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Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J.

PRO PERFIDIS JUDAEIS

MAN'S redemption is a mystery of love: love seeking, love faithful even were rejected, love oblation. The mystery was accomplished in the place and at the moment chosen by God, that is, in Jerusalem during the paschal solemnities of almost two thousand years ago. This yearly feast recalled miracles of divine tenderness for a people long sought, sometimes unfaithful, often afflicted, but always privileged to have God's ministers, Moses, Joshua, and all the other prophets, to recall it when unfaithful, to console it when afflicted. Out of Egypt God brought His people. At Sinai He bound Himself to it, asking in return its love and worship. In the desert He fashioned it for forty years. To its own land He guided it. There it was to prepare for another exodus, the exodus of the Anointed One, the Redeemer who was to fulfill all the vast promises of the prophets, to undo the ancient wrong, and to die a salvific death for all men.¹ The pasch was, therefore, memorial and prophecy. To Jews it remains a sacred commemoration of their marvelous deliverance from the Egypt of bondage and idolatry. To Christians it is the quickening rite which reveals again and again mankind's deliverance from the death which is sin, and its entrance into life. The Christian pasch unfolds in a succession of sacred days that bring to an intense conclusion and mighty climax the purifying work of Lent.²

The General Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites in 1955

1. Louis Bouyer, Orat., *The Paschal Mystery* (Chicago: Regnery, 1950), p. 58. Jean Daniélou, S.J., describes the typology of the exodus in the Old and New Testaments in *Sacramentum Futuri* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1950), pp. 131-200. See also Barnabas M. Ahern, C.P., "The Exodus, Then and Now," *The Bridge*, I, 53-74. "All in all, the story of Christ as told in the Gospels is best understood when it is read in the biblical context of Israel's exodus" (*ibid.*, p. 66).

2. The biblical theology of the paschal mystery is analyzed by Jean Daniélou, S.J., in *Bible et Liturgie* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1951), pp. 388-408. The author's theme is succinctly stated in the first sentence: "The paschal mystery is in a sense the whole Christian mystery." On the climactic quality of the paschal feast, see Dom Jean Gaillard's *Holy Week and Easter*, trans. by William Busch (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1954).

renewed the order of these richly powerful days so that in the twentieth century, as in the first centuries, these solemn rites commemorating the crucified, buried, and risen Christ are celebrated as nearly as possible on the same days of the week and at the same hours of the day that the sacred mysteries occurred.³ Thus on Thursday evening, the solemn Mass of the Lord's Supper recalls the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, for it was "when evening arrived [that] He reclined at table with the twelve disciples" (Mt 26:20). On Friday afternoon, a deeply significant ceremony commemorates His Passion, for it was "from the sixth hour [that] there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour" (Mt 27:45). And a solemn vigil, beginning on Holy Saturday night, leads to the joy of the resurrection on Easter Sunday morning, for it was "late in the night of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, [that] Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the sepulchre" (Mt 28:1). The days of this sacred triduum are closely linked. Jesus' voluntary act of oblation in the eucharistic banquet on Holy Thursday was completed by His sacrificial death on Good Friday in His life-giving immolation on the cross. After the silence of the Great Sabbath, in the early hours of the first day of the new week, He rose from the dead, glorious and immortal, reconciling all things unto Himself (Col 1:20).

The importance of the Good Friday service in this life-bringing sequence has been reverently acknowledged through the centuries. The words of the 1955 decree sharpen the focus:

The faithful should be trained to gain a right understanding of the unique liturgical services of this day. In these services, after the sacred reading and prayers, the Passion of our Lord is sung solemnly, prayers are offered for the needs of the entire Church and of the human race, and the Holy Cross, the memorial of our redemption, is devoutly adored by the Christian family, the clergy and the people. Finally, according to the rubrics of the restored Ordo, and as was the custom for many cen-

3. The new ordinal of Holy Week (*Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus*) whose use was made preceptive for the Roman rite by the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites *Maxima redemptionis nostrae* and the instruction *Cum propositum*, which were published in *L'Osservatore Romano* on November 27, 1955, together with an authoritative article by an eminent Roman liturgist, Ferdinando Antonelli, O.F.M., explaining the pastoral importance of the restored rite. The official text of the two documents, dated November 16, 1955, was published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 47 (December 23, 1955), pp. 838-847. See also John J. Danagher, C.M., "The Ordinal of Holy Week," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, LVI, 6 (1956), pp. 466-475.

turies, all who wish to do so and who are properly prepared can go to Holy Communion, so that, devoutly receiving the Lord's Body which was given for all men on this day, they may receive richer fruits of the redemption.⁴

The service, then, consists of four parts: Scripture reading, intercessory prayers, adoration of the cross, and holy Communion. It is of the intercessory prayers that I wish now to speak.

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

AFTER the reading of the Passion, the story of Love's oblation, which is retold for no other reason than to arouse our answering love and to remind us who hear it of the words of the risen Christ, "Be not unbelieving, but believing" (Jn 20:27), there follow nine solemn prayers. In a cosmic sweep, disregarding limitations of space and time or distinctions of origin, embracing all, those inside and outside the Church, we ask for peace, for the unity and protection of God's holy Church, for the well-being of the Pope, for the loyal service of the Church's entire body, for wise governing by those in authority, for the spiritual needs of those about to be baptized, for the comfort of those in distress, for the return of those separated from the Church's unity, for the turning to Christ of the children of Israel, and for the enlightenment of pagans and unbelievers. These nine petitions, which go back to the early days of the liturgy, are no less than an expression of the great longings that filled the soul of Jesus as He hung dying on the cross. Perhaps this is why they are retained in the Good Friday service. Once explicit in every Mass, their daily recitation had ceased by the time of St. Gregory the Great, but, of course, they are still implicit in the Church's prayer, implicit in every Mass, when Christ's sacrificial death is sacramentally renewed.⁵

4. "General Decree by which the Liturgical Order of Holy Week Is Renewed" (an English translation and a commentary), *American Ecclesiastical Review*, 134 (January 1956), pp. 51-62. The publication of the decree and the instruction was the occasion of many commentaries. P. Doncoeur, "Chronique de liturgie: Ordo de la Semaine Sainte," *Etudes*, 288 (January 1956), pp. 94-100. G. Ellard, S.J., "Easter, Holy Week Rites Revised," *America*, 94 (December 17, 1955), p. 319. J. Löw, "New Holy Week Liturgy, A Pastoral Opportunity," *Worship*, 30 (January 1956), pp. 94-113. G. Montague, "Reform of the Holy Week Ceremonies," *Irish Ecclesiastical Review*, 85 (January 1956), pp. 58-64.

5. M. Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani* (Louvain, 1948), p. 351. See A. Bugnini, C.M., "Una Particolarità del Messale da Rivedere," *Miscellanea Giulio Belvederi* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1954), p. 119.

Scholars have singled out one of these prayers for special study: the eighth, the prayer for the children of Israel. What gives more than an antiquarian interest to their findings is the fact that they have shaped two recent decrees of the Holy See. A point of translation was clarified in 1948,⁶ and a practice that was dropped a thousand years before was restored by the decree of 1955. Who were the scholars whose inquiries precluded the statement of 1948 and the modified rubric of 1955? The list is long, so that only a selective answer can be given here. The origin of the prayer was examined by Cappuyns.⁷ Its historical development was traced by Canet⁸ and Neut.⁹ Its position in the liturgy was clarified by Guéranger,¹⁰ Schuster,¹¹ Parsch,¹² and Bouyer.¹³ Philological difficulties were the object of the perceptive studies of Peterson,¹⁴ Oesterreicher,¹⁵ and Blumenkranz.¹⁶ A final summation was made by Bugnini.¹⁷

The prayer so exhaustively studied belongs to the golden age of liturgical formulae. It is a tender plea that those who, for so long, guarded the light of truth will come to see the full brightness of what they preserved for other men. It distinguishes between the people loved so faithfully by God and the strange paradox of its not recognizing His love's greatest Gift. It crowns the liturgy's pleading for the Jews, which may be said to have begun with the introit of the first Sunday of Advent, to have been heard with mounting insistence during the weeks of

6. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 40 (1948), p. 342.

7. Maieul Cappuyns, "Les 'Orationes solennes' de Vendredi Saint," *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales*, 23 (1938), pp. 18-31. See "L'Office du vendredi saint," *ibid.* (1930), p. 74.

8. Louis Canet, "La Prière 'pro Judaeis' de la liturgie catholique romaine," *Revue des Etudes Juives*, 56, 122 (April 1911), pp. 211-221.

9. E. Neut, "La Prière pour les Juifs," *Bulletin des Missions*, 8 (1927), pp. 245-248.

10. Prosper Guéranger, O.S.B., *The Liturgical Year* (Dublin: James Duffy, 1875), VI, 484.

11. Ildefons A. Schuster, *The Sacramentary* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1925), II, 212.

12. Pius Parsch, *The Church's Year of Grace* (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1953), I, 334.

13. Louis Bouyer, *Orat.*, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

14. Erik Peterson, "Perfidia iudaica," *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, 50 (1936), pp. 296-311. See his *Le Mystère des Juifs et des Gentils dans l'Eglise* (Paris, 1935).

15. John M. Oesterreicher, "Pro Perfidis Judaeis," *Theological Studies*, 8 (March 1947), pp. 80-96. The same article appeared in French in *Cahiers Sioniens*, I (1947), pp. 85-101.

16. B. Blumenkranz, "Perfidia," *Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi*, 22 (1951-52), pp. 137-170.

17. *Op. cit.*, pp. 117-132.

Lent, and now to find gentle, forthright expression in the Good Friday synaxis:

Let us pray for the unbelieving Jews that our God and Lord withdraw the veil from their hearts, so that they too may acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ.

Almighty, everlasting God, who dost not withhold thy mercy even from Jewish unbelief, hear the prayers we offer for the blindness of that people, that, acknowledging the light of thy truth, which is Christ, they may be delivered from their darkness. Through our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son, who is God, living and reigning with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

PERFIDIA

IN THIS prayer, so often misunderstood, the Church sorrows that Israel still disbelieves; she grieves that so many of the sons of Abraham, "the father of those who believe," have failed to see Christ as the Revelation of revelation. Yet this sense of sorrow born of affection has, at least in the past, often been missing in translations of the missal. The key words of the text, *perfidia* and *perfidus*, "unbelief" and "unbelieving," have at times appeared in some pejorative form: in English "unfaithful," "faithless," or even "perfidious"; in French *perfidie*; in German *treulos* or *untreu*; in Dutch *trouweloos*; in Italian *perfidia*; etc.¹⁸

Questioning that these translations indicated a moral judgment, unusual in the liturgy, scholars examined *perfidus* and *perfidia* to see whether philology supported these indictments of Jewish "treachery" or "wickedness." Their conclusions were unanimous. I list some. One of the first of these philological studies was made by Félix Vernet. Examining the works of St. Ambrose and of St. Gregory the Great, the *Decretum Gratiani*, and other texts, he concludes that in the official language of the Church *perfidia Judaica* seems to mean the "error" or the "unbelief of the Jews."¹⁹ Erik Peterson in his brilliant analysis likewise proves that *perfidia* is to be equated with "unbelief." He shows that the Jews are not the only ones charged with it, but that it is also to be found in here-

18. Father Oesterreicher, in *Theological Studies*, 8 (1947), p. 80, gives examples of translations of *perfidia*. I am happy to note here that an examination of recently published Holy Week books shows most of them to have accepted the correct translation.

19. "Juifs et Chrétiens," *Dictionnaire apologétique de la foi catholique* (1915), II, 1733f.

tics, schismatics, and *lapsi*. He finds support for his thesis in the works of St. Ambrose, St. Isidor of Seville, and St. Leo the Great.²⁰

A similar investigation has been carried out by Bernhard Blumenkranz. He does not limit his inquiries to the present text of the Good Friday service but examines earlier editions, those of Amalarius of Metz, Rabanus Maurus, and the Pseudo-Alcuin.²¹ Then he studies the word as it is used by twenty-six representative authors from the fifth through the eleventh centuries. His conclusion is a model of clarity. Though *perfidia* may at times refer to the lapse of a convert or may mean "false belief," "erroneous belief," "the refusal to believe," "lack of confidence," most of the time, Blumenkranz finds, *perfidia* and *perfidus* have a religious and not a moral sense. They are used as antonyms of *fides* by Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, Rabanus Maurus, Remy of Auxerre, Paschasius Radbertus, and Ratramnus; of *credulitas* by Bruno of Würzburg; of *fidelis* by Maximus of Turin; of *credere* by Gregory the Great, Rabanus Maurus, Remy of Auxerre; or as synonyms of *incredulus*, *impius*, *infidelitas*, *incredulitas*, or *impietas*. Among Blumenkranz's many interesting observations is his statement that *perfidia* is conspicuously absent from texts on the betrayal of Judas.²² Hence his study corroborates the equation of *perfidia* in the Good Friday prayer with "unbelief."

The language of the Good Friday prayer is examined in the light of the liturgy itself by Father Oesterreicher.²³ Quotations from the Leonian

20. *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, 50 (1936), p. 296. Cf. St. Ambrose, *Ad Psalmum* 43 (PL 14:1171); St. Isidor of Seville, *De fide catholica contra Judaeos* (PL 83:450); and St. Leo the Great, *Sermo LXX* (PL 54:381).

21. Blumenkranz, *op. cit.*, p. 159, makes the apposite suggestion that Amalarius's words: *Oremus et pro haereticis perfidisque Iudaeis* (PL 105:1027) should be translated: "Let us pray for heretics and for [those among] the Jews who persist in their refusal of belief." Cf. Rabanus Maurus (PL 107:349) and Pseudo-Alcuin (PL 101:1210).

22. The following partial list gives some indication of the documentation of this article: Peter Chrysologus (PL 52:485), Arnobius (PL 53:322), Leo the Great (PL 54:381), Maximus of Turin (PL 57:721), Avitus of Vienna (PL 59:207), Cassiodorus (PL 70:400, 596, 744), Gregory the Great (PL 75:772, 783; 76:69, 108, 509, 541, 764, 920; 77:694, 1053), Isidor of Seville (PL 83:450, 460), Quiricus (PL 96:193), Ildefonsus of Toledo (PL 96:68), Julianus of Toledo (PL 96:540), Idalius of Barcelona (PL 96:816), Adamnanus (PL 88:785, 787), Bede the Venerable (PL 94:247), Pseudo-Bede (PL 92:659), Alcuin (PL 100:436), Paulinus of Aquilea (PL 99:363), Ratramnus (PL 121:20), Remy of Auxerre (PL 117:442; 118:445, 598; cf. 117:442), Bruno of Würzburg (PL 142:67, 82, 191, 195, 217), etc.

23. *Theological Studies* 8 (1947), pp. 83-85. He reaches this conclusion: "What we implore for [the Jews] is enlightenment, the gift of faith; lacking it, their state

Sacramentary and the Ambrosian liturgy are in accord with the findings of Vernet, Peterson, and Blumenkranz. Particularly cogent is the use of the word *perfidia* in the Rite of Baptism for Adults. Having first bid the catechumen to profess his belief in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, the priest admonishes him, if he is an idolator or heathen, to abhor idols and reject images. If a Moslem desires the sacrament, he is told to turn away from "Moslem unbelief" (*Mahumeticam perfidiam*). And if he is a Jew, he is enjoined to turn away from "Jewish unbelief" (*Judaicam perfidiam*). In each case, this plea, this command, is followed by a solemn entreaty to worship God the Father and Jesus Christ His only Son. The absence of any reference to morals in this last entreaty, the earlier inquiry into the catechumen's faith, the demand that he reject false or incomplete beliefs and cults, the use of *perfidia* for both Moslems and Jews—all these clearly indicate that the convert from Judaism is not told by the Church to abandon the "perfidious ways" of his "treacherous and deceitful brethren" but to abandon their unbelief in Christ, their failure to acknowledge Him.

All these studies of *perfidia* show that there is no doubt in the minds of scholars about the meaning of the word. There is, however, less agreement about the history of the rubric which for centuries, till Easter 1956, prefaced the Church's Good Friday intercession for the children of Israel.

THE RUBRIC

ALL stand, while the priest summarizes or "collects" the individual prayers into the official collect. The same procedure of kneeling and praying silently and then rising, at the priest's (or deacon's) invitation, is repeated in all the following prayers.²⁴

This new rubric has put an end to a centuries-old anomaly. Before the decree of 1955, the ritual for the eighth prayer, the prayer for the Jews, differed from all the others in that it prescribed the omission of *Oremus*, "Let us pray"; *Flectamus genua*, "Let us bend our knees"; and

is unbelief. The words of the Church echo the bewilderment of the Apostle that the people of the revelation, who had watched through the night and witnessed the dawn, should, as a whole, have failed to see the day. And she employs his gentle image for their ignorance—the veil with which Moses covered the radiance of his face is now upon their hearts . . ." (p. 86).

24. Godfrey L. Diekmann, O.S.B., *The Masses of Holy Week and the Easter Vigil* (Collegetown, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1956), p. 110.

Levate, "Arise." The reason so often given since medieval days was that the invitation to prayer and the genuflection were here omitted so as not to repeat the gesture with which, at His scourging, the Jews dishonored Jesus on this day.²⁵

On two counts this statement may be challenged: it is logically and historically untenable. Why, we cannot help asking ourselves, is it fitting that we stand? Should we not rather kneel in humble reparation for the derisive genuflections made before Christ? Why not repeat the gesture without the irreverence? Why not bow down in adoration in order that the outward and inward act may proclaim the majesty of the God once so outraged by knees bent in scorn? In doing so we should be following the example of St. Stephen recorded in the Acts. Standing, he prayed for himself: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and then, kneeling down, he prayed for those who were about to put him to death: "Lord, do not lay this sin against them" (7:59-60). But there is a more serious objection to this once so common interpretation of the rubric than its illogicality. A simple reading of the Gospels shows that those who clothed Christ in a bright robe, placed a crown of thorns upon His head, and knelt before Him in a derisive act of homage were Roman soldiers, not Jews.²⁶ These legionaries were ridiculing not only Jesus but the messianic expectation of Israel; their contempt was not only for the Man who claimed to be King but for the people who hoped for the King-Messiah.

Not all medieval authors were satisfied with the explanation of the old rubric in terms of Jewish contempt for Christ. Joannes Beleth, for example, admitted that the scornful treatment Jesus received was not the work of the Jews, but contended that they were responsible for it because they were responsible for His death.²⁷ Sicardus of Cremona begins with the usual explanation that "we do not bend the knee for the Jews, so

25. Guéranger, *op. cit.*, p. 484; Parsch, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

26. *Cambridge Ancient History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934), X, 851: "If the procurators could not hide their antipathy in their daily contacts with their subjects, far less could their underlings and the soldiers drawn from the non-Jewish population of Palestine." M.-J. Lagrange, O.P., writes in *The Gospel of Jesus Christ* (London: Burns Oates, 1938), II, 259: "What a stroke of good luck to have Him at their mercy, the mercy of these Roman soldiers who scorned all kings and held the Jews in contempt." F. Didon, O.P., writes in *Jesus Christ* (English trans.; New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1891), II, 343: "What caprice of cruelty were these soldiers obeying? Why this detestable and vulgar mockery? The Roman soldiers entertained an intense hatred of the Jews and the condemned man who was delivered to them was made the victim of this hatred."

27. *Rationale Divinorum Officium*, 98 (PL 202:102).

that we may avoid their deceit, who derisively genuflected before God"; then he offers this not too convincing explanation:

Since the blindness that befalls Israel cannot be dispelled as long as the Gentiles have not yet entered [the Church], intensive prayer must not be offered for them, nor should a genuflection be made. But it is right to pray, since He who was lifted upon the cross will draw all things to Himself and will one day dispel this blindness.²⁸

There is no need to point out the weakness of the positions so ingeniously and so feebly defended by Joannes Bebeth and Sicardus. There is not a shred of evidence that they represent the mind of the Church.

While admitting that the old rubric lacked intrinsic logic—is it possible to show that it enshrined an old and universally observed custom which could be traced back to the earliest centuries? Pioneer studies suggest that the answer is no. Though extant sources are so few that this conclusion cannot be absolutely certain, it remains highly probable. Manuscripts available indicate that until the ninth century, a silent prayer, with clergy and people kneeling, was said at the intercession for the Jews as at all the others. From the ninth to the close of the sixteenth century, the silent prayer was said but no genuflection was made. From 1570, in the pontificate of Pius V, until the decree of Pius XII in 1955, both silent prayer and genuflection were omitted, and in all missals the following rubric preceded the preface and the prayer for the Jews: "Amen is not said, nor *Oremus*, nor *Flectamus genua*, nor *Levate*, but the priest says immediately, 'Almighty, everlasting God.'" Let us examine each part of these omissions.

The injunction to omit the *Amen* is not an expression of hostility to the Jews. It is merely a useful reminder that the words soon to be said: *Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum*, mark not, as so often, the end of a prayer but the end of a preface, to which it is not customary to add *Amen*. As a matter of fact, none of the prefaces of the nine intercessory prayers of Good Friday have, or could have, an *Amen*.²⁹ Durand of Mende took the trouble to record that some considered this omission particularly appropriate in the case of the Jews and of the pagans who, being outside the Church, deserved no sign of affection (needless to say,

28. *Mitrale*, 6 (PL 213:317). See Rupertus the Abbot, *De Divinis Officiis*, 6, 18 (PL 170:163-164).

29. Bugnini, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-130.

an attitude totally opposed to the spirit of the crucified Jesus, with His arms outstretched for all); but he went on to give the real reason for the omission, which was that these prefaces, like the prefaces of the Mass, are never followed by *Amen*.³⁰

The *Oremus* and the *Flectamus genua* have different histories. In the ancient discipline of the Church, all nine prayers seem to have included silent prayer and genuflection. The *Sacramentarium Gelasianum* (Cod. Vatican. Reg. 316), which may have been written for the Abbey of Saint Denis at the end of the seventh or the beginning of the eighth century, makes no distinction in the rubric for any of the solemn prayers. This is corroborated by the eighth-century *Ordo Romanus* of Saint-Amand (Paris, cat. 974) and the *Ordo Romanus* of Einsiedeln (326).³¹ The *Oremus* introducing the Church's prayer for the Jewish people is found also in missals like the *Missale Gallicanum vetus* in the eighth century and the missal of Jumièges in the eleventh century. Durand of Mende attests its use in the thirteenth century, and it is still retained in sixteenth-century French missals. But after 1570 it rarely appears.³²

Much earlier than this, the *Flectamus genua* had been dropped. The first indication of a change is found in the *Ordo Romanus I*, where it is expressly enjoined that no genuflection be made before the prayer for the Jews. This innovation seems to have come from the Franks and soon took its place in most missals and sacramentaries, so that, from the ninth century on, the deacon's injunction to bend the knee was suppressed in almost all liturgical books. On this statement most liturgists agree, but as to the cause of the change there is less unanimity. Some forty years ago, Louis Canet discovered an interesting marginal note in the tenth-century Sacramentary of Saint Vast: "None of us [priests] is allowed to bend his body on account of the fault and madness of the people." If, as Canet believes, "people" refers to Christians who, imagining themselves animated by "pious indignation," stoned the houses of Jews during Holy Week, then it was the "fault and madness" of the faithful that forced the hand of the Church. The people's unholy wrath might, he thinks, have resisted the liturgy's impassioned appeal for the Jews, so that the Church (if Canet is right) may have altered the rubric simply as a record of the popular usage. This thesis is supported by such scholars

30. *Rationale*, 6, 77.

31. Oesterreicher, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

32. Canet, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

as Félix Vernet³³ and Dom Henri Leclercq, O.S.B.³⁴ It is contested by Dom G. Morin, O.S.B., who considers the omission akin to the subtle and delicate omission of the Kiss of Peace on Maundy Thursday and of the *Gloria* and *Alleluia* on the feast of the Holy Innocents.³⁵ Another Catholic scholar, Peterson, likewise disagrees with Canet's interpretation of the marginal note on the Saint Vast Sacramentary. He asks whether "people" might not refer to the Jews who were thought to be guilty of "the fault and madness" of mocking Christ. He goes on to suggest that oriental drama and not anti-Jewish prejudice may have been responsible for the omission of the genuflection. The dramatic Reproaches of Good Friday, brought to the Franks from Syria in the tenth century, started a trend alien to the dignified restraint characteristic of the Roman liturgy, so that those to whom the Reproaches appealed, with their ardent dialogue between God and man, might have wanted to introduce into the liturgy some dramatic touches of their own.³⁶

Until further evidence is available, here arguments on the suppression of the genuflection must rest. But it is good to know, indeed it is a joy, that the Church, after a thousand years, has re-established the old order, and that on Good Friday *Oremus*, *Flectamus genua*, and *Levate* are said at each of the solemn intercessions when she prays for all men, with none excepted, with all included in her love.

CONCLUSION

THE discussion of the meaning of *perfidia* and of the former rubric has come to a close with the new decrees. One last question remains: What is the nature of that "Jewish unbelief" the Church yearns to see ended and for the ending of which she bids all her members to pray? Does "unbelief," as used in her intercession, imply *stubborn* resistance and *willful* blindness to the reality of Jesus? I think not. We must always distinguish between the act and the state, or, to speak with Monsignor Journet, between the sin and the heritage of unbelief. For no matter how grievous the sin of those who once, in the house of the high priest and before the governor's seat, rejected Jesus, today the unbelief of Jews is

33. *Op. cit.*, col. 1715.

34. "Judaïsme," *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de la liturgie* (1928), VIII/1, col. 181.

35. "De quelques publications liturgiques récentes," *Revue Bénédictine*, 30 (Maredsous, 1913), pp. 122-123.

36. Peterson, *op. cit.*, p. 310.

an inculpable patrimony. So says Monsignor Journet in his masterful work on the Church. Consequently, in Judaism there are welded together into a single block divine truths and human deviations from the truth.³⁷ And without guilt in the original act of denial of the Christ, Jews down to this very day, when reading Moses, have a veil covering their hearts (2 Cor 3:15)—a veil which keeps them from seeing Him, who wants to be seen by them.³⁸

Love, nothing but love, compels the Church to pray for His kinsmen, and love must compel us. Without the least haughtiness, rather with humble awareness of our own often faltering belief, we who enjoy the fulfillment of the promises of old must pray for those who guarded them for us during the long hours of the Advent. They were watching for the dawn but they failed to see the Sun of Justice because of the veil over their eyes. Yet, St. Paul assures us, "the veil shall be taken away" (2 Cor 3:16). This, then, is the petition of the eighth intercessory prayer: that Israel may see; that the mystery of redemption, the mystery of Love crucified and risen, may find in it an echo that will make earth and heaven resound.

37. Charles Journet, *L'Eglise du Verbe incarné* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1951), II, 815.

38. A further distinction, in addition to that of Monsignor Journet, must be made. As Father Oesterreicher, in *The Elder Brother: The Prayer of the Church for Israel* (Newark, N. J.: The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies, 1951), p. 21, has pointed out, the Church does not pray: "God, who dost not withhold thy mercy even from the unbelieving Jews," but rather: "from Jewish unbelief." He calls it a momentous, indeed a divine, distinction. It is God Himself, and the Church as His voice, who distinguish between the *sin* of those who resisted the work of redemption and the *people* of Israel, "which remains, in spite of it, the object of His lasting love."