



# The Formularies “Pro unitate Christianorum” in the 2002 *Missale Romanum*

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“[C]hange of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and merits the name ‘spiritual ecumenism.’”<sup>1</sup>

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With these words, the Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council highlighted the importance of liturgical prayer for the unity of Christians and for the unity of the Church.<sup>2</sup> Although Christians already rejoice in being united in a certain way by the shared gift of baptism,<sup>3</sup> we are nevertheless called under the inspiring grace of the Holy Spirit to make efforts in prayer, word, and action to attain that fullness of visible unity that Jesus Christ desires for his one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.<sup>4</sup> The unity of the church is ultimately a gift

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<sup>1</sup> Second Vatican Council, Decree on ecumenism *Unitatis redintegratio* (21 November 1964), §8, in Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (London; Washington, DC: Sheed & Ward; Georgetown University Press, 1990), 913\*. Henceforth: UR.

<sup>2</sup> UR 8 proceeds with the observation that “It is a recognized custom for Catholics to have frequent recourse to that prayer for the unity of the church in which the Savior himself on the eve of his death so fervently appealed to his Father, ‘that they may all be one’ (In 17, 21).” (Tanner, 913\*, *emphasis added*). [NOTE: In “left-to-right” language books (such as English, French, German, etc.), the Tanner edition of the ecumenical councils has regular pagination for the *verso* (“left” side) page for original language texts, and adds an *asterisk* (\*) to the pagination for the English translation for the *recto* (“right” side) page]

<sup>3</sup> Cf. UR 3: “[A]ll who have been justified by faith in baptism are members of Christ’s body, and have a right to be called Christians, and so are deservedly recognized as sisters and brothers in the Lord by the children of the Catholic Church.” (Tanner, 910\*).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. UR 4.

from God that can be established, maintained, and restored only by the power of God's grace. Through our prayer for the unity of the church in all times and places, we join ourselves to Jesus' prayer to *abba* that "thy will be done," in this case under the specific form of Christ's priestly prayer *ut unum sint* ("that they may be one"). In light of the observation of the Decree on Ecumenism that the eucharist both signifies and effects the unity of the church,<sup>5</sup> this study shall examine the liturgical formularies provided for celebrations of the eucharist offered specifically for the intention of the unity of Christians that appear in the 1970 *editio typica* of the *Missale Romanum* promulgated by Pope Paul VI<sup>6</sup>, and the 2002 *editio typica tertia* promulgated by Pope John Paul II.<sup>7</sup> I shall begin with a brief description of the development of the pre-conciliar prayer formularies for the unity of the church, including a consideration of the terminology utilized in different eras to refer to these texts. Next, I shall offer a detailed examination of the first of the three formularies provided in the 2002 *Missale Romanum* under the title *Pro unitate Christianorum* ("For Christian Unity"). Finally, I shall conclude with an overview of the findings of this study and possibilities for further research.

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## 1. LITURGICAL PRAYER FOR THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH AND THE UNITY OF CHRISTIANS

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Although liturgical prayers offered specifically for the unity of the church emerge at least as early as the *Didache*<sup>8</sup>, and in some sense can be said to permeate the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church,<sup>9</sup> here I shall focus on the development of a prayer formulary for the unity of the church that occurred in the context of the Western Schism (1378-1417).<sup>10</sup> In the Roman obedience (to the Roman sphere of

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. UR 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum. Editio typica.* (Vatican City: Typis polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970), 790-794. The formularies appear as number 13 in the section of the Missal labelled "Missæ et Orationes ad diversa."

<sup>7</sup> *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum Ioannis Pauli PP. II cura recognitum. Editio typica tertia.* (Vatican City: Typis Vaticanis, 2002), 1111-1115. Although the text of these formularies remains unaltered, they appear as number 17 in the expanded section of "Missæ et Orationes ad diversa" offered in the *editio typica tertia*. When appropriate, I will henceforth refer to MR1970/2002 in light of the continuity of the two editions of the *Missale Romanum* with respect to the texts of these formularies.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Didache* 10:5: "Remember your church, O Lord; save it from all evil, and perfect it in your love. And gather it from the four winds into your kingdom, which you prepared for it." Translation from *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 1, trans. Bart D. Ehrman, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 433 (emphasis added).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Gregory Baum, *That They May Be One: A Study of Papal Doctrine (Leo XIII-Pius XII)* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Co., 1958), 127-134; John F. Romano, *Liturgy and Society in Early Medieval Rome* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 109-139.

<sup>10</sup> For a brief overview of the Western Schism, see W. Ullmann, "Western Schism," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Gale, 2003), vol. 14:691-94.

ecclesiastical authority), the feast of the Visitation was instituted in 1389 with the explicit purpose of seeking the Virgin Mary's intercession to end the schism.<sup>11</sup> In the Avignon obedience, Clement VII (1342-1394) initiated a separate initiative of prayer for unity in 1392 in the form of a Mass formulary titled "Pro sedacione scismatis," which he ordered to be celebrated regularly in a solemn form.<sup>12</sup> Although perhaps partially influenced by a prayer formulary widely used in the 13th and early 14th centuries for praying for the recovery of the Holy Land, the intervention of the Avignonese Clement VII seems to have been directly influenced by a set of prayers *pro pace et pro unitate ecclesie* ("for peace and for Christian unity") instituted by Pope John XXII (1249-1334) in the early 14th century.<sup>13</sup>

In the period following the conclusion of the Western Schism, both the Feast of the Visitation and the formulary promulgated by Clement VII were gradually adopted throughout both sides of the reunited church.<sup>14</sup> The formulary of Clement VII was eventually adopted in a slightly modified form in 1570 *Missale Romanum* promulgated by Pius V, now appearing as a votive Mass with the title *Missa ad*

<sup>11</sup> On the institution of the feast of the Visitation, cf. Ignazio M. Calabuig, "The Liturgical Cult of Mary in the East and West," in *Liturgical Time and Space*, ed. Anscar J. Chupungco, Handbook for Liturgical Studies 5 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2000), 219-97, at 292-295; Giuliano Di Bacco and John Nadas, "The Papal Chapels and Italian Sources of Polyphony during the Great Schism," in *Papal Music and Musicians in late Medieval and Renaissance Rome*, ed. Richard Sherr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 44-92, at 73-74; Ira Westergård, *Approaching Sacred Pregnancy: The Cult of the Visitation and Narrative Altarpieces in Late Fifteenth-Century Florence*, Bibliotheca Historica 109 (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 2007), 56-67.

<sup>12</sup> For the history and text of the formulary promulgated by Clement VII, Robert Amiet, "La messe "pro unitate ecclesiae," *Ephemerides liturgicae* 76 (1962): 296-334. Amiet's 1962 article is a revision of an earlier 1954 article: Robert Amiet, "La messe pour l'unité des chrétiens," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 28 (1954): 1-35. In drawing out the connection of the formulary to the Western Schism, Amiet complements the treatment given by Séverien Salaville, "L'origine avignonnaise de la Messe "ad tollendum schisma," *L'Année théologique* 3 (1942): 117-22. For several comments and expansions on the work of Salaville and Amiet, see Emil J. Lengeling, "'Pro unitate Christianorum" im neuen Missale Romanum," in *Communio Sanctorum: mélanges offerts à Jean-Jacques von Allmen* (Geneva: Labor et fides, 1982), 204-23, at 207-211.

<sup>13</sup> See Amiet, "La Messe "pro Unitate Ecclesiae," 315-321.

<sup>14</sup> On the gradual adoption of the feast of the Visitation, see Calabuig, "The Liturgical Cult of Mary in the East and West," 294. On the spread of the formulary of Clement VII, see Amiet, "La Messe "pro Unitate Ecclesiae," 322-330. Amiet lists (p. 325) a number of titles under which the formulary appeared in the manuscript tradition: "Missa pro unione ecclesie; Missa specialis pro scismate ecclesie; Missa devota pro unione ecclesie; Missa pro tempore scismatis; Missa pro sedacione scismatis ecclesie; Missa pro scismate; Missa propria pro sedacione pacis ecclesie; Missa pro sedacione scismatis et unione ecclesie; Missa pro pace ecclesie; Missa pro extirpatione scismatis."

*tollendum schisma, vel pro quacunq[ue] necessitate Ecclesiae*,<sup>15</sup> a title which in later printings was simplified to *Missa ad tollendum schisma* (“mass to get rid of the schism”).<sup>16</sup>

In the early to mid-20th century, renewed attention was given to this formulary in the context of the ecumenical movement. As early as 1922, the liturgist Sévérien Salaville began to play an active role in promoting this votive Mass as a mode of prayer for unity.<sup>17</sup> In the autobiographical introduction to his 1964 volume *Chrétiens en dialogue*, Yves Congar wrote fondly of his frequent celebration of this votive Mass: “It was while meditating upon the seventeenth chapter of St John’s Gospel that I clearly recognized my vocation to work for the unity of all who believe in Jesus Christ. Ever since the days immediately following my ordination [on 25 July 1930], I have often repeated that prayer, especially when celebrating the votive Mass *pro unitate*...”<sup>18</sup> Congar’s landmark 1937 *Chrétiens désunis* makes several references to this Mass formulary, which in his unpublished 1948 revision

<sup>15</sup> For the text of the 1570 edition, see Manlio Sodi and Achille Maria Triacca, eds., *Missale Romanum: Editio Princeps (1570)*, Monumenta Liturgica Concilii Tridentini 2 (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998), 628-630 (new pagination).

<sup>16</sup> See, for instance, *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini restitutum, Pii V Pont. Max. iussu editum, et Clementis VIII auctoritate recognitum* (Paris: Nicolai de la Vigne, 1628) lxxv: “Missa ad tollendum schisma.” (<http://books.google.com/books?id=M1v4zC1RiS8C&pg=PR65>).

<sup>17</sup> Sévérien Salaville, *Messes votives pour l’union des églises et pour la propagation de la foi. Texte du missel, avec traduction et commentaire, suivi d’un choix de chants et de prières, par le P. Sévérien Salaville* (Lille: Société Saint-Augustin, Desclée, De Brouwer et Cie, 1922). Cf. Sévérien Salaville, “Quomodo liturgia sacra nos doceat veram unionis methodum,” in *Acta IV. Conventus Velehradensis: Ut omnes unum sint* (Hukvaldy: Sumptibus Archiepiscopi Olomucensis, 1925), 215–17. For a list of Salaville’s numerous works on liturgy and ecumenism, see Raymond Janin and G. Nowack, “Bibliographie du R. P. Sévérien Salaville,” *Revue des études byzantines* 16, no. 1 (1958): 15–27.

<sup>18</sup> Yves Congar, *Yves Congar, Chrétiens en dialogue: Contributions catholiques à l’Écumenisme*, Unam Sanctam 50 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1964), xi. English translation from Yves Congar, *Dialogue between Christians: Catholic Contributions to Ecumenism*, trans. Philip Loretz (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1966), 3. In connection with his statement concerning John 17, Congar makes the following remarks that shed light on the liturgical context of his discovery of a vocation to ecumenism: “The Dominican liturgy for Maundy Thursday contains a solemn chant consisting of chapters 13-17 of St John’s Gospel, the *Sermo Domini*. As I was then a deacon in the house of studies at Saulchoir, I had asked to be allowed to perform this function in Holy Week of 1930.” (English translation, p. 3, n. 4).

of the volume he labeled as a “très belle messe votive.”<sup>19</sup> Paul Couturier began in 1936 to propose the title *Messe pour l'unité des chrétiens* (“mass for Christian unity”) as a more positive way of referring to the “Missa ad tollendum schisma.”<sup>20</sup> In the estimation of Robert Amiet,<sup>21</sup> this desire was “endorsed and authenticated” in the revision of the rubrics of the *Missale Romanum* in 1960, when the name of the formulary was changed to “Missa pro unitate Ecclesiae,”<sup>22</sup> although curiously the title of the formulary appears as a reversed order in the typical edition of 1962 as “Pro Ecclesiae unitate.”<sup>23</sup> Finally, on the eve of the Council, the biographer and collaborator of Couturier, Maurice Villain, wrote glowingly concerning this votive Mass: “It breathes such an atmosphere of humility, supplication, and peace, and it is so biblical in tone that our Protestant brothers are glad to adopt it as a scheme for their service.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Congar’s 1937 *Chrétiens désunis* confirms the importance of the formulary for his ecumenical imagination by closing with a scriptural quotation that Congar explicitly mentions is derived from the alleluia verse of the Dominican version of this formulary; see Yves Congar, Yves Congar, *Chrétiens désunis: Principes d’un “Œuménisme” Catholique*, Unam Sanctam 1 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1937), 345. The Dominican formulary preserved the original scriptural texts from the Clement VII formulary for the graduale (responsorium) and alleluia verses, whereas MR1570 and its descendants present a different set of texts for these chants; cf. Amiet, “La Messe “pro Unitate Ecclesiae,”” 329. Further, on p. 382, in an appendix showing the diversity of terminology used by the Church for referring to non-Catholics, Congar emphasizes the witness of the votive Mass prayers. In Congar’s unpublished 1948 revision of *Chrétiens Désunis*, he expands his treatment of this formulary in light of Salaville’s 1942 article on the relationship of the formulary to the Western Schism; see the notes appended to p. 382 in the online version of the 1948 revision on the website of Editions du Cerf: Yves Congar, “Nouvelle version inédite de Chrétiens Désunis du cardinal Yves Congar, O.P.,” 2003, [http://www.editionsducerf.fr/site\\_congar/presentation.html](http://www.editionsducerf.fr/site_congar/presentation.html): “La liturgie romaine demande à Dieu de “ adunare “ son Église (Canon, *Te igitur*), de la “ pacificare et coadunare “ (prières avant la communion): il s’agit de l’unité interne de l’Église elle-même, œuvre de Dieu qu’on lui demande chaque jour, comme une grâce, de vouloir bien opérer. Dans la très belle messe votive “ pro unione Ecclesiae tempore schismatis “, composée sous le pape Clément VII lors du grand schisme d’Occident (voir S. Salaville, dans *L’Année théologique*, 1942, pp. 117-122), l’Église prie ainsi : “ Super populum christianum tuae unionis gratiam clementer infunde “ (*Collecte* : comp. la *Secrète* : “ pro unione populi christiani “, et la *Postcommunio* : “ in tua Ecclesia unitatis operetur effectum “).

<sup>20</sup> See Amiet, “La Messe “pro Unitate Ecclesiae,”” 332.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> See John XXIII, *Motu Proprio Rubricarum Instructum*, (25 July 1960) and the accompanying documents in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 52 (1960): 593–740, at 721: “62. Missa votiva “Contra paganos” inscribatur “Missa pro Ecclesiae defensione” ; Missa autem “Ad tollendum schisma” abhinc dicatur “Missa pro unitate Ecclesiae”.

<sup>23</sup> See MR1962, §6269, [89] (old numbering), 901 (new numbering). Nevertheless, in the “Rubricae generales” of the 1962 edition, the phrase “pro unitate Ecclesiae” appears in the context of describing the assignation of the violet vestments; see MR1962, xx (old numbering), 20 (new numbering).

<sup>24</sup> Maurice Villain, *Unity: A History and Some Reflections*, trans. J.R. Foster (Baltimore: Helicon, 1963), 220. This text was originally published in 1961 under the title *Introduction à l’œuménisme*.

## 2. THE FORMULARIES “PRO UNITATE CHRISTIANORUM” IN MR1970/2002

In transition from MR1962 to MR1970, three major changes were made to the votive Mass for the unity of the church.

1. The title of the Mass was changed from “Pro Ecclesiae unitate / Pro unitate Ecclesiae” to “Pro unitate Christianorum.”
2. The euchological texts dating back to the 14th century formulary were adapted, in some cases combining material from other euchological texts and, in other cases, making minor adjustments.
3. Finally, along with the addition of a newly composed preface, two additional formularies were provided alongside the formulary adapted from the MR1962 votive Mass.

Thus, MR1970/2002 provides three formularies titled *Pro unitate Christianorum*, which are identified in the missal as A, B, and C. In addition to sharing a proper preface, each formulary provides an antiphon *ad introitum*, two collects, a *super oblata* prayer, an antiphon *ad communionem*, and a *post communionem* prayer.

In MR1970/2002, the Mass formularies are directed towards the unity of *Christians* instead of the unity of *the church*. This change was anticipated several years before the publication of the MR1970 by a change in the title of one of the Solemn Orations in the Good Friday liturgy. In the 1955 revision of Holy Week, the Solemn Orations were newly provided with titles for each of the nine prayers; in the case of the seventh prayer, the oration of the 1953 *Missale Romanum* was provided with the title “Pro unitate ecclesiae” while the text of the invitation and prayer remained unchanged.<sup>25</sup> On 7 March 1965, the Sacred Congregation of Rites promulgated a text that made several changes to the 1955 Holy Week

<sup>25</sup> *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1956), 90-91: “7. Pro unitate Ecclesiae. Oremus et pro haereticis et schismaticis: ut Deus et Dominus noster eruat eos ab erroribus universis; et ad sanctam matrem Ecclesiam catholicam atque apostolicam revocare dignetur. Oremus. Flectamus genua. Levate. Omnipotens sempiternae Deus, qui salvas omnes, et neminem vis perire: respice ad animas diabolica fraude deceptas; ut, omni haeretica pravitate deposita, errantium corda respiscant, et ad veritatis tuae redeant unitatem. Per Dominum.” For the 1953 version, which is identical except for appearing without a title, see: *Missale Romanum: Ex Decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini Restitutum S. Pii V Pontificis Maximi Jussu Editum Aliorum Pontificum Cura Recognitum a Pio X Reformatum et Benedicti XV Auctoritate Vulgatum Editio VII Juxta Typica Vaticanam* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1953), 181-182. In the MR1962, this text remained unchanged from the 1955 revision: see MR1962, §1129-1230, 173 (old numbering), 257 (new numbering). As noted above, this title was subsequently also used for the votive Mass formerly labeled “Ad tollendum schisma.”

liturgy, including modifications to four of the solemn orations of Good Friday.<sup>26</sup> According to the decree promulgating these changes, “it seemed well to modify a phrase here and there in the solemn prayers for Good Friday so that they might be more in accord with the mind and decrees [*spiritui et decretis*] of Vatican Council II regarding ecumenism.”<sup>27</sup> With respect to the seventh prayer, the title was changed to “Pro unitate Christianorum”<sup>28</sup> and substantially adapted texts were provided for both the invitation to prayer and the oration itself.<sup>29</sup>

In the transition from the 1962 votive Mass “Pro unitate Ecclesiae” to the first of the 1970/2002 Mass formularies “Pro unitate Christianorum,” the *collecta* and the *secreta* of the 1962 formulary were substantially altered, while still bearing traces of the earlier versions, while the *postcommunio* received only a minor alteration (*these changes will be discussed in more detail below*). In addition to these three prayers, the first formulary provides a second collect that Coppieters ‘t Wallant has identified as being a new composition based on texts from the Decree on

<sup>26</sup> Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Variationes in Ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae Inducendae: Editio Typica* (Vatican City: Typis polyglottis Vaticanis, 1965). Henceforth this publication will be referred to as OHS 1965. On the 1965 changes to the Holy Week liturgy, cf. Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy 1948-1975*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1990), 116-119; Piero Marini, *A Challenging Reform: Realizing the Vision of the Liturgical Renewal 1963-1975*, ed. Mark R. Francis, John R. Page, and Keith F. Pecklers (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2007), 126-127.

<sup>27</sup> Sacred Congregation of Rites, Decree *Quamplures Episcopi* (7 March 1965), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 57 (1965): 412-13. English translation from International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *Documents on the Liturgy, 1963-1979—Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts*, ed. Thomas C. O’Brien (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1982), no. 454, §3853, p. 1186.

<sup>28</sup> Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Variationes in Ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae Inducendae*, 20-21. In an essay published in *L’Osservatore Romano* on March 19, 1965, Annibale Bugnini emphasized the change of title of the prayer for unity, suggesting that the title now speaks on the unity of Christians rather than for the unity of the Church because the Church has always been one; see Annibale Bugnini, “Per l’attuazione della Costituzione liturgica: Le ‘Variationes’ ad alcuni testi della Settimana Santa,” *L’Osservatore Romano* (March 19, 1965). I have consulted this essay in a French translation: Annibale Bugnini, “Modifications aux oraisons solennelles du Vendredi saint,” *La Documentation catholique* 62 (1965): 603-4. In evaluating this explanation, it may be recalled that paragraph 8 of the Decree on Ecumenism speaks both of prayer for the unity of Christians as well as for the unity of the Church. Further, in his September 3, 1965 encyclical *Mysterium fidei*, Pope Paul VI invites bishops to teach the faithful “sine intermissione Deum obsecrare, seipsos Domino ut acceptabile sacrificium offerre pro Ecclesiae pace et unitate” and states that this task especially belongs to religious men and women: “Hoc autem obsecrandi et se Deo devovendi studium pro Ecclesiae unitate religiosi, sive viri sive mulieres, potissimum suum esse intellegant.” In the same document, Paul VI also speaks of the desire for the “unitatis omnium christianorum.” See Paul VI, “Encyclical Mysterium Fidei (3 September 1965),” *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 57 (1965): 753-774, at 772-773 (emphasis added). These passages suggest that the shift in title in the 1965 Good Friday oration should not be interpreted as a repudiation of the earlier terminology.

<sup>29</sup> Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Variationes in Ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae Inducendae*, 20-21: “7. Pro unitate Christianorum. Oremus pro universis fratribus in Christum credentibus: ut Deus et Dominus noster eos, veritatem facientes, in una Ecclesia sua congregare et custodire dignetur. Oremus. Flectamus genua. Levate. Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, qui dispersa congregas: respice ad oves gregis tui; ut, quos unum baptisma sacravit, eos et fidei iungat integritas et vinculum caritatis. Per Dominum.”

Ecumenism *Unitatis redintegratio* and a newly composed preface of which Cuthbert Johnson and Anthony Ward have conducted a source study.<sup>30</sup> In addition to the first formulary based partially on the MR1962 formulary, MR1970/2002 provides two additional formularies that, according to Coppieters 't Wallant, are adapted from a variety of historical euchological sources and texts from the *Unitatis redintegratio*.<sup>31</sup>

Although these second two of the three euchological formularies for the unity of Christians are worthy of further attention, in the pages that follow I shall focus on the three prayers of the first formulary that are adapted from the MR1962 votive Mass.<sup>32</sup> This will be followed by a detailed study of the adaptations made in the 1970/2002 versions, considering both the relationship of the 1970/2002 prayers to the 1962 versions as well as the other euchological sources that seem to have been utilized in the redaction of these prayers.

### Collect 1

*Omnipotens sempiterne Deus,  
qui dispersa congregas et congregata  
conservas, ad gregem Filii tui placatus  
intende, ut, quos unum sacrauit  
baptisma, eos et fidei iungat integritas,  
et vinculum societ caritatis.*

Almighty eternal God, who gather those who have been dispersed and preserve those who have been gathered, gently attend to the flock of your Son that integrity of faith may bind and the bond of charity may unite those whom one baptism has sanctified.<sup>33</sup>

The first collect of 17A is nearly identical with the fifth prayer of the Good Friday “Oratio universalis,” which is titled “Pro unitate Christianorum.”<sup>34</sup> Antoine Dumas identifies the 1952 Good Friday oration “Pro unitate Ecclesiae” as a source for the contemporary prayer, while referring the reader also to the 1965 version of

<sup>30</sup> Bertrandus Coppieters 't Wallant, ed., “Missale Romanum 2002,” in *Corpus Orationum: Tomus XIV: Subsidia Liturgica II*, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 160M (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 151–242, at 226. Cuthbert Johnson and Anthony Ward, “Fontes Liturgici. The Sources of the Roman Missal (1975) II: Prefaces,” *Notitiae* 23 (1987): 408–1010, at 904–910.

<sup>31</sup> See Coppieters 't Wallant, “Missale Romanum 2002,” 226–227.

<sup>32</sup> For a broader overview of the euchological prayers, readings and chants of Mass for the unity of Christians in the Missal of Paul VI, see Lengeling, ““Pro unitate Christianorum” im neuen Missale Romanum,” 204–23, at 211–219.

<sup>33</sup> This translation and those that follow are offered by the present author for study purposes.

<sup>34</sup> See MR2002, p. 318–319. The only difference between the two prayers is that the words “sacrauit baptisma” in the unity of Christians formulary appear as “baptisma sacrauit” in the Good Friday formulary. Cf. Zvonko Pažin and Karlo Višaticki, “Sveopća molitva bogoslužja Velikog petka,” *Crkva u svijetu* 47 (2012): 210–34, at 225.



the Good Friday prayer.<sup>35</sup> Cuthbert Johnson describes the prayer as a “*compositio nova*,” while referring the reader both to the 1962 Good Friday oration as well as to a prayer for the blessing of palms for Palm Sunday found in editions of the *Missale Romanum* prior to the 1955 Holy Week reform.<sup>36</sup> Finally, in addition to the euchological sources already identified by Dumas and Johnson, Coppieters ‘t Wallant identifies the collect of the 1962 votive Mass “*Pro Ecclesiae unitate*” as a source for the contemporary prayer.<sup>37</sup>

The following table provides the text of the prayers referenced by these three authors,<sup>38</sup> and indicates direct textual parallels to the 1970/2002 prayer in bold and thematic parallels in italics.

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### 1953 Palm Sunday Blessing (MR1953, p. 143)

**Deus, qui dispersa congregas, et congregata conservas:** qui populis obviam Jesu ramos portantibus benedixisti: benedic etiam hos ramos palmae et olivae, quos tui famuli ad honorem nominis tui fideliter suscipiunt: ut, in quemcumque locum introducti fuerint, tuam benedictionem habitatores loci illius consequantur: et omni adversitate effugata, dextera tua protegat quos redemit Jesus Christus Filius tuus Dominus noster.

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<sup>35</sup> Antoine Dumas, “Les sources du nouveau Missel Romain,” *Notitiae* 7 (1971): 37–42, 74–77, 94–95, 134–136, 276–280, 409–410, at 74. Dumas refers to the Good Friday oration according to the version presented by Placide Bruylants, *Les oraisons du Missel Romain: texte et histoire*, 2 vols. (Louvain: Centre de Documentation et d’Information Liturgiques, 1952), §799 (2:227). The text of the oration presented by Bruylants, although it pre-dates the 1955 Holy Week Reforms of Pius XII, is identical with that found in the 1962 *Missale Romanum*; see 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 (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007), §1230, 173 (old pagination), 257 (new pagination).

<sup>36</sup> Cuthbert Johnson, “The Sources of the Roman Missal (1975), Proprium de Tempore, Proprium de Sanctis,” *Notitiae* 32 (1996): 1–180, at 61. For the Palm Sunday blessing, Johnson refers to Bruylants §325 (2:90–91). This prayer may be found in *Missale Romanum: Ex Decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini Restitutum S. Pii V Pontificis Maximi Jussu Editum Aliorum Pontificum Cura Recognitum a Pio X Reformatum et Benedicti XV Auctoritate Vulgatum Editio VII Juxta Typica Vaticanam* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1953), 143 (henceforth: MR1953).

<sup>37</sup> Coppieters ‘t Wallant, “*Missale Romanum 2002*,” 167. Coppieters ‘t Wallant refers to CO1583 (CCSL 160A:318), which corresponds with the collect for the votive Mass “*Pro Ecclesiae unitate*” in MR1962, §6270 (original p. [89], new p. 901).

<sup>38</sup> I have omitted from consideration one source referred to by Coppieters ‘t Wallant: CO1536 (CCSL 160A:299), a collect which is identified with only a single source, a 10th–11th century Sacramentary originally from the Iberian peninsula; cf. José Janini, ed., “*Officia Silensia. Liber Misticus III*,” *Hispania Sacra* 31 (1978): 357–465, at 362–363, §20, §24. Janini’s edition does not provide the full text of the prayer, and I have not had the opportunity to access his full text edition of the *Liber missarum de Toledo* in which he provides the full text, but the version printed in CO is as follows: “*Deus, qui dispersa congregas et congregata conservas, da inviolabilem populo tuo in bona voluntate concordiam, ut, quos fecisti fidem conservare, tua semper facias pace gaudere.*” Cf. José Janini, *Liber missarum de Toledo y libros místicos* (Toledo: Instituto de Estudios Visigótico-Mozárabes, 1982–1983). This text shares its opening words with the Palm Sunday blessing; it seems unlikely that this specific prayer was consulted directly in the preparation of the MR1970 prayer, as it was not edited until the 1970s.

**1962 Good Friday prayer (MR1962, §1230)**

**Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, qui** salvos omnes, et neminem vis perire: respice ad animas diabolica fraude deceptas; ut, omni haeretica pravitate deposita, errantium corda respiscant, et ad veritatis tuae redeant unitatem.

**1962 Missa Pro Ecclesiae unitate (MR1962, §6271)**

**Deus, qui** errata corrigis, et **dispersa congregas, et congregata conservas:** quaesumus, super populum christianum tuae unionis gratiam clementer infunde; ut, divisione reiecta, vero pastori Ecclesiae tuae se uniens, tibi digne valeat famulari.

**1965 Good Friday Prayer (OHS 1965)**

**Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, qui dispersa congregas:** respice ad oves *gregis tui*; **ut, quos unum baptisma sacrauit, eos et fidei iungat integritas et vinculum [ ]<sup>39</sup> caritatis.**

**1970/2002 Good Friday / Missa pro unitate Christianorum Prayer**

Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, qui dispersa congregas et congregata conservas, ad gregem Filii tui placatus intende, ut, quos unum baptisma sacrauit [vel: sacrauit baptisma], eos et fidei iungat integritas, et vinculum societ caritatis.

The first collect for the formulary for the unity of Christians begins with the formulaic incipit “Omnipotens sempiternus Deus.” In addition to other euchological uses, this phrase is used to begin each of the Good Friday intercessory prayers in MR1953, MR1962, OHS1965 and MR1970.<sup>40</sup> It seems likely that the phrase appears in the adapted version of the votive Mass collect in light of the decision made to use the same collect in both the 1970 Good Friday liturgy and the 1970 Christian unity formulary.

The collect then describes God as one who “dispersa congregas et congregata conservas.” In addition to having thematic similarities to biblical texts such as Is 56:8 and Jn 11:42, this phrase is identical with one found in a prayer that appears in various medieval liturgical and hagiographical texts that appears perhaps as early as the 6th century: “*Deus pater Domini nostri Iesu Christi, qui dispersa congregas*

<sup>39</sup> This space is included to emphasize the absence of a second verb in the 1965 version, which uses “iungat” to govern both “integritas” and “vinculum.”

<sup>40</sup> See also the table of prayers for this liturgy presented by Herman Schmidt, *Hebdomada sancta* vol. 1 (Rome: Herder, 1956-1957), 785.

*et congregata conservas, auge fidem et fiduciam servis tuis...*<sup>41</sup> The same phrase appears in a blessing for palms on Palm Sunday that is found as early as the 9th-10th century Sacramentary of Monza<sup>42</sup> and is used widely in later texts, including the *Missale Romanum* prior to the revision of 1955.<sup>43</sup> The phrase appears with the addition of an antecedent statement (“qui errata corrigis”) in the collect for the *Missa pro unitate Ecclesiae* of MR1962.<sup>44</sup> In the 1965 Good Friday prayer, only half of this phrase is included: “qui dispersa congregas.” Of these texts, it seems likely that the redactors of the 1970 Good Friday/Unity collect were directly reliant upon the 1962 *Missa pro Ecclesiae unitate* prayer, which might also have been an inspiration for the redactors of the 1965 Good Friday prayer; nevertheless, it is also possible that the 1953 Palm Sunday prayer, although not present in the MR1962, could also have been consulted directly in the composition of the 1970 prayer.

The 1970/2002 collect next asks that God “ad gregem Filii tui placatus intende.” This seems to be a rearrangement of the parallel phrase of the 1965 collect: “respice ad oves gregis tui,” a phrase which may have parallels with a *super populum* prayer in the Gellone sacramentary.<sup>45</sup> In the 1970/2002 version, Christians are spoken of as the flock of the Son of God, rather than as the sheep of God’s flock. The 1970/2002 collect similarly rearranges the final phrase of the 1965 collect; whereas in the 1965 version “iungat” applies to both “fidei ... integritas” and “vinculum caritatis,” the 1970/2002 version adds the thematically similar word “societ” to

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Charles Coebergh, “Le pape Zacharie et la bénédiction des rameaux,” *Studia Patristica* 10 (1970): 328–32, who quotes this text from a *passio* of St. Marius and companions that he suggests may be from as early as the 6th century and that is quoted in a martyrology of the Venerable Bede (d. 735). Sts. Marius and his companions are purported to have been martyred under Emperor Claudius II in 270, and thus postdate the pontificate of St. Callistus I, Pope (d. 222), but in other texts the prayer is associated with the Pope Callistus I rather than the later 3rd century bishop Callistus; see, for instance, the Office antiphon *Beatus Callistus* (CAO 1617), which is associated in some manuscripts with the October 14 feast of St. Callistus I: “Beatus Callistus dedit orationem dicens *deus qui dispersa congregas et congregata conservas* auge fidem et fiduciam servis tuis per Christum dominum nostrum,” in René Jean Hesbert, ed., *Corpus antiphonalium officii*, *Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta*, Series major, Fontes 7-12, vol. 3 (Rome: Herder, 1963-79), 74.

<sup>42</sup> Alban Dold and Klaus Gamber, eds., *Das Sakramentar von Monza (im Cod. F 1/101 der dortigen Kapitelsbibliothek): ein aus Einzel-Libelli redigiertes Jahresmessbuch; mit Anhang ein Scheyerer Sakramentar-Fragment im Monza-Typ*, *Texte und Arbeiten* 3 (Beuron: Beuronischer Kunstverlag, 1957) 18\*, §251.

<sup>43</sup> MR1953, 143. Cf. Bruylants §325, 2:90-91.

<sup>44</sup> Given the somewhat wide diffusion of the text attributed to Clement and the perhaps wider diffusion of the Palm Sunday blessing, it seems possible that one or perhaps both of these texts served as euchological sources for the original redactors of the MR1962 collect, which is identical with the version promulgated by the Avignonese Clement VII in the 14th century.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Antoine Dumas and Jean Deshusses, eds., *Liber sacramentorum Gellonensis*, 2 vols., *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 159-159A (Turnholt: Brepols, 1981), §2057, p. 2057: “*Respice domine populum tuum et uigila super oves gregis tui. ...*” For the words “oves gregis tui,” cf. the *Psalterium Romanum* versions of Ps 73:1 and Ps 78:13 in Robert Weber, ed., *Le Psautier Romain et les autres anciens Psautiers Latins*, *Collectanea Biblica Latina* 10 (Roma: Abbaye Saint-Jérôme, 1953) 172, 197.

apply to “vinculum caritatis,” thus creating a parallel construction between “et fidei iungat integritas” and “et vinculum societ caritatis.”

In summary, the first collect of the first formulary for the unity of Christians in MR1970/2002 is an adaptation of the 1965 Good Friday collect for the unity of Christians which incorporates elements that are likely taken from the 1962 collect of the votive Mass for the unity of the Church.

### Super oblata

*Qui una semel hostia, Domine, adoptionis tibi populum acquisisti, unitatis et pacis in Ecclesia tua propitius nobis dona concedas.*

O Lord, who by one sacrifice have acquired once for all a people of adoption for yourself, graciously grant to us the gifts of unity and peace in your Church.

The *super oblata* prayer of the first formulary for the unity of Christians is shared in MR1970/2002 with Dominica XXI “Per annum.”<sup>46</sup> According to Dumas, this text was adapted directly from the *secreta* of the votive Mass for the unity of the church.<sup>47</sup> Cuthbert Johnson refers to the text as a “compositio nova,” while also referencing the votive Mass *secreta*.<sup>48</sup> In addition to mentioning the votive Mass source, Coppieters ‘t Wallant identifies parallels with several scriptural texts (Heb 9:26, Heb 10:12, 1 Pt 2:9) and the *super oblata* for Corpus Christi.<sup>49</sup> The table below presents these texts with direct verbal correspondences in bold and textual similarities in underlined text.

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#### Heb 9:26

alioquin oportebat eum frequenter pati ab origine mundi nunc autem **semel** in consummatione saeculorum ad destitutionem peccati per hostiam suam apparuit.<sup>50</sup>

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#### Heb 10:12

hic autem unam pro peccatis offerens hostiam in sempiternum sedit in dextera dei.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> MR2002, p. 471.

<sup>47</sup> Dumas, “Les sources du missel Romain,” 94. Dumas refers to Bruylants §690 (2:192).

<sup>48</sup> Johnson, “The Sources of the Roman Missal (1975), Proprium de Tempore, Proprium de Sanctis,” 95.

<sup>49</sup> Coppieters ‘t Wallant, “*Missale Romanum* 2002,” 177 (in the entry for Dominica XXI).

<sup>50</sup> Robert Weber and Roger Gryson, eds., *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 5th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007), 1851 (henceforth Weber-Gryson).

<sup>51</sup> Weber-Gryson, 1852.

**1 Pt 2:9a**

vos autem genus electum regale sacerdotium gens sancta populus acquisitionis ut virtutes<sup>52</sup>

**1962 votive Mass “pro unitate Ecclesiae”**

Munera haec pro unione populi christiani tibi, **Domine**, oblata sanctifica: per quae **unitatis et pacis in Ecclesia tua nobis dona concedas.**

**1970/2002 Corpus Christi super oblata<sup>53</sup>**

Ecclesiae tuae, quaesumus, **Domine, unitatis et pacis propitius dona concede**, quae sub oblatiis muneribus mystice designantur.

**1970/2002 formulary for Christian unity – super oblatae**

Qui una semel hostia, Domine, adoptionis tibi populum acquisisti, unitatis et pacis in Ecclesia tua propitius nobis dona concedas.

The opening words of this prayer, which do not have an apparent euchological precedent, seem to be based on the scriptural texts identified by Coppieters ‘t Wallant. Whereas the parallel opening words of the 1962 text ask the Lord to sanctify the gifts that are being offered for the sake of the unity of the Christian people, the 1970/2002 text emphasizes the unicity of the sacrifice of Christ which acquired a people of adoption.

The second half of the 1970/2002 Christian unity prayer, on the other hand, is clearly reliant upon the 1962 votive Mass prayer. This prayer in turn seems to borrow from the 13th century Corpus Christi *super oblata*, traditionally ascribed to Thomas Aquinas.<sup>54</sup> In this section of the prayer, God is asked to give the gifts (*dona*) of unity and peace to his church. The pairing of unity and peace parallels the request in the embolism after the *Pater Noster* to make peaceful and unite

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 1866.

<sup>53</sup> MR2002, p. 489.

<sup>54</sup> Although the authorship of the Corpus Christi office and Mass has occasionally been disputed, Pierre-Marie Gy has argued forcefully for its authenticity as a text of St. Thomas Aquinas. See Pierre-Marie Gy, “L’Office du Corpus Christi, œuvre de S. Thomas d’Aquin,” in *La Liturgie dans l’histoire* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1990), 223–45. For a recent treatment of the relationship of the Corpus Christi texts to Thomas’s theology of the eucharist and the Church, see Gilles Emery, “The Ecclesial Fruit of the eucharist in St. Thomas Aquinas,” in *Trinity, Church, and the Human Person: Thomistic Essays* (Naples, FL: Sapientia Press, 2007), 155–72.

(*pacificare et coadunare*) the church.<sup>55</sup> A similar request for the gifts of unity and peace is also found in the *super oblata* for the Feast of Christ the King<sup>56</sup> and the *super oblata* for St. Benedict.<sup>57</sup>

### Post communionem

*Haec tua, Domine, sumpta sacra communio,  
sicut fidelium in te unionem praesignat,  
sic in Ecclesia tua unitatis operetur effectum.*

Having received this your sacred communion, O Lord, just as it prefigures the union of the faithful in you, may it thus work the effect of unity in your Church.

The *post communionem* for the first formulary for Christian unity is identical to the equivalent MR1962 votive Mass prayer with the exception of the omission of the word “quaesumus” between “unitatis” and “operetur.” The prayer is shared in MR1970/2002 with Dominica XI “per annum.”<sup>58</sup> This prayer emphasizes the role of the eucharist as a sign of the unity of the church, and asks that it may bring about what it signifies by producing the effect of unity in the church. This classical theme of connection between the eucharist as a sign and effector of the unity of the church is directly expressed by the decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council: “In his church, he instituted the most wonderful sacrament of the eucharist, by which the unity of the church is both signified and made a reality.”<sup>59</sup> The request for the effect of unity is parallel to that of the *super oblata*, but here the singular effect of unity is requested rather than the double gifts of unity and peace.

<sup>55</sup> See MR2002, p. 599: “Domine Iesu Christe, qui dixisti Apostolis tuis: Pacem relinquo vobis, pacem mean do vobis: ne respicias peccata nostra, sed fidem Ecclesiae tuae; eamque secundum voluntatem tuam pacificare et coadunare digneris.” Cf. the fourfold request in the *Te igitur* of the Roman canon: “pacificare, custodire, adunare, et regere.”

<sup>56</sup> MR2002, p. 496: “Hostiam tibi, Domine, humanae reconciliationis offerentes, suppliciter deprecamur, ut ipse Filius tuus cunctis gentibus unitatis et pacis dona concedat.” Cf. Johnson, “The Sources of the Roman Missal (1975), Proprium de Tempore, Proprium de Sanctis,” 104.

<sup>57</sup> MR2002, p. 787: “Haec sancta, Domine, quae in beati Benedicti celebritate deferimus, respice benignus, et praesta, ut nos, eius exemplis te quaerentes, unitatis in tuo servitio pacisque dona consequi mereamur.” Cf. Johnson, “The Sources of the Roman Missal (1975), Proprium de Tempore, Proprium de Sanctis,” 128.

<sup>58</sup> MR2002, p. 461. Cuthbert Johnson refers to the votive Mass postcommunio as the source for this prayer: see Johnson, “The Sources of the Roman Missal (1975), Proprium de Tempore, Proprium de Sanctis,” 90.

<sup>59</sup> UR 2 (Tanner, 908\*).

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### 3. CONCLUSION

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This study has explored the reception of the 14th century votive Mass present in MR1962 under the title “Pro unitate Ecclesiae” in the prayer formularies for the unity of Christians in MR1970/2002. The first of the two collects provided in the first of the three formularies may be slightly influenced by the 1962 votive Mass prayer, but is more substantially indebted to the revised 1965 Good Friday prayer for the unity of Christians. The prayer over the gifts incorporates a substantial portion of the 1962 secret prayer, while adding an apparently newly composed opening section. The post communion prayer substantially reproduces the 1962 prayer, with a minor textual variation. In addition to their presence in the formulary for the unity of Christians, each of these three prayers is used in another part of the Missal of Paul VI, thus showing a broader influence of the 14th century formulary on the worship of the Church. Further investigation should be undertaken to analyze both the contemporary reception of the other elements of the older votive Mass formulary, such as readings and chants, into the Missal of Paul VI, as well as the broader synthesis of liturgy and ecumenism presented by the three formularies for the unity of Christians.