

“Patrick Regan provides a valuable study that will be an essential tool for academic research, pastoral practice, and liturgical planning. He demonstrates the organic development of the *Missale Romanum* 1970 in continuity not only with *Missale Romanum* 1962 but also with all that preceded it, and in so doing he presents the close relationship between the ‘Ordinary’ and the ‘Extraordinary’ forms of the Roman Rite. Regan’s research sheds new light on the purpose and meaning of the liturgical seasons and feasts of the Roman calendar.”

— Msgr. Richard B. Hilgartner
Executive Director, USCCB Secretariat of Divine Worship

“Abbot Patrick has produced a gem here. It is necessary and timely reading for anyone seeking to understand the current shape, contents, theology, and spirituality of the liturgical year, especially in the Roman Catholic Church, but ecumenically as well, given the adaptations of the *Ordo Lectionum Missae* in the New Common Lectionary used by many churches as well as common principles governing the calendar of the Church’s feasts and seasons. Highly recommended.”

— Maxwell E. Johnson
University of Notre Dame

“Patrick Regan’s *Advent to Pentecost* is destined to become a classic in the fields of liturgiology and pastoral theology. His analysis is both meticulous and pastoral. He provides the reader with a scholarly historical orientation that is far more spiritual than it is pedantic. Throughout he offers excellent pastoral suggestions that pastors and preachers will want as a regular reference. For those of us who were shaped by the 1962 Missal, this analysis enables us to see how richer our lives and spirituality are following the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. For many it will clear away the cobwebs of nostalgia and the illusion that the 1962 Missal was inherently more reverent as Fr. Regan ably makes up for what was lacking in liturgical formation forty years ago.”

— Julia Upton, RSM
St. John’s University, Jamaica, New York

“What a marvelous piece of scholarship! Abbot Regan has gifted us with a novel, insightful, and fresh approach to the festal seasons. Rich theological insight, practical pastoral critique, carefully researched textual development, invaluable ritual and scriptural analysis, and a pervasive liturgical spirituality mark this book. Its content is thoroughly grounded in the paschal mystery. Its methodology is, in effect, a contemporary mystagogy. This book would quicken anyone’s heart to celebrate more eagerly the readings and chants, prayers and other texts of the Eucharistic liturgy during the festal seasons.”

— Joy Ann Zimmerman, CPPS
Director, Institute for Liturgical Ministry, Dayton, Ohio

Patrick Regan, OSB

Foreword by Rev. Msgr. Kevin W. Irwin

Advent to Pentecost

*Comparing the Seasons
in the Ordinary and Extraordinary Forms
of the Roman Rite*

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*To Abbot David Melancon, OSB,
third abbot of Saint Joseph Abbey,
who in September of 1962
sent me to Collegeville for studies*

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Foreword

Since the publication of Pope Benedict XVI's apostolic letter *Summorum Pontificum* on the possibility of extending the celebration of the Mass as revised after the Council of Trent, the terms "ordinary form" and "extraordinary form" of the Roman Rite have become commonplace in church circles. What is also commonplace are debates about the desirability of expanding the opportunities to celebrate the extraordinary rite beyond those already established in the preexisting documents: *Quattuor abhinc annos* from the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship (1984); *Ecclesia Dei*, the *motu proprio* of Pope John Paul II (1988); and the subsequent *motu proprio* on the application of *Summorum Pontificum* (2011). What is also commonplace, in my judgment, is that such debates are often characterized more by emotion than by reasoned arguments. Some might say they generate more heat than light.

What *Advent to Pentecost: Comparing the Seasons in the Ordinary and Extraordinary Forms of the Roman Rite* offers is a guide for how to evaluate these two forms of the Mass as they were and are celebrated. Fr. Patrick Regan's background and unquestioned competence as an eminent liturgical scholar and student of the liturgy shines forth on every page.

He admits candidly in the preface that the purpose of the book "is to show the excellence and superiority of the reformed liturgy over the previous one . . . the ordinary form over the extraordinary one." He argues this thesis by setting forth the data from all of the (very many) liturgical sources at work here: the Missal of 1570 (in light of the range of preceding sacramentaries, lectionaries, pontificals, rituals, etc.), the Missal of 1962, and the Missal of 1970 and its subsequent revisions through the (Latin) edition of 2008 and the English translation in 2011. Fr. Regan's knowledge of and engagement with these liturgical texts along with patristic and medieval authors and the Sacred Scriptures themselves reflect a man steeped in the church *lex orandi* by way of academic study, theological reflection, *lectio divina*, and personal

prayer. Again and again I found myself musing about his turns of phrase, mild-mannered judgments, and keen insights into the church's prayer, especially texts and rites.

After close to forty years of praying with the Missal revised after Vatican II, one can tend to take for granted much of its richness, its theological center in the paschal mystery, and its breadth in terms of how it expands far beyond what the Missal from Trent has to offer. The amazing sea change in terms of appreciating the proclaimed Word of God from the revised Lectionary is a case in point, underscored again and again by Fr. Regan in the way he relates the readings with the Missal's texts and rites and vice versa.

What makes this book truly remarkable and truly a model for liturgical writing in general is the way he assesses both the ordinary and extraordinary forms of the Mass. While revering both forms of the Mass and indicating the theological superiority of the ordinary form, he is nonetheless very willing to critique the Missal as revised after Vatican II where necessary.

He is willing to take on "hot-button" issues, such as the translation of *pro multis* as "for many" (citing references from the Servant Songs of Isaiah and Synoptic Gospel texts to indicate where this usage came from) while at the same time noting that the literal "for many" does, in fact, mean that Christ's salvation is offered to all. He critiques the "clericalization" of the present Chrism Mass, preferring to underscore its more traditional emphases on the paschal mystery through the celebration of sacraments whose oils are consecrated and blessed at this Mass.

This very important book can be read by a number of audiences and in a number of ways. Those trained in liturgical studies will want to read it page after page and study it thoroughly. Priests and pastoral ministers will want to read it section by section as they prepare the liturgies for a given season because of the depth of historical data and theological insight it offers. Those looking for a summary of the issues involved in the "ordinary"/"extraordinary" debate will find in the final chapter an excellent and succinct summary of the issues.

This is the work of a trained and seasoned liturgical theologian. It is clear that what he writes about is what he has prayed in and through the liturgy for many years as a Benedictine monk. If "moderation" can be said to characterize the Rule of St. Benedict, "moderation" can certainly be used to characterize the style, tone, and message of this very important book. In it the author reflects the best of liturgical

scholarship and wisdom gleaned from the liturgy. We are the richer for all of his efforts to write about and invite us into the prayers and rites of the liturgical seasons.

It is my hope that, given the present debates about the Mass and liturgy in general, this book will generate much light (not heat) in those debates at a time when in some quarters' shadows have tended to eclipse the breadth, depth, and profundity of the post-Vatican II reformed liturgy. This book suggests on every page why there had to be a reform and how rich it is.

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Abbreviations

- AAS *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 103 vols. (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1909 to present)
- ACW Ancient Christian Writers, 58 vols. (Westminster, MD, then New York: The Newman Press, 1949 to present)
- Alc André Wilmart, OSB, ed., *Le Lectionnaire d'Alcuin*, Biblioteca Ephemerides Liturgicae 2 (Roma: Ephemerides Liturgicae, 1937)
- AMS René-Jean Hesbert, ed., *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex* (Bruxelles: Vromant & Co., 1935)
- ANF The Ante-Nicene Fathers, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989–93, reprint)
- B Angelo Paredi and Giuseppe Fassi, eds., *Sacramentarium Bergomense*, Monumenta Bergomense VI (Bergamo: Edizioni Monumenta Bergomensia, 1962)
- Bruylants Placide Bruylants, OSB, ed., *Les oraisons du Missel Romain*, 2 vols. (Louvain: Abbaye du Mont César, 1952)
- Church* Aimé Georges Martimort et al., eds., *The Church at Prayer*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell, new ed., 4 vols. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1987)
- CCC *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1994)
- CCL Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, 176 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 1954 to present)
- CSEL Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, 97 vols. (Wien: Carolus Gerold, then Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1866 to present)

- DACL *Dictionnaire d'archéologie Chrétienne e de liturgie*, 15 tomes, each in 2 parts (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1907–53)
- DOL International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *Documents on the Liturgy 1963–1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts* (Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 1982)
- EL *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, 125 vols. (Roma: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano-Edizioni Liturgiche, 1887 to present)
- EpW Germain Morin, ed., “Le plus ancien COMES ou lectionnaire de l’Eglise romaine,” *Revue Bénédictine* 27 (1910) 41–74
- EvW Germain Morin, ed., “Liturgie et basiliques de Rome au milieu du VIIe siècle d’après les listes d’évangiles de Würzburg,” *Revue Bénédictine* 28 (1911) 296–330
- FC *The Fathers of the Church*, 122 vols. (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1962 to present)
- G Antoine Dumas, OSB, ed., *Liber Sacramentorum Gelloniensis*, CCL 159 (1981)
- GeV Leo Cunibert Mohlberg, OSB, ed., *Liber Sacramentorum Romanae Aeclesiae Ordinis Anni Circuli (Cod. Vat. Reg. Lat. 316 / Paris Bibl. Nat. 7193, 41/56) (Sacramenarium Gelasianum) Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta, Series Maior, Fontes IV* (Roma: Casa Editrice Herder, 1960)
- Go Els Rose, ed., *Missale Gothicum*, CCL 159 D (2005)
- H Jean Deshusses, ed., “*Hadrianum ex Authentico*,” in *Le Sacramentaire Grégorien. Ses principales formes d’après les plus anciens manuscrits*, 2nd ed., *Spicilegium Friburgense* 16 (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires, 1979), nos. 2–1018
- ICEL International Commission on English in the Liturgy
- JBC Raymond E. Brown, SS, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, SJ, and Roland E. Murphy, OCarm, eds., *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 2 vols. in one (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1970)

- LMS Marius Férotin, OSB, ed., *Le Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum*, reprint of 1912 ed., prepared by Anthony Ward, SM, and Cuthbert Johnson, OSB, Biblioteca Subsidia 78 (Roma: CLV-Edizioni Liturgiche, 1995)
- M André Wilmart, ed., “Le COMES de Murbach,” *Revue Bénédictine* 30 (1913) 25–69
- MP Cuthbert Johnson and Anthony Ward, eds., *Missale Parisiense 1738*, Biblioteca Ephemerides Liturgicae, Subsidia, Instrumenta Liturgica Quarreriensia, Supplementa 1 (Roma: CLV-Edizioni Liturgiche, 1993)
- MR 1570 Manlio Sodi and Achille Maria Triacca, eds., *Missale Romanum: Editio Princeps (1570)*, Monumenta Liturgica Concilii Tridentini 2 (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998)
- MR 1962 Manlio Sodi and Alessandro Toniolo, eds., *Missale Romanum ex Decreto SS. Concilii Tridentini Restitutum Summorum Pontificum Cura Recognitum, Editio Typica, 1962*, Monumenta Liturgica Piana 1 (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007)
- MR 1970 *Missale Romanum ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Pauli PP. VI Promulgatum, Editio Typica* (Roma: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970)
- MR 1975 *Missale Romanum ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Pauli PP. VI Promulgatum, Editio Typica Altera* (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1975)
- MR 2002 *Missale Romanum ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Pauli PP. VI Promulgatum Ioannis Pauli PP. II Cura Recognitum, Editio Typica Tertia* (Roma: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis 2002)
- MR 2008 *Missale Romanum ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Pauli PP. VI Promulgatum Ioannis Pauli PP. II Cura Recognitum, Editio Typica Tertia (emendata)* (Roma: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis 2008)

- NCE *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 17 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967)
- NPNF Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd series, 14 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988–91 reprint)
- NRSV New Revised Standard Version
- OHS *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus, Editio Typica* (Roma: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1956)
- OLM 1981 *Missale Romanum ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Pauli PP. VI Promulgatum: Ordo Lectionum Missae, Editio Typica Altera* (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1981)
- OR Michel Andrieu, ed., *Les Ordines Romani du haut moyen âge*, 5 vols., *Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense* 11, 23, 24, 28, 29 (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense Administration, 1931–61)
- PG *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca*, compiled by J. P. Migne, 161 vols. (Paris, 1857–66)
- PL *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, compiled by J. P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844–64)
- PR 1962 Manlio Sodi and Alessandro Tonilio, eds., *Pontificale Romanum, Editio Typica, 1961–62*, *Monumenta Liturgica Piana* 3 (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2008)
- PRG Cyrille Vogel and Reinhard Elze, eds., *Le Pontifical Romano-Germanique du dixième siècle*, 3 vols., *Studi e Testi* 226, 227, and 269 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1963, 1972)
- PRMA Michel Andrieu, ed., *Le Pontifical Romain au moyen-âge*, 4 vols., *Studi e Testi* 86–89 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1938–41)
- Rites *The Roman Ritual Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI: The Rites of the Catholic Church*, study ed., 2 vols. (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1990)

- Rot *Rotulus of Ravenna*, in Leo Cunibert Mohlberg, OSB, ed., *Sacramentarium Veronense (Cod. Bibl. Capit. Veron. LXXXV [80])*, *Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta, Series Maior, Fontes I* (Roma: Casa Editrice Herder, 1956), nos. 1332–71.
- RCIA Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, in *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, study ed., vol. 1 (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1990), pp. 1–336
- RM 1962 *The Daily Missal and Liturgical Manual with Vespers for Sundays and Feasts from the Editio Typica of the Roman Missal and Breviary, 1962*, *Summorum Pontificum* edition (London: Baronius Press, 2008)
- RM 1974 *The Roman Missal Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI: The Sacramentary* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1974)
- RM 1985 *The Roman Missal Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI: The Sacramentary* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1985)
- RM 2011 *The Roman Missal Renewed by Decree of the Most Holy Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI and Revised at the Direction of Pope John Paul II*, third typical edition (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011)
- RML 1981 *The Roman Missal Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI: Lectionary*, 3 vols. (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1981)
- Sup Jean Deshusses, ed., “*Hadrianum Revisum Anianense cum Supplemento*,” in *Le Sacramentaire Grégorien. Ses principales formes d’après les plus anciens manuscrits*, 2nd ed., *Spicilegium Friburgense 16* (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires, 1979), nos. 1019a–1805
- V Leo Cunibert Mohlberg, OSB, ed., *Sacramentarium Veronense (Cod. Bibl. Capit. Veron. LXXXV [80])*, *Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta, Series Maior, Fontes I* (Roma: Casa Editrice Herder, 1956), nos. 1–1331

Preface

This book began in early January of 2009 with an invitation by Sister Joyce Ann Zimmerman, CPPS, then editor of *Liturgical Ministry*, to write an article about Lent for a future issue of that magazine. I agreed to do so and started to think about what I might say. In the previous year, 2008, the third typical edition of the *Missale Romanum* of Paul VI, published in 2002, had appeared in emended form. I was curious to find out how it compared with the 2002 version as well as with the first typical edition of 1970 and the second one in 1975. I was also curious about how it compared with the Missal used before 1970—one issued in 1962 under Pope John XXIII, incorporating the simplification of rubrics begun in the mid-fifties by his predecessor, Pope Pius XII, and the restored liturgies of Holy Week. I decided to write about the readings, prayers, prefaces, and chants of Lent in the most recent edition of the postconciliar Missal and how they compared with those in the last edition of the preconciliar one.¹

This turned out to be a most rewarding exploration. I was immediately impressed at how thoughtfully the readings were selected and at how well they went together—much more so than those in the old Missal—and at how improved was the content of the new prayers and prefaces, especially in light of changed discipline concerning fast and abstinence. During the Easter holidays of 2009, as I was typing the article for *Liturgical Ministry*, the idea came of doing for the other liturgical seasons what I had just done for Lent and of doing it not in a series of articles but in a book. Liturgical Press accepted the proposal and here it is: a comparative study of the readings and rubrics, prefaces and prayers, antiphons and chants of the third edition of the Missal of Paul VI, translated into English and in use since the First Sunday of Advent 2011, with their counterparts in the 1962 Missal of John XXIII, the latest update of the so-called Tridentine Missal, first

¹ I am, of course, well aware that readings are not in any of the three editions of the postconciliar Missal but in the Lectionary.

published under Pope Pius V in 1570. Pope Benedict XVI in a *motu proprio* of July 7, 2007, titled *Summorum Pontificum* recognized the post-conciliar Missal as the ordinary form of Mass in the Roman Rite but permitted the 1962 Missal to be used as an extraordinary form under conditions that he immediately spelled out.

It is fitting that the book appears at the present moment. This year, 2012, is the fiftieth anniversary of the 1962 Missal, and next year, 2013, will be the fiftieth anniversary of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, approved by Paul VI on December 4, 1963, laying down the principles for the reform of the 1962 Missal and other service books in subsequent years. The purpose of this volume is to show the excellence and superiority of the reformed liturgy over the previous one, or, in the terminology of *Summorum Pontificum*, of the ordinary form over the extraordinary one. It is limited to the liturgical seasons—more precisely, to the temporal cycle, now called the Proper of Time. Ordinary Time, solemnities of the Lord during Ordinary Time, and feasts of saints are not included and, except for Advent and Lent, neither are weekdays. There was simply not enough time to do the research that including them would have involved. Nor was there space to print it. Being limited to the major seasons and feasts, the book does not touch the *Ordo Missae*, or Order of Mass, and contains only as much about origins and history as is necessary to explain how the Proper of Time got to be the way it is and why it is better now than it used to be.

The organization of the book is eminently simple. It treats the seasons in the order in which they occur in the 2011 translation, beginning with the First Sunday of Advent and ending with Pentecost Sunday. Since this is a comparison of two missals, depending on how similar or different they are, sometimes one is presented after the other, sometimes they are presented alongside each other, sometimes they are presented topically or thematically. In each chapter I rely as much as possible on official documents: the general rubrics of the 1962 Missal, the 1969 Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, the introduction to the 1981 revised Order of Readings for Mass, which is also the introduction to the Lectionary, and, of course, texts from the missals, the Lectionary, and at times other liturgical books. More than a mere description of externals, however, this work seeks to identify and call attention to underlying theological shifts as it moves from the preconciliar Missal to the ones after Vatican II. Indeed, the originality and greatest value of the book may lie precisely here. I also point out the sources of the prayers and prefaces in the two

missals, showing how each draws upon different streams of older tradition, both Roman.

During the months leading up to implementation of the new English translation of the 2008 Missal last November, many lamented the inadequacy of catechesis on the Missal when it first appeared in the early seventies. The Lectionary may have fared better. In any case, large numbers of the faithful do not yet sufficiently appreciate the astounding spiritual profundity of the reformed Missal, while others, attracted by the theocentricity and apparent reverence of the preconiliar Mass, are unaware of the deficiencies of the 1962 Missal, of how outdated is its calendar, of how weak is its repertoire of readings, prefaces, and prayers, and hence of why extensive revision was deemed desirable. This book seeks to make up for what was not done some forty years ago, while also explaining the significance of more recent developments. In this way it aims to help Catholics get beyond present tensions and make progress in realizing the hopes of the Second Vatican Council.

In concluding this introduction, I express thanks to my colleagues and confrères in Rome and at home for their interest in this project throughout the three years of research and writing, especially to Father Jeremy Driscoll, OSB, my next-door neighbor at Sant' Anselmo, who read the manuscript in the various stages of its production, made suggestions, and encouraged me to keep going.

April 1, 2012
Collegio Sant' Anselmo
Rome

Advent

A. THE WORD AND ITS MEANING

1. *Classical Latin*

The Latin word *adventus*, from the verb *advenire*, means coming, arrival, or the fact of having arrived and so of being present. The prepositional prefix *ad* expresses movement toward and suggests arrival from afar or after a journey. In classical Latin the visit of a sovereign to a city or province in his realm, especially a first visit, is designated as an *adventus* and is frequently commemorated by a public monument or a coin bearing an inscription such as *Adventus Augusti*, “The Advent of Augustus,” followed by the name of the place and date.¹ Such appearances usually involve elaborate ceremonial displays. Like papal visits in our own day, they require extensive preparation and generate enthusiastic expectation.

Adventus is also applied to the annual visit of divinities to shrines and temples in which they are thought to dwell for the duration of festivals. Reflecting the belief that emperors were deified, a Roman calendar copied in 354 refers to Constantine’s accession to the throne as *Adventus Divi*, “Advent of God.”² Early Christian mosaics sometimes show an empty throne awaiting the arrival of Christ in glory. Already we glimpse some of the resonances that the word will assume when used as the name of the season that precedes Christmas and prepares for its celebration. Absolutely essential to the meaning of the term, however, is its use in the New Testament.

¹ See Aegidius Forcellinus, ed., “Adventus,” *Totius Latinitatis Lexicon*, 6 vols. (Prati: Typis Aldinianis, 1858–60) I, 110; P. G. W. Glare, ed., “Aduentus,” *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1997) 55–56; Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, eds., “Adventus,” *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1879, reprinted in 1995) 48.

² Pierre Jounel, *Church IV*, 91.

2. New Testament

In the Vulgate New Testament *adventus* translates the Greek words *parousia* and *epiphaneia*. The basic meaning of *parousia* is presence, coming, advent.³ We find it with the meaning of “presence” in 1 Corinthians 16:17 where Paul rejoices “at the coming [*parousia*] of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus.”⁴ Here *parousia* is rendered in Latin not as *adventus* but as *presentia*. In Philippians 2:12 Paul contrasts his presence, *parousia*, with his absence, *apousia*, writing, “You have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence.” Here again the Latin counterpart of *parousia* is *presentia*. *Parousia* is also translated by *presentia* in 2 Peter 1:16.

Besides this general meaning of presence, however, *parousia* became a technical term to designate two different but closely related events. “On the one hand the word served as a cult expression for the coming of a hidden divinity, who makes his presence felt by a revelation of his power or whose presence is celebrated in the cult” and is frequently accompanied by miracles and other extraordinary phenomena. “On the other hand *parousia* became the official term for a visit of a person of high rank, especially kings and emperors visiting a province.”⁵ In this sense *parousia* is synonymous with the Latin *adventus* already discussed.

These two technical uses of the term “can approach each other closely in meaning, can shade off into one another or even coincide.” This is seen in the New Testament when authors use *parousia* to refer to the advent or coming of Christ “and nearly always of his Messianic Advent in glory to judge the world at the end of this age.”⁶ In the Latin version of such passages *parousia* is *adventus*. In Matthew 24:3, for example, the disciples ask Jesus, “What will be the sign of your coming [*parousia*, *adventus*] and of the end of the age?” He answers that “as the

³ William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, eds., “*parousia*,” *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957) 635.

⁴ The English translation of the Bible used throughout is the *New Revised Standard Version Bible: Catholic Edition* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993). The Greek and Latin texts of the New Testament are from Eberhard Nestle, ed., *Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine* (Stuttgart: Württembergischen Bibelanstalt, 1964).

⁵ Arndt-Gingrich, “*parousia*,” 635.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 635.

lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so will be the coming [*parousia, adventus*] of the Son of Man" (Matt 24:27).

In Saint Paul's two letters to the Thessalonians *adventus* translates *parousia* several times. In 1 Thessalonians 2:19 the apostle declares that the faith of Christians in Thessalonica is reason for "boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming [*parousia, adventus*]." He prays that they be found blameless "at the coming [*parousia, adventus*] of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (3:13) and cautions that the living will have no advantage over the dead at "the coming [*parousia, adventus*] of the Lord" (4:15). Near the end of the letter he again prays that God keep the Thessalonians blameless "at the coming [*parousia, adventus*] of the Lord" (5:23). In 2 Thessalonians 2:1 Paul returns to the theme of "the coming [*parousia, adventus*] of the Lord Jesus Christ," linking it with "the day of the Lord" in 2:2 and urging his readers not to be alarmed.⁷

Except for 1 Thessalonians 2:19, the other four passages just cited all contain the expression *adventus Domini*, or "advent of the Lord." The Letter of James contains it twice: "Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming [*parousia, adventus*] of the Lord. . . . Strengthen your hearts, for the coming [*parousia, adventus*] of the Lord is near (Jas 5:7-8). As we will see shortly, the same expression, *adventus Domini*, will appear innumerable times in patristic and liturgical texts and for centuries will be the name of the season of Advent.

On the other hand, the Pastoral Epistles never use the word *parousia*. In them *adventus* translates *epiphaneia*, which means "appearing, appearance." Like *parousia* it likewise is a religious technical term. It refers to "a visible manifestation of a hidden divinity, either in the form of a personal appearance or by some deed of power by which its presence is made known."⁸ It too refers to the final coming of Christ. Here, however, the contrast is not between presence and absence but between manifest and hidden, revealed and concealed, visible and invisible. Hence light, splendor, and glory usually surround an epiphany.

In 1 Timothy 6:14, 16, Paul charges Timothy to persevere "until the manifestation [*epiphaneia, adventus*] of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in approachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see." The Second Letter of Paul to

⁷ Second Peter 3:4-13 further elaborates on the connection between the *Parousia*, the Day of Judgment, and the Day of the Lord.

⁸ Arndt-Gingrich, "*epiphaneia*," 304.

Timothy places the Lord's manifestation in the context of judgment. "In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing [*epiphaneia, adventus*] and his kingdom" (2 Tim 4:1), it urges the recipient to continue proclaiming the message despite opposition. As a reward for such fidelity, the apostle is confident of receiving "the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearance [*epiphaneia, adventus*] (2 Tim 4:8). The Letter of Paul to Titus 2:13 states that "we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation [*epiphaneia, adventus*] of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."

Although the letters of Paul as well as those of James and Peter use the word *parousia* to designate the final advent of Christ, whereas the Pastoral Letters use *epiphaneia* for the same event, 2 Thessalonians 2:8 puts the two words together, declaring that the Lord Jesus will destroy the lawless one "by the manifestation [*epiphaneia, illuminatio*] of his coming [*parousia, adventus*]," or literally "by the epiphany of his *parousia*," which of course "is pleonastic, since both words have the same technical sense."⁹

Only once in the New Testament does the Greek word *epiphaneia* designate the appearance of Jesus in the flesh. It is in 2 Timothy 1:10, which declares that the purpose and grace of God has now been revealed "through the appearing [*epiphaneia*] of our Savior Jesus Christ, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." But here, as in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, *epiphaneia* is translated by *illuminatio*, not *adventus*. In the Latin New Testament, therefore, the term *adventus*, whether translating *parousia* or *epiphaneia*, always refers to the advent of the Lord in glory as judge at the end of the ages and never to his coming in the flesh. Early in the history of the church, however, this changes.

3. Greek Fathers

Already in the opening years of the second century, Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, tells Christians in Philadelphia that what distinguishes the Gospel from the old dispensation is that it "contains the coming [*parousia*] of the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, his passion, his

⁹ Ibid.

resurrection.”¹⁰ This may be the first passage in which *parousia* refers not to the advent of the Lord as judge at the close of history but to his appearance on earth as incarnate Word.

In the mid-second century Justin Martyr, writing in Greek to the emperor Antoninus Pius, for the first time mentions two comings, two *parousias*—one in the past, the other in the future. “The prophets,” he asserts, “have foretold two comings [*duo parousias*] of Christ: the one, which already took place, was that of a dishonored and suffering man; the other coming will take place, as it is predicted, when he shall gloriously come from heaven with his angelic army, when he shall also raise to life the bodies of all the men that ever were, shall cloak the worthy with immortality and shall relegate the wicked, subject to sensible pain for all eternity, into the eternal fire together with the evil demons.”¹¹

In the *Dialogue with Trypho* Justin several times contrasts the characteristics of the two advents as found in the prophets. Some passages “refer to the first coming [*parousia*] of Christ, in which he is described as coming in disgrace, obscurity and mortality; other passages allude to his second coming [*parousia*] when he shall appear from the clouds in glory.”¹² Elsewhere he asserts that Scripture “predicted that there would be two advents [*parousias*] of Christ—one in which he will appear in suffering and without honor or beauty, and the other in which he will return in glory to judge all men.” He adds that “Elias will be the forerunner of the great and terrible day, namely, of his second advent [*parousia*].”¹³ Later he writes that Christ at his first advent [*parousia*] was “without honor or comeliness” and “was scorned,” but that “at his coming [*parousia*] in glory” he will “completely destroy all who hated him and maliciously turned their backs on him, while

¹⁰ Ignatius of Antioch, *To the Philadelphians* 9, trans. Gerald G. Walsh, in FC 1, 117. Greek text in PG 5, 705.

¹¹ Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 52, 3, trans. Thomas B. Falls, in FC 6, 89. Greek text in PG 6, 404–5.

¹² Justin Martyr, *Trypho* 14, 8, in FC 6, 170. Greek text of this work is in PG 6, 471–800. See also *Trypho* 32, 2, in FC 6, 195.

¹³ Justin Martyr, *Trypho* 49, 2, in FC 6, 221. Along similar lines in *Trypho* 40, 4, in FC 6, 209, he relates that the two goats required for Jewish sacrifice—nowhere mentioned in the Bible—“were an announcement of the two advents [*parousias*] of Christ.”

bestowing upon his faithful followers rest and every other blessing they expected.”¹⁴

Perhaps the most eloquent and extensive treatment of the difference between the two advents of Christ is that of Cyril of Jerusalem in the third quarter of the fourth century. In a Lenten catechesis based on Daniel 7:9, 13, he declares that “we preach not one coming [*parousia*] of Christ, but a second as well, far more glorious than the first. The first gave us a spectacle of his patience; the second will bring with it the crown of the kingdom of God.” After contrasting Christ’s two births—one of the Father and the other of Mary—he remarks that “in his first coming [*parousia*] he was wrapped in swaddling clothes in the manger; in his second he will be ‘robed in light as with a cloak’ (Ps 103:2). In his first coming [*parousia*] he ‘endured a cross, despising shame’ (Heb 12: 2); in his second he will come in glory, attended by a host of angels. We do not rest, therefore, in his first coming [*parousia*], but we look also for his second.” The bishop adds that “of these two comings [*parousias*] the prophet Malachia says, ‘And suddenly there will come to the temple the Lord whom you seek’; that is one coming [*parousia*]. Of the second coming [*parousia*] he says: ‘And the messenger of the covenant whom you desire. Yes, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts’ (Mal 3:1-3).”¹⁵ In the Liturgy of the Hours this catechesis of Cyril is the second reading at the Office of Readings on the First Sunday of Advent and sets the tone for the whole season.

4. Latin Fathers

Evolution of the meaning of the Latin term *adventus* proceeds in much the same way as did the Greek *parousia*. Tertullian, writing in North Africa at the beginning of the third century, declares that after *Pascha*, the period of Pentecost is the most appropriate time for baptism because then was “the grace of the Holy Spirit first given and the hope of our Lord’s coming [*adventus Domini*] made evident.”¹⁶ Here, of course, *adventus Domini* has its New Testament meaning of the Lord’s coming in glory. In his treatise *Against Marcian*, however, Tertullian

¹⁴ Justin Martyr, *Trypho* 121, 3, in FC 6, 335–36. See also the whole of *Trypho* 52, in FC 6, 226–27.

¹⁵ Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* XV, 1–2, trans. Leo P. McCauley, SJ, and Anthony A. Stephenson, in FC 64, 53–54. Greek text in PG 33, 870–72.

¹⁶ Tertullian, *On Baptism* 19, in Ernest Evans, ed. and trans., *Tertullian’s Homily on Baptism* (London: SPCK, 1964) 41.

provides a lengthy list of quotations from the Old Testament to show that there would be two advents of Christ: the first in lowliness, the second in majesty; the one obscured by insults inflicted, the other glorious and “altogether worthy of God.”¹⁷

Ambrose (339–97) too understands the advent of the Lord to be his coming on the clouds of heaven (Matt 24: 30) when his presence will fill the whole world, both human and natural, as it fills the heart of each believer.¹⁸ But he also uses *adventus Domini* for the coming to earth of the Savior in his incarnation, as was prophesied.¹⁹ For the bishop of Milan, then, there are two advents. Both are redemptive: a first for forgiving sins, *propter redimenda peccata*, and a second for curbing transgressions, *propter reprimenda delicta*.²⁰ Slightly later Jerome (347–419 or 420) likewise writes that the prophets and gospels teach that there are two advents of the Lord: the first when he came in humility and after that when he would come in glory.²¹

Augustine (354–430) too speaks of a first and second coming of Christ, criticizing those who failed to recognize “the time of his first coming, so that they might believe in him and so await his second coming by watching for him whenever that coming should be.” He adds, “Whoever does not recognize the first coming of the Lord cannot prepare himself for the second” (*Qui enim adventum Domini non cognoverit primum, preparare se non poterit ad secundum*).²² The first coming is the time of Jesus’ redemptive mission on earth. The second is his appearance as judge at the end of the world. In sum, the bishop of Hippo, like the other Latin fathers, maintains that “we believe in two advents of the Lord [*duos adventus Domini credimus*], one in the past, another in the future.”²³

All the authors examined thus far, both Greek and Latin, understand the Lord’s first coming in the broad sense of his entire earthly

¹⁷ Tertullian, *The Five Books against Marcian* 111, VII, trans. Peter Holmes, in ANF III, 326–27. Latin text in CSEL 47, 386–87.

¹⁸ Ambrose, *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucan* X, 39, in CSEL 32, 4, 469–70. Unless otherwise noted, translations from CSEL are mine.

¹⁹ Ambrose, *Explanatio psalmi XXXV*, 22, in CSEL 64, 65.

²⁰ Ambrose, *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucan* X, 17, in CSEL 32, 4, 462.

²¹ Jerome, *Epistula* 121, 11, in CSEL 56, 51–52.

²² Augustine, *Epistula* 199, 6, trans. Sister Wilfrid Parsons, SND, in FC 30, 362. Latin text in CSEL 57, 250.

²³ Augustine, *In Psalmum IX enarratio* 1, trans. mine from CCL 38, 58.

ministry marked by humility, lowliness, and obscurity and culminating in his being rejected, condemned, and crucified. A decisive change takes place in the early fifth century with John Cassian, who identifies the *adventus Domini* with his *nativitas*, thereby narrowing down the first advent to the Lord's birth. In his *Seven Books on the Incarnation of the Lord, against Nestorius*, written between 429 and 430 "at the request of the then-Roman deacon, later Pope Leo I,"²⁴ Cassian twice cites Baruch 3:36-38, erroneously thought to be from Jeremiah: "He was seen upon earth and conversed with men." After the second citation he comments, "You see how plainly this points to the advent and nativity of the Lord [*adventus Domini ac nativitas*]. For surely the Father . . . was not seen upon earth, nor born in the flesh."²⁵ Elsewhere in the same treatise he calls the words spoken to Mary by the angel Gabriel in Luke 1:31 "the announcement of a sacred advent," *sacri adventus nuntio*.²⁶ Insisting that the incarnation is beyond the power of any human to effect and is due entirely to God's initiative, he states that "the nativity [of Christ] could not come about except by way of an advent" (*natiuitas agenda non erat nisi per aduentum*).²⁷

To conclude, the phrase *adventus Domini* is dynamic in meaning. It is an act, it has the person of Christ as its subject, and it has strong eschatological resonances, especially when referring to the Lord's advent in glory. But even when applied to his birth it emphasizes that this event is no mere physiological occurrence. It is theophanic and salvific. It is the dawn in time of the fullness of time, the entrance into history of the goal of history, the appearance in one man of the ultimate future of all. Despite the contrasts that the fathers never tire of expounding, the birth of the Lord on earth and his coming from heaven are both advents—are both parousias and epiphanies—the first inaugurating what the second will perfect, the second completing what the first began. In the Word made flesh, divinity shows itself in human form, permanently binding itself to humanity and reconciling creation with its Creator. The mystery of the incarnation is already the paschal mystery, and Christmas is a feast of redemption.

²⁴ Berthold Altaner, *Patrology* (Freiburg: Herder, 1960), 538.

²⁵ John Cassian, *Seven Books on the Incarnation of the Lord, against Nestorius IV*, 9, trans. Edgar C. S. Gibson, in NPNF 11, 578. Latin text in CSEL 17, 296.

²⁶ *Against Nestorius II*, 2. My translation of the Latin in CSEL 17, 248.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

B. A SEASON OF FOUR SUNDAYS

1. Name

The Old Gelasian Sacramentary—*Gelasianum vetus* in Latin—uses the New Testament phrase *adventus Domini* in its title *Orationes de adventum Domini*, “Orations for the Advent of the Lord.”²⁸ Consistent with this, many of its orations and prefaces, besides referring to Christ’s coming in the flesh, also refer to his coming in glory and give voice to the church’s eschatological hope. This sacramentary dates from the seventh century and was used in the neighborhood churches of Rome, known as titular churches, or *tituli*, served by presbyters.²⁹ It is the oldest of the Roman sacramentaries, preceded only by an unofficial collection of papal Masses preserved in a manuscript in Verona.³⁰

The New Testament expression is also found in other liturgical books. Although the earliest Roman lectionary, the Epistolary of Würzburg, dating from the mid-sixth century, omits a general heading, it places *de adventu Domini* in front of the pericope for each week.³¹

The eighth-century Lectionary of Murbach, from which readings in the Roman Missal of 1570 generally derive, introduces its Advent material with the words *Incipiunt lectiones de adventu Domini*, “Here begin the readings for the advent of the Lord.”³² Four of the six oldest Roman antiphonals likewise use *adventus Domini* in their titles, at least for the first Sunday.³³

By way of contrast, the sacramentary that Pope Hadrian (772–95) sent to Charlemagne between 784 and 791 omits the word *Domini* from its title, retaining only *adventus*. Here the term has lost its connection with the New Testament, with the person of Christ, and with the act that will bring salvation history to its climax. “Advent” has become simply a period of time before Christmas. Consistent with eliminating *Domini* from the name of the season and consequently all the

²⁸ GeV, title LXXX.

²⁹ On the titular churches, see John F. Baldovin, SJ, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 228 (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1987) 108, 112–15.

³⁰ For information about this collection as well as the other liturgical sources used here, see the pertinent sections of Cyrille Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy: An Introduction to the Sources* (Washington, DC: The Pastoral Press, 1986).

³¹ EpW CLXX–CLXXIII.

³² M CXLVII.

³³ AMS 1a.

eschatological overtones that *adventus Domini* has in the gospels and Pauline letters, this sacramentary also excludes all the prayers that refer to the advent of Christ in glory and keeps only those that refer to his coming in the flesh—in other words, to the *adventus* understood to be his birth.

Though one of the four forms of the Gregorian Sacramentary, this Mass book is not a work of Pope Gregory the Great (590–604). Scholars call it the *Hadrianum*. The oldest sections may go back to Pope Honorius (625–38). It contains the prayers of Masses celebrated by the pope at the Lateran or at stational churches.³⁴ If the *Gelasianum vetus* hands on the presbyteral form of Roman liturgy, the *Hadrianum* transmits the papal one. These two sacramentaries, therefore, are of capital importance and will be cited frequently, for they attest the simultaneous co-existence of two types of liturgy in early medieval Rome. Of the two, the papal form eventually prevailed and is enshrined in the *Missale Romanum* of 1570 and its successors, the latest being that of 1962. Reform of the Missal after the Second Vatican Council draws heavily on the presbyteral tradition preserved in the Old Gelasian.

The name of the four weeks preceding Christmas in the 1962 Missal as well as in the three typical editions of the Missal of Paul VI is *tempus Adventus*, “season of Advent,” derived of course from the Sacramentary of Pope Hadrian. Redactors of the postconciliar Missal availed themselves of many prayers from the Old Gelasian in order to recover the eschatological aspect of the season but unfortunately stopped short of restoring *Domini* to the title as found in that sacramentary as well as in the lectionaries of Würzburg and Murbach and four of the early antiphonals.

2. From Six Sundays to Four

Besides the name of the season, another difference between the Advent of the Old Gelasian and that of the *Hadrianum* is its length.³⁵

³⁴ On the stational churches and stational liturgy of Rome, see Baldovin, *Urban Character*, 143–166.

³⁵ On this see Antoine Chavasse, *Le Sacramentaire Gélisien (Vaticanus Regiensis 316): Sacramentaire presbytéral en usage dans les titres romains au VII^e siècle* (Tournai: Desclée & Co., 1958) 412–26. An excellent exposition in English of the origins and early history of Advent is Martin J. Connell, “The Origins and Evolution of Advent in the West,” in Maxwell E. Johnson, ed., *Between Memory and Hope* (Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000) 349–71. More recent is Paul

In the former as well as in the Epistolary of Würzburg, Advent is six weeks—as it was in Gaul and Spain, and still is in Milan. In the Sacramentary of Pope Hadrian, the Lectionary of Murbach, and five of the six ancient antiphonals, however, it is only four weeks. It is thought that Pope Gregory the Great is the one responsible for shortening the season and that his motive was to clearly differentiate Advent from Lent and make it generally coincide with the month of December. Reduction of the weeks, however, affected mainly the papal liturgy at the Lateran and not that of the neighborhood churches where presbyters used some form of the Gelasian Sacramentary. An Advent of two different lengths at Rome lasted until well into the seventh century when the papal practice eventually triumphed.

The general rubrics of the Roman Missal of 1962 specify that “the time of sacred Advent [*tempus sacri Adventus*] runs from First Vespers of the First Sunday of Advent until None of the Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord inclusive” (no. 71).³⁶ The Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, published on March 21, 1969,³⁷ describes the season a bit differently. No. 40 states that “Advent [*tempus Adventus*] begins with First Vespers (Evening Prayer I) of the Sunday that falls on or closest to November 30 and it ends before First Vespers (Evening Prayer I) of Christmas.” The reason for changing the end of Advent from None of the Vigil of the Nativity to Evening Prayer I of Christmas is probably because the office of None, meant to be prayed at the ninth hour, or 3:00 p.m., has been replaced, for those not bound by particular law, by the daytime hour that can be prayed at the most appropriate time between morning and evening.³⁸

F. Bradshaw and Maxwell E. Johnson, “Advent,” in their *The Origins of Feasts, Fasts and Seasons in Early Christianity*, Alcuin Club Collections 86 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), 158–68.

³⁶ The translation is mine throughout this work. These rubrics were first published by Pope John XXIII in a *motu proprio* of July 25, 1960, and can be found in *Rubrics of the Roman Breviary and Missal* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1960).

³⁷ These are newly translated at the beginning of the 2011 Roman Missal. The previous translation, with many inaccuracies, is in DOL doc. 442, nos. 3767–827. The Latin text is in the front of the third typical edition of the *Missale Romanum*, published in 2008.

³⁸ See General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, nos. 74–78, in DOL doc. 426, nos. 3504–8.

The season of Advent, then, as it has come down in both of our missals, consists of four Sundays before Christmas and a variable number of weekdays, depending on which day of the week Christmas falls. When Christmas falls on a Sunday, there are four full weeks, or twenty-eight days, in Advent. When it falls on a Monday, however, there are only three full weeks in Advent, plus the fourth Sunday on December 24, making a total of twenty-two days.

3. *Ember Days*

A major difference in the two missals is the presence in RM 1962 of Ember Days on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday of the third week. Ember days were unique to Rome and unknown elsewhere. Always Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday—they are primarily fast days rooted in ancient agricultural society. Roughly coinciding with the change of seasons, they occur four times a year—during the first week of Lent in spring, the octave of Pentecost in summer, the week after September 14 in autumn,³⁹ and the third week of Advent in winter. The Latin name for these days is *Quatuor Temporum*, meaning “the four seasons.” The English word “ember” is said to derive from *temporum* “via the German *Quatember*,” remarks Thomas Talley.⁴⁰ The generic designation *Quatuor Temporum*, however, is not ancient. It makes its appearance only in the first printed edition of the Roman Missal at Milan in 1474.⁴¹

These days eventually gave rise to a very distinctive set of eucharistic celebrations. Pierre Journel writes that “an ember week included not only fasting but stational liturgical assemblies on Wednesday and Friday and again during the night between Saturday and Sunday. These assemblies were held successively at the churches of St. Mary Major and of the Holy Apostles and the Basilica of St. Peter.”⁴² Conse-

³⁹ In RM 1962 the formularies for these days are found between the seventeenth and eighteenth Sundays after Pentecost.

⁴⁰ Thomas Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1986) 148.

⁴¹ See the lists of titles in Bruylants, I, nos. 5, 6, and 7. In no. 5 inclusion of *in quatuor tempora* in the title of Wednesday of the third week seems to be a mistake. In the edition of this manuscript by Giovanni Bosco Shin-Ho Chang, *Vetus Missale Romanum Monasticum Lateranensis* (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2002) 1373, is found only *Feria IIII*. This *Vetus Missale* is commonly called the Lateran Missal.

⁴² *Church IV*, 28–29.

quently, each day has proper Mass texts, unlike the other weekdays of Advent on which the Sunday Mass is repeated. The Mass formularies of these days display archaic characteristics. Ember Wednesday always has two lessons before the gospel. A gradual is sung after each one, and an oration follows the first. Both lessons are taken from the Old Testament except during the octave of Pentecost when they are from the Acts of the Apostles.

Ember Saturdays have five Old Testament lessons before the epistle, for a total of six readings before the gospel. Because these were once done in Latin and Greek, the sacramentaries assign these Saturdays the title of *Sabbato in XII Lectiones*, "Saturday of the Twelve Lessons." The last Old Testament lesson is always Daniel 3:47-51. Each Old Testament lesson is followed by a gradual and an oration, and a tract replaces the Alleluia before the gospel. In the centuries when these Saturday liturgies were nocturnal vigils culminating in a eucharistic celebration in the early hours of the Lord's Day and so fulfilling the object of Saturday's fast, there was no Mass later in the day. Ancient documents indicate the absence of a Mass on Sunday by the expression *Dominica vacat*. In the formularies that have come down in the 1962 Missal these ancient fast days, once autonomous, have been annexed by Advent and in fact are the clearest expression of what the season is commonly taken to be: preparation for the birth of Jesus.

As for the origin of Ember Days, Jounel states that they "may go back to Pope Siricius at the end of the fourth century. St. Leo the Great already regarded them as traditional." He adds that "ordinations soon came to be connected with the three stations: the names of the candidates were announced on Wednesday; the men themselves were presented to the people on Friday; and they were ordained during the Saturday night vigil."⁴³

The revised Roman Calendar of 1969 eliminated Ember Days from the universal calendar and did so for a number of reasons. For centuries the all-night vigil from Saturday to Sunday, like the Paschal Vigil, had moved up to Saturday morning. The successive steps of ordination rites were no longer tied to these days. After Paul VI in 1966 lifted the obligation of fasting from all days except Ash Wednesday and Good Friday,⁴⁴ Ember Days ceased being obligatory fast days, which

⁴³ *Church IV*, 28–29. The texts he cites on p. 28 in note 51 are particularly valuable.

⁴⁴ See his apostolic constitution *Paenitemini* III, II, 3, in DOL doc. 358, no. 3022.

was one of their essential characteristics. Moreover, these days, except for the ones in September, had long ago forfeited their distinctively agricultural character and had been thoroughly absorbed by Advent, Lent, and the octave of Pentecost. Finally, in many parts of the world into which the church spread in recent centuries, the *Quatuor Temporum* or four seasons does not coincide with the times presumed by the liturgical texts. No. 45 of the Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar stipulates that the purpose of Ember Days is “to entreat the Lord for the various needs of humanity, especially for the fruits of the earth and for human labor, and to give thanks to him publicly.” Then nos. 46–47 decree that the duration and frequency of these days should be determined by conferences of bishops and that texts be taken from votive Masses for various occasions.

4. Counting the Sundays

The 1969 Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, no. 41, declares that “the Sundays of this time of year are named the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Sundays of Advent,” which is how they are designated in both of our missals. Though this seems obvious to us, it took centuries to come about and become standard.

Early documents show a surprising amount of diversity in this matter. The Old Gelasian contains the general heading *Orationes de aduentum Domini* but does not number the formularies. Each of those following the first one is simply designated as another Mass, *Item alia Missa*. At the other extreme the Epistolary of Würzburg has no general heading but places the phrase *de aduentu Domini* in front of each of its pericopes, without numbering them and without connecting them to either Sundays after Pentecost or Sundays before Christmas as other books sometimes do.

The Sacramentary of Gellone covers all possibilities. It contains the general title “Here Begin Orations for the Advent of the Lord,” then lists Masses for the Sundays, numbering them in two ways—as Sundays of weeks after Pentecost, as well as in reverse numerical order as Sundays before Christmas, except for the last, which it labels *Dominica vacat*. But it does not include the word Advent in the titles of any of the Sundays.⁴⁵ Other eighth-century Gelasians, after a general title referring to Advent, count the Sundays only in reverse order before Christmas, eliminating references to weeks after Pentecost and omit-

⁴⁵ G titles 277, 281, 288, 290, 294.

ting Advent from the names of individual Sundays. The Lectionary of Alcuin does the same but, strangely, does not place a general heading above any of the pericopes. Hence the word Advent appears nowhere in the titles of these four sets of readings *ante natale Domini*.⁴⁶

The Sacramentary of Pope Hadrian comes closest to current nomenclature—but only partially. It lists the first three Sundays in ascending numerical order as the first, second, and third Sundays but refers to the fourth as *Dominica vacat* and does not include the word Advent in any of them. The general title “Orations for Advent” was sufficient to indicate their purpose. The first Missal to employ exactly the terminology found in the 1962 Missal and the three editions of the Missal of Paul VI is the second typical edition of the Roman Missal by Clement VIII in 1604.⁴⁷

5. *From End to Beginning*

The ancient Roman sacramentaries and lectionaries all start the yearly cycle with the Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord. Although the nativity was being celebrated at Rome as early as 336, Advent does not emerge there until the middle of the sixth century.⁴⁸ By that time the annual round of prayers and readings, starting with the Lord’s birth, continuing with Lent, culminating with the Easter season, and concluding with the long series of Sundays after Pentecost together with Ember Days and commemorations of martyrs and other saints, was well established. Formularies for Advent, therefore, represent relatively late additions to a liturgical calendar already shaped by some two centuries of tradition.

Maintaining the birth of the Lord as the beginning of the year—a practice that could receive ample theological justification—the early sacramentaries and lectionaries insert their Advent material at the end of the Sundays after Pentecost. This tends to accentuate the eschatological content of the season, especially when it is called *Adventus Domini*. Since the Ember Days and feasts of saints were in the calendar long before Advent got started, their presence determined the precise place where the new material would be located. The Old Gelasian inserts its “Orations for the Advent of the Lord” before the three Ember Days of December, the generic title of which is “Orations and Prayers for the Tenth Month” (GeV 1157–77). The *Hadrianum* integrates Masses

⁴⁶ Alc CXC VII, CXC VIII, CXC VIII, CC VIII.

⁴⁷ See Bruylants I, nos. 1, 3, 4, 6.

⁴⁸ The earliest evidence is the list of pericopes in the Epistolary of Würzburg.

for the first three Sundays with memorials of saints but places that of the fourth Sunday after the three Ember Days (H 790–804).

Early Roman antiphonals, on the other hand, like Gallican and Hispanic liturgical books, begin with Advent, thus creating the awkward situation of chants for the Mass being found in the front of books and prayers and readings near the end. Only in twelfth- and thirteenth-century plenary missals do the Advent Masses start to appear before Christmas.⁴⁹ Consequently, the First Sunday of Advent is commonly taken to be the beginning of the liturgical year. Though not stated in any magisterial document, the claim receives some justification by the placement in the 1969 calendar of the solemnity of Christ, King of the Universe, on the previous Sunday, the last Sunday of Ordinary Time, which therefore is taken to be the last Sunday of the liturgical year. Additionally, in the postconciliar Lectionary the cycle of readings at Sunday Mass changes each year on the First Sunday of Advent. This, more than anything else, suggests that a new liturgical year is beginning on that day. On the other hand, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, no. 102, reflects the older view of Advent coming at the end of the year and being mainly eschatological. It says that “within the course of the year,” Holy Mother Church “unfolds the whole mystery of Christ, from the incarnation and nativity to the ascension, to Pentecost, and the expectation of the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord.”⁵⁰ The concluding words are an adaptation of Titus 2:13 and in Latin end with the phrase *adventus Domini*.

6. Purple and Penitential

In both the ordinary and the extraordinary forms of eucharistic celebration purple vestments are worn during Advent, and the Gloria is omitted. In RM 1962 the Alleluia is likewise omitted on weekdays but not on Sundays. These are sometimes taken as signs of penance, and, in fact, Pope Pius XII in his famous encyclical on the liturgy, *Mediator Dei*, written in 1947, presents the season in strongly penitential terms: “In the period of Advent,” he writes, “the Church arouses in us the

⁴⁹ See, for example, the Lateran Missal edited by Chang, referred to in note 41. In this Missal from the mid-thirteenth century, by the way, the phrase *in adventu Domini* is still in the title of the first Sunday.

⁵⁰ Throughout this work the translation of council documents is from Austin Flannery, OP, ed., *Vatican Council II, vol. 1, The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, new rev. ed. (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Co., 1996).

consciousness of the sins we have had the misfortune to commit, and urges us, by restraining our desires and practicing voluntary mortification of the body, to recollect ourselves in meditation, and experience a longing desire to return to God who alone can free us by His grace from the stain of sin and from its evil consequences."⁵¹

Historically, this view is relatively recent. At first, Advent was exclusively liturgical, not ascetical, both at Rome and at Ravenna. In the eighth and ninth centuries, when the liturgy of the city of Rome spread north of the Alps where fasting and abstinence had for centuries formed part of preparing for Christmas or Epiphany,⁵² people in those places interpreted the season in the way familiar to them. Though this had no effect on the texts of the Masses, in the twelfth century it led to the wearing of purple vestments, omission of the Gloria, and, on weekdays, omission of the Alleluia.⁵³

To summarize, the foregoing review of variations in the name, content, length, and placement of Advent texts in service books shows that this most recent of liturgical seasons was still evolving well into the thirteenth century, and, as we saw, the way of identifying the Sundays was not fixed until 1604. Stripped of most of its eschatological content, shorn of its title *Adventus Domini* with its New Testament evocations, reduced from six Sundays to four, placed immediately before the Nativity of the Lord, and assigned purple vestments, *tempus Adventus* in the Roman Rite, until the postconciliar reforms, was partially penitential and aimed only at preparing the faithful to celebrate Christmas. So it remains in the extraordinary form. Since the season is quite different in the ordinary form, we will present one after the other, beginning with the Missal of 1962.

C. THE ROMAN MISSAL OF 1962

1. Sundays

Orations. In RM 1962 the three presidential prayers, called oration, secret, and post-Communion, all derive from the Sacramentary of Pope

⁵¹ No. 154 in Pamela Jackson, *An Abundance of Graces* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2004) 160–61.

⁵² See Connell, "The Origins and Evolution of Advent," 349–71.

⁵³ Adolf Adam, *The Liturgical Year* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1979)

Hadrian.⁵⁴ No mention is made in any of these prayers of Christ's coming in glory, of his return as judge, of the end of the world, or of any other eschatological events. Three of them make explicit reference to preparation for Christmas. The post-Communion of the first Sunday asks that "we may prepare with due honor for the approaching feast of our redemption," that of the third Sunday asks that "these divine helps may . . . prepare us for the approaching feast," and the collect for Wednesday of the third week, the first of the three Ember Days, begs "that the coming solemnity of our redemption may both confer upon us assistance in this present life and bestow the rewards of everlasting blessedness."⁵⁵

This shows that the seventh- or eighth-century papal Advent preserved in RM 1962 is a period of time dedicated not to preparing the faithful to meet the Lord at his Parousia but to preparing them for the liturgical celebration of his birth, understood broadly and dogmatically as a feast of redemption. The collect for the second Sunday expresses this most clearly. Alluding to the gospel of the day, Matthew 11:2-10, which presents John the Baptist as the one sent to prepare the way of the Lord, the prayer asks, "Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the ways of thine only-begotten Son: that through his coming [*per ejus adventum*] we may deserve to serve thee with purified minds."

The first words of this prayer, "Stir up," which translate the Latin *Excita*, are the opening entreaty of three of the four Sunday collects—the first, the second, and the fourth. In that of the second Sunday, God is asked to "stir up our hearts." In that of the first and fourth Sundays, he is asked to stir up his power and come. That bold petition, *Excita, quaesumus, Domine, potentiam tuam et veni*, is from Psalm 79:3 and is chanted as the gradual and Alleluia of the third Sunday. Recurrence of this petition in the prayers and chants of Advent is one of the elements that make this season so unique.

Readings. In the Tridentine Mass there are only two biblical readings for each Sunday, called the epistle and the gospel. They are read by the priest at the right- and left-hand sides of the altar, respectively, and are found not in a separate book, the Lectionary, but in the Missal itself, as are the chants appointed for the day. A missal, then, contains all the

⁵⁴ Instead of oration, we designate the first prayer as the collect.

⁵⁵ Unless otherwise indicated, translations of the prayers and chants of the 1962 Roman Missal are from *The Daily Missal and Liturgical Manual*, 3rd ed. (London: Baronius Press, 2008).

texts a priest needs to celebrate Mass. Though usually assisted by one or two servers, he reads all the prayers, readings, and chants himself. When at a solemn high Mass a subdeacon chants the epistle, a deacon chants the gospel, and a choir chants the proper, the priest is still required to read all of them silently or in a low voice. The Tridentine Mass, then, is organized in function of a single priest offering Mass alone. When the choir and congregation sing the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei*, or when other ministers discharge functions pertaining to them, the priest is not affected. He does what he would do even in their absence.

For the four Sundays of Advent there are a total of eight readings in RM 1962—four epistles and four gospels. Except for the gospel of the fourth Sunday, all eight are found in the Lectionary of Murbach,⁵⁶ though not in the same order and usually with epistles and gospels paired differently. For example, the account of the Son of Man coming on a cloud in Luke 21:25-33, prescribed for the first Sunday in RM 1962, is reserved for the third Sunday in the Lectionary of Murbach. With it is read Romans 15:4-13, read in RM 1962 on the second Sunday with Matthew 11:2-10.

We see, then, that in the early sources the same readings occupy different positions. The arrangement of the gospels in the Tridentine Missal of 1570 and hence in RM 1962 might be the most logical: on the first Sunday the coming of the Son of Man with great power and majesty (Luke 21:25-33), and on the next three Sundays John the Baptist—the testimony of Jesus about him (Matt 11:2-10) on the second Sunday, John's self-effacement before Jesus (John 1:19-28) on the third, and the solemn inauguration of the precursor's preaching (Luke 3:1-6) on the fourth, which is a repetition of the gospel of the previous day, ember Saturday. But the epistles of these Sundays have no intrinsic connection with the gospels.

Cyrille Vogel explains that in the Epistolary and Evangelary of Würzburg the lists of epistles and gospels "are Roman and done by the same scribe but they come from different eras and do not correspond to one another."⁵⁷ He continues, "Churches used books of readings that came from different periods and belonged to different types. The fact that a Roman lectionary, or rather a Romano-Frankish

⁵⁶ M CXLVII, CL, CLI, CLII, CLVI. For lists of readings in the ancient lectionaries and the Missal of 1570, see Adrian Nocent, OSB, *The Liturgical Year*, 4 vols. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1977) I, 168-71.

⁵⁷ Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, 339.

lectionary like the *Comes* of Murbach, finally prevailed in the West is an accidental result of the Romanization of worship brought about by the Carolingian reformers. Nowhere is there to be found a systematic attempt at organizing a system of readings.⁵⁸ That, we might add, comes only after the Second Vatican Council.

Chants. All the sung texts for the first three Sundays of Advent in RM 1962 are already found in the six oldest manuscripts of the Roman Antiphonal, dating from the eighth and ninth centuries. This unanimity, especially with regard to the Alleluia verses, prompts René-Jean Hesbert, editor of the *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, to remark that “we are in the presence of a primitive organization.”⁵⁹ For reasons to be explained below, choice of chants for the fourth Sunday diverges slightly in the manuscripts, three of which list no chants at all because of the lack of a Sunday Mass after the vigil on Saturday night. RM 1962 reproduces the manuscript in which the chants for the fourth Sunday are taken from ember Wednesday.

Texts for the first Sunday reflect an unusual unity and coherence. Three of the five are drawn from Psalm 24. The introit antiphon is Psalm 24:1-3: “To thee have I lifted up my soul. . . . None of them that trust in thee shall be confounded.” The second half of the antiphon serves as the gradual: “All them that wait on thee shall not be confounded.” The complete antiphon of the introit returns verbatim at the offertory: “To thee have I lifted up my soul. Let me not be ashamed. None of them that wait for thee shall be confounded.” More than any other texts, these verses of Psalm 24 show Advent to be a time of expectation, hope, and waiting coupled with confidence of not being disappointed by a God attentive to the needs of his people.

The Alleluia verse on the first Sunday uses the familiar words of Psalm 84:8, “Show us, O Lord, thy mercy and grant us thy salvation.” The same verse is used as the offertory of the second Sunday, preceded by verse 7 of the same psalm, “Thou wilt turn, O God, and bring us to life and thy people shall rejoice in thee.” Psalm 84:13, “The Lord will give goodness and our earth shall yield her fruit,” is the communion chant of the first Sunday, and the opening words of the psalm, “Lord,

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 349.

⁵⁹ AMS xxxvii. On the chants of the Roman Missal, especially those of Advent, see the marvelous study of James McKinnon, *The Advent Project* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

thou has blessed thy land," are heard in both the introit and the offertory of the third Sunday.

As was already pointed out, Psalm 79:3b, "Stir up your power and come," besides being the opening petition of several orations, is the Alleluia verse of the third Sunday. Psalm 79:2, 3, 6 is the gradual of that Sunday: "Thou, O Lord, that sitteth upon the Cherubim, stir up thy might and come. Give ear, O thou that rulest Israel, that leadest Joseph like a sheep." Thus, the first few verses of the same psalm comprise both the gradual and the Alleluia of the third Sunday. From all this it is clear that Psalms 24, 79, and 84 stand out as the preferred Advent psalms.

Chants for the second Sunday are connected by the theme of Sion or Jerusalem and three of the six most ancient manuscripts of the Roman Antiphonal indicate that the stationary church of the day is the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem.⁶⁰ The introit antiphon announces, "People of Sion, behold the Lord shall come to save the nations" (Isa 30:30). The gradual declares, "Out of Sion the loveliness of his beauty. God shall come manifestly" (Ps 49:2-3, 5). Immediately thereafter the Alleluia sings, "I rejoiced at the things that were said to me. We shall go unto the house of the Lord" (Ps 121:4). The communion exclaims, "Arise, O Jerusalem, and stand on high, and behold the joy that cometh to thee from thy God" (Bar 5:5; 4:36). Only the offertory, *Deus, tu*, fails to include any reference to Jerusalem or Sion, and Hesbert strongly suspects that this is due to a scribal error.⁶¹

Be that as it may, it is surprising to note that the theme of Sion or Jerusalem is limited to the chants and is not found in the readings or prayers. Such is not the case on the third Sunday. On that day the rather lengthy introit antiphon *Gaudete in Domino semper*, "Rejoice in the Lord always," is the first half of the epistle, Philippians 4:4-7. Because of the first word of the antiphon, this Sunday is popularly known as Gaudete Sunday and is the Advent counterpart of Laetare Sunday during Lent. Rose vestments are worn on each.

2. Ember Days

In RM 1962 the prayers of these three days, like those of Sundays, are from the Sacramentary of Pope Hadrian (H 790-804). By the time ember Wednesday is reached, what the church has been preparing

⁶⁰ AMS 2.

⁶¹ AMS xxxvii-xxxviii.

for, waiting for, and longing for is much closer than it was on the first Sunday. When Christmas falls on a Monday, ember Saturday can be the day before Christmas Eve. The imminent fulfillment of the Advent hope is expressed in the second gradual of Wednesday, *Prope est Dominus*, "The Lord is nigh unto them that call upon him" (Ps 144:18). The introit on Friday addresses God in similar words, *Prope es tu, Domine*, "You are near, O Lord, and all thy ways are truth" (Ps 118:151).

On these days prayers become more intense, more urgent. Three times is heard the plea of Psalm 79:3, *Excita potentiam tuam et veni*, "Stir up thy might, we beseech thee, O Lord, and come." The first is in the collect of Friday, which adds, "that those who trust in thy loving kindness may be the more speedily freed from all adversity." The other two are in chants on Saturday. The gradual following the third lesson on that day sings, "O Lord God of hosts, convert us and show thy face, and we shall be saved. Stir up thy might, O Lord, and come to save us." Before the gospel the tract asks, "Give ear, O thou that rulest Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep. Thou that sittest upon the Cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasses. Stir up thy might, O Lord, and come and save us." As if growing short on patience, the second oration of Wednesday, possibly alluding to Habakkuk 2:3 and Hebrews 10:37, begs, "Hasten, we beseech thee, O Lord, tarry not." In the words of Psalm 79:2, 4, the introit on Saturday cries out, "Come, O Lord, and show us thy face, thou that sittest upon the Cherubim, and we shall be saved."

Another feature of the Ember Days is the frequency with which readings and chants are taken from the prophet Isaiah.⁶² On Wednesday the introit antiphon is *Rorate, coeli*, the well-known plea of Isaiah 45:8, "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above and let the clouds rain down the Just. Let the earth open and bud forth a Saviour." Both lessons before the gospel are from Isaiah. The first, Isaiah 2:2-5, is the eschatological vision of the nations streaming to the house of the God of Jacob, prepared on the highest of mountains. The second, Isaiah 7:10-15, tells that "a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and his name shall be called Emmanuel." The gospel, Luke 1:26-38, without citing this passage, as does Matthew 1:23, announces its fulfillment when the Virgin Mary gives her consent to the divine plan disclosed by the angel

⁶² Until now only two chants have come from Isaiah: the introit on the second Sunday (Isa 30:30) already cited, and the communion on the third Sunday (Isa 35:4).

Gabriel. The offertory is Isaiah 35:4, "Take courage and fear not, for behold our God will bring judgment. He himself will come and will save us." The communion repeats Isaiah 7:14, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son," heard in the first lesson. The Mass of ember Wednesday, then, is exceptionally coherent.

Friday has only one lesson before the gospel, and it is Isaiah 11:1-5, depicted countless times in manuscript illuminations, murals, and stained-glass windows: "There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him." On ember Saturday, or Saturday of the Twelve Lessons, four of the five Old Testament readings are from Isaiah, the fifth being, as always, Daniel 3:47-51, issuing onto the canticle of the three young men in the fiery furnace in Daniel 3:52-56. The gospels of these three days recount key episodes leading to the birth of Jesus—on Wednesday the annunciation (Luke 1:26-38), on Friday the visitation (Luke 1:37-47), and on Saturday the cry of John, son of Zachary, in the desert to prepare the way of the Lord, "as it was written," the evangelist points out, "in the book of the sayings of Isaiah the prophet." Since these passages are all drawn from the Gospel of Luke, the three Ember Days of Advent receive additional unity and direction.

The Mass formulary for the fourth Sunday is later than those of the first three because originally the only Eucharist on this day was the one concluding the all-night vigil on Saturday. When a formulary for the fourth Sunday was assembled, several texts were taken from the preceding Ember Days, making it a composite. The gospel, the mission of John the Baptist in Luke 3:1-6, is taken from ember Saturday. The introit, *Rorate coeli*, the gradual, *Prope est Dominus*, and the communion, *Ecce virgo concipiet*, are all from ember Wednesday.

3. *Vigil of the Nativity*

The title of the Mass formulary for this day has remained practically the same throughout its history: Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord. The hour of its celebration, however, has changed. The early sacramentaries add to the title *ad nonam*, or "at the ninth hour,"⁶³ indicating that the Mass was celebrated at roughly three in the afternoon. As such, it inaugurated the Christmas feasts. For this reason the formulary is found at the very beginning of the ancient sacramentaries, just before

⁶³ Bruylants I, no. 9.

the three Christmas Masses—Advent material, as we have seen, being inserted in various ways at the end of the temporal cycle, following the Sundays after Pentecost. Contrary to its original time and purpose, in RM 1962 the Eucharist for the Vigil of the Nativity is celebrated on the morning of December 24. No longer the inaugural Mass of Christmas, it has become the last Mass of Advent.

The chants are superb. Looking forward on this day to the next day's wonder, the introit and the gradual announce, "This day you shall know that the Lord will come and save us, and in the morning you shall see his glory." In Exodus 16:6-7 these are the words of Moses and Aaron making known the Lord's promise to rain down bread from heaven for the people he just led out of Egypt but who are now murmuring in the desert. Besides evoking the Bread of Life discourse in John 6: 28-58 and the heavenly origin of Jesus, whose earthly birth is about to be celebrated, this announcement places the entire Christmas liturgy in the context of exodus, that is to say, in the context of redemption—begun at Passover and completed in Christ.

The collect, a masterful composition from H 36, also found in GeV 1156, identifies Christ as "our Redeemer" and his birth as "our redemption." It prays, "O God, who dost gladden us by the yearly expectation of our redemption, grant that we, who now joyfully receive thine only-begotten Son as our Redeemer, may also without fear behold him coming as our judge." This is the only mention of the Second Coming in the Advent prayers of the extraordinary form.

The Alleluia verse, unfortunately sung only on Sundays, contributes further to the redemptive character of Christmas. Taken from 4 Esdras 16:53, it declares, "Tomorrow shall the iniquity of the earth be abolished and the Savior of the world shall reign over us." The phrase "Savior of the world" recalls the invitatory during the unveiling of the cross on Good Friday as translated in RM 1962, "Behold the wood of the cross on which hung the savior of the world," and the ancient gloss on Psalm 98, "The Lord reigns *from the wood*" (emphasis mine).

The epistle, Romans 1:1-16, looks forward not only to Christmas but to Easter as well, or rather looks forward to Christmas in the light of Easter, setting forth the person of Christ as the seed of David according to the flesh but Son of God by the resurrection from the dead. In the gospel (Matt 1:18-21) the angel of the Lord addresses Joseph as "son of David," telling him that it is by the Holy Spirit that his spouse has conceived and that he is to name the child Jesus, "for he shall save his people from their sins." Jesus traces his Davidic and, hence,

messianic lineage through Joseph, not Mary, and through his saving deeds—his earthly ministry culminating in his death and glorification—actualizes the meaning of his name.

4. *Concluding Comments*

Reflecting on the material enshrined in the 1962 Missal, one is first of all astounded at its antiquity and durability. Readings, prayers, and chants all go back to some of the earliest written sources of the Roman liturgy and have remained unchanged through the centuries. Recurrence of the cry *Excita* from Psalm 79:3 connects the weeks and binds together texts of diverse genres, thereby imparting continuity to the season. A limited number of verses from Psalm 24 and Psalm 84 instill familiarity. Words and melodies of the chants are splendid and remain so even when sung throughout the week. The Ember Days of the third week with their proper formulas and distinctive structures are a welcome contrast to the previous two weeks. Having passed from the vision of the Last Judgment in the gospel of the first Sunday through the Baptist's call to conversion in the next two, the readings from Isaiah on the Ember Days and the gospel accounts of the annunciation and visitation lead the faithful steadily to the threshold of the Christmas mystery and instill in them childlike wonder.

But RM 1962 also has shortcomings. It has no proper prefaces and no proper Masses for weekdays besides those of the Ember Days. It contains the prayers of only one of the two liturgical zones of the city of Rome: the papal, stational one, represented by the Gregorian Sacramentary sent to Charlemagne by Pope Hadrian in which Advent comprises only four weeks. Many of the prayers of the other liturgical zone, the presbyteral one, preserved in the Old Gelasian Sacramentary in which Advent consists of six weeks, have not been transmitted. The formulary for the fourth Sunday is an artificial construct assembled of pieces taken from previous days. The Lectionary is particularly weak. Epistles and gospels are randomly selected and not well paired. Gospels about John the Baptist on three of the four Sundays might be too much, given the wealth of other available material. Readings are abundant and rich on the Ember Days but unfortunately are heard only by the relatively small number of faithful who attend weekday Mass. Without readings from Isaiah and other prophets and books of the Old Testament on Sundays, the place of the birth of Christ in the larger sweep of salvation history is not presented to the majority of churchgoers, and the hopes of Israel and the nations that the incarnation

fulfills are not articulated. Finally, although references to the Second Coming are heard in the epistles of the first and fourth Sundays as well as ember Saturday, they are absent from the gospels after the first Sunday and from all the prayers except the collect of Christmas Eve. These are defects that the Order of Readings for Mass, first published in 1969, then revised in 1981, and the three editions of the Missal of Paul VI admirably redress.

D. THE MISSAL OF PAUL VI

1. *Sundays*

The 1969 Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, no. 39, declares that “Advent has a twofold character, for it is a time of preparation for the Solemnities of Christmas, in which the First Coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered, and likewise a time when, by remembrance of this, minds and hearts are led to look forward to Christ’s Second Coming at the end of time.” Immediately, we notice a major difference between our two missals. Whereas RM 1962 focuses primarily if not exclusively on the first coming, the reformed Missal broadens the view to include the second as well. This may be one of many liturgical echoes of the Second Vatican Council’s effort to recover and integrate eschatology into Catholic thought, notably the teaching on the eschatological nature of the pilgrim church in chapter 7 of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*. The Universal Norms, no. 39, adds that “Advent is a period of devout and expectant delight”—a refreshingly positive outlook in contrast to the gloomy assessment of Pius XII we saw in *Mediator Dei*.

Readings. Here we must recall that in keeping with *Sacrosanctum Concilium* nos. 35 and 51, the Mass of Paul VI has three readings on Sunday distributed over a three-year period, making nine readings for each of the four Sundays of Advent and a total of thirty-six for the season in contrast to the eight in RM 1962. Furthermore, except during Easter Time, the first reading is from the Old Testament. Readings are contained no longer in the Missal but in other books, the Lectionary and Gospel Book, and read no longer at the altar—now reserved for the eucharistic offerings—but from a lectern or ambo. The first two readings are done from the Lectionary by lectors, preferably two of them, one for each reading, and the gospel from the Book of the Gospels by a deacon or, if there is no deacon, by the priest himself. While each minister is proclaiming the Word of the Lord, the others listen, as

does the entire congregation. No one should read the text silently to himself or herself. After the first reading a soloist chants the responsorial psalm, and the assembly repeats the refrain. Unlike the graduals of RM 1962, which were just one or two verses of a psalm and usually generic in content, the responsorial psalms are much longer and carefully chosen to echo the specific content of the reading they follow.⁶⁴ In sum, the Liturgy of the Word, like the rest of the eucharistic liturgy, is now a corporate undertaking, an ecclesial act, in which each participant has his or her distinct role. This is reflected in the different types of liturgical books corresponding to different ministries.

In the current Mass, biblical readings are not only more numerous than in the past but chosen with greater discrimination and systematically arranged in accord with clearly enunciated principles. Beginning with the gospels, the 1981 introduction to the Lectionary,⁶⁵ no. 93, explains that on the Sundays of Advent “each Gospel reading has a distinctive theme: the Lord’s coming at the end of time (First Sunday of Advent), John the Baptist (Second and Third Sunday), and the events that prepared immediately for the Lord’s birth (Fourth Sunday).” This defines the fundamental structure of the Advent thematic. Other readings are chosen in function of the gospel, and on occasion prayers reflect the content of the readings. The theme of the fourth Sunday, events immediately preceding the birth of Christ, is new—found on the Ember Days in RM 1962 but not on Sunday. The theme of the first Sunday, the Second Coming, and that of the second and third Sundays, John the Baptist, are roughly the same as before. The difference is that these themes, though the same for each week, over a three-year cycle are now articulated by different evangelists, each having his own viewpoint and accents, outlook, and emphases.

On the first Sunday in Year A Jesus urges readiness and watchfulness in Matthew 24:37-44 because the Son of Man will come as suddenly and unexpectedly as the flood in Noah’s day or as a thief in the night. In the parallel passage from Mark 13:33-37 in Year B Jesus likewise enjoins vigilance lest, returning without warning like the master of a household

⁶⁴ Unfortunately, limits of space do not permit us to comment on these psalms and their link with the reading that precedes them.

⁶⁵ The introduction to the Lectionary, found in RML 1981, pp. xvi–xlvi, is a translation of the *praenotanda*, or general introduction, to the OLM 1981, or Order of Readings for Mass. The translation in DOL, nos. 1843–69, is that of the 1969 version and hence is outdated.

who went on a journey, he find us not discharging the duties entrusted to us, but sleeping. In the first part of the gospel in Year C, Luke 21:25-28, which is the same as in RM 1962, Jesus presents the apocalyptic upheaval and distress of the end time as the prelude to the dawn of redemption. To this the Lectionary appends verses 34-36, not in RM 1962, a characteristically Lukan exhortation to prayer that in the midst of cosmic dissolution believers may encounter the approaching Son of Man.

The next two Sundays set before us the person of John the Baptist. On the second Sunday all three years portray him as the voice crying in the wilderness (Isa 40:3) and stress his summons to conversion. In Year A Matthew 3:1-12 relates that he preached repentance and baptized in view of impending judgment. In Year B Mark 1:1-8, with no reference to judgment, coordinates the two activities of the Baptist, saying that he preached a baptism of repentance, adding that it was for the forgiveness of sins, not mentioned by Matthew. In Year C Luke 3:1-6 opens with a grand introduction, placing John in historical context, then, with no description of his unconventional dress and foods, declares, like Mark, that he proclaimed a baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins. In RM 1962 this is the gospel for ember Saturday, repeated on the fourth Sunday.

On the third Sunday the gospel readings of all three years are again about the precursor but do not line up with each other as neatly as do those of the previous Sunday. In Year A Jesus recounts in Matthew 11:2-11 the actions that should suffice for him to be recognized as the Messiah, then praises John as a prophet—and more than a prophet—sent to prepare his way.

In Year B John confesses in John 1:6-8, 19-28 that not he but one coming after him and as yet unknown is the Messiah, the straps of whose sandals he is not worthy to untie. The gospel of the third Sunday in Year C, Luke 3:10-18, continues that of the previous week, Luke 3:1-6. On this Sunday, however, John tells the crowds how to bear fruits worthy of repentance and so escape the coming divine wrath.

The fourth Sunday, says the introduction to the Lectionary, no. 93, is devoted to “the events that prepared immediately for the Lord’s birth.” In Year A Matthew 1:18-24 narrates how an angel discloses to Joseph that his wife, Mary, would conceive and bear a son whom he would name Jesus. The evangelist adds that this fulfills Isaiah 7:14, heard in the first reading. In Year B Luke 1:26-38 recounts the annunciation to Mary, followed in Year C by Luke 1:39-48, Mary’s visit to her cousin Elizabeth. We notice that the gospel on all four Sundays of

Advent in Year A are taken from Matthew, as they are for the rest of the year, and that in Year C all four gospels are from Luke, as they are for the other Sundays of that year. In Year B the gospels are normally taken from Mark, and in Advent this is true for the first two Sundays. But since Mark is shorter than the others and has no infancy narratives, the gospel on the third Sunday in that year is from John, and that on the fourth Sunday is from Luke.

Turning now to the first reading, from the Old Testament, the introduction to the Lectionary, no. 93, states that these “are prophecies about the Messiah and the Messianic age, especially from the Book of Isaiah.” In Year A the readings are from the first part of Isaiah, chapters 1–39, generally about God’s offer of unlimited pardon to all who seek him. On the first Sunday Isaiah 2:1-5 sketches the vision of a glorious future in which all nations stream to the mountain of the Lord. On the second Sunday Isaiah 11:1-10 foresees a branch sprouting from the root of Jesse on which the Spirit of the Lord rests. On the third Sunday Isaiah 35:1-6a, 8a-10 describes the redeemed returning to Zion—the lame, the feeble, the blind, and the deaf. On the fourth Sunday is read Isaiah 7:10-14 from the so-called book of Emmanuel. It tells of a virgin conceiving and bearing a son whom she shall call Emmanuel. The gospel of that day, Matthew 1:28-24, cites these words and declares them fulfilled in Mary.⁶⁶

In Year B the selection on the second Sunday, Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11, the beginning of the Book of Consolation, is noteworthy because it contains the well-known passage about the voice crying in the wilderness that will be cited in various ways and applied to John the Baptist in the gospels of all three years on that Sunday and in Year B on the third Sunday as well. On the first Sunday of Year B is read Isaiah 63:16b-17; 64:1-3b, 8, and on the third Sunday is read Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11—all from the third part of Isaiah, chapters 56–66. The readings from Isaiah finish on the third Sunday of Year B. On the fourth Sunday of that year the first reading, 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 16, though from a historical book and not a prophetic one, is prophetic in content—Nathan’s words about the Lord’s determination to build David a house, words fulfilled beyond all imagining in the gospel of that day, Luke 1: 26-38, Mary’s conception of a son who would rule on David’s throne forever.

⁶⁶ In RM 1962 Isa 2:2-5, Isa 7:10-15, and Luke 1:26-38 are read on ember Wednesday and Isa 11:1-5 on ember Friday.

In Year C the first reading is not from Isaiah but from four other prophets: Jeremiah (33:14-16) on the first Sunday, Baruch (5:1-9) on the second, and Zephaniah (3:14-18a) on the third, all of which express the joy and gladness of Jerusalem. On the fourth Sunday is Micah 5:2-5a with its reference to Bethlehem and “to the mother of the Messiah.”⁶⁷

As for the second reading, the introduction to the Lectionary, no. 93, states that “the readings from an Apostle serve as exhortations and proclamations, in keeping with the different themes of Advent.” Those on the first Sunday are about how Christians should comport themselves while awaiting the return of the Lord and accord well with the eschatological character of that day as found in the gospels and Old Testament readings. Those on the fourth Sunday relate rather explicitly with events recounted in the gospels and foretold by the prophets. Those on the second and third Sundays are more generic in content and pertain more to the season than to an individual day.

Prayers. The Missal of Paul VI replaces the four Sunday collects of RM 1962 with others drawn from ancient sources that better express the themes of the season as defined in the introduction to the Lectionary, no. 93, thereby producing more coherent and unified formularies in which prayers, readings, and at times chants are connected to each other.⁶⁸ It substitutes for *Aurem tuam* on the third Sunday a prayer very similar in wording from GeV 1137 and moves the three collects beginning with *Excita* to weekdays.

The one formerly on the first Sunday, *Excita, quaesumus, Domine, potentiam tuam et veni*, is now on Friday of the first week.⁶⁹ Its replacement is taken from one of the Advent Masses in the Old Gelasian Sacramentary, where it was a post-Communion (GeV 1139). It asks God for

⁶⁷ Note to Mic 5:3 in *The Jerusalem Bible* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1966).

⁶⁸ For the liturgical sources of the prayers of Advent and the Christmas season together with possible biblical and patristic allusions, see Cuthbert Johnson, OSB, and Anthony Ward, SM, *The Sources of the Roman Missal (1975) I: Advent, Christmas* (Rome, 1986), a reprint of articles in *Notitiae* 22 (1986) nos. 240–42. See also the six articles of Antoine Dumas, OSB, “Les sources du Missel Romain,” *Notitiae* 7 (1971), which indicate, season by season, the sources of all the prayers in the 1970 *Missale Romanum*.

⁶⁹ It was unrecognizable in the 1975 translation, “Jesus, our Lord, save us from our sins. Come, protect us from all dangers.”

the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ
with righteous deeds at his coming,
so that, gathered at his right hand,
they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom.

Being gathered at Christ's right hand in the kingdom is an allusion to the Last Judgment scene in Matthew 25:34-36 in which the king invites those at his right side to come and take possession of the kingdom prepared for them. The petition accords perfectly with the eschatological content of the readings of the first Sunday.

The collect of the second Sunday in RM 1962 is another *Excita* oration, "Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the ways of thine only-begotten Son." It has been moved to Thursday of the second week.⁷⁰ In its place is another prayer from the Old Gelasian (GeV 1153):

Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking hinder those
who set out in haste to meet your Son.

Here too we note an eschatological overtone missed in the previous translation. The petitioners are portrayed as *in occursum festinantes*, "hastening to meet" or to encounter Christ—like the bridesmaids in Matthew 25:6 being told at midnight that the bridegroom whom they await has come, and they go out to meet him. Thus the collects on each of the first two Sundays make reference to the Lord's Parousia.

While the collects of the first two Sundays refer to the Lord's glorious return, that of the third Sunday, taken from the *Rotulus* of Ravenna (Rot 25 = V 1356),⁷¹ focuses on the other half of the Advent thematic, preparation for the celebration of his birth.⁷² It prays,

⁷⁰ It too was unrecognizable when translated as "Almighty Father, give us the joy of your love to prepare the way for Christ our Lord."

⁷¹ This is a scroll containing forty-two orations dealing with themes characteristic of Advent and Christmas. Most of the prayers are included in the reformed Roman and Ambrosian missals. See Anthony Ward, SM, "The Rotulus of Ravenna as a Source in the 2000 'Missale Romanum,'" EL 121 (2007) 129-76. Latin texts of the prayers are printed in Mohlberg's edition of the *Veronensis*, here abbreviated V, pp. 173-78. They are identified by their number in the *Rotulus* and by their number in the Mohlberg edition.

⁷² The prayer after Communion does likewise. Retained from MR 1962, it asks that "this divine sustenance / may cleanse us of our faults / and prepare us for the coming feasts."

O God, who see how your people
faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity,
enable us, we pray,
to attain the joys of so great a salvation
and to celebrate them always
with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.

Mention of "the joys of salvation" and "glad rejoicing" echoes the traditional entrance chant of the third Sunday, *Gaudete in Domino semper*, "Rejoice in the Lord always." The biblical passage from which this exhortation is taken, Philippians 4:4-5, is read in Year C. The first reading in that year, Zechariah 3:14-18a, several times calls daughter Zion to rejoice at the presence of the king of Israel, the Lord, in her midst. In Year B both readings before the gospel, Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24, contain many references to rejoicing, as does the first reading in Year A, Isaiah 35:1-6a, 8a, 10. Expressions of joy and gladness, rejoicing and exultation, then, bind together the introit, collect, and readings of the third Sunday in all three years.

On the fourth Sunday in the 1962 Missal is the third of the *Excita* collects, crying out to the Lord, "Stir up thy power and come, and with great might succour us." The Missal of Paul VI shifts it to Thursday of the first week,⁷³ replacing it with the familiar prayer after the Angelus, rendered in RM 2011 as

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,
your grace into our hearts,
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son
was made known by the message of an Angel,
may by his Passion and Cross
be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.

The previous translation was a lot looser: "Lord, fill our hearts with your love, and as you revealed to us by an angel the coming of your Son as man, so lead us through his suffering and death to the glory of his resurrection." In the *Hadrianum* this is the post-Communion of the feast of the Annunciation on March 25 (H 142), but it functions perfectly as the collect of the fourth Sunday because of its mention of the incarnation, which is at the center of all the readings on this Sunday and, as we will see below, is even referred to in the prayer over

⁷³ RM 1975 translated it lamely as "Father, we need your help."

the offerings. However, it quickly passes from the incarnation to the paschal events and concludes with the petition that we be granted a share in the glory of the resurrection, which, of course, is reserved for the eschatological future. The prayer, then, admirably binds together the two advents of Christ and in the final petition connects the last Sunday of the season with the first two on which we prayed to be at Christ's side in his kingdom and to be admitted to his company in heaven.

This section would not be complete without a few words about the two other presidential prayers, the prayer over the offerings, and the prayer after Communion. On the first Sunday the prayer over the offerings is taken from the *Veronensis* (V 575). It asks that what we celebrate here below may "gain for us the prize of eternal redemption." In the gospel of Year C Jesus declares that "your redemption is near at hand" (Luke 21:28). The post-Communion of the first Sunday in RM 1962 is now on December 18. Its replacement is a combination of two texts from the collection in Verona—V 1053 and V 175—asking that "as we walk amid passing things" God teach us "to love the things of heaven." Both of these prayers fit well with the eschatological character of the first Sunday and probably for this reason were chosen to replace the secret and post-Communion of RM 1962.

On the second and third Sundays the prayer over the offerings and the prayer after Communion are the same in both missals. Those of the fourth Sunday, leaning toward the coming celebration of Christ's birth, are different. The prayer over the offerings is from the Sacramentary of Bergamo (B 84). Echoing the gospel of Year A when Mary is "found to be with child from the Holy Spirit" (Matt 1:18) and Year B when the angel Gabriel assures her that "the Holy Spirit will come upon you" (Luke 1:35), it prays:

May the Holy Spirit, O Lord,
sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar,
just as he filled with his power
the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The prayer after Communion, the first words of which are from V 741 and the rest a modification of a Lenten preface,⁷⁴ looks entirely toward Christmas, calling it "the feast day of our salvation" and asking that

⁷⁴ See Johnson-Ward, *Sources*, 495.

at its approach “we may press forward all the more eagerly/to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son’s Nativity.” As we will see shortly, the prayers over the offerings and the prayers after Communion of the first three Sundays are repeated on weekdays through the third Friday.

Following the prayer after Communion on every Sunday during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Easter, the current Missal indicates that “a formula of solemn blessing may be used.” These formulas are found after the Order of Mass. They are introduced by an invitation of the deacon or priest—bow down for the blessing—and consist of three parts after each of which the faithful respond, “Amen.” The first and third parts of the solemn blessing for Advent refer to both comings of Christ. The first part prays,

May the almighty and merciful God,
by whose grace you have placed your faith
in the First Coming of his Only Begotten Son
and yearn for his coming again,
sanctify you by the radiance of Christ’s Advent
and enrich you with his blessing.

The third part adds,

So that, rejoicing now with devotion
at the Redeemer’s coming in the flesh,
you may be endowed with the rich reward of eternal life
when he comes again in majesty.

2. *Weekdays through December 16*

In the Lectionary and Missal of Paul VI there are two series of weekday Masses. Both are new and have no counterparts in RM 1962. The first series is for days of the week: from Monday of the first week through Friday of the third week. The second series is for days of the month: December 17 through December 24. This series takes precedence over the first one, except for Sundays, and can begin as early as the second Saturday when Christmas falls on a Monday.

Readings. As the introduction to the Lectionary, no. 94, explains, in the first series “there are readings from the Book of Isaiah, distributed in accord with the sequence of the book itself and including the more important texts that are also read on the Sundays.” This holds at least

up to Thursday of the second week. Until then the first reading is a semicontinuous reading of Isaiah 1–40. The gospels are an assortment of passages from Matthew and Luke for the choice of which “the first reading has been taken into consideration,” declares the introduction to the Lectionary, no. 94. In those early days, though, the accent is on Isaiah.

This changes on Thursday of the second week when the emphasis shifts to the gospels. Beginning on that day and extending through Friday of the third week are passages from the gospels pertaining to John the Baptist. These are taken from Matthew and Luke except on the last day when John 5:33-36 is chosen. On these days, says the introduction to the Lectionary, no. 94, “the first reading is either a continuation of Isaiah or a text chosen in view of the Gospel.” Actually, there are only three readings during that period that are not from Isaiah: Sirach 48:1-3, 9-11 on the second Saturday, the praise of Elijah to whom Jesus in the gospel likens John the Baptist; Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a on Monday of the third week, the oracle of Balaam; and Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13 on Tuesday of the third week, the promise of salvation to a faithful remnant in Jerusalem.

Prayers. Of the seventeen collects of these Masses six are from the Old Gelasian,⁷⁵ six are from the *Rotulus* of Ravenna,⁷⁶ and five are from RM 1962—the three *Excita* collects of the first, second, and fourth Sundays transferred to Friday of the first week, Thursday of the second week, and Thursday of the first week, respectively, and two from ember Saturday, the third transferred to Thursday of the third week and the fourth to Wednesday of the third week.

Some of these prayers, especially those from the Old Gelasian, look to the Parousia. That of the first Monday, for example, asks God to

Keep us alert . . .
as we await the advent of Christ your Son,
so that, when he comes and knocks,
he may find us watchful in prayer
and exultant in his praise.

⁷⁵ M 1 = GeV 1128; W 1 = GeV 1131; F 2 = GeV 1136; M 3 = GeV 1137; Tu 3 = GeV 49; F 3 = GeV 1126.

⁷⁶ Tu 1 = Rot 3 (V 1334); Sa 1 = Rot 7 (V 1338); M 2 = Rot 13 (V 1344); Tu 2 = Rot 14 (V 1345); W 2 = Rot 6 (V 1337); Sa 2 = Rot 19 (V 1350).

That of the first Wednesday prays that

at the coming of Christ your Son
we may be found worthy of the banquet of eternal life
and merit to receive heavenly nourishment from his hands.

That of the second Friday requests that

as the author of our salvation himself has taught us,
we may hasten, alert and with lighted lamps,
to meet him when he comes.

All three of these prayers are based on Luke 12:35-37: "Have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. . . . He will . . . have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them."

Other prayers are concerned with preparation for Christmas. That of the second Monday asks that

with purity unblemished,
we, your servants, may come . . .
to celebrate the great mystery
of the Incarnation.

That of the second Tuesday prays that "we may look forward in joy / to the glorious Nativity of Christ." That of the first Saturday includes both comings. After recalling that God sent his "Only Begotten Son into this world / to free the human race from its ancient enslavement," it entreats him to "bestow on those who devoutly await him / the grace of your compassion from on high."

The prayers over the offerings and prayers after Communion on weekdays through the third Friday are not proper but, as was pointed out above, taken from the first three Sundays. Those of the first Sunday are repeated every Monday and Thursday, those of the second Sunday are repeated every Tuesday and Friday, and those of the third Sunday are repeated every Wednesday and on Saturday of the first two weeks but not the third. The third Saturday already forms part of the second series of weekday Masses, those meant for days of the month—that is, December 17 through December 24. For over

a thousand years the “O” antiphons⁷⁷ have been chanted with the Magnificat during this period, and Morning Prayer has had proper antiphons for each day. In 384 the Council of Saragossa decreed that starting on December 17, the faithful should gather in church daily until Epiphany.⁷⁸

3. *Weekdays from December 17 through December 24*

Readings. The introduction to the Lectionary, no. 94, states, “In the last week before Christmas the events that immediately prepared for the Lord’s birth are presented from the Gospels of Matthew (chapter 1) and Luke (chapter 1).” The readings from Matthew are on December 17 and 18—the opening genealogy in 1:1-17, followed by the annunciation to Joseph in 1:18-24. On December 19–24 is continuous reading of the first chapter of Luke—on December 19 the appearance of the angel Gabriel to Zechariah in the temple, announcing the conception of John (1:5-25); on December 20 the annunciation to Mary (1:26-38); on December 21 the visitation (1:39-45); on December 22 Mary’s Magnificat; on December 23 the birth and naming of John (1:57-66); and on December 24 the prophecy of Zechariah, or *Benedictus* (1:67-79). “The texts in the first reading,” the introduction to the Lectionary, no. 94, adds, “chosen in view of the Gospel reading, are from different Old Testament books and include important Messianic prophecies.” The content of this second series of weekday Masses, then, is basically the same as that of the Ember Days in RM 1962, only much fuller.

An innovation of the Lectionary of Paul VI is that the Alleluia verses at these Masses are the “O” antiphons.

Prayers. Like the collects of the first series of weekday Masses, those of December 17–24 derive from a variety of sources. Two are from RM 1962: that of December 18 is the second oration of ember Saturday. That of December 24 is the collect of ember Wednesday. Of the six others, four are from the *Rotulus* of Ravenna—those of December 17, 19,

⁷⁷ For short reflections on these, including indications of biblical allusions, see Nocent, *Liturgical Year I*, 162–67.

⁷⁸ See Connell, “The Origins and Evolution of Advent,” 363–65.

20, and 23.⁷⁹ These prayers do not so much prepare for Christmas as anticipate it.⁸⁰ The one for December 17 may be the richest doctrinally:

O God, Creator and Redeemer of human nature,
who willed that your Word should take flesh
in an ever-virgin womb,
look with favor on our prayers,
that your Only Begotten Son,
having taken to himself our humanity,
may be pleased to grant us a share in his divinity.

On December 20, when the first reading relates the Lord's sign to Ahaz in Isaiah 7:10-14 and the gospel recounts the annunciation to Mary from Luke 1:26-38, the collect is entirely Marian in content:

O God, eternal majesty, whose ineffable Word
the immaculate Virgin received through the message of an Angel
and so became the dwelling-place of divinity,
filled with the light of the Holy Spirit,
grant, we pray, that by her example
we may in humility hold fast to your will.

On December 21 both comings of Christ are included in the request

that those who rejoice
at the coming of your Only Begotten Son in our flesh
may, when at last he comes in glory,
gain the reward of eternal life.

Reference to Christ's coming "in our flesh" and his future coming "in glory" recalls the contrast many of the fathers made between the two advents of the Lord.

Unlike the first series of weekday Masses, each day from December 17 through December 24 has its own prayer over the offerings and prayer after Communion. On December 18 the post-Communion of the first Sunday in RM 1962 is used. The others are taken from a broad

⁷⁹ They are Rot 31 (= V 1362), Rot 2 (= V 1333), Rot 30 (= V 1361), and Rot 24 (= V 1355), respectively.

⁸⁰ Preface II of Advent declares this explicitly: "It is by his [Christ's] gift that already we rejoice / at the mystery of his Nativity."

range of ancient sources, sometimes with modifications. Several take note of the approach of Christmas. The prayer over the offerings on December 23 asks “that we may celebrate with minds made pure / the Nativity of our Redeemer.” The prayer after Communion of December 19 asks that “we may welcome the Nativity of our Savior.” Other prayers mention the Second Coming. The one after Communion on December 17 prays that “afame with your Spirit, / we may shine like bright torches before your Christ when he comes.” That of December 22 asks “that we may go out to meet our Savior / with worthy deeds when he comes”—another allusion to the bridesmaids of Matthew 25:6, first heard in the collect of the second Sunday. On December 24 both comings of Christ are mentioned but in different prayers. The prayer over the offerings refers to the Parousia, asking to be cleansed of sins in order “to stand ready with pure hearts / for the coming in glory of your Son.” The prayer after Communion acknowledges that “we prepare to celebrate in adoration / the festivities of your Son’s Nativity;” then adds a petition eschatological in character, praying that “we may possess in gladness / his everlasting rewards.”

4. *Two New Prefaces*

The third typical edition of the Missal of Paul VI contains some ninety-two prefaces, two of which are for Advent.⁸¹ The first is used through December 16; the second from December 17 to 24. Both have the same structure: recollection of divine munificence in past salvation history, a brief mention of present activity, and a longer expression of future hope. The subtitle of the first preface is “The two comings of Christ.” It begins by recalling that Christ

assumed at his first coming
the lowliness of human flesh,
and so fulfilled the design you formed long ago,
and opened for us the way to eternal salvation.

At present, it says, “we watch” and “we dare to hope.” The object of our hope is that “when he comes again in glory and majesty / and

⁸¹ The 1975 Roman Missal contained eighty-two prefaces. For their liturgical sources as well as possible biblical and patristic allusions, see Anthony Ward, SM, and Cuthbert Johnson, OSB, *The Prefaces of the Roman Missal* (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1989).

all is at last made manifest," we "may inherit the great promise." The preface gives daily expression to the theme that dominates the readings and prayers of the first part of the season and tells how what Christ did for us in the past makes us confident of receiving what he promised to do for us in the future.⁸² In other words, thanksgiving for the first coming generates longing for the second—and should, we might add, dispel inordinate fears of divine punishment. The contrast between the two comings—the humility of the first and the glory of the second—expounded by the fathers and mentioned in several prayers is also highlighted here.

The first section of the second preface singles out the persons who figure so prominently in the readings of the last eight days of Advent: the prophets, the virgin mother, the baptizer. It recalls that

the oracles of the prophets foretold him [Christ],
the Virgin Mother longed for him
with love beyond all telling,
John the Baptist sang of his coming
and proclaimed his presence when he came.

In the last week of this season, it confesses that "already we rejoice / at the mystery of his Nativity." Our hope is that when this mystery is finally celebrated at the arrival of Christmas, "he may find us watchful in prayer / and exultant in his praise." The subtitle of this preface is "The twofold expectation of Christ." The first preface spoke of the two comings of Christ. The second speaks of only one coming but of two groups waiting for it. The first group is the prophets, the virgin mother, and the baptizer. The second group is us. They awaited it in the past. We do so in the present. Theirs was historical. Ours is liturgical.

5. *Conclusion*

The Missal of Paul VI makes expectation of the second coming of Christ as integral a part of Advent as recollection of his first coming. It provides Mass formularies for all the weekdays of the season. Those

⁸² This corresponds exactly to the description of the season in Universal Norms, no. 39: a time "in which the First Coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered, and likewise a time when, by remembrance of this, minds and hearts are led to look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time."

on December 17–24 prepare for Christmas in an explicit way and are far more comprehensive in content than the Ember Days of RM 1962. Since many of the new prayers are taken from the Old Gelasian Sacramentary, Advent in the Missal of Paul VI gives wonderful expression, perhaps for the first time, to the full liturgical heritage of the church of Rome, presbyteral as well as papal. Prayers taken from the *Rotulus* of Ravenna disclose the profound doctrinal content of the season. The two new prefaces exemplify the best of what contemporary creative skill, rooted in tradition, can produce.

Whereas readings in the 1962 Missal are few and often randomly arranged, the postconciliar Lectionary is marvelous in structure and content. It includes virtually all the messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, especially those of Isaiah, all the texts about the mission of John the Baptist, and all the material in the gospels leading up to the birth of Jesus. Presidential prayers are frequently aligned with the readings.