Frankish and Rhenish *ordines*: cf. B. BAROFFIO- F. DELL’ORO, «L’Ordo Missae del vescovo Warmondo d’Ivrea», *Studi Medievali* 16 (1975) 795-823. Cf. also A. ODENTHAL, «Zwei Formulare des Apologientyps der Messe vor dem Jahre 1000: Zu Codex 88 und 137 der Kölner Dombibliothek», *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 37 (1995) 36, as well as H.B. MEYER, *Eucharistie: Geschichte, Theologie, Pastoral* (Gottesdienst der Kirche 4), Regensburg 1989, 204-208.

³¹ Cf. LUYKX, *De oorsprong van het gewone der mis*, 28.

³² In the XVI century, this text was published by the Lutheran theologian Mattias Flacius Illyricus (1520-1575) along with a polemical commentary – whence comes the popular title *Missa Illyrica*.

Gall. The text has been edited by Martène³³ and Migne³⁴, but there is a critical edition of the manuscript *Codex Helmstadiensis* 1151 made by Joanne Pierce in 1988, with an ample introduction and a useful commentary³⁵. The typology of the book tells something of its purpose: it is a small (120 mm x 170 mm) pocket-sized book, such that the bishop could easily use it during the long liturgical celebrations when the clergy or schola were carrying out their respective roles, leaving the bishop free for his personal devotions. This *libellus precum* is a good example of that excess of subjectivism Luykx talks about, a subjectivism which was later pruned back and inserted into a more objective structure in the XIII century, such that the typology of a personal prayer book to be used by the bishop or priest celebrant during the “soft points” of the Mass disappears.

From the X century onward, the Rhenish *ordo missae* spread rapidly to all points of the compass³⁶. According to Luykx, there are three reasons for this remarkable success: 1) Considering broad cultural shifts, one can say that after Roman objectivity and Frankish subjectivity formed a new synthesis in which the subjective element was sometimes excessive, there was a gradual shift toward a more objective liturgical piety, which required an *Ordo Missae* which stayed closer to the structure of the Mass. The Rhenish *Ordo Missae* responded to this need, and so served as a kind of corrective of the individualistic piety which expressed itself especially in the apologetic type. 2) The Rhenish *Ordo Missae* was a vast repertory of prayers and rubrics, its form and content still fluid at this point, leaving the celebrant free to choose what suited his personal devotion. 3) Because of the close link between the St. Gall-Reichenau-Mainz nucleus and the Ottonian movement of liturgical reform, the *Ordo Missae* spread along with the

³³ *De antiquis Ecclesiae ritibus libri*, ed. E. Martène, vol. 1, Antwerp 1736 [reprint: Hildesheim 1967], 489-518.

³⁴ *Patrologia Latina* 138, 1301-1336.

³⁵ *Sacerdotal Spirituality at Mass: Text and Study of the Prayerbook of Sigebert of Minden (1022-1036)*, ed. J. Pierce (Thesis ad doctoratum: University of Notre Dame), Notre Dame 1988 [unpublished]. There is a good study of the Sigebert *ordo missae* by D. MERZ, *A Sacrifice of Pure Praise, a Confession of Grievous Faults: A Study of Priestly Piety in the Ordo Missae of Sigebert of Minden (1022-1036)* (Thesis ad licentiam: Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, S. Anselmo), Roma 1999 [unpublished].

³⁶ Luykx, *De oorsprong van het gewone der mis*, 40-41 gives a detailed description of this spreading influence, extending, with the Crusaders, as far as the Holy Land.

Roman-Germanic pontifical in the second half of the X century³⁷. (This hypothesis has been challenged, however, by more recent research)³⁸.

Paratus sacerdos (1227)

There is a myth, propagated primarily by Stephen Van Dijk, that just as there is an archetypal missal of the Roman Curia, so also there is a corresponding archetype of the *Ordo Missae*. The documentation to support this hypothesis is lacking, however. The idea of liturgical uniformity is perhaps anachronistic for this period, and the manuscripts of the *Ordo Missae* contain many variations. Nonetheless, the tradition of the *Ordo Missae* does become stabilized in the XIII century. There are two important witnesses to this development: the so-called *Paratus ordo* (before 1227) and the more extensive rubrical description by Haymo of Haversham (1243) beginning with the words *Indutus planeta*.

Van Dijk reconstructs the *Paratus* text from twelve different manuscripts³⁹. He points out that this was primarily an order of speech (*ordo dicendorum*) rather than an order of action (*ordo agendorum*)⁴⁰, hence the rubrical indications are rather minimal. It is intended for High Mass, since it speaks of the presence of deacon and subdeacon.

While there is some variety from one manuscript to another, the consolidation of the *Paratus* tradition is clear. Here is a classic Rhenish *Ordo Missae*, purified of excessive subjectivism, containing a rubric for every gesture, expressing priestly piety, but no longer admitting of individual choice from a series of *ad libitum* texts. It is now an *Ordinarium Missae* made up of standard and obligatory prayers and gestures which have by now filled in the former “soft points” of the introductory, offertory and communion rites.

³⁷ Cf. LUYKX, *De oorsprong van het gewone der mis*, 35-36.

³⁸ Cf. the *Lectio coram* of C. Torrez Quiroga, entitled *Manoscritti non editi che contengono l'Ordo Missae di tipo renano in Italia nei secoli X-XII*, Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, Roma 2024. The important work of H. Parkes also calls this hypothesis into question; cf. H. PARKES, *The Making of Liturgy in the Ottonian Church: Books, Music and Ritual in Mainz, 950-1050*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2015.

³⁹ Cf. *The Ordinal of the Papal Court from Innocent III to Boniface VIII and Related Documents*, ed. S. Van Dijk-J. H. Walker (Spicilegium Friburgense 22), Fribourg (CH) 1975. The manuscripts are listed on page 494, and the reconstructed *Ordo Missae* follows on pages 495-526. Two of the twelve manuscripts have been edited in recent years. Cf. *Missale Franciscanum regulae*, where the *Paratus ordo* begins on page 258, number 1152, and *A Rubricated Sacramentary of Thirteenth-century Rome*, ed. Menke, where the *Paratus ordo* begins on page 207, number 665. Cf. also the recent edition by A. BELLEZZA, «L'Ordo Missae “Paratus” del Missale secundum consuetudinem romanae curiae nella tradizione manoscritta veneziana», in *Studies on the Sources of the Roman Liturgy: Missal – Lectionary – Pontifical*, ed. D. Jurczak-M. Tymister (Ecclesia orans. Studi e ricerche 6), Napoli 2022, 27-50. The method of compiling a composite or reconstructed text is no longer considered reliable.

⁴⁰ Cf. *The Ordinal of the Papal Court*, liii.

Because this *Ordo Missae* was accepted by the papal court in the XIII century and thus entered into the missal *secundum consuetudinem romanae curiae* (usually inserted between the Easter Vigil and the Easter Day Mass), some version of the *Paratus* text became so widespread and so authoritative that it was included in the first printed missals⁴¹ and, of course, in the *Missale Romanum* of 1570⁴². What is needed is an anthology of texts of the *Ordo Missae* and its variants in the 200-year period between the XIII century and the first printed missals. Without such a tool, it is difficult to sketch the history of the *Ordo Missae* in this period with any accuracy.

Missale Romanum 1474

Because it is not clear what manuscript sources were used for the printing of the *Missale Romanum* of 1474 it is difficult to determine the sources of the *Ordo Missae*. Let it suffice here to point out the main differences in comparison with the *Paratus* text of Van Dijk. The title is simply *Ordo Misse*, followed immediately by the rubric *Paratus sacerdos cum intrat ad altare dicat*⁴³. There are no preparation prayers before Mass (that is, no *Quando presbiter parat se ad celebrandum missam secundum consuetudinem romanae curiae/ecclesiae dicat hos psalmos*) and no prayers of thanksgiving after Mass. As seen in the edition of Van Dijk, some manuscripts offered alternative prayers for the offertory rite: *Largire sensibus nostris* for the washing of the hands, *In tuo conspectu* for the spreading out of the corporal and *Ex latere Christi* for the mixing of water and wine. None of these are carried over into the 1474 missal. The rest is basically the same. The ordo is intended for Solemn Mass, since the deacon is mentioned frequently. There are very few rubrics, and those are very succinct.

Missale Romanum 1570

A study of the *Ordo Missae* in printed missals between 1474 and 1570 would be very useful. Lacking that, we can only surmise that just as the manuscripts on which the printed missals were

⁴¹ *Missalis Romani editio princeps Mediolani anno 1474 prelis mandata*, edd. A.Ward-C.Johnson (Biblioteca "Ephemerides Liturgicae". Subsidia, Supplementa 3), Centro Liturgico Vicenziano-Edizioni Liturgiche, Roma 1996. The *Paratus* ordo begins on page 165, number 963.

⁴² Cf. *Missale Romanum editio princeps (1570)*, edd. M.Sodi-A.M.Triacca (Monumenta Liturgica Concilii Tridentini 2), Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 1998. The ordo «*Sacerdos cum ingreditur ad altare signans se signo crucis* [...]» (without the word *paratus*) begins on page 293, number 1389.

⁴³ Note that the wording of the initial rubric is slightly different from that of Van Dijk's edition, which reads: «*Paratus autem intrat ad altare dicens*». Cf. *The Ordinal of the Papal Court*, 497.

based were variable, so too the *Ordo Missae* would show corresponding variety. The *ordo dicendorum* remains basically the same; what is different is the degree to which that ordo is accompanied by rubrical instructions. We know of two extremes in this period of 100 years: an extremely bare kind of *ordo missae* such as found in the Zarotto missal of 1474 and the frequent insertion of Burkhard's *Ordo Missae* (which is really a kind of Mass ceremonial), in order to make up for this lack of clarity. The *Missale Romanum* of 1570 innovates by creating two new documents placed at the beginning of the missal: the *Rubricae generales Missalis* and the *Ritus servandus in celebratione Missarum*, while at the same time augmenting the rubrical directives in the *Ordo Missae* itself.

The title of this section in MR 1570 is *Ordinarium Missae*⁴⁴. The *praeparatio ad Missam* and *Gratiarum actio post Missam* form part of the introductory documents at the beginning of the missal. The initial rubric is: *Sacerdos cum ingreditur ad altare signans se signo crucis clara voce dicit*. This ordo is intended for a Solemn Mass, as the deacon is often mentioned. There is a concern for the parts of the Mass that the priest must sing: therefore, the intonations are all written in musical notation: *Gloria*, *Credo*, Preface dialogue and prefaces (both solemn and simple tones) and *Pater noster* (both solemn and simple tones). Other intonations for the *Gloria*, *Item missa est*, *Benedicamus Domino*, *Flectamus genua* are inserted in a curious place after the *Sanctus* and before the *Te igitur*. The 1474 missal often supplied only the *incipit* of prayer texts, whereas the 1570 missal makes everything explicit, and writes everything out. There are more rubrics, offering greater precision. While the *Ordo Missae* of 1474 ends with *Placeat tibi sancta Trinitas*, the post-Tridentine missal continues with the blessing of the people, the last Gospel and the thanksgiving prayers.

From this comparison one can discern the choices made by the liturgical reformers of Trent in order to have greater clarity and uniformity in the celebration of Mass. The *Ordo Missae* remains an *ordo dicendorum* in complete continuity with the *Paratus* tradition, but supplied with more complete rubrics. The need for an *ordo agendorum* was satisfied by the creation of a new literary genre, the *Rubricae generales* and *Ritus servandus* inserted at the beginning of the missal among the introductory documents.

⁴⁴ *Missale Romanum editio princeps* (1570), 293, number 1389. The title of *Ordinarium Missae* serves as the page heading.

The Ordo Missae between 1570 and 1962

A fairly unexplored area of research is the development of the *Ordo Missae* in the various typical editions of the Roman Missal between 1570 and 1962. The reason is surely that while there are small changes of rubrics, the order in which the prefaces are listed, and other minor elements, there are no changes of substance⁴⁵.

While the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 contains numerous changes, incorporating the reforms of Holy Week (1951-1955) and the 1960 *Codex Rubricarum*, the actual text of the *Ordo Missae* changed very little. There are more intonations for the *Gloria*, for example, and a second intonation for the *Credo*. The section on the prefaces contains rubrical differences for two reasons: the change in the ranking of feasts (from *duplex*, *semi-duplex* and *simplex* to I, II and III class), and the suppression of most octaves. The preface for the Chrism Mass is inserted, due to the reforms of Holy Week. The canon of the Mass is the same, the Communion rite is the same. In the 1962 missal there is no reference to the thanksgiving rite at the end of Mass, as there was in the 1920 missal, but those things are included in the *Gratiarum actio post Missam* found at the beginning of the missal.

The Ordo Missae 1965

Sacrosanctum Concilium 50⁴⁶ (1963) called for a revision of the *Ordo Missae* (*Ordo Missae recognoscatur*) with two goals in mind: that the nature of its various parts might be more clearly manifested and that the *actuosa participatio* of the faithful might be more easily accomplished. In order to achieve this goal, some general principles were given: to make the rites simpler (while keeping their substance); to omit certain unnecessary things which, with the passage of time, were duplicated or added; to restore to the “pristine norm of the holy fathers” certain necessary things which, with the vagaries of time, had fallen out of use. The text was deliberately generic, leaving its interpretation and realization to the post-conciliar period.

There are two recently published works which give insight into the “nature of modern man” which “changed nature” required that the liturgy be adapted to his needs. The first is a

⁴⁵ The *Ordo Missae* of the 1920 *Missale Romanum*, for example, differs very little from its predecessors. There are very minor changes in the rubrics, with the aim of being more precise. There are three new prefaces: Sacred Heart, Christ the King and St. Joseph.

⁴⁶ For a comparison of the four drafts of SC 50, cf. GIL HELLÍN, *Constitutio de Sacra Liturgia Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Concilii Vaticani II Synopsis 5), Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 2003, 150-153.

study of the work of the Pian Commission in revising the Roman Pontifical (1961-1962). A *positio* was prepared by the Historical Section officers Annibale Bugnini and Carlo Braga, emphasizing that the longer rites were thought to be insufficiently practical or unfitting for the times of modern life and that the liturgy should “conform to man and the conscious awareness he has of himself and his needs”⁴⁷. The second insight is given by a *peritus* to the *Consilium*, none other than Bonifaas Luykx, who served as a consultant to Bishop Mulala of Kinshasha (at that time the Belgian Congo). In a heated discussion between Mulala and Bugnini, the secretary asserted: “We work from the assumption that the modern Western man is *the* man, *tout court*, the model of all true humanity, for all countries and cultures, and for all ages to come.”⁴⁸ It is possible to see here the real motivation for liturgical change in general, and changes in the *Ordo Missae* in particular.

The implementation of the council document on the liturgy took place in rapid stages⁴⁹. The *Consilium ad exsequendam Constitutionem de sacra Liturgia* was established in January 1964, with the reform of the *Ordo Missae* being assigned to *Coetus* X. The first Instruction for the realization of the Constitution on the Liturgy (*Inter oecumenici*) was published in September 1964, introducing the first changes in the *Ordo Missae*⁵⁰. A few months later, on January 27, 1965, a decree was issued, explaining that since the Instruction introduced many changes in the celebration of the Mass, a new edition was needed of the *Ordo Missae*, the *Ritus Servandus* and the *De defectibus*⁵¹. These modifications represent important changes, but the basic structure of the previous *Ordo Missae* is still visible.

⁴⁷ M. BERNHARD, «The *iter redactionis* of the *Ordo ad altare consecrandum sine ecclesiae dedicatione* in the *Pontificale Romanum* of 1961», in *Studi sulle fonti della liturgia romana: Messale, Lezionario, Pontificale* (Ecclesia orans. Studi e ricerche 6), Editrice Domenicana Italiana, Napoli 2022, 63.

⁴⁸ B. LUYKX, *A Wider View of Vatican II: Memories and Analysis of a Council Consultor*, Angelico Press, Brooklyn 2025, 87.

⁴⁹ For a comprehensive treatment of the whole process, cf. M. BARBA, *La riforma conciliare dell'“Ordo Missae”: Il percorso storico-redazionale dei riti d'ingresso, di offertorio e di comunione* (Bibliotheca “Ephemerides liturgicae”. Subsidia 120), Roma 2002.

⁵⁰ Cf. SACRA CONGREGATIO RITUUM, «Instructio prima ad executionem Constitutionis de sacra Liturgia recte ordinandum *Inter oecumenici* (Sept. 26, 1964)», *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 (1964) 877-900, especially numbers 48-56.

⁵¹ The process is documented by M. BARBA, *La riforma conciliare dell'“Ordo Missae”*, 121-132.

The Ordo Missae (1969) of the Missale Romanum 1970

Three years after *Inter oecumenici*, but only two years after the 1965 *Ordo Missae*, a second Instruction for carrying out the liturgical reforms was issued, beginning with the words *Tres abhinc annos* (May 4, 1967)⁵². Like the first instruction, this one also introduced so many changes that it was deemed necessary to publish a small booklet with the title *Variationes in Ordinem Missae inducendae*⁵³, dated May 18, 1967, which listed all the modifications made. This was meant as a study document, as it lays out, on facing pages, the pertinent texts to be compared: on the left page, the 1965 *Ordo Missae*; on the right page, the variations. Changes were made to thirty paragraphs of the 1965 *Ordo*.

Because of the vast scope of the project, only a summary of the most important changes can be made here.

First of all, the number of orations (collect, super oblata, post communionem) is normally one only. Exceptions to the rule are indicated in Tres abhinc annos. The Canon is said aloud. Gestures are greatly reduced, especially signs of the cross and genuflections. The altar is kissed only at the beginning and the end of Mass. After the Consecration, the priest no longer holds his thumbs and forefingers together. If there are faithful present who will be receiving Communion, then the priest says Domine, non sum dignus, etc. together with the people, instead of having a duplicate rite: one for the priest and another for the people. The part of the Mass after Communion is simplified, for example, the blessing comes before the Ite Missa est.

Many useful changes, asserts *Tres abhinc annos*, can be made now by simply altering the rubrics, not the existing liturgical books themselves; this corresponds to the principle of gradual

⁵² SACRA CONGREGATIO RITUUM, «Instructio altera ad executionem Constitutionis de sacra Liturgia recte ordinandum *Tres abhinc annos* (May 4, 1967)», *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 59 (1967) 442-448.

⁵³ *Variationes in Ordinem Missae inducendae ad normam instructionis S.R.C. diei 4 maii 1967*, Città del Vaticano 1967. The same parallel text was published in *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 81 (1967) 321-332 and *Notitiae* 3 (1967) 195-211. I am referring only to the changes indicated in the *Ordo Missae* itself, not those indicated in that section of *Tres abhinc annos* which has the genre of a *Ritus servandus*.

liturgical reform⁵⁴. The new Eucharistic Prayers have not yet been added, but it is easy to see that the «future and definitive liturgical reform» is not far away⁵⁵.

The *Ordo Missae* according to *Tres abhinc annos* was used six months later for the celebration of the so-called *Missa normativa* in the Cappella Sistina, on October 24, 1967, in the presence of the synod fathers assembled in Rome for the Synod of Bishops⁵⁶. Because Pope Paul VI was not able to be present, three new experiments were scheduled in his presence on January 11, 12 and 13, 1968, using three different typologies of the *Ordo Missae*: a recited Mass with hymns, a recited Mass without music, and a sung Mass. Based on the observations of Paul VI, Coetus X prepared a document summarizing the pope's interventions and the commission's responses (April 23, 1968)⁵⁷. A subcommission was named to examine these points, which met on April 25-26, 1968. A new version was prepared, dated May 24, 1968. On June 2, 1968, this text was sent to fourteen cardinals of the curia for their observations (just the *Ordo Missae*, not the *Istitutio Generalis*). Paul VI himself made thirty-four annotations in the margins of the text and sent it to the *Consilium* on September 22, 1968, asking them to take his comments into account, «with free and measured judgment»⁵⁸. This they did, in meetings from October 8-17, 1968, sending a dossier to the pope with their observations of October 24, 1968. The pope approved the text on November 6, 1968, and the formal approval was communicated by the office of the Secretary of State on January 17, 1969. The Sacred Congregation of Rites issued a

⁵⁴ «[...] quae ad ipsam liturgicam instaurationem progressive inducendam utilia censeantur [...]» (SACRA CONGREGATIO RITUUM, «Instructio altera ad executionem Constitutionis de Sacra Liturgia recte ordinandam *Tres abhinc annos* (May 4, 1967)», *AAS* 59 [1967] 442).

⁵⁵ The documents states that changes «[...] quae pastoralis ratione commendantur et futurae ac definitivae instaurationi liturgicae obstat non videntur, statim in praxim deduci posse vista sunt» (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 59 [1967] 442).

⁵⁶ «*Missa normativa nihil aliud est nisi Missa celebrata iuxta normas "Instructionis alterius" diei 4 maii 1967 paucissimis mutatis; et Missa celebrata in Cappella Syxtina die 24 octobris nihil aliud est nisi Missae 'normativa', cum omnibus partibus, quae cani possunt, reapse cantatis*» (CONSILIIUM AD EXSEQUENDAM CONSTITUTIONEM DE SACRA LITURGIA, «De Missa Normativa», *Notitiae* 3 [1967] 371). For an account of the work of Consilium on the question of the *Missa normativa*, cf. BARBA, *La riforma conciliare dell' "Ordo Missae"*, 97-121. For a description of the «experiment» in the Cappella Sistina and the reaction of the synodal fathers, cf. BUGNINI, *La riforma liturgica*, 344-356. Cf. also C. KAPPES, *The "Missa normativa" of 1967; its history and principles as applied to the liturgy of the Mass* (Tesi di dottorato: Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, S. Anselmo), Roma 2012 [unpublished].

⁵⁷ Cf. *Schemata* number 281 as found in BARBA, *La riforma conciliare dell' "Ordo Missae"*, addendum I, 601-605.

⁵⁸ «*Si prega di tener conto, con libero e ponderato giudizio, di queste osservazioni*» (BUGNINI, *La riforma liturgica*, 374).

decree on April 6, 1969, saying that the new *Ordo Missae* would go into effect on November 30, 1969, the First Sunday of Advent⁵⁹.

In comparing the new *Ordo Missae*⁶⁰ with the entire history of this literary genre, a number of conclusions present themselves. It appears that the main concerns of the composers of the *novus ordo* were as follows:

1. To promote the verbal participation of the people as much as possible. Thus prayers that were formerly private prayers of the priest often became prayers of the whole assembly. Various acclamations were added to involve the people in verbal participation.
2. To eliminate what were considered outmoded expressions of medieval piety. Most apology-type prayers were eliminated; many gestures, such as genuflections and signs of the cross were eliminated; many psalm verses and biblical allusions, characteristic of medieval piety, were eliminated.
3. To remove from the Offertory Rite proleptic references to the consecrated species and to the theology of sacrificial offering.
4. To make the *Ordo* linear and functional. Repetitions of all kinds were eliminated.
5. To leave more room for the personal interpretation of the priest. Many of the rubrics of the *Novus Ordo* are rather vague: this was perhaps a reaction against the strictness and extreme precision of the rubrics of the past.

The result of these changes was a new literary genre, although the name has stayed the same. This is symbolically evident in the opening words of the respective *ordines*: *sacerdos paratus* in the former *Ordo*, as opposed to *populo congregato* in the new. The *novus ordo* is more an *Ordinarium Missae* in the sense of an obligatory series of words and gestures, but now involving both priest and people, rather than an *Ordo Missae* in the original sense of the term, that is, an expression of personal priestly piety during the three “soft points” of the entrance, offertory and communion rites of the Mass.

⁵⁹ For detailed information on this whole process, cf. chapter 24 of Bugnini’s work, *La riforma liturgica*, 335-389, especially section V, *L’ultima tappa*, pages 374-380 and section VI, *Pubblicazione dell’“Ordo Missae”*, pages 381-389.

⁶⁰ *Ordo Missae, editio typica*, Città del Vaticano 1969.