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Mary in the Mysteries of Christ from Advent to the Baptism of the Lord: Liturgical References

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MARY IN THE MYSTERIES OF CHRIST FROM ADVENT TO THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD: LITURGICAL REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

1. The assigned topic, "Mary in the Mysteries of Christ from Advent to the Baptism of the Lord: Liturgical References," is quite difficult. In one sense there does not appear to be sufficient material if the scriptural lessons—in which Mary figures quite heavily—are excluded; the scriptural lessons, however, are to be treated in a separate paper. In another sense there are far too many disparate "liturgical references,"¹ ranging over the entire theological and liturgical terrain, to pursue in a modestly scaled paper.²

2. "Implications for Preaching and Teaching," a sub-theme of the convention, presents another challenge. A first principle for effective teaching/preaching is "analyze the audience." Since the variety of audiences is vast, any reflections will, of necessity, be rather general.

The recently-published *Fulfilled in Your Hearing*,³ in taking a receiver-oriented approach to the homily, offers wise guidelines for the preacher, who is "to be in touch with the cares and concerns, needs and good fortunes of the assembly."⁴ "The preacher then has a formidable task: to speak from the Scriptures . . . to a gathered congregation in such a

¹*Marialis cultus*, 3; hereafter *MC*.

²I am grateful to my colleague, Edward D. O'Connor, C.S.C., who not only confirmed many of my suspicions when I initially began preparing this paper, but also offered expert advice on aspects that might prove interesting.

³The Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry, *Fulfilled in Your Hearing: The Homily in the Sunday Assembly* (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1982); hereafter *FIYH*.

⁴*FIYH*, 9.

way that those assembled will be able to worship God in spirit and truth, and then go forth to love and serve the Lord."⁵

The document suggests that the homily interprets the human situation through the scriptures,⁶ stating that the "homily is not so much *on* the Scriptures as *from* and *through* them."⁷ The liturgical homily is thus "a scriptural interpretation of human existence which enables a community to recognize God's active presence, to respond to that presence in faith through liturgical word and gesture, and, beyond the liturgical assembly, through a life lived in conformity with the Gospel."⁸

3. The parameters limiting the scope of this paper are as follows:

- a) use of the current Roman liturgy; (Historical references will be made for clarity's sake, for contextualization or for raising some interesting points.)
- b) study of the marian euchology in mass texts; (These will be studied, even though the Liturgy of the Hours texts are, in some senses, more interesting.⁹)
- c) consideration of the mass formularies that are in actual

⁵FIYH, 19.

⁶FIYH, 20.

⁷FIYH, 20.

⁸FIYH, 29.

⁹Cf. Louis Bouyer, "Le culte de la Mère de Dieu dans l'Église Catholique," *Irenikon* 22 (1949): 139-159. In his "exposé synthétique de la mariologie catholique," Bouyer notes "Le thème dogmatique des fêtes liturgiques, au rite romain, se trouve généralement ramassé dans les antiennes des Laudes. D'ordinaire elles se trouvent reprises aux premières et aux secondes Vêpres, et dans tous les cas elles repassent tour à tour avec les petites heures" (141).

Although Bouyer is treating the pre-Vatican II liturgy, his insight still applies today. He suggests that the antiphons, through "leurs images germinales" (143), assert first the full reality of the divine maternity and then the supereminent virginity of Mary. Cf. also Dom Joseph Gajard, O.S.B., "Notre Dame et l'Art Grégorien," in *Maria*, ed. Hubert du Manoir, S.J. (8 vols.; Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1949-71), 2:341-382; Immaculate Conception, 346-7; Liturgy of Advent, 354-56; Liturgy of Christmas, 356-58; The Circumcision, 359-60.

use; (The so-called entrance, offertory, and communion antiphons will not be considered.¹⁰)

d) no examination of scriptural readings; (As mentioned above, these are being examined in a separate study.)

e) some remarks of a theological nature, but based on the liturgical data; (Liturgy itself will be the source of theological reflection.¹¹)

f) perusal of the Sunday/Feast Day texts from Immaculate Conception, 4th Sunday of Advent, Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, and Holy Family; (References will be made only in passing to the Christmas and Epiphany formularies.)

¹⁰J. Michael Joncas, "The 'Visitation' Formulary in the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary: An Exercise in Liturgical Exegesis*," *Worship* 64 (May, 1990): 242-259. In this recent study, Joncas, a former Notre Dame graduate student, examines one Mass formulary, drawing some interesting conclusions and raising some provocative questions. He chooses, however, to include the short "antiphons" in his considerations.

¹¹I will not use the formula, *Lex orandi, lex credendi*, because of difficulties in interpretation; e.g., A. Schmemmann, G. Wainwright, and A. Kavanagh all rely on this ancient formulation, but use it in different senses. *Marialis cultus* speaks of "doctrinal continuity" (MC, 11), which is expressed germinally in liturgical formulations.

Various contemporary authors, however, have raised serious questions regarding the interpretation of these doctrines; perhaps the most radical statement is made by Karen Borresen: "The disappearance of patriarchal forms of society is a challenge to the fundamental androcentrism of Catholic doctrine; we need a *new* theology." Karen Borresen, "Mary in Catholic Theology," in *Mary in the Churches*, Concilium, ed. Hans Küng and Jurgen Moltmann (NY: Seabury Press, 1983), 48-58, esp. 55. Cf. also Anne Carr, "Mary: Model of Faith," in *Mary: Woman of Nazareth*, ed. Doris Donnelly, (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1989), 7-24 f.; Catharina Halkes, "Mary and Women," in *Mary in the Churches*, Concilium, ed. Hans Küng and Jurgen Moltmann (NY, Seabury Press, 1983), 66-73. Elizabeth A. Johnson, C.S.J., "The Marian Tradition and the Reality of Women," *Horizons* 12 (1985): 116-135; "Mary and Contemporary Christology: Rahner and Schillebeeckx," *Église et Théologie* 15 (1984): 155-182; "Mary and the Female Face of God," *Theological Studies* 50 (1989): 500-526; "The Symbolic Character of Theological Statements about Mary," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 22 (Spring, 1985): 312-336. Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel, "Motherhood or Friendship," in *Mary in the Churches*, Concilium, ed. Hans Küng and Jurgen Moltmann (NY: Seabury Press, 1983), 17-24; Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Mary—The Feminine Face of the Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977).

g) examination of the weekday formularies of Advent (17, 19-20, 23)—some of the most interesting texts; (No reference will be made to the three marian prayers in the post-Christmas season ferias [Jan. 2-Epiphany].¹²)

h) no examination of the U.S. Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. (Although celebrated in the Advent season, it does not contain the advent themes, images, and motifs.)

4. The liturgical year is more than a calendar of feasts and seasons.¹³ It is a way of marking time and keeping time; the church calendar organizes times and determines rhythms of life. The liturgical year, however, embraces more: not only texts, but also cultural contexts (e.g., Christmas anticipation, clash of calendars on New Year's Day vs. Solemnity of Mary), sights, sounds, colors and textures, song, silence, etc. Even though this paper will not treat any of these aspects, it is critical to understand that it is only within the broad and deep textures of liturgical celebration that meaning is communicated and faith nourished.¹⁴

THE ADVENT-CHRISTMAS-EPIPHANY SEASON

The Documents

According to the *Motu Proprio* of Paul VI, the restoration of the liturgical year and revision of norms are "to allow the

¹²Dom Bernard Billet, O.S.B., "La place de la bienheureuse Marie dans le Missel Romain de Paul VI," *Études Mariales* 39 (1982): 23-56. Billet has done a careful study of marian references in both the ordinary and propers of the missal. Enzo Lodi has taken a different tack; in examining marian references in the mass and hours formularies, he has taken a synthetic approach organizing his insights under three categories: Mary in the plan of salvation, the virginal divine maternity as sign of humanity's divinization, and Mary in the Church. Cf. E. Lodi, "L'eucologie romaine de la liturgie mariale," in *La Mère de Jésus-Christ et la communion des saints dans la liturgie*, ed. A. M. Triacca and A. Pistoia (Rome: C.L.V. Edizioni Liturgiche, 1986), 173-196.

¹³Cf. Adrian Nocent, O.S.B., *The Liturgical Year*, 4 vols.; Vol. I: *Advent, Christmas, Epiphany*, trans. by Matthew J. O'Connell (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1977); hereafter cited as *Year I*. An introduction to the liturgical year is given, 1: 3-23.

¹⁴Cf. Nocent, *Year, I*, for a presentation of biblical, historical, and theological insights into the season.

faithful, through their faith, hope and love, to share more deeply in 'the whole mystery of Christ as it unfolds throughout the year.'¹⁵ Emphasis on feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary, continues Paul VI, is not incongruous, for Mary "is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her son.'¹⁶ It must be noted, however, that primacy is given to the Sunday celebration.¹⁷ Within the rhythm of the weekly paschal memorial, "the whole mystery of Christ, from his Incarnation to the day of Pentecost and the expectation of his coming again, is recalled by the Church during the course of the year."¹⁸

The General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar point out that the Christmas season is "second only to the annual celebration of the Easter mystery"¹⁹ and describe the season of Advent:

The season of Advent has a twofold character. It is a time of preparation for Christmas when the first coming of God's Son to man is recalled. It is also a season when minds are directed by this memorial to Christ's second coming at the end of time. It is thus a season of joyful and spiritual expectation.²⁰

The commentary on the document offers the following insight:

From the First Sunday of Advent until December 16 the liturgy expresses the eschatological character of Advent and urges us to look for the second coming of Christ. From December 17-24, the daily proper of the Mass and Office prepare more directly for the celebration of Christmas.²¹

¹⁵*The Roman Calendar: Text and Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 1976), 1; hereafter *RC*.

¹⁶*RC*, 2, citing *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 103 (Vatican II's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy; hereafter cited as *SC*).

¹⁷*RC*, 4.

¹⁸*RC*, 17.

¹⁹*RC*, 32.

²⁰*RC*, 39.

²¹*RC*, p. 24.

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Marialis cultus, published five years after the general calendar norms, notes that the reorganization of the calendar "makes it possible in a more organic and closely-knit fashion to include the commemoration of Christ's Mother in the annual cycle of the mysteries of her Son."²² The faithful are invited to take Mary as model in preparing for the birth of Christ²³; the Advent liturgy, "by linking the awaiting of the Messiah and the awaiting of the glorious return of Christ with the admirable commemoration of His Mother, presents a happy balance in worship," overcoming any tendency to separate Mary from Christ.²⁴

"The Christmas Season," continues Paul VI, "is a prolonged commemoration of the divine, virginal and salvific Motherhood of her whose 'inviolable virginity brought the Savior into the world.' In fact, on the Solemnity of the Birth of Christ the Church both adores the Savior and venerates his glorious Mother."²⁵ On the Epiphany, a celebration of the universal call to salvation, the Church "contemplates the Blessed Virgin, the true Seat of Wisdom and true Mother of the King, who presents to the Wise Men for their adoration the Redeemer of all peoples."²⁶ On the Feast of the Holy Family, the Church "meditates with profound reverence upon the holy life led in the house at Nazareth by Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Man, Mary His Mother, and Joseph the just man."²⁷

²²MC, 2.

²³MC, 4.

²⁴MC, 4.

²⁵MC, 5. Note, however, there are no marian references in any collects or any preface, during the Christmas season.

²⁶MC, 5. The liturgy, however, has no direct reference to "Seat of Wisdom" or "Mother of the King"; the quoted reference, Mt. 2:11, merely mentions "with Mary his Mother."

²⁷MC, 5. The first and second readings, however, describe qualities of life in the Christian family/community; there are no direct references to the family of Nazareth.

Conclusion

The Advent-Christmas-Epiphany season invites participants into the unfolding mystery of Christ. The Advent mystery of expectation is twofold: the expectation of Christ's return in glory and the expectation of the incarnation. The Christmas season prolongs the nativity feast, Christ's manifestation in the flesh, which culminates on Twelfth Night with the feast of Epiphany, Christ's manifestation to the world.

It is this season in which Mary, Mother of God, finds a most privileged place, for she is most intimately involved in the unfolding plan of salvation. While *Marialis cultus* rightfully places Mary in these Christ-mysteries of expectation, birth and manifestation, the document goes beyond the liturgical evidence in describing the veneration of Mary on the feasts of Christmas and Epiphany.

INVENTORY

*1. December 8: Immaculate Conception*²⁸

The "... Solemnity of 8 December ... is a joint celebration of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, of the basic preparation ... for the coming of the Savior and of the happy beginning of the Church without spot or wrinkle."²⁹

Opening Prayer

The opening prayer "expresses the theme of the celebration"³⁰ and addresses a petition to God through Christ in the Holy Spirit. In the past as well as today, the prayer completes the complexus of introductory rites, serving as a quasi-summation. Jungmann, basing himself on H. Rheinfelder, classifies minor euchologies, i.e., collects, as "simple" or

²⁸Cf. Nocent, *Year, I*, 327-328.

²⁹*MC*, 3.

³⁰*The General Instruction on the Roman Missal in The Sacramentary* (NY: Catholic Book, 1985), 32; hereafter *GIRM*.

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“amplified” depending on the presence of a relative clause modifying the direct addressee.³¹

Written four centuries before the 1854 definition of the Immaculate Conception, the opening prayer is a redaction of one of Sixtus IV’s clerics, Leonard of Nogarola, who had composed the Mass of the Conception of Mary, requested in 1476.³² This Franciscan Pope—the Franciscans adopted the feast as early as 1263—made the Immaculate Conception a feast in 1477 for the diocese of Rome. Only in 1708 did Clement XI make the feast obligatory for the entire Roman rite.³³

The collect appearing in the Tridentine missal is retained in the 1970 missal. This opening prayer expressed so well the nature and foundation of Mary’s privilege that it inspired *Ineffabilis Deus* of Pius IX.³⁴

English/Latin

The English is a free translation³⁵ of the Latin Collect, an “amplified” euchology. The English text maintains praise of

³¹Rev. Joseph A. Jungmann, S.J. *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, trans. by Rev. Francis A. Brunner, C.S.S.R. (2 vols.; NY: Benziger, 1950), 1: 374-375. Jungmann also believes that “petition” is the chief characteristic of the collect; the amplified oration is “a definitely literary device, the world of rhetorical art, the sort of oratorical craft one would expect on the occasion of a solemn assembly of the faithful” (*Ibid.*). Christine Mohrmann, however, considers the “amplified” form to be the “normal” form in contradistinction to a “simpler” form; *Liturgical Latin: Its Origin and Character. Three Lectures* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1957), 75.

³²Pierre Jounel, “Le culte de Marie dans la liturgie romaine renouée,” in *La liturgie, expression de la foi*, ed. A. M. Triacca and A. Pistoia (Rome: C.L.V. Edizioni Liturgiche, 1979), 172.

³³Irenée Henri Dalmais, Pierre Jounel and Aimé Georges Martimort, *The Liturgy and Time*, vol. IV of *The Church at Prayer*, ed. Aimé Georges Martimort *et al.*, trans. by Matthew J. O’Connell (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1986), 139; hereafter cited as *Time*.

³⁴Dalmiais *et al.*, *Time*, 140.

³⁵Cf. Helen Kathleen Hughes, R.S.C.J., *The Opening Prayers of The Sacramentary: A Structural Study of the Prayers of the Easter Cycle* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1980). Cf. 87 ff. for a discussion of

God throughout the prayer, even though it splits the Latin text into three separate sentences. *Dignum Filio tuo habitaculum* is rendered "worthy mother of your son," losing the metaphoric overtone of the Latin text. "You kept her sinless from the first moment of her conception," the translation of *per immaculatam virginis conceptionem*, holds onto the doctrinal content while choosing not to use traditional phraseology.

A serious difficulty is presented by the last phrase in English: "help us by her prayers to live in your presence without sin." The Latin text, literally translated, runs: "as you preserved her from every stain, may we, through her intercession, come to you cleansed." Even though the English text asserts the doctrine of marian intercession, it misses an important connection, a critical one in light of *Lumen gentium's* insistence on ecclesiology. In the Latin text, the Church, in petitioning God, named as the giver of the grace of the immaculate conception *ex morte eiusdem Filii tui praevisa*, asks that we also (*nos quoque*) be freed from sin. In other words, the Latin text presents Mary ecclesiotypically, as God is petitioned to act now on our behalf in a manner similar to his past salvific action.

The Latin text has a sense of salvation history as *ongoing*; as God has acted, so God continues to act. The English text, however, referring to marian aspects of salvation history, ends up with a weak petition "to live in your presence without sin" (which must be interpreted as referring to the present, not "presence" in heaven); it does not highlight the movement toward the coming kingdom in which the Church is engaged: "to come to you" (*ad te pervenire*).

English text

In the classic structure of the Roman collect, the invoca-

the principles of ICEL translations; 96 relates the difficulty of translation of the "ut" clause; 98 ff. treats "alternative prayers." Cf. Concilium for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, "Instruction on Translation of Liturgical Texts" (Washington, D.C.: NCCB, 1969).

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tion, amplified or simple, is followed by a narration of God's works that serves to "motivate" God to act in a certain way, which desired action is expressed in a related petition; it closes with a doxology. In this English prayer text, there is no clear connection between the narration of God's acts and the petition. The text lapses into moralism in the petition "help us to live . . . without sin," but misses any sense of Mary as genuine model for us because of God's continuing mighty deeds on behalf of God's own. The English text is held together semiotically by the binary opposition of sinful/sinless.

In announcing the doctrine of the immaculate conception, it images Mary as "Virgin Mary," "mother of your Son." The text is weighty with anamnesis, but light on connection between remembrance and the present situation of the praying community. Nonetheless, it clearly announces the "theme of the celebration."

Prayer over the Gifts

"The preparation of the gifts concludes with the invitation to pray with the priest and the prayer over the gifts, followed by the eucharistic prayer."³⁶ Jungmann comments that the prayer "concludes the offering and depositing of the material gifts and . . . explains their significance by transmuting them into the language of prayer."³⁷ Throughout the history of the Roman Rite, the petition remains, for the most part, quite general³⁸; it may incorporate notions of *sacrum commercium*. Joining the "innermost offering" of the participants with gifts is sometimes suggested by phrases linking references to the gifts with the prayer of the assembly.³⁹ Usually the prayer is a "simple oration."

³⁶GIRM, 53.

³⁷Jungmann, *Mass*, 2:94.

³⁸Jungmann, *Mass*, 2:95.

³⁹Jungmann, *Mass*, 2:96-97.

English/Latin

The Latin prayer text adds the word “*dignanter*” to the text of the missal of Pius V. As was the case with the opening collect, here too the English translation misses an important connection expressed in Latin. “Help us by her prayers, and free us from our sins” is not the same as “That as we proclaim her to be preventively graced and immune from all sin, so, by her intercession, may we be freed from all faults.” The English stresses the notion of Mary’s intercession to the detriment of ecclesiology. [Notice, too, that the English petitions God to “Help us . . . *and* free us. . . .”]

The English text contains three sentences: “Accept this sacrifice on the feast,” an imperative; “You kept her free from sin,” a declarative statement of doctrine; and “Help us by her prayer, and free us from our sins,” an imperative. The prayer construction appears to be three separate thought units. How much better to have employed the relative clause!

The text is held together, as noted before, by the opposition of sinful/sinless. Mary is imaged as “Virgin Mary.” There is no link, however, between the gifts *per se* and the petition of the prayer.

Prayer after Communion

“In the prayer after communion, the priest petitions for the effects of the mystery just celebrated, and by their acclamation (“Amen”), the people make the prayer their own.”⁴⁰ Jungmann notes that the theme of the post-communion is given by the action just completed; even when only the priest has received communion, the prayer texts still envision the communion of the assembly.⁴¹ Prayer texts usually begin with a “grateful glance at the gifts received,”⁴² followed by a petition for their effect.

⁴⁰*GIRM*, 56k.

⁴¹Jungmann, *Mass*, 2:422.

⁴²Jungmann, *Mass*, 2:422.

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Latin/English

Our present text, the same as the Tridentine missal's, dates from an early collection. The Latin text petitions: "may the sacrament we have received heal in us the wound of sin from which You singularly preserved the immaculate conception of blessed Mary." Although the literal translation is wooden in English, it makes connections clear; eucharistic communion heals the wound of our sin—the sin from which Mary was preserved by God's grace.

The Latin collect preserved the traditional Roman form, moving from reference to the sacrament received to a related petition. The English translation, however, begins with God's choosing of Mary and keeping her free from sin. Then it petitions that this sacrament free us from sin. While the connective fabric of this English text is more evident than in the preceding text (Prayer over the Gifts), the Latin text functions better as a conclusion to the communion rite in light of what *The General Instruction on the Roman Missal* states about the prayer.

Preface

"The chief elements of the eucharistic prayer are these: a) Thanksgiving (expressed especially in the preface): in the name of the entire people of God, the priest praises the Father and gives him thanks for the work of salvation or for some special aspect of it in keeping with the day, feast or season."⁴³

The Preface for this feast is a new composition of the 1970 missal.⁴⁴

Latin/English

The Latin text maintains praise of God throughout the text, through the use of relative clauses; the English text, however, separates the ideas into separate sentences and shifts subjects from God ("You") to She.

⁴³GIRM, 55.

⁴⁴Cf. Billet, "La place," 26.

The text is richly allusive; scripturally, the text refers to the Church without spot or blemish, splendid in glory (Eph. 5:27) (cf. *LG* 65). The scriptural imagery links Mary, mother of God's Son, with the Church, the Bride of Christ; "Full of grace" reechoes the angelic greeting (Lk. 1:28). Liturgically, the text alludes to the innocent lamb⁴⁵ (Jn. 1:29); during the communion rite, the assembly will hail the slain, victorious Lamb in singing the *Agnus Dei*. Mary's role as advocate, however, is split from her role as God-bearer in the English text, although the link is clearly established in the Latin.⁴⁶

The image-system in the prayers analyzed above focuses on the opposition sin/sinlessness. Although present in the preface, this theme is not dominant. The 1970 text is richer scripturally and liturgically than the ancient orations. In presenting the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, it does so in a way more congenial to liturgical praise. The abundance of images in the preface offers the praying congregation multiple entrees into praise of God for what God has done.

Conclusions:

1) While the English texts are free translations, they miss important linkages to human situations today. Their phraseology does not abet the ecclesiotypical sense⁴⁷; there is a certain "split" between Mary and the members of the Church. While the Latin texts faithfully enunciate the traditional doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, they do so in such a way that that unique privilege is a "type" or "model" of God's action for all the people of the Church: freedom, liberation from sin.⁴⁸

⁴⁵Cf. Nocent, *Year, I*, 285-6.

⁴⁶For a discussion of *genetrix vs. mater*, cf. Borresen, "Mary . . . Theology," 49-50; Carr, "Mary: Model," 16-17.

⁴⁷*Lumen gentium*, 63 (Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church; hereafter cited as *LG*).

⁴⁸Although M. Garrido Bonaño, O.S.B., does not specifically treat this feast, his "Acción de María en la reconciliación según la nueva Liturgia de Adviento-Navidad," *Estudios Marianos* 50 (1985): 83-110, treats this theme.

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2) The Latin texts assert Mary's intercessory role, but in muted phrases such as "*eius intercessione*," which is richly ambiguous. Such phraseology does not diminish the Christic mediation, our one Mediator. The English texts are weak, e.g., "Help us by her prayers," and remain weak because they are not integrated within the flow of the prayer.

3) The collects have an under-developed pneumatology and ecclesiology. Only the preface presents a contemporary ecclesiology. [Of course, we would not expect 15th-century texts to offer contemporary ecclesiology; but, the texts, in rightly enunciating the mystery of the Immaculate Conception, miss important liaisons with the Church at prayer.]

4) While the feast is not an "Advent proper," it does however benefit from the Advent climate in which it is located. The underlying Advent fabric forms a rich support for pastoral interpretation of the feast, for preaching and teaching. It suggests that the doctrine can be expressed not in syllogistic reasoning, but, as *Fulfilled in Your Hearing* suggests, in preaching *through* the texts.⁴⁹ Here *Marialis cultus* is helpful⁵⁰: the feast is a triple icon of the marian privilege, the basic preparation for the coming of Christ, and the beginning of the Church.

2. *Advent Collects*

As noted above, the season of Advent in the Roman calendar looks forward to the coming of Christ in glory (up to December 16) and then shifts to the mystery of the incarnation.

Although no Advent season is found in the Eastern Church, celebrations of the different "advents" of God took place on various days. It is the genius of the Roman rite that Advent was in its origins a liturgical season; ascetical considerations dominated other Western rites.⁵¹ Advent appears in the second half of the sixth century and gradually is es-

⁴⁹*FIYH*, 19.

⁵⁰*MC*, 3.

⁵¹Dalmais *et al.*, *Time*, 92.

established in the Western Church.⁵² Only in the eighth and ninth centuries is Advent seen as the beginning of the Church Year.⁵³

A study of Advent in the ancient sacramentaries reveals that although both themes—parousia and nativity—were present in the texts, the primary focus was on the coming nativity and a concomitant sense of expectant joy. The watchful waiting for the second coming, which rightfully inspires holy fear, was less dominant.⁵⁴ “Nor could the thought of Mary be absent from the Advent season, which is the season of human expectation and had been the season of Mary’s expectation.”⁵⁵

2.1 4th Sunday of Advent

The calendar commentary states: “From the readings at Mass, the Fourth Sunday of Advent appears as a Sunday of the Father of the Old Testament and the Blessed Virgin Mary, in anticipation of the birth of Christ.”⁵⁶

Opening Prayer

Since there is no obvious marian reference, I will not deal with this prayer extensively. Found in the Pius V Missal as a post-communion prayer for the Annunciation,⁵⁷ it is also used as the collect for the Angelus. The prayer is a summation of the great mysteries of the incarnation, passion and cross, and the glory of resurrection.⁵⁸ Rich in theology, the text joins the Christmas and Easter mystery.

⁵²Cf. Thomas J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year* (NY: Pueblo, 1986), esp. 79-155.

⁵³Dalmais *et al.*, *Time*, 92. SC, 102, seems to place Advent at the end of the Church Year.

⁵⁴F. Nogues, “Avent et événement d’après les anciens sacramentaires,” *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales* 22 (1937): 234-244, 280-297, esp. 234-40, 295.

⁵⁵Dalmais *et al.*, *Time*, 134.

⁵⁶RC, p. 24.

⁵⁷Billet, “La place,” 33.

⁵⁸Cf. Nocent, *Year*, I, 212-214.

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Latin/English

The English version is fairly close to the Latin, although *Christi Filii tui incarnationem* is rendered "coming of your Son as man."

Prayer over the Gifts

Ancient "secreta" of the Annunciation—termed the "Annunciation of the Lord" until the seventh century, it regained its Christic title in 1969—this prayer is not found in Pius V's missal.⁵⁹

This brief prayer is a typical pneumatic epiclesis: the Church prays that the Spirit sanctify the gifts as the Spirit filled the "viscera" of blessed Mary. The Latin works on the parallelism of "*sanctificet*" and "*replevit*," the latter alluding to the work of the Spirit at Pentecost (*replevit totam domum; repleti sunt omnes Spiritu sancto*, Acts 2:2,4; the phraseology is also familiar to Catholics of a certain age who prayed: "Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful. . .").

The English translation is satisfied with "sanctified Mary Mother of your son," and the phrase "of your Son" is not found in the Latin text.

English

The English text, close to the Latin, maintains the sense of the prayer: as the Spirit sanctified Mary, may the Spirit sanctify these gifts. The English text parallels "sanctified" and "make holy," eliminating the possibility of further verbal allusion to the work of the Spirit.

Both prayers (collect, prayer over the gifts) have a natural connection with the pneumatic epiclesis in the Eucharistic prayer.

⁵⁹Cf. Dom Frénaud, O.S.B., "Le culte de Notre Dame dans l'ancienne Liturgie latine," in *Maria*, ed. Hubert du Manoir, S.J. (8 vols.; Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1949-71), 6:163; Billet, "La place," 33.

Preface II of Advent

This 1970 text, to be used after December 16, focuses on the imminent celebration of the Nativity.

Latin/English

The Latin text rests on linkages with "*per Christum Dominum nostrum: quem . . . qui.*" The English translation presents declarative statements; each sentence has a different grammatical subject. There is no grammatical link to the phrase "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Both versions are scripturally allusive; references to the prophets, John the Baptist, and the Virgin Mother suggest the framework of salvation history. The text then moves to the present situation, preparation for the celebration of the Nativity. Preparing for the Nativity feast is also linked with the Advent theme "watching in prayer," an eschatological reference as well.⁶⁰ Scripturally rooted and allusive, the text praises God for salvation history as a continuing movement of grace. The prayer text casts the theological assertions in the context of the Advent mystery.

Conclusions:

1) This is the Advent feast of the Annunciation.⁶¹ The Ambrosian rite celebrates an annunciation feast on the last Sunday of Advent, and in the Roman rite, until 1970, the gospel *Missus est* was read on Ember Wednesday and the Visitation gospel on Ember Friday. Although the scriptural texts have changed, the shift of focus to the coming celebration of the incarnate word is evident. The theme of "annunciation" remains muted, with only an allusion in the opening prayer.

2) The use of this Advent preface until the vigil of Christmas situates the Nativity within the framework of salvation history in which Mary's role is a predominant one.

⁶⁰Cf. Nocent, *Year, I*, 68-9, 78-81, 107-110, 145-46.

⁶¹Cf. F. Cabrol, "Annonciation (Fête de l')," in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, ed. F. Cabrol, H. Leclercq, and H. I. Marrou (15 vols.; Paris, 1924-53), cols. 2241-2255.

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2.2 *Advent Ferias*

Collects for December 17, 19-20, 23

In 1961, Joseph Lemarié published a study of an ancient manuscript of Rotulus of Ravenna, examining collects which provided an entrée into "developing an authentic spirituality of Advent."⁶² Six years later Suitbert Benz published a magisterial study of these orations, detailing the influence of the preaching of Peter Chrysologus, bishop of Ravenna from about 432-450, in shaping the Rotulus texts.⁶³

Benz groups the Rotulus collects into three categories: 1) the first group of prayers manifests a general character; only some texts have Advent references; 2) the second category is directly related to preparation for the celebration of the Nativity; 3) the prayers of the third group are the most theological, with rich allusions to Christological dogma.⁶⁴ The orations for December 17, 19, 20, and 23 fall into Benz's third category.

A further and different analysis of these texts appeared in 1971; André Rose compared the Rotulus texts with the 1970 *Missale Romanum* and the French edition of that missal.⁶⁵

Lemarié detected that in Rotulus Advent is primarily the season for preparation for Christmas.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, the Church in celebrating Advent in faith and love, lives in the expectation of the fullness of time; thus expectation is bifo-

⁶²Joseph Lemarié, O.S.B., "Le mystère de l'Avent et de Noël d'après le Rotulus de Ravenne," *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales* 44 (1961): 303-322, esp. 317; Lemarié hoped that some of these prayers would be included in the new missal; happily, they were.

⁶³P. Suitbert Benz, *Der Rotulus von Ravenna*, Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 45 (Münster: Aschendorffsche, 1967).

⁶⁴*Ibid.*: Structure of the Collect, 72-81; Dec. 17 (R31), 243-255; Dec. 19 (R2), 294-296, 299-300, 322-28; Dec. 20 (R30), 218-243; Dec. 23 (R24), 204-209.

⁶⁵Cf. André Rose, "Les oraisons du Rotulus de Ravenne dans le nouveau Missel romain," *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales* 52 (1971): 271-292, esp. 271.

⁶⁶Lemarié, *Rotulus*, 310; his conclusion parallels that of Nogues in his inventory of ancient sacramentaries. Cf. n. 39.

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cal.⁶⁷ Rose supports this notion; Christ's coming in humility and his return in glory both find a home in the collects.⁶⁸ Keep in mind, however, that the actual organization of the Advent season is *posterior* to these texts.

December 17⁶⁹

Latin/English

God is identified as *conditor et redemptor*, typical phraseology in the Leonine style.⁷⁰ The Gelasian sacramentary uses the phrase *creator humanae reformatorque naturae*, which allows for better interplay between first creation/new creation⁷¹ in tandem with humanity/divinity. *Carnem assumere* relates to the Johannine theme of the Word's becoming flesh (Jn. 1:14). *Consortio sociare* is found in 2 Peter 1:4; while not textually explicit, the oration resonates with Philippians 2:15 in the play of humanity/divinity.

O God, creator and redeemer of human nature, who willed that your Word take flesh in the womb of perpetual virginity: look graciously on our prayer, that your Only-begotten, having assumed our humanity, may consider us worthy to share in divine fellowship.

Tightly-linked ideas, within a Johannine framework, express the theology of the coming feast: Christ assumed human nature that humanity might share in the divinity. It is through the divine maternity that God's salvific plan is brought to fulfillment.⁷²

⁶⁷Cf. Lemarié, *Rotulus*, 310.

⁶⁸Rose, *Rotulus*, 291.

⁶⁹Benz, *Rotulus*, 249-50, sees an Arianizing recension here; mentioned also in Rose, *Rotulus*, 284. Benz finds the Arian Bp. Maximus' maxim, *Pater imperavit et filius adimplevit*, operating in the oration. In the phrase in question, *Verbum tuum . . . carnem assumere voluisti*, the object of volition is not *Verbum tuum*, but the entire clause. The phrase is not patently Arian.

⁷⁰Rose, *Rotulus*, 284.

⁷¹Cf. Nocent, *Year, I*, 218-220.

⁷²Cf. Nocent, *Year, I*, 187-218; on the theme of reconciliation, cf. Bonaño, *Accion*, esp. 87-93.

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English

The English text renders *Deus* as "Father," which could pose a problem if the literal translation were followed; the difficulty of praying to share in the divinity of the *Father* is eliminated by shifting to the expression "May we come to share in the divinity of Christ."

The solution, however, splits the English text into two sentences, praising the Father initially (identified as redeemer), and then praying that "we" share in Christ's divinity.⁷³ The split, however, loosens the connection between the Word's becoming flesh through the divine maternity and our sharing in Christ's divinity.⁷⁴

The Johannine phraseology is all but eliminated in the English text. The Latin, *Verbum tuum in utero perpetuae virginitatis carnem assumere*, is weakly rendered "your Word became man." The "admirable exchange" expressed in the Latin is less clear in the English text.

December 19

English/Latin

A literal translation of the Latin is as follows:

O God, who deigned to reveal to the world the splendor of your glory through the bringing forth (*partum*) of the holy Virgin, grant we ask, that we may both worship with the integrity of faith and always celebrate with fervent devotion the mystery of the incarnation.

The text is rich with scriptural references. "Splendor of your glory" re-echoes Hebrews 1:3, "He reflects the glory of God. . . ." It likewise prepares the congregation to hear the proclamation of Titus 2:13, "the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus," at the Christmas midnight celebration.

⁷³The English text, "May we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share our human nature," is similar to the inaudibly recited text at the mixing of the water and the wine.

⁷⁴Cf. Bonaño, "Acción," esp. p. 90.

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The Latin substitutes *modo* for Rotulus' *in mundi fine*, which alludes to 1 Corinthians 10:11, "upon whom the end of the ages has come." Leo the Great announced the incarnation mystery: *secundum carnem quoque in fine temporum generatum*.⁷⁵ Rotulus' text also has a linkage to Hebrews 1:2, "In these *last days* God has spoken to us by a Son," the beginning of the lesson at the Christmas Mass during the day.

The prayer, in essence, announces the Christmas gospel in different words: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us . . . ; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (Jn. 1:14).

English

The English text, two discrete sentences, declares that God shows the world the splendor of God's glory and then petitions for "true faith and love to celebrate the mystery of God made man." This version misses the point: God reveals divine glory *that* we may always (omitted in the English text) celebrate the mystery "with the integrity of faith."⁷⁶ The splendor of God shown in the mystery of the incarnation is the narrative motivation for us to worship and celebrate. The English text, unfortunately, misses this connection with the revealed splendor of glory and petitions, in a second sentence, that God "Give to us true faith and love to celebrate. . . ." Further, the English text, "Give us true faith and love to celebrate the mystery," is a reduction of the theology of the original texts and appears quasi-moralistic.

December 20

Latin/English

The following is a literal, if awkward, translation of the Latin text:

⁷⁵Rose, *Rotulus*, 285-286.

⁷⁶Benz, *Rotulus*, 324, sees *fidei integritas* as a reference to the faith expressions of the great Christological councils, incorporated as a response against Arian heretics.

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O God, by the angel's announcement, the immaculate virgin welcomed your ineffable word, and, having become the house of divinity (*domus divinitatis*), was filled with the light of the Holy Spirit; grant that, by her example, we may be strong to adhere in humility to your will.

The original conclusion of the Rotulus text is stronger in marian imagery and incarnational theology: *Deum et hominem sacris castisque visceribus meruit baiulare*. This has been reduced to moral imitation: "may we humbly adhere to your will, following her example." The theological impoverishment of the petition is exacerbated in the English text which begins "help us to follow the example of Mary," setting aside the canonic oration form which places narration before the petition.

The Latin text, unfortunately, does little with the imagery of the angelic message—dwelling place of the divinity and the fullness of the Spirit's light. In offering an interpretation of the angelic message, it opts for drawing a moral lesson of "obedience."

English

The English text, as mentioned above, begins with the petition that we follow Mary's example of readiness to do God's will. A second sentence describes Mary's action of welcoming the eternal Son and becoming the temple of God's Word, filled with the Spirit's light. The beautiful *domus divinitatis* is translated "Temple of your Word," another rich metaphor, but different.

The Latin text is semiotically cohesive; Mary welcomed the word in a double sense: the word of the angel and the ineffable Word. The interplay of the dual connotations enriches the text. The English version lacks this nuance. Since the image cluster in English is message/eternal/son/temple of the word, there is less integration than in the Latin. While the Latin text insinuates that as Mary welcomed the word, responding in faith and being filled with the light of the Holy Spirit, so, too, may we welcome God's word, the ex-

pression “following the example of Mary” captures neither the sense of the prayer nor its theological surfeit.

December 23

The Latin text begins, “Almighty and eternal God, we see approaching the day when we celebrate the Nativity of your son according to the flesh,” and it concludes with the petition, “we ask, that to us, unworthy servants, the Word, which deigned to become flesh of the Virgin Mary and live among us, may manifest mercy.”

Latin/English

The theological character of the collect is evident throughout. *Nativitas secundum carnem* alludes to the Roman martyrology which titled the Christmas feast, *nativitas domini nostri Iesu Christi secundum carnem*. *Secundum carnem* is also found in Romans 1:13. John 1:14 asserts, *Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis*. The prayer insists on the doctrine of the incarnation. Soon we will see this great mystery: the enfleshment of God. This mystery is a proclamation of the mercy of God, dispensed lavishly to us, unworthy servants.⁷⁷

English

The English does not hold the sense of expectation found in the Latin: “. . . we see approaching the day. . . .” “We contemplate the birth of your Son. He was born of the Virgin Mary and came to live among us” is a pitiable translation of the scripturally-based Latin text, rooted in Johannine theology. The twinned Johannine themes—The Word became flesh and dwelt among us—are dessicated. “Birth of your son” does not carry the weight of *caro fieri*; without reference to “became flesh,” the phrase “came to live among us” loses its potency.

⁷⁷Cf. Bonaño, “Acción,” 90-91. Bonaño also points out that the text of the *Gloria in excelsis* in the Codex Alexandrinus, *Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam*, appears in the Bangor Antiphony as *Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam misericordiam tuam*.

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The petition for "forgiveness (not in the Latin text) and mercy" is ever so loosely connected to the preceding sentences that one could petition for almost anything! The theological assertions, subsumed under anamnesis, remain separate from the petition.

While the text has a marian reference, it clearly situates Mary within the unfolding of the incarnation mystery. Mary is commemorated in a "more organic and closely-knit fashion" in this prayer.⁷⁸

Advent collects of Rotulus

The Advent collects based on Rotulus have a strong sense of anamnesis, but likewise contain the sense of the present actuality that the mystery is bared to us and made powerful in the liturgical act.⁷⁹ The collects are in conformity with the liturgy constitution: "Recalling . . . the mysteries of the redemption, the Church opens to the faithful the riches of her Lord's powers and merits, so that these are in some way made present at all times, and the faithful . . . lay hold of them and become filled with saving grace."⁸⁰

In concluding his article on the Rotulus collects Rose states: "While the Roman Missal has pretty much respected the original Rotulus (except for leveling down some doctrinal shadings), it is very regrettable that the official French translation has so much impoverished [*sic*] the major bearings of the mystery of Advent and has fallen in the pitfall of moralism, to the prejudice of doctrinal depth."⁸¹ The same judgment can be passed on the English missal.

The marian references in the collects, with the exception of that of December 20 which speaks of the example of Mary, all place Mary securely within the mystery unfolded in the Advent season; her expectation⁸² is the expectation of

⁷⁸MC, 2.

⁷⁹Cf. Lemarié, *Rotulus*, 310.

⁸⁰SC, 102.

⁸¹Rose, *Rotulus*, 293; this quotation appears as an unsigned English summary of the article.

⁸²Cf. Nocent, *Year*, I, 158.

the Church in this season. Her role, while unique, is also the role of the Church and its members—to hear the Word of God and respond faithfully, that Christ may dwell among us.

3. *January 1st.*

Origins of the Feast

In an important 1933 article, Dom Bernard Botte declared that January 1 was the first marian feast of the Church of Rome.⁸³ *Natale S. Mariae*, appearing in seventh-century Rome, celebrated Mary in the post-Christmas season, following the lead of the churches of the East whose marian feasts developed in the wake of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon.⁸⁴

Botte's hypothesis did not remain unchallenged. Placide Bruylants challenged his position one year later; Theodor Klauser, basing himself on Antoine Chavasse's work, refuted Botte's findings. These opinions are amply discussed by Dom Frénaud.⁸⁵ It appears that Botte was correct in the main; the feast was indeed the earliest Roman marian feast, but it was not universally celebrated.

January 1 always coincided with the Octave Day of Christmas, and, through the scriptural proclamations, the Church remembered the circumcision and naming of Jesus. Additionally, the day was singled out for Christian reparation for pagan Janus festivities.⁸⁶ Throughout history the designation of the feast has changed: from *Natale S. Mariae*, to Octave Day, to Circumcision, to Octave Day, to Solemnity

⁸³Dom Bernard Botte, "La première fête mariale de la liturgie romaine," *Ephemerides liturgicae* 47 (1933): 425-30.

⁸⁴Dalmis *et al.*, *Time*, 133.

⁸⁵D. P. Bruylants, "Les origines du culte de la Sainte Vierge à Rome," *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales* 23 (1938): 200-210, 270-282. Antoine Chavasse, *Le Sacramentaire Gélasien*, Vaticanus Reginensis 316 (Tournai: Desclée, 1957). Frénaud, "Le culte," 6:157-211. Theodor Klauser, "Review of 'La première fête mariale de la liturgie romaine' by B. Botte," *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 13 (1933): 356-357.

⁸⁶Dalmis *et al.*, *Time*, 133.

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of Mary. Despite the nomenclature shifts, January 1 never lost its marian character.⁸⁷

The latest calendar revision restored the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God as a feast commemorating Mary's part in the mystery of salvation. "It is meant also to exalt the singular dignity which this mystery brings to the 'holy Mother . . . through whom we were found worthy to receive the Author of Life.'"⁸⁸

Opening Prayer

The opening prayer, found in the Gregorian sacramentary, is today's text. It expresses seventh-century Roman faith not only in the virginal maternity of Mary, but also in the power of the one who welcomed Christ.⁸⁹ It is an amplified oration, which focuses on introducing the motif of the feast.

Latin/English

The Latin text is typically Roman, exhibiting the address to God, followed by a relative clause (narration) which introduces an "ut" clause (petition). Literally translated the Latin prayer addresses God, stating "through the fruitful virginity of blessed Mary you have given the treasures of eternal salvation to the human race; grant that we may know her to intercede for us, her through whom we have merited to receive the author of life, your Son."

The Latin text asserts the doctrine of the divine maternity and Mary's virginity and also marian intercession; in so doing it declares that the human race has benefitted through Mary's role in salvation history, receiving "treasures of eternal salvation" and "the Author of life."⁹⁰

⁸⁷Cf. Nocent, *Year, I*, 246-7.

⁸⁸*MC*, 5.

⁸⁹Jounel, "Le culte," 167; while the circumcision gradually eclipsed the celebration of the divine maternity in the mass texts, the antiphons for the office remained thoroughly marian.

⁹⁰Quoted in *MC*, 5.

The English text contains neither the phrase “treasures of eternal salvation” nor “author of life,” but combines these notions in the jejune and less imaginative “life and salvation.” The allusive “fruitful virginity” is absorbed into “Virgin Mother,” which is far less forceful. While the Latin text follows the canonic collect form—from address, to narration, to petition, the English text moves immediately to petition—“God our Father, may we always profit by the prayers of the Virgin Mother Mary”—and continues with the somewhat convoluted “for you bring us life and salvation through Jesus Christ her son.” Thus, the Latin text operates with a richer semiotic system of images; the English pales by comparison.

More unfortunately, however, the English text lacks the cohesion of the Latin. The skeleton English structure—“May we profit by (her) prayers, because you bring life and salvation”—is not a clear conduit of meaning. Since there is no “instant replay” during the liturgical act, the congregation will be hard pressed to discern any theological nuance in the prayer. My hunch is that the perlocutionary force of the prayer will be reduced to “May we profit by her prayers,” which is certainly not the main thrust of the original text. By eliminating the rich, image-laden phrases of the original text, there is a reduction in the surplus of meaning that the text can carry. Notice too that the English text speaks of Christ as “her Son,” a phrase to be repeated in other prayers.⁹¹

⁹¹Cf. below. Most marian references allude to Mary’s virginity. This crucial theme, Virgin *and* Mother, a mystery totally inaccessible on the human level, needs further theological exploration. While the office antiphons present image-centered reflections, the mass texts are content to reiterate the verbal icon, Virgin Mother. How can contemporary Christians enter into this mystery? Cf. Lodi, “L’euologie,” 182-3. Also cf. Nocent, *Year, I*, 227-229; Walter J. Burghardt, S.J., “Mary in Western Patristic Thought,” in *Mariology*, ed. Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M. (3 vols; Milwaukee: Bruce, 1954-60), 1:109-55. The important work of Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (NY: Columbia University, 1988), esp. 353-56, 445-6, sheds light on the discussion; also, Ruether, *Mary*, 53-57. Thomas Aquinas stated: “We use

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Prayer over the Gifts

The prayer over the gifts is a modern composition. It is an amplified oration.

Latin/English

Containing *laetantibus, gratiae gloriamur, and gaudere*, the prayer expresses the joyful tone of the season. The Latin text operates on the binary opposition of beginning/completion [*incobas/perficis; de initiis gloriamur/de perfectione gaudere*], and the time-frame of the prayer secures its cohesion. Notice that there is no clear reference to the gifts, unless "*bona cuncta*" serves as a muted reference.

The English text maintains the tension of beginning/completion, but that opposition is iterated only once, not twice as in Latin. The lack of reference to the gifts *in any way whatsoever* raises a question as to the real function of this prayer.

English

The English text accords with the Christmas season's spirit during which we "celebrate the beginning of our salvation." The petition for fulfillment is a logical complement. The text merely inserts the phrase "on the feast of Mary, the Mother of God."

In both texts, there is a reference to the mystery of salvation as an on-going event; the assembly at prayer is caught up in this movement toward completion. The English text, however, uses the phrase "salvation will be brought to its fulfillment," a passive construction, in distinction to the Latin "rejoice in its perfection."

words before God, not indeed that we may manifest our thoughts to him who is the searcher of hearts, but that we may bring ourselves and others who hear to reverence him" (*Summa Theologiae*, 2a-2ae, 91.1). What words can be used to express this mystery in such a way that, in reverencing God, we have access to this mystery, not as a distant truth, but as a life-giving present reality?

Prayer after Communion

Another new composition, the communion text draws its opening phrases from a ninth-century text for the feast of St. Agnes.⁹²

Latin/English

Following the schema for post-communion prayers outlined by Jungmann, this prayer reflects on the act of communion which leads into petition: "O Lord, we have partaken in the heavenly sacraments joyfully, grant, we ask, that they may profit us unto eternal life, we who glory in calling the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of your Son and Mother of the Church."

Paul VI proclaimed Mary "Mother of the Church," although the doctrinal commission had rejected the phrase proposed by the bishops of Poland.⁹³ This prayer holds in tension the dual aspects of the maternity of Mary, Mother of the Son, Mother of the Church.

The English text, rather than reflecting on communion initially, begins with "as we proclaim the Virgin Mary to be the Mother of Christ and the Mother of the Church." "Mother of Christ" and "communion with her Son" are free translations of "*Genetricem Filii tui*" and "*sumpsimus sacramenta.*" The English skeleton, "as we proclaim Mary, may our communion with her son bring us to salvation," shows a reduction of the plenitude of meaning of the Latin. *Laeti, gloriamur*, picking up Christmas themes, is omitted in the English. Regrettably, the cohesiveness of the English text is questionable. The Latin, articulating well the post-communion prayer's function within this feast, focuses on the act of communion and a petition for fruitful communion. The English, however, seems to place less weight on the communal action of the Church.

⁹²Billet, "La place," 34.

⁹³Borresen, "Mary . . . Theology," 54. Cf. Msgr. G. Philips, "*La Vierge au II^e Concile du Vatican et l'avenir de la mariologie*," in *Maria*, ed. Hubert du Manoir, S.J., (8 vols.; Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1949-71), 8:68-70.

Preface

Preface I of Blessed Virgin Mary is retained from Pius V's missal, which had only one marian preface. In 1095, Urban II adapted a collection of eighth-century prayer texts.⁹⁴ The text was used at Saint-Gall for the feast of the Assumption.⁹⁵ It is a fitting text for this Christmas-season feast, since it refers to the theme of light (Jn. 1:9). If the Lent-Easter-Pentecost season is the season of life, the Advent-Christmas-Epiphany season is the season of light.⁹⁶

English/Latin

The English text splits praise of God by switching sentence subjects: from "You" to "She." ICEL English seems incapable of effectively rendering the Latin relative clause.⁹⁷ "*Virginitatis gloria permanente*" is rendered "virgin mother of your only son."

Both the English and Latin texts celebrate the role of the Holy Spirit in the work of salvation. In both texts, praise is situated in the context of *anamnesis*.

Conclusions:

1) The English rendering of "*Filii tui*" in the opening and post-communion prayers is "her Son." This is a very interesting change in eucharological phraseology.

Some have objected that traditional casting of the divine maternity has been based on a faulty gynecology.⁹⁸ Mary's

⁹⁴Jourel, "Le culte," 174.

⁹⁵Billet, "La place," 25. Cf. Dom Bernard Capelle, "Les origines de la préface romaine de la Vierge," in his *Travaux Liturgiques de doctrine et d'histoire*, III (Louvain: Centre liturgique, Abbaye du Mont César, 1967), 305-15.

⁹⁶Cf. Nocent, *Year, I*, 307-8.

⁹⁷"The Sunday Collects [of the Roman Rite] contain some of the most magnificent literature of the world . . . They enshrine . . . so perfectly the genius of a language that it is impossible to hope ever to translate them adequately." C.C. Martindale, as quoted in Mary Gonzaga Haessley, *Reflections on the Sunday Collects of the Roman Missal* (St. Meinrad, IN: St. Meinrad Press, 1967), 122.

⁹⁸Cf. Borresen, "Mary . . . Theology," 49-50; Carr, "Mary: Model," 16-17.

role has been (incorrectly) viewed as purely passive. Rather than seeing Mary's response to God as a radical act of faith and commitment, a human risk in face of the divine, interpretations have suggested that the male-imagined God is powerful over the passive, totally receptive woman.⁹⁹ Is the English phraseology an attempt at a corrective? I doubt it. At any rate the switch of terms falls hard on the ears, even though doctrinally correct.

2) The English version of the opening prayer lacks nuance. In an interesting study of the role of rhetoric, Walter Fisher employs Chaim Perelman's notion of the "universal audience." This mental construction envisions the best body of critics one can imagine for the situation and the subject at hand.¹⁰⁰ By addressing any audience, one attempts to convince or persuade. Following Perelman, Fisher notes that this audience reasons, not by syllogism, but by analogy. Further, he observes that audiences respond to an "integrated message," rather than single units of communication.¹⁰¹

The English version obviously does not envision the assembly as the "best body of critics," who know something of the business of Christian liturgical prayer. Nor does the text offer the chance to enter into prayer through analogy. It offers a skeleton, rather than the theologically richer Latin version, which presents a more integrated message as an *entrée* to prayer.

3) *Marialis cultus* is imbued with the spirit of the liturgy. Pope Paul VI did a genuine service to the liturgical renewal in reflecting on Mary's rightful and proper place within the liturgical year. One notable exception stands out, however. Since the promulgation of *Marialis cultus*, January 1 has also been declared a World Day of Peace.

⁹⁹The phrase "journey of faith" in John Paul II's encyclical *Redemptoris mater* attempts to overcome some traditional misunderstandings.

¹⁰⁰Walter R. Fisher, *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina, 1987), 132.

¹⁰¹Fisher, *Communication*, 133-35.

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It is likewise a fitting occasion for renewing adoration to the newborn Prince of Peace, for listening once more to the glad tidings of the angels . . . and for imploring from God, through the Queen of Peace, the supreme gift of peace. It is for this season that, in the happy concurrence of the Octave of Christmas and the first day of the year, we have instituted the World Day of Peace, an occasion that is gaining increasing support and already bringing forth fruits of peace in the hearts of many.¹⁰²

The overlaying of the theme of peace is extra-liturgical. Nothing in the euchology suggests that this feast celebrates peace. The prayers, as noted above, operate with a different image-system and focus predominantly on the mystery of the divine maternity. The scriptural lessons are not concerned with world peace or peace in general; there is but one reference to peace—in the Aaronic blessing in the first reading, but surely this one word is not a sufficient basis for re-orienting the feast. The second reading deals with adoption as children of God and the gospel, recounting the angelic greeting to the shepherds, also mentions the circumcision and naming.

What has happened is that now this day has become another "idea feast."¹⁰³ Genuine celebrations are rooted in events, not ideas. One can celebrate a birthday or an anniversary because their genesis is a historical event. Celebrating an idea leads to the failure of human festivity.

Marialis cultus also states that the "restored Solemnity of Mary the holy Mother of God . . . is meant to commemorate the part played by Mary in this mystery of salvation. It is meant also to exalt the singular dignity which this mystery brings to the 'holy Mother . . . through whom we were found worthy to receive the Author of life.'"¹⁰⁴ This, not

¹⁰²MC, 5.

¹⁰³I believe the term is original to Anton Baumstark, *Comparative Liturgy*, rev. B. Botte and trans. F. L. Cross (London: Oxford, 1958), 156; Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 2nd ed. (London: Dacre Press, 1964), 358.

¹⁰⁴MC, 5.

World Peace Day, is the liturgical foundation of the celebration.

4. *Christmas/Epiphany*

Despite the assertions in paragraph 5 of *Marialis cultus*, there are *no* marian references in the English collects or prefaces of the season, except for three ferial post-Epiphany opening prayers, which I will not examine.

5. *Holy Family*

This feast was established on 26 October, 1921,¹⁰⁵ by Benedict XV; the original texts were composed by an eighteenth-century Canadian bishop who stressed the importance of Christian family life.¹⁰⁶ Widespread popular devotion to the Holy Family was a characteristic of seventeenth-century Roman Catholic piety. John XXIII was likewise devoted to this feast.

Opening Prayer

Even though the opening prayer text does not specifically allude to Mary, I will consider it briefly. The Latin text reads (in literal translation):

O God, who has deigned to give us the stunning example of the holy family, graciously grant that, having carefully followed them in the bonds of domestic virtues and life, we may enjoy your eternal gifts in the joy of your home.

The Latin text serves to introduce the motif of the day—the model of the family of Nazareth—and petitions that we may enjoy the joy of God's eternal home. The text operates imagistically, clustering holy family/domestic virtues and life/joy in your home. It envisions Christian family life as drawing character from the holy family with the result that that life will continue in God's home. The Latin text is far

¹⁰⁵ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 13 (1921): 543.

¹⁰⁶ *Saint Andrew Bible Missal* (Bruges, Belgium: Biblica, 1965), 106.

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richer than the English: "Father, help us to live as the holy family united in respect and love. Bring us the peace of your eternal home."

While the Latin text suggests an ongoing movement—a microcosm of salvation history, the English loses that thrust and weakly petitions: "Help us to live. . . ." Once again the English begins with a petition, rather than narration, and concludes with a second petition: "Bring us to the joy and peace of your eternal home." The motivation for God's action is less clearly expressed in English than in Latin. The sense of the Latin is that as we have followed their stunning example on earth, may we continue that way of living in heaven. The English is an impoverished text.

Prayer over the Gifts

The Prayer over the Gifts, a simple oration, is similar to the text of the 1946 missal. There is a clear marian reference, *Deiparae Virginis*, and a reference to Joseph.

Latin/English

The Latin text begins, "We offer this sacrifice of propitiation, Lord," and continues with the petition, "humbly praying-in-earnest, that, through the intervenient suffrage (support) of the blessed Virgin God-bearer and Joseph, you would steadfastly establish our families in your grace and peace."

Close to the Latin, the English text begins—"Lord, accept this sacrifice"—with an imperative and moves to the petition—"and through the prayers of Mary, the virgin Mother of God and of her husband Joseph, unite our families in peace and love." The Latin text, "steadfastly establish in your grace and peace," is stronger than "unite our families in peace and love."

English

The text adverts to the virginal divine maternity and marian intercession. The Latin links *deprecantes* with *suffragio*, suggesting a conjoining of sacrifice with the prayer of the

assembly, coupled with the suffrage/support/prayer of Mary and Joseph. The English does not carry the same weight.

Prayer after Communion

The Latin text is a typical Roman post-communion prayer: "Refreshed by heavenly sacraments, most gracious Father, let us firmly imitate the example of the Holy Family so that after the toils of this age, we may attain eternal fellowship with them." After reference to the sharing in communion, the prayer quickly proceeds to a petition. Note that the text exhibits the movement of salvation history: through the toils of this age to fellowship in heaven.

By comparison with the Latin text, the English text is thin: "We want to live as Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, in peace with you and one another. May this communion strengthen us to face the troubles of life." Unfortunately the connecting thought is absent in English, due, once again, to its beginning with the petition, rather than narration. The movement from sacrament to sacramental grace, in living through the toils of this age to eternal fellowship, is not carried by the English prayer text.

Holy Family: Idea Feast

This feast has a curiously contemporary ring to it, different from the other feasts and ferias of the season which are heavy on liturgical anamnesis, the blessed recollection of the events in salvation history. Here the prayer texts focus, as one would expect, on the Holy Family presented as an icon for imitation. The scriptural lessons focus on qualities and characteristics of Christian life in community and family.

The feast borders on being an "idea feast," that is a feast that does not rest on a commemoration of historical events, but rather on a theological doctrine or idea.¹⁰⁷ The prayer texts iterate certain themes: "respect and love," "joy and peace" (Opening Prayer), "peace and love" (Gifts), and "peace" (Communion), but the expressions are abstract. Fur-

¹⁰⁷Cf. n. 103 above.

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ther compounding the problem is scripture's relative silence, save for a few hushed phrases, about the family life of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

Thus, while the Advent-Christmas-Epiphany season of grace invites participants into the mystery of the incarnation, this feast focuses more on the ideas which we presume characterized the life of the Holy Family. Jungmann puts it well:

It can always be said of all of these themes of Christian feasts, that it is not merely an abstract idea that is being celebrated. It is not mercy or justice that is being made the subject of a feast. Still less is it a virtue or a moral ideal as was attempted by secular thought in the days of the enlightenment. It is always a living person, the person of the God-man who is being surveyed from different angles. This means that in all these Church feasts the basic theme of the *Anamnesis*, the word of Redemption, remains present—the work which was a free, historical activity of the triune God in Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁸

The prayers focus on a "moral ideal," which is not what the liturgy celebrates; the first two scriptural proclamations present ideals in living Christian community. The task of the preacher is to steer a course away from sheer moralizing in order to focus on the *anamnesis*, the work of redemption that is being accomplished by God in our world, so that we together may give thanks and praise.

Conclusions:

1. *Liturgical Translations*

No less a scholar in both liturgy and canon law than

¹⁰⁸J. A. Jungmann, S.J., *Pastoral Liturgy* (NY: Herder and Herder, 1962), 398. Jungmann seems to cast a jaundiced eye on the Holy Family feast: "It was a happy decision which made the highest ecclesiastical authority resist pressure for a feast of Christ the worker. Had this request been granted, the fundamental facts of the story of Redemption would have been dangerously scaled down to a proclamation of a *moral ideal* (emphasis mine). This would have meant going a step further than has been gone in the feast of the Holy Family. . . ." *Ibid.*, 399.

Frederick McManus comments on the poverty of the translations of the present collects.

This impersonality of the collects, and of the liturgy as a whole, was greatly valued not so long ago. Subjective and concrete and emotional expressions were rejected in favor of the objective and abstract and intellectual. Impersonality means, among other things, that prayers of petition like the collect should not become too particular or individual; the generalized plea has a breadth that makes it more widely applicable to a whole congregation, to the entire Church.

All this is changed. The Roman collects in English seem to be one of the weaker and less developed elements of the present liturgy. The brilliant Latin style is apparently not transferable to English. More seriously, the breadth of the petitions for devotion or strength or peace or joy seem abstract or vapid to some people. It is not enough to pray publicly in generalizations, seeking one virtue or another from day to day, making petitions against "what is harmful" and for "what is helpful."¹⁰⁹

The marian euchological texts examined fall under the judgment of McManus. Chart III (below) indicates the type of generalized petitions found in the prayer texts. One can go further, however, in stating that many of the English translations are not only "free" but also inaccurate, resulting in a theological, liturgical and pastoral impoverishment.

2. *Liturgical Prayer and Dogma*

Unfortunately many of texts in the English euchology suffer from an overdose of dogma which tends to inoculate the assembly against entering into the *mystery* celebrated.

Liturgical prayer should not be a treasury of dogma, whether the dogma of the Church or the dogma of contemporary move-

¹⁰⁹Frederick R. McManus, "The Problem of the Roman Collect," *American Ecclesiastical Review* 159 (October, 1968): 270-71.

¹¹⁰Peter Fink, "Reflections on Liturgical Prayer," *Liturgical Prayer* 2 (1971): 2.

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ments. It is not a catechism geared to instruct the people, nor a vehicle to manipulate them.¹¹⁰

Rich poetic language which suggests the swampy depths of the meaning of dogma provides a way for the assembled faithful to interiorize prayer. Terse English phraseology, often unsuitable for public oral proclamation, turns prayer into catechesis.

3. Liturgical Prayer and the Roman Tradition

If the euchology is Roman in the sense that it is "sober, biblically-based, and theologically-balanced,"¹¹¹ it is also Roman in its lack of a well-articulated pneumatology. A refined pneumatology might help to rescue some of the prayers from their moralizing tone, for the action of the Spirit could bridge the link between the "then" of the prayers and the "now" of the pray-ers, bringing salvation history more into focus.

In the meanwhile, one can hope for richer, more biblical, imaginative translations, so that our common prayer may spring from "authentic faith that leads us to acknowledge the exaltedness of the Mother of God and inspires us to a filial love for her as our Mother and to an imitation of her virtues."¹¹²

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¹¹¹Joncas, "Visitation, Formulary," 258.

¹¹²LG, 67.

KEY to abbreviations used in the charts

- alt = alternate form
- Amp = Amplified (i.e., containing a relative clause modifying the direct address)
- Br (vol. #: p. #) = P. Bruylants, O.S.B., *Les oraisons du Missel Romain. Texte et histoire* (2 vols.; Louvain: Centre de Documentation et d'Information Liturgiques, 1952)
- Can = Canonical
- Comm = Prayer after Communion
- E = English text
- eccl dom = *ecclesia domestica* (domestic church)
- Gifts = Prayer over the Gifts
- GIRM = *General Instruction on the Roman Missal*
- L = Latin text
- LG = *Lumen gentium* (Vatican II's Constitution on the Church)
- n/a = not applicable
- OpPr = Opening Prayer (Collect)
- Pref = Preface
- Sim = Simple (i.e., not containing a relative clause modifying the direct address)

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MARY IN THE ADVENT-CHRISTMAS-EPIPHANY CYCLE

Chart I

FEAST (Proper)	SOURCE	STYLE	FORM	FUNCTION [GIRM]	REFERENCE TO HOLY SPIRIT/ CHURCH
DEC. 8					
OpPr	1863 Br 1:69	Amp (L) Sim (E)	Can	Introduction to feast	
Gifts	1863 Br. 1:69	Sim	Can	Preparation	
Comm	1863 Br 1:69	Sim	Can	Effects of the mystery	
Pref.	1970	n/a	Can /alt (E)	Thanksgiving —feast-related	yes: sign of favor to the Church; promise of its perfection
4th SUN. ADVENT					
OpPr	8th c. Br 1:90 (Post-comm., Mar. 25)	Sim	Can /alt (E)	Introduction to feast	
Gifts	8th c. Br. 1:90 (Mar. 25)	Sim	Can	Preparation	sanctify —Mary —gifts
Comm	[No marian reference]				
Pref	1970	n/a	Can/ alt (E)	Thanksgiving —season-related	

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MARY IN THE ADVENT-CHRISTMAS-EPIPHANY CYCLE

Chart I

FEAST (Proper)	SOURCE	STYLE	FORM	FUNCTION [GIRM]	REFERENCE TO HOLY SPIRIT/ CHURCH
ADVENT WEEKDAYS					
DEC. 17					
OpPr	5-6th c. Rotulus	Amp	Can/ alt (E)	Introduction to celebration	
DEC. 19					
OpPr	5-6th c. Rotulus	Amp	Can/ alt (E)	Introduction to celebration	
DEC. 20					
OpPr	5-6th c. Rotulus	Amp	Can/ alt (E)	Introduction to celebration	light of Spirit
DEC. 23					
OpPr	5-6th c. Rotulus	Amp	Can/ alt (E)	Introduction to celebration	
JAN. 1					
OpPr	8th c. Br 1:11	Amp (L) Sim (E)	Can/ alt (E)	Introduction to feast	
Gifts	1970	Amp (L) Sim (E)	Can/ alt (E)	? (No reference to gifts)	
Comm	1970 (Incipit 9th c.— Br 1:79)	Sim	Can/ alt (E)	Effects of the mystery	yes: Mother of Church
Pref	8th c.	n/a	Can/ alt (E)	Thanksgiving —feast-related	power of Holy Spirit

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MARY IN THE ADVENT-CHRISTMAS-EPIPHANY CYCLE**Chart II**

SCRIPTURE	IMAGES	DOCTRINE	MORALISM
Jn. 1:14 2 Pet. 1:4 (Phil. 2:15)	creator redeemer Word became man Virgin Mary divinity/human nature	creation redemption incarnation virginity divine maternity	
Heb. 1:3 1 Cor. 10:11 Jn. 1:14	splendor of your glory coming of Christ born of Virgin mystery of God made man	divine maternity incarnation	give us true faith and love
Lk. 1:28, 38	example of Mary angel's message light of your Spirit temple of Word	incarnation pneumatology	
Rom. 1:13 Jn. 1:14	birth of your Son Virgin Mary live among us forgiveness mercy	incarnation divine maternity redemption virginity	may we receive forgiveness, mercy
	Virgin Mother Mary life and salvation her Son	virginity divine maternity ("her Son") intercession	profit by her prayers
	beginning of salvation Mary, Mother of God salvation	divine maternity	
	Virgin Mary Mother of Christ Mother of Church her Son salvation	virginity divine maternity ("her Son") the Church	
Lk. 1:35 Jn. 1:9	power of Holy Spirit virgin mother light of the world	incarnation divine maternity	

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MARY IN THE ADVENT-CHRISTMAS-EPIPHANY CYCLE

Chart I

FEAST (Proper)	SOURCE	STYLE	FORM	FUNCTION [GIRM]	REFERENCE TO HOLY SPIRIT/ CHURCH
HOLY FAMILY					
OpPr	1970	Amp (L) Sim (E)	Can/ alt (E)	Introduction to feast	<i>eccl dom</i>
Gifts	1970	Sim	Can	Preparation	<i>eccl dom</i>
Comm	1970	Sim	Can/ alt (E)	Effects	<i>eccl dom</i>
Pref	[No marian reference]				

Mary in Advent/Christmas: Liturgical References 93**MARY IN THE ADVENT-CHRISTMAS-EPIPHANY CYCLE
Chart II**

SCRIPTURE	IMAGES	DOCTRINE	MORALISM
	holy family respect, love joy, peace eternal home	communion of saints	help us to live as holy family
	prayers Mary, virgin Mother of God husband, Joseph peace, love	intercession divine maternity virginity communion of saints	unite families
	Jesus, Mary, Joseph peace troubles of life	communion of saints	want to live in peace

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MARY IN THE ADVENT-CHRISTMAS-EPIPHANY CYCLE
Chart III

FEAST
(Proper)

FOR WHAT DO WE PRAY?

DEC. 8

- Op Pr "Help us by her prayers to live in your presence without sin"
Gifts "Accept this sacrifice . . . ; help us by her prayers, and free us from our sins."
Comm "May this sacrament of your love free us from our sins."
-

4th SUN. ADVENT

- OpPr "... lead us through his suffering and death to the glory of his resurrection." [No marian reference]
Gifts "... may the power of the Spirit . . . make holy the gifts we place upon this altar."
Comm [No marian reference]
-

ADVENT WEEKDAYS

DEC. 17

- OpPr "May we come to share the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share our human nature."

DEC. 19

- OpPr "Give to us true faith and love to celebrate the mystery of God made man."

DEC. 20

- OpPr "... help us to follow the example of Mary, always ready to do your will."

DEC. 23

- OpPr "May we receive forgiveness and mercy. . . ."

MARY IN THE ADVENT-CHRISTMAS-EPIPHANY CYCLE
Chart III

FEAST
(Proper)

FOR WHAT DO WE PRAY?

JAN. 1

- Op Pr “. . . may we always profit by the prayers of the Virgin
 Mother Mary.”
- Gifts “. . . we ask that our salvation will be brought to its
 fulfillment.”
- Comm “. . . may our communion with her Son bring us to salvation.”
-

HOLY FAMILY

- OpPr “. . . help us to live as the holy family . . . ; bring us to the joy
 and peace of your eternal home.”
- Gifts “. . . accept this sacrifice . . . unite our families in peace and
 love.”
- Comm “May this communion strengthen us to face the troubles of
 life.”
-