

The Literary Style of the Latin Collects  
of the Missal of Paul VI: A Study

A Research Paper

Submitted to the Faculty  
Of Saint Meinrad College of Liberal Arts  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

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May, 1977  
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## INTRODUCTION

One might ask the question why even do an analysis on the literary style of the Latin presidential prayers of the Sacramentary of Paul VI. To this query one may reply that there is a definite literary style to these presidential prayers in the Latin original. This fact alone is justification enough for this study.

This study does not stop short of merely giving a Latin literary analysis, but in addition offers a commentary on these Latin presidential prayers as they have been translated in our own Sacramentary in the United States. By way of comparison two additional examples of different translations are given. One translation is from the Sacramentary of England and Wales, and the other is a translation prepared by the author. With these three translations one will be able to decide for himself how effective each translation is. In preparation for this study of the presidential prayers of the Roman Missal, a brief chapter on the nature of presidential prayers in general precedes the study of particular presidential prayers. Thus one begins with a theory and history of presidential prayers followed by an application of that theory. Each collect in this study (ten examples from the Roman Sacramentary) is analyzed in the following format: presidential prayer, vocabulary,

rhetoric, three translations, and a commentary on the translations. Three abbreviations are used in this study: ICEL for the translation of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy, E & W for the translation used by the Episcopal Conference of England and Wales, and A for the translation offered by the author. This study will provide thought on a subject that is important to anyone involved in the liturgical life of the American church.

## Chapter I

### The Nature of Collects in General

In any study on the collects of the Roman Missal, it seems necessary to preface the study of particular collects with a chapter devoted to the nature of collects in general. In this study the terms: collects, orations, and opening prayers are being used interchangeably.

The presidential prayer that opens the celebration of the Eucharist is most often called the "oration" in the Roman liturgy, even in the oldest Roman Ordines.<sup>1</sup> The oration is the prayer in which the presbyter "collects the preceding prayers of the people and presents them to God."<sup>2</sup> The reason that the term collect is most appealing is that it expresses the custom of the early church of processing to a stational church. There the presbyter would pray a prayer (collecta) collecting all the prayers and petitions of the faithful assembled for the Eucharist. The term collecta or collectio was native to the Gallican liturgy.<sup>3</sup>

The collection of Roman orations that we first find in the ancient sacramentaries was probably gathered between the third and sixth centuries, i.e., from the time the Church made the transition from Greek to Latin.<sup>4</sup> Before that time it was the usual custom of the presbyter to compose extemporaneous orations.

In studying these early orations we can truly see the Roman preference for conciseness and clarity.<sup>5</sup> This preference is strictly Roman. One does not find this preference in the Eastern liturgies. Jungmann appropriately quotes from Origen's Nature of Prayer and says:

According to Origen the normal course of every properly adjusted prayer--and surely this holds most especially for public prayer--should begin by praising God through Christ in the Holy Ghost; should then pass on to thanksgiving and an acknowledgement of our weakness; and only after that would it be fitting to make petitions, and these, petitions "for great and heavenly things"; and lastly it should close with the doxology repeated over again.<sup>6</sup>

The fact is that the Roman oration is almost always restricted to a form of petition.<sup>7</sup> It is now necessary to explain some mechanical parts of an oration.

Orations can be divided into two types: simple and amplified.<sup>8</sup> In the simple type there is merely an address to God and a statement of a petition. In the amplified type the address is "enlarged by a phrase or relative clause, called the relative predication."<sup>9</sup> For example, a simple type would be "Pater, da mihi fidem." An amplified type would be "Pater, qui es in caelo." The reason it is called the amplified type is because the address is amplified with a qui clause. This amplified type is usually used on festal occasions.

The ancient Roman orations followed the rules of the cursus. The cursus was a scheme of "rhythmical patterns based on accent used in Roman literary prose from the fourth to the seventh centuries."<sup>10</sup> By arranging the accents in

the last syllables of a clause to fixed patterns we have a cursus.<sup>11</sup> The cursus was the chief factor in obtaining an agreeable harmony in the orations.<sup>12</sup> There were three main forms of the cursus:

cursus planus / \_ \_ / \_ (esse consortes)

cursus velox / \_ \_ (2) \_ / \_ (meritis adiuvemur)

cursus tardus / \_ \_ / \_ \_ (semper obtineat).

From the above example one can see that the emphasis is on accented syllables.

Another characteristic about the Roman collects is that up until the year 1000, they were always addressed to the Father. This emphasis is understandable since we pray to the Father through the mediation of the Son. The Council of Hippo in 393 established a canon stating that collects must be addressed to the Father. "Ut nemo in precibus vel Patrem pro Filio, vel Filium pro Patre nominet. Et cum altari assistitur, semper ad Patrem dirigatur oratio."<sup>13</sup> Now this law did not eliminate Christ from the collects. In fact, every conclusion includes Christ. Jungmann sheds some light on the Per Christum conclusion.

Per Christum does not mean a mere adiuratio as some authors thought, as though we begged a hearing "by Christ," for His sake, in virtue of His merits. Nor does it signify that the gifts be handed us through Christ. It must be understood rather as a progressive movement, a mounting upwards. For we declare that we offer up our petitions to God through the mediation of Christ.<sup>14</sup>

The collect, for purpose of analysis, can be divided into three parts: the Address, the Petition, and the Conclusion.<sup>15</sup>



In the Address we invoke God under different titles. In the Petition God is asked for favors and, finally, the oration is closed with a Per Christum. This form is also used in many liturgical hymns. At this point it is necessary to move into the area of translation. One could stop the investigation on collects at this point if it were not for the fact that the Church universally does not now use the Latin Missal but a translation of it.

When Rachel John was asked what sort of language people wanted in public worship, she replied they wanted something that was lucid but luminous.<sup>16</sup> The goal to be aimed for at in translations is to "proclaim the message of salvation to believers and to express the prayer of the Church to the Lord."<sup>17</sup>

Words and phrases not in living use today are to be avoided. Both vocabulary and style must serve the needs of public, corporate worship rather than of private, personal prayer. Although the more cultured and the less cultured will certainly not be ignored, the focus of the advisors and translators is the great body of literate worshipers. The suitability of the text to musical settings will be a constant concern. And much of the final stage will be devoted to testing the version by reading it aloud.<sup>18</sup>

The sentence about musical settings is very important. History shows that a sung liturgy has always been an important form of worship among the Jews and Eastern and Western rite Christians. "In this the very nature of man is reflected."<sup>19</sup> In translating Latin orations it is important that they be able to be sung. This is exactly what the Church did in the early centuries when she went from

Hebrew to Greek and from Greek to Latin. The basic psalm-tones are definitely Jewish in origin. There are still extant almost fifty examples where Greek chants have been adapted to Latin texts.<sup>20</sup> Liturgical texts must have the qualities to be sung. Words that are difficult to sing must be omitted. "Phrases must have a rhythm which allows the text to flow."<sup>21</sup> This musical problem is just one of the problems that must be taken into consideration. Another problem concerns rhetorical figures.

Any student of Latin knows that Latin word order allows the possibility to heighten the effect of the orations by rhetorical figures, "chiefly those based on parallelism."<sup>22</sup> "The soul-body and eternal-temporal antithesis lent themselves to the figures of contrast so frequent in the orations." As a result "some prayers lose much of their point when put into English precisely because half of their point is a parallelism which is untranslatable."<sup>23</sup>

Another problem is one of clarity. This problem is posed by ideas that are no longer a part of our experience. For example, the Latin word familia conveys the idea of a household complete with servants and slaves. This type of institution no longer exists. We have to settle for a word like family.<sup>24</sup>

Granted that it is important to understand what the Latin original says, we have to admit sometimes that a literal translation will not furnish us with a prayer which is "relevant to our own temper."<sup>25</sup>

In concluding this chapter, one aspect of the collects must not be overlooked. One only has to notice that the opening prayers of the Missal are almost always in the plural. This emphasizes the fact that the whole Church is at prayer. God's family turns to Him and petitions for everyone. The priest prays in the name of all, but together the faithful give their endorsement in the concluding Amen.<sup>26</sup>

## Chapter II

### Analysis of Ten Collects from the Roman Sacramentary

#### 1

#### Hebdomada I "Per Annum"

Vota, quaesumus, Domine  
 supplicantis populi caelesti pietate prosequere  
 ut et quae agenda sunt videant,  
 et ad implenda quae viderint convalescant.

#### I. Vocabulary

Vota: votum, i, n. that which is vowed or promised to a deity by vow; that which has been wished; in general a prayer, wish, desire.

quaesumus: quaeso, ere. (an old form of quaero, perhaps the original form, as the perf. quaesivi), to seek, *ἐντέω*, quaeso is often inserted between the parts of a sentence, like an interjection (which it is in this oration).

supplicantis: supplico, are. to kneel down before anyone to pay respect, *προσκυνέω*. Also to pray or beg humbly, beseech, implore.

caelesti: caelestis, is, adj. heavenly, celestial, *οὐράνιος*, heavenly powers, divine.

pietate: pietas, atis, f. a sense of duty, performance of duty to the gods; duty also to parents, children, cousins.

prosequere: prosequor, qui. to follow after, attend, *κατακολουθεω*, to pursue.

implenda: gerundive form from impleo, to fill up, to stuff full.

convalescant: convalesco, ere. to gain strength, grow strong, gain power, prevail.

#### II. Rhetoric

Protasis (Prelude)

Vota quaesumus, Domine,

Address: Domine.

Formula of Petition: quaesumus.

Petition: 1. supplicantis populi caelesti pietate  
prosequere ut et quae agenda sunt videant,  
2. ad implenda quae viderint convalescant.

Vota: Urgency of supplication emphasized by position  
at beginning of collect.

Alliteration: populi, pietate, prosequere.

Assonance: Vota, Domine.

Rhyme couplets: Domineu, prosequeree.  
videante, convalescante.

### III. Translations

1. Lord in your mercy grant the prayers of your people.  
Help us to see what we ought to do, and to have the  
strength to carry it out (E & W).
2. Father of love,  
hear our prayers.  
Help us to know you will  
and to do it with courage and faith (ICEL).
3. We beseech you, O Lord, to hear the prayers of your  
suppliant people, that they may persevere in their  
duty of heavenly things; that we may see those things  
we are to do and have the strength to bring them to  
conclusion (A).

### IV. Commentary

By way of comment, two words stand out: supplicantis  
and pietate. In both the ICEL and E & W translation, the  
strong meaning that these words convey is almost lost.  
The closest thing to supplicantis we could insert would  
be "suppliant" people, which has almost lost the meaning that  
the Latin conveys of not only beseeching but practically  
begging. Pietas which translates into piety would not  
fit here. Our English word, pious, does not contain the  
idea of a good sense of duty that the Latin conveys. Duty

would be a better substitute than, "help us to know your will."

Both the ICEL, which is not literal; and the E & W, which is closer to the Latin structure do contain the sense of the Latin original.

## 2

## Dominica III "Per Annum"

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus  
dirige actus nostros in beneplacito tuo  
ut in nomine dilecti Filii tui  
mereamur bonis operibus abundare.

## I. Vocabulary

Omnipotens: (omnis and potens), tis, adj. all powerful, omnipotent, ruling over all things.  $\Pi\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\delta\upsilon\nu\delta\mu\iota\varsigma$  .

sempiterne: vocative case for sempiternus, a, um, adj. continual, perpetual, endless, eternal, everlasting.  $\alpha\iota\omega\nu\iota\omicron\varsigma$  .

Deus: i, m. God, the Supreme Being.  $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  .

dirige: dirigo, ere. to make or place straight, direct, to mark out,  $\kappa\alpha\tau\epsilon\upsilon\lambda\acute{\iota}\nu\omega$  . In many passages modern editors replace dirigo by derigo, which appears to be the older and more popular form.

actus: us, m. business, employment, actions, daily affairs and transactions.

beneplacito: beneplacitus, a, um, adj. pleasing, acceptable, Vulg. Eccclus. 34, 31.

nomine: nomen, inis, n. a name, appellation. Cicero defines a name as, "quod unicuique personae datur, quo suo quaeque proprio et certo vocabulo appellatur."

dilecti: delectus, a, um, adj. from deligere, loved, esteemed, fond of, partial to.

Filii: Filius, i, m. a son,  $\upsilon\iota\omicron\varsigma$  .

mereamur: mereo, ere. It is used either transitively or intransitively. Transitively, it signifies to deserve, merit. Intransitively, it means to deserve of, do either good or ill.

bonis: bonus, a, um, adj. good, probus, integer, absolutus, perfectus.

operibus: opus, eris, n. need, necessity, what is needful to be done.

abundare: abundo, are. to abound, more than suffice.

## II. Rhetoric

Protasis (Prelude)

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus

Address: sempiterne Deus.

Formula of Petition: dirige.

Petition: dirige actus nostros . . . abundare.

Polyptoton: (repetition of the same word in different cases)<sup>27</sup> tuo, tui.

Assonance: Omnipotens, sempiterne  
beneplacito, tuo  
dilecti, filii, tui

Consonance: Omnipotens, sempiterne

Repetition: in

## III. Translations

1. Almighty, eternal God, guide our actions according to your will, so that we may be fruitful in good works through the grace of your beloved Son (E & W).
2. All-powerful and ever-living God, direct your love that is within us, that our efforts in the name of your Son may bring mankind to unity and peace (ICEL).
3. All-powerful and eternal God direct our acts in conformity to your will that in the name of your beloved Son we may abound in good works (A).

## IV. Commentary

Three words in this collect stand out. The first word dirige, which is in the imperative mood, shows the urgency we beseech our Father to truly direct our lives. The E & W uses

guide, which also is a very good choice of words. Beneplacitum is an interesting word. It comes from two Latin words conveying the meaning of pleasing well. It's a difficult word to translate. In this collect the word refers to actions (actus) pleasing to God or actions in accord with God's will. England and Wales translates it as, "according to your will." The ICEL doesn't translate it but substitutes an elaboration on the love of God in us. Mereamur is intransitive. Thus the idea is to be deserving of an abundance of good works. E & W translates mereamur abundare as, "we may be fruitful." The ICEL does not translate this idea but draws a theological conclusion. By meriting an abundance of good works we may advance the reality of unity and peace. In the two translations of this oration, we see how the England and Wales tries to keep as closely as possible to the Latin original, where as the ICEL tries to develop a theological elaboration on the Latin original. In this collect the ICEL gives a good elaboration on the text but is not faithful in rendering the immediate sense of the Passage.

## 3

## Dominica V "Per Annum"

Familiam tuam, quaesumus, Domine, continua pietate custodi ut, quae in sola spe gratiae caelestis innititur, tua semper protectione muniatur.

## I. Vocabulary

Familiam: familia, ae, f. a family, one's whole property.

quaesumus: Cf. Heb I.



Domine: Dominus, i, m. a master, a proprietor, possessor, owner, supreme lord, ruler.

continua: continuus, a, um, adj. continued, without intermission, uninterrupted, *συνεχής*, incessant, ceaseless.

pietate: Cf. Heb I.

custodi: custodio, ire, to guard, watch, *φρουρέω*, to take care.

sola: solus, a, um, adj. alone, only, unaccompanied, *μόνος*.

gratiae: gratia, ae, f. pleasantness, agreeableness, grace, *χάρις*, to find favor with one.

caelestis: Cf. Heb I.

innititur: innitor, niti. to lean or rest upon, recline upon, *ἐνισχυρίζομαι*, relying upon.

protectione: protectio, onis, f. a protection, defence, *ὑπερασπίσις*.

muniatur: munio, ire. to build, labor, fortify, strengthen, put in a posture of defense.

## II. Rhetoric

Protasis (Prelude)

Familiam tuam, quaesumus, Domine, continua pietate custodi.

Address: Domine.

Formula of Petition: quaesumus,

Petition: continua pietate custodi . . . muniatur.

Polyptoton: (repetition of the same word in different cases) tuam, tua.

Assonance: familiam, tuam.

Alliteration: quaesumus, quae.  
continua, custodi.  
in, innititur.

Familiam tuam: emphasis by position at the beginning of the collect.

### III. Translations

1. Be faithful to your people, Lord, we pray, and do not cease to protect us. Guard us always and defend us, for we have no hope apart from your grace (E & W).
2. Father, watch over your family and keep us safe in your care, for all our hope is in you (ICEL).
3. We beseech you, O Lord, to watch over your family with unending kindness, that it may rely on the sole hope of heavenly grace and always be fortified by your protection (A).

### IV. Commentary

In this collect we find that the second clause, quae in sola spe gratiae caelestis innititur, is somewhat difficult to translate literally into good flowing English. Again in the ICEL version, pietate is not translated. The E & W version carries a sense of the word pietate in, "Be faithful." Pietas also contains the idea of duty and faithfulness. Be faithful is a good translation of this word. The E & W also translates "continua pietate custodi" as "do not ease to protect us. " This phrase could be better translated as, "watch over with unending kindness." This phrase shows the force of the word custodi and continua. Muniatur is conveyed by "defend us" in the England and Wales version and by "keep us safe" in the ICEL. Both translations lose something by not translating muniatur in the sense it conveys of being fortified.

## Dominica VI "Per Annum"

Deus, qui te in rectis et sinceris manere  
 pectoribus asseris, da nobis tua gratia tales  
 exsistere, in quibus habitare digneris.

## I. Vocabulary

rectis: rectus, a, um, adj. right, straight, direct,  
 not crooked. *ορθός . εὐθύς .*

sinceris: sincerus, a, um, adj. genuine, natural, real,  
 pure, clean, without dirt, uncorrupt.

manere: maneo, ere. to remain, stay, abide, take up  
 one's abode, sojourn, lodge.

pectoribus: pectus, oris, n. the breast, *στήθος*,  
 heart, as the seat of feeling, affection, courage.

asseris: assero, ere. to claim or take as one's own  
 property, to join to one self, as legal, to lay hold of a  
 slave.

gratia: Cf. Heb V.

tales: talis, e, adj. such, of such a nature, quality,  
 or kind, such like, so constituted.

exsistere: exsisto, ere, (ex & sisto). to come forth  
 or out, proceed, appear, become visible, emerge, appear sudden-  
 ly, start up, *ἐξέρχουμαι*, to show one's self, to manifest  
 one's self.

habitare: habito, are. inhabit, live, dwell, remain.

digneris: dignor, dignari. think worthy, deign.

## II. Rhetoric

Protasis (Prelude)

Deus, qui te in rectis et sinceris manere pectoribus  
 asseris.

Address: Deus,

Formula of Petition: da.

Petition: da nobis tua gratia tales exsistere, in quibus habitare digneris.

Assonance: rectis, sinceris, asseris, nobis, digneris.  
pectoribus, quibus.

Consonance: rectis, sinceris, pectoribus.

Polyptoton: qui, quibus.

Metaphor: rectis et sinceris pectoribus for the Church.

### III. Translations

1. Lord, you promise to make your home in upright and sincere hearts. Give us the grace to make ourselves worthy dwelling places for you (E & W).
2. God our Father  
you have promised to remain for ever  
with those who do what is just and right.  
Help us to live in your presence. (ICEL).
3. O God, you have made a covenant to dwell in those upright and sincere hearts. Give us the grace to manifest ourselves as your worthy dwellings (A).

### IV. Commentary

In this collect we see much depth conveyed in two brief statements. The first statement is a statement of fact: God promises to make his home in "upright and sincere hearts." The second and final statement is the petition: make us worthy dwelling places for the Father.

In this opening prayer one word needs to be commented upon. This word is *asserō*, which basically means to claim or to take as one's own property. An interesting fact is that this word originally had a legal connotation in regards to slavery: to lay hold of a slave, a very strong binding together. We are, however, not bound to God as slaves but as free men. This is why the third translation uses the word

covenant to convey this idea of claiming as one's own. Granted that God has claimed us; but we, unlike the slaves of Roman times, must accept God's calling. Thus the covenant idea of binding is there, though not explicitly expressed. Both the ICEL and the England and Wales translations use the word promise to convey the meaning of assere.

The E & W translates the word pectoribus as "in upright and sincere hearts," where as the ICEL omits this word. Right and sincere hearts represent those who do what is right and just. We see a Latin prepositional phrase being translated by an English restrictive clause. This is an effective way to translate that Latin prepositional phrase. Again we see the ICEL attempting to translate the idea instead of the word.

## 5

## Dominica IX "Per Annum"

Deus, cuius providentia in sui dispositione  
non fallitur, te supplices exoramus,  
ut noxia cuncta submoveas  
et omnia nobis profutura concedas.

## I. Vocabulary

Deus: Cf. Dom III.

cuius, a, um, adj. genit. of qui, quae, quod, or quis.

providentia: ae, f. foreseeing, foreknowing, foresight, forethought, timely care, providence, caution, prudence.

dispositione: dispositio, onis, f. placing in order, arranging, connecting. *Dis+ctio*

fallitur: fallo, fallere. to make fall, might cause a mistake, to deceive, cheat, beguile, to violate a promise.

supplices: supplex, icis, adj. that kneels down, suppliant, humbly begging, as a subs. a suppliant, humble petitioner.

exoramus: exoro, are. to entreat earnestly, to gain by entreaty, obtain by prayer,  $\xi\iota\kappa\epsilon\tau\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\omega$ .

noxia: ae, f. a fault, offence, trespass, harm, prejudice, hurt.

cuncta: cunctus, a, um, adj. all together, all, whole, entire.

submoveas: submoveo, ěre. to remove, displace, carry or remove to a distance, remove out of the way.

omnia: omnis, e, adj.  $\pi\alpha\lambda\acute{\iota}$ , omnia, all things.

profutura: prosum, prodesse, to do good, profit, be advantageous, avail, conduce,  $\omega\pi\epsilon\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ .

concedas: concedo, ere. to step aside, remove from one's place, to retire, withdraw, yield, give place.

## II. Rhetoric

Protasis (Prelude)

Deus, cuius providentia in sui dispositione non fallitur, te supplices exoramus.

Address: Deus.

Formula of Petition: exoramus,

Petition: te supplices exoramus, ut noxia cuncta submoveas, et omnia nobis profutura concedas.

Statement of Fact: cuius . . . fallitur.

Assonance: noxia, cuncta, submoveas, concedas, omnia, profutura.

## III. Translations

1. O God, you watch over us with sure and unfailing care.

Protect us from all that is harmful, and help us in all our needs (E & W).

2. Father,

your love never fails.

Hear our call.

Keep us from danger

and provide for all our needs. (ICEL).

3. O God whose concern for our actions does not fail,  
 We humbly entreat you  
 that you will remove all harm from us,  
 and that you will grant all that will profit us.

#### IV. Commentary

It is interesting to note how the England and Wales and the ICEL translates this collect. The E & W translates Deus by O God; where as the ICEL transfers this meaning to Father. Neither version translates, "providentia in sui dispositione" literally. England and Wales uses "over us with sure and unfailing care." The ICEL merely takes this phrase and concludes that "your love never fails" because of this concern.

In both translations the strength of the verb sub-movere is lost. Submovere means to displace or move completely out of the way, in this case danger. Both translations use similar words: protect and keep. The word profutura conveys a meaning that is also slightly lost. Profutura is a future active participle that modifies omnia. We are not merely asking God for all our needs, as much as we are asking for the needs that will profit us (omnia nobis profutura). In both of these translations the sense is maintained, though the strength of the original is weakened.

#### 6

#### Dominica XI "Per Annum"

Deus, in te sperantium fortitudo,  
 invocationibus nostris adesto propitius,  
 et quia sine te nihil potest mortalis infirmitas,  
 gratiae tuae praesta semper auxilium,  
 ut, in exsequendis mandatis tuis,  
 et voluntate tibi et actione placeamus.

## I. Vocabulary

Deus: Cf. Dom III.

sperantium, pres. part. of spero, are. to hope, entertain hopes, trust, *ἐλπίζω*.

fortitudo: inis, f. fortitude, bravery, courage, resolution, *ἀνδρεία*.

invocationibus: invocatio, onis, f. a calling upon, invoking, *ἀνὰ κλήσιν*.

adesto: <sup>28</sup>be near to, be attentive to, give ear to, be intent upon.

propitius: a, um, adj. appeased, kind, favorable, merciful.

quia: (old neut. plur. of quid) conj. because.

mortalis: e, adj. mortal, subject to death, *θνητός*.

infirmitas: atis, f. weakness, feebleness, disease, sickness, malady, illness, infirmity.

gratiae: Cf. Dom V.

praesta: praesto, are, iti, itum. to stand before, to be superior to or better than, to warrant, answer, or be accountable for.

semper: adv. once for all, always, ever, forever.

auxilius: i, n. assistance, help, aid, medicine, remedy.

exsequendis: from exsequor, exsequi. follow, pursue, follow to the grave, carry out, undergo.

mandatis: mandatum, i, n. a commission, order, command, charge, injunction, mandate, *πρὸς τὰ μὲν*.

voluntate: voluntas, atis, f. the will, inclination, with, desire, *βουλῇ*.

actione: actio, onis, f. an act, action, operation, management, negotiation, treaty.

placeamus: placeo, ēre. to please, be pleasing, be agreeable, suit the taste of.



## II. Rhetoric

Protasis (Prelude)

Deus, in te sperantium fortitudo, invocationibus nostris adesto propitius.

Address: Deus.

Formula of Petition: adesto,

Petition: invocationibus nostris adesto propitius, gratiae tuae praesta semper auxilium.

Hyperboton: Deus, in te sperantium fortitudo.

Antithesis: mortalis infirmitas is placed in contrast to Deus fortitudo.<sup>29</sup>

Chiasmus: mortalis infirmitas gratiae tuae.  
adj. noun noun adj.

Anaphora: et

Polyptoton: te, tibi.

## III. Translations

1. O God, strength of those who place their hopes in you, without you we are weak and powerless. Never fail to help us to keep your commandments, so that our actions as well as our intentions may conform to your will.(E & W).
2. Almighty God,  
our hope and our strength,  
without you we falter.  
Help us to follow Christ  
and to live according to your will (ICEL).
3. O God, strength of those hoping in you  
lend a kind ear to our invocations  
because without you human weakness can do nothing.  
Always grant (us) the help of your grace,  
that in carrying out your mandates,  
we may please you by will and action (A).

## IV. Commentary

An interesting fact about this collect is that it is borrowed almost directly from Pius V's Missal in the 1st Sunday after Pentecost. The only difference is the word order

of two phrases. "Invocationibus nostris" is interchanged with "adesto propitius" and "gratiae tuae" is interchanged with "semper auxilium." In addition "semper" is inserted between "praesta" and "auxilium." One reason that can be posited for this interchange is to emphasize the word "gratia" over the word "auxilium."

Again this collect is translated interestingly. Both versions omit sections of the Latin. The appositive used with Deus is translated very well by the E & W version. The ICEL merely translates "in te sperantium fortitudo" by "our hope and our strength." This loses a sense of the action on our part expressed by the active participle. Both translations fail to translate part of the prelude: invocationibus nostris adesto propitius. There is a double invocation in the Latin "adesto propitius" and "placeamus" that is not conveyed in either translation. The E & W version translates mandatis faithfully by commandments. The ICEL interprets the idea of carrying out God's mandates by what this carrying really means, i.e., to follow Christ. For by following Christ we are keeping the commandments of the Father. The phrase "et quia sine te nihil potest mortalis infirmitas" contains an interesting thought. The idea here is not so much "without you we falter" in the ICEL version, but that human nature can do nothing (nihil) without God.

## 7

## Dominica XIII "Per Annum"

Deus, qui, per adoptionem gratiae,  
 lucis nos esse filios voluisti, praesta,  
 quaesumus, ut errorum non involvamus tenebris,  
 sed in splendore veritatis semper maneamus  
 conspicui.

## I. Vocabulary

Deus: Cf. Dom III.

per: prep. through, through the midst of, δια .

adoptionem: adoptio, onis, f. an adopting, adoption.

gratiae: Cf. Dom V.

lucis: lux, lucis, f. (from the old Greek λυκη), the  
 light, light of day, more open, evident, manifest.

filios: Cf. Dom III.

voluisti: volo, velle. to will, be willing, choose,  
 purpose, intend, θέλω .

praesta: Cf. Dom XI.

quaesumus: Cf. Heb I.

errorum: error, oris, m. a going out of the way,  
 straying, error.

involvamur: involvo, ere. to tumble, to wrap up,  
 envelop, cover.

tenebris: tenebrae, arum, f. darkness, σκοτος ,  
 darkness of night, blindness, ignorance, stupidity.

splendore: splendor, oris, m. clearness, splendor,  
 radiance.

veritatis: veritas, atis, f. truth, necessity, true,  
 reality.

maneamus: Cf. Dom VI.

conspicui: conspicuus, a, um, adj. visible, in full  
 view, conspicuous, clear, illustrious, distinguished.

## II. Rhetoric

Protasis (Prelude)

Deus, qui, per adoptionem gratiae, lucis nos esse filios voluisti.

Address: Deus.

Statement of Fact: lucis . . . voluisti.

Formula of Petition: quaesumus.

Petition: quaesumus, ut errorum non involvamar . . . maneamus conspicui.

Alliteration: splendore, semper.

Assonance: nos, filios  
                  veritatis, tenebris  
                  maneamus, quaesumus.

Antithesis: Lucis is placed in contrast to tenebris.

Metonymy: lux for veritas and tenebrae for errorum.

## III. Translations

1. O God, in your generosity you have adopted us and made us children of light. Grant that we may not be overtaken by the darkness of error, but may always be bathed in the light of truth (E & W).
2. Father,  
  you call your children  
  to walk in the light of Christ.  
  Free us from darkness  
  and keep us in the radiance of your truth (ICEL).
3. O God, who through the grace of adoption wished that we may be children of light, and not be wrapped up by the darkness of error, but that you may always remain visible in the radiance of truth (A).

## IV. Commentary

In this collect we see a double antithesis between light and darkness and truth and error. Error is metaphorically portrayed by darkness, where as truth is portrayed by light. The imagery is beautiful. We pray that we be not wrapped up in the error of darkness. The Latin word here is very forceful.

Involvere conveys not only the idea of "overtaken" as expressed by the E & W translation, but also the idea of tumbling, wrapping up, enveloping, and conveying. Just as darkness envelops the earth at night, so does the darkness of error envelop us. The E & W translates this verb literally by "overtake." The ICEL translates "non involvamus" as "free us." Here the ICEL has translated a negative, passive, subjunctive verb form by the present imperative. The true meaning is, however, not lost. The ICEL translates "lucis filios" by "children to walk in the light of Christ." Here again the translation conveys a theological interpretation. The Latin merely says, "you have willed us to be children of light." If we are children of light we will walk in the light of Christ. Granted that this idea is also contained, it is not as poetic or vivid as the phrase "children of light." The E & W uses this poetic translation of "filios lucis." The ICEL does translate "in splendore veritatis semper maneat" in a very vivid way by "always be bathed in the light of truth." One cannot help but think of the warmth of a summer sun bathing us as the truth of God does.

## 8

## Dominica XXVI "Per Annum"

Deus, qui omnipotentiam tuam  
 parcendo maxime et miserando manifestas,  
 gratiam tuam super nos indesinenter infunde,  
 ut, ad tua promissa currentes,  
 caelestium bonorum facias esse consortes

## I. Vocabulary

Deus: Cf. Dom III.

omnipotentiam: omnipotentia, ae, f. omnipotence.

parcendo: parco, parcere. to cease, leave off, let alone, omit, spare.

maxime: superlative adv. of magnus. most of all, remarkably, eminently, very, much.

miserando: misereo, ēre; also misereor, eri. to have compassion, pity.

manifestas: manifesto, are. disclose.

gratiam: Cf. Dom V.

super: adv., (ὐπὲρ), above, over, besides, upon this.

indesinenter; adv., incessantly, continually.

infunde: infundo, ere. to pour in or into, spread over.

ad: prep., to, unto, πρὸς .

promissa; promissum, i, n. a promise.

currentes: curro, ere. to run, hastening.

caelestium: Cf. Heb I.

bonorum: Cf. Dom III.

facias: facio, ere. to make, do, act.

consortes: consors, tis, adj. sharing, partaking of.

## II. Rhetoric

### Protasis (Prelude)

Deus, qui omnipotentiam tuam parcendo maxime et miserando manifestas.

Address: Deus.

Statement of Fact: qui omnipotentiam . . . manifestas.

Formula of Petition: infunde.

Petition: gratiam tuam super . . . consortes.

Assonance: omnipotentiam, tuam  
maxime, infunde  
tua, promissa  
caelestium, bonorum.

Alliteration: maxime, miserando, manifestas  
indesinenter, infunde.

Antithesis: omnipotentiam is placed in contrast to miserando.

Anaphora: tuam.

Polyptoton: tua, tuam.

Isocolon: (lines of equal length)  
 1,2. parcendo . . . manifestas.  
 1,5. caelestium . . . consortes.

## III. Translations

1. O God, you reveal your almighty power above all in your mercy and forbearance. Fill our hearts with your grace, so that nothing may hold us back from the joys of heaven which you have promised us (E & W).
2. Father,  
 you show your almighty power  
 in your mercy and forgiveness.  
 Continue to fill us with your gifts of love.  
 Help us to hurry toward the eternal life you promise  
 and come to share in the joys of your kingdom  
 (ICEL).

3. O God, whose almighty power is shown especially in sparing and in showing mercy, continually pour out upon us your grace so that those who hasten to your promises be sharers in the joys of heaven (A).

#### IV. Commentary

Both the England and Wales and the ICEL translations provide a good translation into the vernacular of the above collect. The ICEL word "forgiveness" for the gerund "miserando" is a good choice of words, better than forbearance. The E & W translates "gratiam" with grace, where as the ICEL translates "grace" into "gifts of love." This phrase "gifts of love" shows an aspect of what grace is, i.e., a gift of love. The E & W translation fails to translate "indesinenter" an important word that conveys the hope that God will not only fill us but continually fill us. This idea of continual pouring in of grace is expressed by the ICEL by "Continue to fill us with your gifts of love." The active participle "currentes" implies an action on our part of hastening to the promises of the Father. This idea is conveyed in the ICEL version more effectively than in the E & W version. Both versions translate "caelestium bonorum consortes." The idea here is that we are sharers of heavenly goods. The E & W translates this idea by "joys of heaven"; the ICEL translates this by "the joys of your kingdom." In the ICEL version, we see an emphasis on a theology of mercy and the kingdom.



## Dominica Quarta Adventus

Gratiam tuam, quaesumus, Domine, mentibus nostris  
 infunde, ut qui, Angelo nuntiante  
 Christi Filii tui incarnationem cognovimus,  
 per passionem eius et crucem  
 ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur.

## I. Vocabulary

Gratiam: Cf. Dom V.

quaesumus: Cf. Heb I.

Domine: Cf. Dom V.

mentibus: mens, tis, f. *μενος*, mind, disposition,  
 sentiments, heart, soul, the spiritual.

infunde: Cf. Dom XXVI.

Angelo: Angelus, i, m. *ἄγγελος*, a messenger, a  
 celestial messenger, an angel.

nuntiante: nuntio, are. to announce, bring news, bear  
 tidings, tell, report, declare, make known, advise.

Filii: Cf. Dom III.

incarnationem: incarnatio, onis, f. incarnation, a  
 becoming flesh.

cognovimus, cognosco, ere. to examine, investigate,  
 explore, to look at a thing, to make one's self acquainted  
 with.

per: Cf. Dom XIII.

passionem: passio, onis, f. a suffering, enduring,  
 passion, affection.

crucem: crux, crucis, f. a cross.

ad: Cf. Dom XXVI.

resurrectionis: resurrectio, onis, f. a rising from  
 the dead.

gloriam: gloria, ae, f. glory, renown, fame.

perducamur: perduco, ere. to bring through, conduct.  
convey, lead through.

## II. Rhetoric

Protasis (Prelude)

Gratiam tuam, quaesumus, Domine, mentibus nostris  
infunde.

Address: Domine.

Statement of Fact: ut qui, angelo nuntiante, Christi  
Filii tui incarnationem cognovimus.

Formula of Petition: quaesumus.

Petition: 1. Gratiam tuam, mentibus nostris infunde,  
2. ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur.

Alliteration: per, passionem.

Assonance: gratiam, tuam, gloriam  
incarnationem, passionem, crucem  
Domine, infunde, nuntiante  
cognovimus, eius.

Antithesis: Crucem is placed in contrast to gloriam.

Polyptoton: tui, tuam.

Metonymy: Crucem (this word stands for death).

## III. Translations

1. Lord, enlighten our minds with your grace. You revealed to us through the message of an angel the incarnation of Christ your Son; lead us through his passion and cross to the glory of the resurrection (E & W).
2. Lord,  
fill our hearts with your love,  
and as you revealed to us by an angel  
the coming of your Son as man,  
so lead us through his suffering and death  
to the glory of his resurrection (ICEL).
3. We beseech you, O Lord, to fill our minds with your grace, so that we, at the message of an angel made familiar with the Incarnation of Christ your Son, may be lead to the glory of his resurrection (A).

#### IV. Commentary

This collect from the Fourth Sunday of Advent has a different structure from most collects. The urgency of the petition is highlighted by the fact that it is placed first before the statement of fact. In this collect you have the address, immediately followed by the petition. After the petition is the statement of fact concluded with a secondary petition. We have an apparent antithesis with "crucem" and "gloriam." This is paradoxical, because it is through the cross that we attain glory.

The word "gratiam" is translated by England and Wales as grace. The ICEL version, however, chooses to equate grace with love; and thus translates the word by "love." The ICEL translates "incarnationem" by what the word literally means, i.e., "the coming of your Son as man." The England and Wales version translates "crucem" by cross. The ICEL translates this word by the action it brought about, i.e., the death of Jesus, his ultimate sign of love.

In this collect we see the E & W version very faithful to a literal translation. The ICEL is faithful to the basic structure of this collect, but does translate two words by an extension of their meaning for us, i.e., love by grace and death by the cross.

## Feria IV Cinerum

Concede nobis, Domine, praesidia militiae  
Christianae sanctis inchoare ieiuniis,  
ut, contra spiritales nequitias pugnaturi,  
continentiae muniamur auxiliis

## I. Vocabulary

Concede: Cf. Dom IX.

Domine: Cf. Dom V.

praesidia: praesidium, i, n. defence, protection,  
help, assistance.

militiae: militia, ae, f. military service, warfare,  
labor, toil, pains.

Christianae: Christianus, a, um, adj. Christian, re-  
lating to Christianity.

sanctis: sanctus, a, um, adj. sacred, inviolable, holy,  
divine, venerable, important.

inchoare: inchoo, are. to commence, begin, to lay  
the foundation of anything.

ieiuniis: ieiunium, i, n. fast.

contra: prep. against, contrary to, in opposition to.

spiritales: spiritalis, e, adj. pertaining to air or  
wind, spiritual.

nequitias: nequitia, ae, f. inactivity, remissness,  
neglectful conduct.

pugnaturi: pugno, are. to fight, combat, contend,  
to prevent anything, to take pains.

continentiae: continentia, ae, f. continuity,  
restraining, taming, moderation.

muniamur: Cf. Dom V.

auxiliis: Cf. Dom XI.

## II. Rhetoric

Protasis (Prelude)

Concede nobis, Domine, praesidia militiae Christianae  
sanctis inchoare ieiuniis.

Address: Domine.

Formula of Petition: Concede.

Petition: 1. Concede nobis . . . Christianae.  
2. contra spiritales . . . auxiliis.

Alliteration: Concede, contra, continentiae.

Assonance: militiae, Christianae, continentiae  
sanctis, ieiuniis, auxiliis.

## III. Translations

1. Lord, our struggle is against the forces of evil.  
Grant that during this Lent we may submit to rigorous training and learn self-control through the fast with which we begin this season (E & W).
2. Lord,  
protect us in our struggle against evil.  
As we begin the discipline of Lent  
make this day holy by our self-denial (ICEL).
3. Grant us, O Lord, a defense of Christian warfare  
as we begin this holy fast,  
that we may be able to fight against spiritual  
inactivity and be fortified with the weapon of  
self-control (A).

## IV. Commentary

This collect of Ash Wednesday is very direct. Immediately we ask God to grant us a defense of Christian warfare (Concede nobis praesidia militiae Christianae). Both translations mention the idea of a struggle against evil. However, something is lacking because the force of this struggle is not expressed. It is not merely a struggle; it is a battle between good and evil. We ask for a military defense in this Christian battle.

Both translations use the word Lent for what it means, i.e., a time for fasting (sanctis ieiuniis). Both translations fail to translate a very important idea of fighting against spiritual apathy or inactivity (contra spiritalis nequitias pugnaturi). It is precisely to fight against this apathy that we ask to be fortified with the help of self-control. This help "auxiliis" would very effectively be rendered by the word "weapon."\*

In this example we can see that both translations do contain part of the idea of the original Latin. However, they both fail to convey the very important idea of a battle against evil with the weapon of self-denial and self-control.

\*The 1974 version of E & W does in fact use the word weapon.

## CONCLUSION

As a result of this study, certain facts should be restated. 1) The presidential prayer which opens each celebration of the Eucharist is most frequently called the oration. 2) Before the 3rd century, it was common to compose extemporaneous orations. 3) Ancient Roman liturgical orations followed the rules of the classical cursus, a scheme of rhythmical patterns based on accent. 4) Most collects up to the year 1000 were addressed to the Father. 5) Collects are divided into three parts: address, petition, and conclusion. 6) The opening prayer in the Missal is almost always in the plural, thus emphasizing the whole Church at prayer. God's family turns to Him and petitions for everyone.

At the end of this study, certain conclusions may be drawn about the method of translation used by England and Wales and the ICEL. The Instruction on Translations of Liturgical Texts, Rome, 1969, states that the goal to be aimed at in translations is to "proclaim the message of salvation to believers and to express the prayer of the Church to the Lord."

One may conclude that: 1) both the ICEL, which is not literal; and the E & W, which is closer to the Latin structure, do contain the sense of the Latin original;

2) the ICEL develops a theological elaboration on the original Latin text; 3) the ICEL attempts to translate the idea instead of the literal word; 4) in some translations the sense is maintained, though the strength of the original is weakened; 5) both versions omit sections of the Latin; 6) there is no set way to render the Latin presidential prayers into the vernacular, in our case into English.

Where one collect may have plus factors, it also may have negative factors. One positive effect that this tension creates is an ever continuous dynamic attempt to render the collects into expressions of prayer that are full of meaning for our social milieu.



## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Joseph A. Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development (Missarum Sollemnia), trans. Francis A. Brunner (New York: Benziger, Inc., 1951), p. 360.

<sup>2</sup> Jungmann, p. 361.

<sup>3</sup> Jungmann, p. 360.

<sup>4</sup> Jungmann, p. 372.

<sup>5</sup> Jungmann, p. 376

<sup>6</sup> Jungmann, p. 374. (Origen, De or-, C. 33 (PG, XI, 557 f.).

<sup>7</sup> Jungmann, P. 375.

<sup>8</sup> James A. Devereux, "Translating the Orations of the Mass: Problems and Suggestions," American Eccleastical Review, 153 (December 1965), p. 401..

<sup>9</sup> Devereux, p. 401.

<sup>10</sup> Devereux, p. 401.

<sup>11</sup> Devereux, p. 401.

<sup>12</sup> Jungmann, p. 376.

<sup>13</sup> Jungmann, p. 379. (Can. 23 of the III Council of Carthage).

<sup>14</sup> Jungmann, p. 381.

<sup>15</sup> Mary Gonzaga Haessly, Rhetoric in the Sunday Collects of the Roman Missal, (St. Louis: The Manufacture's Printery, 1938), p. 15.

<sup>16</sup> Rachel John, "The New Vernacular How it Strikes a Contemporary," Clergy Review, 60 (November 1975), P. 692. (Miss John's paper was read at a meeting in London during the summer of 75 to discuss the formation of a society to concern itself with the use of English in public worship.)

17 Instruction on Translation of Liturgical Texts, Rome 1969.

18 Devereux, p. 293. [From "One World, One Word," America, 30 (August 28, 1965)].

19 Percy Jones, "Some Observations on Liturgical Adaptations to English," Clergy Review, 49 (February 1964), p. 72.

20 Jones, p. 73.

21 Jones, p. 72.

22 Devereux, p. 401 (From Haessly).

23 Devereux, p. 401.

24 Devereux, p. 408.

25 Devereux, p. 409.

26 Maria Da Graça, "The Collects of the Temporal Cycle, A Catechesis of the Prayer of Request," Lumen, 17 (September 1962), p. 521.

27 M. Inviolata Barry, St. Augustine, The Orator: A Study of the Rhetorical Qualities of St. Augustine's Sermones Ad Populum, (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1924), p. 74.

28 Haessly, p. 144.

29 Haessly, p. 74.

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