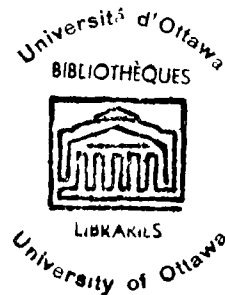


ADOPTIVE SONSHIP IN THE ROMAN MISSAL  
by Sister Mary Ursuline Szymusiak, C.S.S.F.

Thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts  
of the University of Ottawa through the  
Department of Religion as partial ful-  
fillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Arts.



Degree conferred  
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## CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Sister Mary Ursuline Szymusiak, C.S.S.F., was born May 19, 1912, in North Chicago, Illinois. She received her elementary education at Holy Rosary School, North Chicago, Illinois, and her secondary education at Good Counsel High School, Chicago, Illinois.

In 1930 Sister entered the Community of the Felician Sisters in Chicago. She received the Ph.B. degree in 1953 from De Paul University. From 1953 to 1960 she served as a Principal at St. Bronislava School in South Chicago, Illinois, and at St. Linus School in Oak Lawn, Illinois.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Catholic Church teaches that through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass the highest worship is rendered to God. In the encyclical Mediator Dei, Pope Pius XII says that the Mass which Christ instituted and which He commands to be continually renewed in the Church by His Ministers is the central and highest act of Christian worship. The faithful are exhorted to be aware that to participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice is their chief duty and supreme dignity.

By the waters of Baptism, as by common right, Christians are made members of the Mystical Body of Christ the Priest, and by the "character" which is imprinted on their souls they are appointed to give worship to God.<sup>1</sup>

The Christians are privileged to participate in the great mystery of Redemption which is reenacted in every Sacrifice of the Mass. As children of God, Mass becomes their exclusive possession because of their special relationship to God the Father. "If thou acknowledge thyself the son of God by spirit of adoption, dare to call

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<sup>1</sup>Pope Pius XII, Mediator Dei, November 20, 1947 (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference), p. 34.

God Father."<sup>2</sup> The Scriptural basis for this adoption is found in St. John's Gospel. "But as many as received Him, He gave them power to be made the sons of God to them that believe in His name" (Jn. 1:12-13). St. Basil asserts that through Baptism we were born anew. "Having put on the new man according to God, we were baptized in the name of the Father and called sons of God."<sup>3</sup> To the Catechumens St. Augustine says, "Love what you are going to be, for you will be sons of God and children of His adoption."<sup>4</sup>

Participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice is the exclusive privilege of the adopted children of God, regenerated in Baptism. The baptismal character enables the Christians to offer this sacrifice to God as their own, as a sacrifice truly belonging to them on the strength of

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<sup>2</sup>Leo the Great, Sermon 22, sec. 5, "On the Feast of the Nativity," Sermons and Letters, trans. C. L. Feltoe, Vol. XII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace (14 vols.; New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1890-1900), p. 131.

<sup>3</sup>Basil, "Concerning Baptism," chap. 3, Ascetical Works, trans. S. M. Monica Wagner, C.S.C., Vol. IX of The Fathers of the Church, ed. R. J. Deferrari (40 vols.; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1947-), p. 387.

<sup>4</sup>Augustine, Sermon 216, "To the Seekers of Baptism," Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons, trans. S. M. Sarah Muldowney, R.S.M., Vol. XXXVIII of The Fathers of the Church, ed. R. J. Deferrari (40 vols.; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1947-), p. 157.

their membership in the body of Christ.<sup>5</sup> It is precisely the reason why the non-Christian can only be a passive spectator of external actions at Mass but in no way can take an active part in the Sacrificial Banquet. The Jew or the pagan can have the best internal sentiments in the world, recite the Mass prayers along with the priest, yet, he cannot take part in the Holy Sacrifice because the Mass is not his worship. The Mass is not his sacrifice for the simple reason that he is not baptized, and, therefore, has not entered into fellowship with Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup> As Saint Augustine says, "The truth is that none can abide in Christ but the members of Christ."<sup>7</sup>

In the early Christian times even the Catechumens were denied the privilege of participating in the Mass of the Faithful. They studied the "Our Father" but could not recite it in common with the adopted children of God. This point is brought out clearly by St. Augustine in his

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<sup>5</sup>M. J. Scheeben, S.J., The Mysteries of Christianity, trans. C. Vollert, S. J. (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1947), p. 586.

<sup>6</sup>D. F. Boeser, O.S.B., The Mass Liturgy, trans. C. Cannon, O.S.B. (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1932), p. 40.

<sup>7</sup>Augustine, The City of God, Bk. 21, chap. 26, trans. G. G. Walsh, S.J., and D. J. Honan, Vol. Vii of The Fathers of the Church, ed. R. J. Deferrari (40 vols.; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1947- ), p. 398.

treatise on the "Creed." "For how can they say 'Our Father' who are not yet born sons? The Catechumens as long as they be such have upon them all their sins. If Catechumens, how much more Pagans."<sup>8</sup> St. Ambrose in a letter to St. Clementianus questions, "How can a Jew say the 'Our Father' if he denies the true Son of God by whom our adoption was obtained?"<sup>9</sup>

The early liturgies of the Church, the Apostolic Constitutions and some of the Fathers of the Church tell us that the Catechumens and other unbelievers were expelled before the Eucharist. No non-communicating attendance was permitted. The dismissal followed the sermon after which the deacon made proclamation for all infidels and non-communicants to withdraw. After the prayers for each respectively the Mass of the Faithful began.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Augustine, "On the Creed--A Sermon to the Catechumens," sec. 8, Short Treatises, trans. C. L. Cornich and H. Browne, Vol. XXII of A Library of the Fathers (40 vols.; Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1838-61), p. 576.

<sup>9</sup>Ambrose, Letter 69, "To Clementianus," Letters, trans. S. M. Melchior Beyenka, O.P., Vol. XXVI of The Fathers of the Church, ed. R. J. Deferrari (40 vols.; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1947- ), p. 412.

<sup>10</sup>Apostolic Constitutions, Bk. 8, sec. 6, trans. A. C. Coxe, Vol. VII of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (8 vols.; New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1907-16), p. 483.

That the Mass of the Faithful was only for the perfect and approved Christians can be inferred from the First Apology of St. Justin in which he speaks of the Eucharist.

We call this food the Eucharist of which only he can partake who has acknowledged the truth of our teachings, who has been cleansed by baptism for the remission of his sins and for his regeneration, and who regulates his life upon the principles laid down by Christ.<sup>11</sup>

The Eucharist, then, is the supreme and only sacrifice of the Christians, for without it there is no supernatural life. It helps to nourish, preserve, and promote the life of adoptive sonship given by God. If the Mass is the exclusive possession of the adopted children of God, it is expected that the Book of the Mass, the Missal, should contain evidence of our spiritual adoption. Assuming that the above is true, allusions to this re-birth will be surveyed in the present thesis. The writer will limit herself to examining the Ordinary of the Mass and the Masses for the Temporal Cycle.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Justin, "The First Apology," chap. 66, Writings of St. Justin Martyr, trans. T. B. Falls, Vol. VI of The Fathers of the Church, ed. L. Schopp (40 vols.; New York: Christian Heritage, Inc., 1947- ), p. 105.

<sup>12</sup>The Sanctoral Cycle will not be studied. It is considered that the Sanctoral, to be properly evaluated, would have to be made the object of a special analysis of a different type from that of the Ordinary and the Temporal Cycle.

The purpose, then, of the proposed thesis is to show that the Missal itself presents the Mass as the property and the privilege of Christians. Therefore, the Roman Missal is considered. Its historical development is sketched, and its doctrinal authority pointed out. This provides a proper setting for a study of the text itself, to discover references and allusions to spiritual adoption. This is accomplished by surveying the references in the Ordinary of the Mass first. Such expressions as Ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam, Orate Fratres, cuncta familia tua, plebs tua sancta, Pater Noster, and the last Gospel speak of man's re-birth and his adoptive sonship.

Similar references are traced in the Masses of the Temporal Cycle, especially in the Easter Vigil. The prayers used for the blessing of water on Holy Saturday contain many references to man's regeneration of water and the Holy Spirit; for example, "the spirit of adoption," "new people," "new birth," "a new creature," "a regenerating water," "born again new children." Noteworthy reference on spiritual adoption is expressed in the Collect for the Mass of Easter Vigil. It reads: "Preserve in the new children, Thy family, the spirit of adoption which Thou

hast given them." The frequently repeated expressions such as "Thy family," "Thy children," "Thy people," "sons of adoption," found in the Temporal Cycle refer to the relationship between God the Father and His adopted children.

## CHAPTER I

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TERM "ADOPTION"

To gain a more adequate knowledge of the problem presented in the thesis, it is necessary that some consideration be given toward the acquisition of a clear concept implied in the term "adoption." In this chapter "adoption" is defined, and the distinction between its legal and spiritual nature is explained. The excellence of the divine sonship is presented. The certitude of the assertions depends solely upon the Scripture, the Fathers, and the teachings of the Church.

Adoption, according to its etymological derivation, signifies "acceptance," that is, bringing into family relationship that which is not naturally one's own. It is generally defined "as a gratuitous admission of a stranger into the inheritance of another." In legal sense the term implies the relationship of parent and child created by law between persons who are not in fact parent and child.<sup>1</sup> This human adoption is a moral substitute of natural filiation, which creates a right in the adopted

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<sup>1</sup>"Adoption," Encyclopedia Americana, 33rd ed., Vol. I.

person without changing his physical nature or personality.<sup>2</sup>

The adoption spoken of in Scripture<sup>3</sup> and theology is the act of admitting one into the family of God, or the state of being admitted. The previous position of the person adopted in this manner was that of a "servant" now he is a "son," an "heir of God," and a joint heir with Christ.

The Old Testament contains no text that would point conclusively to the individual man's adoption in the full New Testament verse. St. Paul introduces the word "adoption" into the New Testament (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5) and applies it to a special relationship (sonship) of man towards God brought about by the indwelling in man's soul of the "spirit of God." This Spirit gives man a new, supernatural life, the life of grace, together with the realization that this new life comes from God and makes men the children of God endowed with the privilege of calling Him "Father," and of being His heirs (Rom. 8:17; Gal. 4:6).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>P. Parente, et al., Dictionary of Dogmatic Theology, trans. E. Doronzo, O.M.I. (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1957), p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Wis. 2:13-18; 5:5; Eccles. 23:1-4; 2 Cor. 6-18; Gal. 3:26; 4:6; Phil. 2:15; Jn. 1:12 f.; 1 Jn. 3:1-2.

<sup>4</sup>"Adoption," Catholic Encyclopedia, 2nd ed., Vol.1.

According to Revelation, God adopts men to make them His children. Some of the Scripture passages can be quoted. St. Paul calls those who have the spirit of Christ not servants or slaves but sons of God.

For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear: but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba "Father." For the Spirit himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God. And if sons, heirs also: heirs indeed of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:14-17).

The Galatians, too, are reminded by the Apostle that God has sent out the Spirit of his Son into our hearts.

That He might redeem them who were under the law: that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying: Abba, Father. Therefore, now he is not a servant, but a son. And if a son, an heir also through God (Gal. 4:6).

St. John in his Epistle says that God has adopted the faithful into his family.

Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called and should be the sons of God (I John 3:1).

That the just become the adopted sons of God follows likewise as a corollary from the doctrine of regeneration or birth from God. The supernatural birth of the children of God is expressed in the Johannine Gospel.

But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that

believe in his name Who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:12-13).

To be sons, therefore, we must have within us the life of the Son. But this life can only be received through Baptism. This second birth was explained by our Lord to Nicodemus. "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:5).

St. Paul reminds the Christians that their own calling was not due to themselves but to God's mercy.

Not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).

The Council of Trent<sup>5</sup> associates justification with adoption. It declares: "Justification is a passing from the state in which man is born a son of the first Adam, to the state of grace and adoption as sons of God through the second Adam, Jesus Christ our Savior."

From the scriptural texts cited, and from others, the Fathers of the Church derived the teaching of the deification of man by grace. In the ancient liturgy and in the writings of the Fathers countless passages could be adduced which bring out the doctrine of divine

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<sup>5</sup>The Church Teaches, trans. J. F. Clarkson, et al. (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1955), pp. 231-32.

adoption. It is a firm conviction of the Fathers that God became man so that man might become God, that is, deified. Thus St. Leo the Great (400-461) declares:

The son of God came to destroy the works of the devil; and He so united Himself to us and us to Him, that the descent of God to man's estate became the exaltation of man to God.<sup>6</sup>

And elsewhere he reminds the Christians of their spiritual adoption.

Whoever then thou are that devoutly and faithfully boastest of the Christian name, estimate this atonement at its right worth. For to thee who was a castaway, banished from the realms of paradise, dying of weary exile, reduced to dust and ashes, without further hope for living, by the Incarnation of the Word was given the power to return from afar to thy Maker, to recognize thy parentage, to become free after slavery, to be promoted from being an outcast to sonship: so that thou who wast born of corruptible flesh may be re-born by the Spirit of God, and obtain through grace what thou hadst not by nature.<sup>7</sup>

St. Irenaeus expresses the doctrine of divine Sonship by saying:

The Word of God was made man, and He who was the Son of God became the Son of man, that man, having been taken into the Word, and receiving the adoption, might become the Son of God.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Leo the Great, Sermon 27, sec. 2, "On the Feast of the Nativity," Sermons and Letters, Vol. XII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 140.

<sup>7</sup>Leo the Great, Sermon 22, sec. 5, "On the Feast of the Nativity," op. cit., p. 131.

<sup>8</sup>Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Bk. 3, chap. 19, trans. A. C. Coxe, Vol. I of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, ed. C. Scribner's Sons, 1907-16), p. 448.

In another passage St. Irenaeus speaks in a similar strain: "Through His transcendent love He became what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself."<sup>9</sup>

The same doctrine is expressed by St. Athanasius: "As the Lord became man by putting on our body so we are deified by the Word as being taken to Him through His Flesh, and henceforward inherit life everlasting."<sup>10</sup> Similarly in the treatise on the Incarnation he says: "The Word was made man that we might be made God."<sup>11</sup> And St. Cyprian expresses the same thought when he says: "What man is, Christ was willing to be, that man also may be what Christ is."<sup>12</sup>

Following the teachings of the theologians, Saint Thomas defines adoption as the gratuitous acceptance of a

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., Against Heresies, Bk. V, Preface, p. 526.

<sup>10</sup>Athanasius, Against the Arians, Discourse 3, chap. 26, sec. 34, Select Writings and Letters, trans. P. Schaff and H. Wace, Vol. IV of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church (14 vols.; New York: Christian Literature Co., 1890-1900), p. 413.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., "On the Incarnation of the Word," sec. 54, p. 65.

<sup>12</sup>Cyprian, Treatise 6, sec. 11, The Epistles and Treatises, trans. E. Wallis, Vol. V of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (8 vols.; New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1907-16), p. 468.

child of other parents to be the same as one's own child and heir.<sup>13</sup> He shows how divine adoption differs from human adoption. He explains how adoptive sonship through grace is a participated likeness of natural sonship. The only-begotten Son of God receives eternally the whole divine nature from His Father, but the adoptive son of God receives, in time, a participation of the divine nature.<sup>14</sup>

Adoption among men implies no more than that a moral act takes place of physical generation. Such an act does not communicate a new nature or life but only extends the father's love to the son, raises the latter to the external rank of the father, and confers upon him a right to the father's inheritance.<sup>15</sup>

By legal adoption men may modify the social standing of the adopted child. They may transmit their name, their possession but they cannot transmit to them their body and blood. The adopted child is considered by the foster parents as their own child and receives from them

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<sup>13</sup>Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, III, q. 23, art. 1 (trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province; Chicago: Benziger Bros. Inc., 1947; II, 2147).

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., III, q. 23, art 1, 2, 3, 4.

<sup>15</sup>M. J. Scheeben, Nature and Grace, trans. C. Vollert, S.J. (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1954), p. 126.

the heritage to which their offspring would be entitled. However nothing is added to the intrinsic worth of the adopted child.<sup>16</sup>

Adoption by God differs greatly from adoption among men. When men are adopted by God they are not only legally and nominally called adopted children but really are His children. Not only are they elevated morally but in a certain sense are re-born and receive a kind of new nature and new life. They receive not only an external right to an inheritance but intrinsically are equipped and empowered to receive it, since the inheritance does not consist in external goods but is a most exalted life of knowledge and love of God.<sup>17</sup> St. Thomas says:

God, by bestowing His grace, makes man whom He adopts worthy to receive the heavenly inheritance; whereas man does not make him worthy whom he adopts; but rather in adopting him he chooses one who is already worthy.<sup>18</sup>

Divine adoption is more complete and more excellent than human adoption. Human adoption presupposes in the one adopted the same nature as in the one adopting and

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<sup>16</sup>A. Tanquerey, The Spiritual Life, trans. H. Branderis, 2d ed. rev. (Tournai, Belgium: Desclée and Co., 1930), p. 48.

<sup>17</sup>Scheeben, Nature and Grace, p. 126.

<sup>18</sup>St. Thomas, op. cit., III, q. 23, art. 1.

establishes solely a moral and civil relationship between them. In the Divine adoption there is accomplished a communication of a supernatural life, a participation in the divine nature, by an act that implies a kind of generation, which establishes not merely a moral but a physical communion of the adopted child with God.<sup>19</sup> Man is regenerated by God the Father in the Holy Spirit through Baptism.<sup>20</sup>

Justification makes men partakers in the divine nature, adoptive sons and heirs of God, His friends, and temples of the Holy Spirit. This is of divine faith. The Council of Trent has said: "The justified become both friends of God and members of his household, advancing from virtue to virtue, renewed day by day."<sup>21</sup>

St. Peter states explicitly that the Christian is elevated to participation in the Divine Nature. "He hath given us most great and most precious promises, that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4).

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<sup>19</sup>L. Ott, Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma, trans. P. Lynch (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1954), pp. 256-57.

<sup>20</sup>Scheeben, Nature and Grace, p. 128.

<sup>21</sup>The Church Teaches, p. 236.

Divine adoption communicates to man a new, incomparably higher life. For this life no seed is produced by man, but must be planted in man. Since the new life is divine, the seed that is planted in man must also be divine. This seed is the Spirit of divine life, given to us by the Father, as St. John says (John 1:12).<sup>22</sup> The life, then, into which man is re-born through Baptism is the divine life that God Himself possesses and has communicated in its fullness to His only-begotten Son. But in generation the life that is communicated must be the same as that of the begetter.<sup>23</sup> The best proof of this assertion is found in the Gospel of St. John according to which the divine life is communicated to man in his spiritual regeneration. This truth is expressed in the comparison of the vine, in which Christ is represented as the trunk from which life flows and spreads into all branches. The faithful are the branches of the vine.

I am the vine you are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing (John 15:5).

Another comparison which indicates the inner unity between Christ and His Church is the analogy of the human body. St. Paul uses this comparison in which men are likened to the members and the Son of God is likened

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<sup>22</sup>Scheeben., p. 128.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

to the Head that concentrates in itself all the vital powers of the body and sends them forth from itself. As the life of the head and that of the members are the same kind, the life which the Son of God communicates to men must be like His life and, so far as that is possible, of the same kind.<sup>24</sup> These relations are clearly stated by the Apostle. "You are the body of Christ and members of member" (1 Cor. 12:27). "Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church" (Col. 1:18).

The Council of Trent teaches: "Christ Jesus himself gives strength to the justified, just as the head gives strength to the members and the vine gives strength to the branches."<sup>25</sup>

A notable statement on the doctrine of the Mystical Body and the Blessed Sacrament is given by Scheeben:

As it is in the Eucharist that Christ perfectly becomes our head, therefore it is only in the Eucharist that Christ can perfectly become the mediator of our union with God. For our Savior Himself said: "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me, and I in him" (John 6:57). As God the Father is in the Son by nature of the Godhead, so God the Son, made man, is rightly said to be in us by the humanity of His flesh. He is celebrated as the mediator between God and Men because we have fellowship of union with God through Him. Although He remains in the Father, it is asserted that He also abides in us. On this

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>25</sup>The Church Teaches, p. 241.

account the Eucharist itself is called Communion, a fellowship of the highest degree, for in itself it is a most intimate and real bond. It joins man to Christ, and in Christ unites man on the one hand with the Blessed Trinity, and on the other with all men who partake of the Eucharist.<sup>26</sup>

That the members of the Mystical Body, God's adopted children, participate in an intimate union with Christ can be further attested from the liturgy of the Church. In the Offertory at Mass the Roman Missal has this prayer: "Grant that by the mystery of this water and wine, we may be made partakers of His divinity, who vouchsafed to become partaker of our humanity." Similarly in the preface of the feast of the Ascension, the Missal states: "He ascended into heaven so that He might make us partakers of his Godhead."

In the Gospel of St. John, Christ explains that He came into the world to give us the same life that He asks the Father for us that we may be one with Him as He is one with Him.

That they all may be one, as thou, Father in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them: that they may be one, as we also are one: I in them, and thou in me: that they may be made perfect in one: and the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me. Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast

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<sup>26</sup>Scheeben, The Mysteries of Christianity, p. 491.

given me may be with me: that they may see my glory which thou hast given me, because thou hast loved me before the creation of the world (John 17:21-24).

With regard to the nature and degree of the participation in the Divine nature, it must not be conceived in the pantheistic sense of the transformation of the soul-substance into the Divinity. Sanctifying grace is the principle of Divine life in man. But grace cannot make men children of God in the same way as the Son of God is, that is, by natural generation any more than adoption among men makes a person the natural son of the one who adopts.<sup>27</sup> "Thou hast not the sonship by nature," says St. Cyril, "but receivest it by adoption."<sup>28</sup> And St. Athanasius says:

They who have received the Word, gained power from Him to become sons of God; for they could not become sons, being by nature creatures, otherwise than by receiving the Spirit of the natural and true Son.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Scheeben, Nature and Grace, p. 125.

<sup>28</sup>St. Cyril of Jerusalem, "On Baptism," Lecture 3, sec. 14, The Catechetical Lectures, trans. E. H. Gifford, Vol. VII of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace (14 vols.; New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1890-1900), p. 17.

<sup>29</sup>Athanasius, Discourse 2, chap. 21, sec. 59, Against the Arians, Vol. IV of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 380.

Elsewhere St. Athanasius further explains the spiritual relationship by saying:

From the beginning we were creatures by nature, and God is our Creator through the Word; but afterwards we were made sons, and thenceforward God the Creator becomes our Father also. 'Father' is proper to the Son and not 'creature' but 'Son' is proper to the Father. We are not sons by nature, but the son who is in us; and again; that God is not our Father by nature, but of that Word in us, in whom and because of whom we cry, 'Abba, Father.'<sup>30</sup>

Accordingly St. Augustine also asserts that man was made the son of God by grace, and not by nature.

He hath called men gods that are deified of His grace, not born of His Substance. For He doth justify who is just through His own self, and not of another. But He that justifieth doth Himself deify, in that by justifying He doth make sons of God. "For He hath given them power to become sons of God" (John 1:12). If we have been made gods; but this is the effect of Grace adopting, not of nature generation. For the only Son of God, God, and one God, with the Father, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, was in the beginning the Word, and the Word with God, the Word God. The rest that are made gods, are made by His own Grace, are not born of His Substance, that they should be the same as He, but that they should come to Him, and be fellow-heirs with Christ.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., Discourse 2, chap. 21, sec. 59, p. 380.

<sup>31</sup>Augustine, Psalm 50, sec. 2, On the Psalms, ed. A. C. Coxe, First Series, Vol VII of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church (14 vols.; Buffalo, N. Y.: The Christian Literature Co., 1886-1889), p. 178.

St. Cyril of Alexandria specified that human nature has been elevated to supernatural order to participate in God's nature by grace.

We mount up unto dignity above our nature for Christ's sake, and we too shall be sons of God, not like Him in exactitude, but by grace in imitation of Him. For He is Very Son, existing from the Father, we adopted by His Kindness, through grace receiving I have said, Ye are gods and all of you are children of the Most High.<sup>32</sup>

Human adoption may introduce the adopted into a more elite or cultured societies. But these societies cannot transform the new member's innermost being and nature, or the root of life. All they can offer is to give a new slant to the member's growth and aid him in developing the existing attitudes.<sup>33</sup>

Divine adoption introduces the adopted into a perfect society giving him the right to membership in the Church. But when man becomes a member of the Church, he is regenerated into a new life where his nature is transformed and transfigured.<sup>34</sup> Faith and Baptism together make man a member of Christ in the organism of the Church instituted by Christ Himself. This membership united man

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<sup>32</sup>Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on St. John, chap. 9, ver. 12, trans. Members of the English Church, Vol. V of A Library of the Fathers (40 vols.; Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1838-61), p. 104.

<sup>33</sup>Scheeben, The Mysteries of Christianity, p. 544.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 545.

most intimately with Christ, and through Christ with God to participation in the divine nature, and at the same time it unites man with all his fellow members in the Church.<sup>35</sup>

The Eucharist, whether considered as sacrament or as sacrifice, is the sacred and mysterious union joining all the members of the Church. "The right to participate in the Eucharist as sacrifice and sacrament is the chief factor that determines membership in the Church."<sup>36</sup> This unique privilege is granted exclusively to the adopted children of God, initiated through faith and baptism. It is precisely they, who can participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and partake of the sacrificial banquet.

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 543.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 542.

## CHAPTER II

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROMAN MISSAL

Since in this thesis allusions to the adoptive sonship are traced through the Roman Missal, it is the purpose of this chapter to give brief and general information on that liturgical book.

The Church possessed no liturgical books when she began her divine mission. With the early Christians, Mass began with the reading of various passages of the Bible. Hymns and psalms were sung during the services; but no book was needed for the faithful knew these sacred songs from memory. There was a sermon; then the people devoted some time praying for themselves and for others. The rest of the Mass was recited either from memory, as the words of Consecration and the Our Father, or was improvised like the prayer of praise and thanksgiving recited after the wine and water were brought to the bishop. And so, in the primitive Mass, the only book used or even needed was the Bible for everything else was from memory.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>William R. Bonniwell, O.P., Interpreting the Mass (New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons, 1949), pp. 8-9.

The books of the old Roman liturgy were divided according to the persons and groups employed to perform the assigned actions. The sacramentarium, which was used by the celebrating priest or bishop contained the orations and prefaces which vary from feast to feast. It also included the secret, the canon, the Pater noster, and the postcommunion. Two separate books were used for the lessons which were recited by two different readers. The epistolary, which contained the Prophecies, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of the Apostles, was used by the reader of the Epistle. The evangelary was used by the deacon who read the Gospel. Another book was required containing the texts for the group of singers, the schola cantorum, who accompanied the processions at the entrance, the offertory and the communion with their antiphonal singing. The individual who led in singing the old traditional responsorial chants between the lessons, also had a special book, the cantatorium. Finally, there was the book of directions to help regulate the functions, especially for the liturgical rites that occurred on certain days of the year. Even the ordinary celebration of the stationary services were taken into account in this book. The ordines, the rubric-books which were composed for this purpose, were used by the cleric whose function it was to act as a sort of master of ceremonies in directing the

celebration. These older liturgical books were used like the actors' parts in a sacred play, as the share of each individual in a community performance. To this day, the Oriental Church employs these liturgical books, while in the West, the liturgical books are usually organized on the basis of acts performed. For that reason everything for the Mass is found in the Missal, while everything for the Office is compiled into the breviary, and everything for the dispensing of the sacraments is contained in the ritual.<sup>2</sup>

Of the Roman Sacramentary, three different versions appeared in the course of time. The Leonine Sacramentary, Sacramentarium Leonianum, ascribed to Pope Leo the Great (440-461), is a collection of Mass formularies arranged according to the Church year. The Roman origin of the book is apparent in many places. By actual count, 174 texts have found their way from the Leonine Sacramentary into the present-day missal, and three of them are used daily in the Ordinary (Aufer a nobis; Deus qui humanae substantiae; Quod ore sumpsimus).<sup>3</sup>

The Gelasian Sacramentary, Sacramentarium Gelasianum, is a Roman Mass book in all essentials. Two

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<sup>2</sup>J. Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, trans. F. Brunner (Chicago: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1959), p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

different forms of it must be recognized; the older and a later. The older, the Gelasian, is of the early eighth century. It contains Mass formularies arranged in three books. Much of the material of this sacramentary survives in the Roman Missal. A considerable number of matching sections taken from the parts of the Leonine Sacramentary which has Vigilius as the author, prove that the book was not edited by Pope Gelasius I. In the first half of the eighth century another type of Mass book was composed in France which was compiled from materials in the Gelasian Sacramentary and liturgical materials imported from Rome. It was known as the later or Frankish Gelasian and frequently called the eighth-century Gelasian.<sup>4</sup>

The third type of the sacramentary, the Sacramentarium Gregorianum, was used no earlier than the ninth century. In the last few decades the conviction has grown that Gregory the Great actually produced this Mass book. Many of the prayer texts still in use today are attributed to Gregory the Great, as, for example, the Easter and the Ascension prefaces.

The book was not meant for ordinary parish services but it was a papal feast-day and stational missal. Later a supplement was added containing the requisite

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 46-47.

materials for parochial services and also mixing many Gallican traditions with the Roman.<sup>5</sup>

When Low Mass became common, additions were made to the Sacramentary, taken from other books. The celebrant began to recite the parts formerly sung by the other ministers therefore he needed their texts as well as his own. The practice of a priest saying Mass without choir or assistants necessitated the putting down in one book, of the whole ceremony, not merely those parts which the celebrant needed to say. This was the origin of missals, and these became common from the thirteenth century onward.<sup>6</sup>

Toward the close of the Middle Ages the missals were greatly modified by changes and additions. The Church considered a revision to be in order. This was accomplished under Pope Pius V (1566-72), Clement VIII (1592-1605), and Urban VIII (1623-44), who carefully revised and corrected the Missal.<sup>7</sup>

The Missal as we have it now, except for few additions and modifications, is practically the Missal

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 47 f.

<sup>6</sup>C. Martindale, S.J., The Mind of the Missal (London: Sheed and Ward, 1946), p. 6.

<sup>7</sup>N. Gihl, The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (St. Louis: Herder Book Co., 1953), p. 374.

reformed and edited by St. Pius V in the year 1570. He reduced it to a better form and omitted interpolations which had been introduced about the period of Reformation. No substantial changes were made in the Ordinary of the Mass, but Pius V did make some things obligatory which had been optional before his time, such as the Psalm "Judica me Deus" at the beginning of the Mass, and the Gospel of St. John at the end; but that was all.<sup>8</sup> From the sixteenth to the twentieth century the Missal came under the direct supervision and control of the Sovereign Pontiff. No one else could lay hands on it. In this way its preservation was guaranteed.<sup>9</sup>

Pope Pius V in the Bull of July 14, 1570, clearly expressed in the introduction, that the revised Missal, from then on, should be standard in every church and that no changes were to be made therein. An exception was made for some churches and religious orders which could demonstrate a two-hundred years' custom for their own usage. They were allowed to continue the use of their own particular rite.<sup>10</sup> Thus for example, the Carmelites,

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<sup>8</sup>Bonniwell, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>9</sup>C. Lattey, S.J., Catholic Faith in the Holy Eucharist (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1928), p. 131.

<sup>10</sup>Jungmann, Mass of the Roman Rite, p. 104.

Carthusians, and Dominicans have retained their ancient rite until this day.<sup>11</sup>

Since the sixteenth century some real changes were made in certain cases by the papal orders in the rubrics and in the text of the Missal of Pius V. For instance, in the new edition of the missal under Clement VIII (1604), the biblical chant pieces were restored to their original state, and new regulations were made regarding the final blessing. The edited Mass book under Urban VIII (1634) improved greatly the wording of the rubrics and the revision of the hymns already accomplished in the breviary was carried out also in the few hymns of the missal. No new edition with any significant changes was made until that of 1920 which contained the revisions based on the reform of Pope Pius X.<sup>12</sup>

The great liturgical reform of Pope Pius X affected the Missal considerably. The very ancient Masses of the Sundays throughout the year and of weekdays, especially the Lenten Masses, were restored to their proper places. The reformed Missal was issued in 1920 by the authority of Pope Benedict XV. Several other minor

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<sup>11</sup>J. F. Sullivan, The Externals of the Catholic Church, rev. J. C. O'Leary (New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons, 1951), p. 304.

<sup>12</sup>Jungmann, Mass of the Roman Rite, p. 106.

changes were made since then by the succeeding Popes, the latest of these being the introduction of the common Mass of one or more Supreme Pontiffs by Pope Pius XII in 1942.<sup>13</sup>

During the pontificate of Pope Pius XII, the reform of the Holy Week liturgy began in 1951 and culminated in the Restored Holy Week Ordo of 1955. In this liturgical movement, permission for evening Masses was granted and new ordering of the laws of fasting enacted (1957).<sup>14</sup>

The latest revision of the rubrics of the Breviary and some changes in the Missal were made by the reigning Pontiff, Pope John XXIII on August 15, 1960. The prayers at the foot of the altar that had already been eliminated on Palm Sunday and in the Easter Vigil are also omitted on the Feast of Purification, Ash Wednesday, and Rogation Mass, if Mass is preceded by a procession or blessing. The Last Gospel, omitted on Palm Sunday and Easter Vigil is also omitted after Requiem Masses, if it is followed by Absolution. It is likewise omitted at certain episcopal functions.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Sullivan, op. cit., p. 308.

<sup>14</sup>Jungmann, Mass of the Roman Rite, p. 125.

<sup>15</sup>G. Ellard, "Saluting the New Rubrics," Theology Digest, VIII (1960), 162.

Such was the origin of the Roman Missal. The present form dates back to the ninth century. Prior to that time, it has been pointed out, the text of the Mass was divided among a number of different volumes. It is this volume, the present-day Roman Missal, which will be considered in the chapters that follow.

## CHAPTER III

## SPIRITUAL ADOPTION IN THE ORDINARY OF THE MASS

The survey will begin with the Ordinary of the Mass, and the references and allusions about supernatural adoption which it contains will be considered.

The Sprinkling of the Faithful with Holy Water  
before the High Mass on Sundays

The Christian has been called to participation in the Mass. This took place at the moment of his regeneration in Baptism. "Enter the temple of God," says the Church in the liturgy of Baptism, "that thou mayest have part with Christ, unto life everlasting."<sup>1</sup>

Every Sunday before High Mass the Church reminds the Christians of this prerogative granted them in holy Baptism. The holy water that is sprinkled upon the faithful during the chanting of the Asperges me (in Paschal time, the Vidi Aquam) is a visible reminder of the water of baptism, by which they were freed from sin and made children of God. The baptismal water and the spiritual character imparted by baptism first brought them into

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<sup>1</sup>P. F. Weller (ed), The Roman Ritual (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1950), Vol. I, p. 47.

union with Jesus Christ. "Having been baptized in Christ and put on Christ we have been made conformable to the Son of God," observes St. Cyril of Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> The baptismal water and the spiritual character imparted first conferred upon them the privilege of offering in union with the Eternal High Priest the Holy Sacrifice of Mass.<sup>3</sup> The magisterium of the Church teaches:

It is therefore desirable, that all the faithful should be aware that to participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice is their chief duty and supreme dignity, and that not in an inert and negligent fashion, giving way to distractions and daydreaming, but with such earnestness and concentration that they may be united as closely as possible with the High Priest, according to the Apostle: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). And together with Him and through Him let them make their oblation, and in union with Him let them offer up themselves.<sup>4</sup>

According to the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas, we have a participation in the priesthood of Christ, a right of priestly worship which Christ offers to the heavenly Father in our sacred liturgy especially the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Cyril of Jerusalem, Lecture 21, sec. 1, "On Chrism," The Catechetical Lectures, Vol. VII of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 149.

<sup>3</sup>Boeser, op. cit., p. 41

<sup>4</sup>Pope Pius XII, Mediator Dei, pp. 31-32.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas Aquinas, III q. 63 art. 5.

### Prayers at the Foot of the Altar

Mass begins with the solemn sign of the cross and the formula In nomine Patris . . . which recalls that of the baptismal rite founded on our Lord's command to preach and baptize. St. Justin speaks of it when he says, "And they are regenerated in the name of God the Father, and Lord of all, and of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit."<sup>6</sup> Regenerated through Baptism the children of God advance to Mass in the name of the Blessed Trinity. They go forward to this tremendous act at His bidding, along with Him to do what He did, and for the purpose for which He did it. Enveloped in God, Fathered, accompanied, interiorly driven on by God, the child of God does the most divine work made possible to man when he proceeds to take part in Mass in the Presence and the Power of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.<sup>7</sup>

Every Mass is a continuation and unfolding of the grace of Baptism.<sup>8</sup> The words of Psalm 42 which was evidently chosen by reason of the suitability of one of the

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<sup>6</sup>Justin, "The First Apology--Christian Baptism," chap. 61, The Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, trans. A. C. Coxe, Vol. I of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (8 vols.; New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1907-16), p. 183.

<sup>7</sup>C. Martindale, S.J., op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>8</sup>P. Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, trans. H. E. Winstone (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1957), p. 92.

verses: "I will go to the altar of God who givest joy to my youth," speaks of the effects of Mass upon the soul. We are just children before God, and are but at the beginning of a life which is to last forever. The term 'youth' refers to the young life of grace.<sup>9</sup> By grace the old man of sin (Rom. 6:6) is destroyed and the newness of life in the Holy Ghost is created (Col. 3:9). There is a parallel to this in the sermons on the Psalms by St. Augustine. "Youth signifies newness. It is He who makes glad my newness, Who had filled my old estate with mourning. For now I go mourning in oldness, then shall I stand exalting in newness."<sup>10</sup> This approach unto God, which the psalmist longed for has become fully possible in a proper sense only, in the New Covenant; for we gain entrance to God only through Christ. The altar of the New Covenant is the place where this meeting with God can be best accomplished this side of heaven.<sup>11</sup>

In the ancient Church, Psalm 42 and its antiphon were chanted on Easter Eve by the newly baptized as they were led in a solemn procession from the baptistery to the

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<sup>9</sup>P. Bussard and F. Kirsch, The Meaning of the Mass (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1942), p. 21.

<sup>10</sup>Augustine, "Psalm 43, ver. 4," On the Psalms, trans. J. Tweed, Vol. XXV of A Library of Fathers (40 vols.; Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1838-61), p. 203.

<sup>11</sup>J. Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, p. 201.

altar; there they took part in the celebration of the Mysteries, and received their first Holy Communion. They were jubilant over their spiritual re-birth. Saint Ambrose in his sermons on Baptism informs us that this psalm was used as a baptismal hymn in the liturgy of the Church of Milan by the neophytes.

The cleansed people, rich with these adornments,<sup>12</sup> hastens to the altar of Christ saying: "I will go to the altar of God Who maketh glad my youth," for having laid aside the slough of ancient error, renewed with eagle's<sup>13</sup> youth it hastens to approach the heavenly feast.<sup>14</sup>

In the baptismal font the neophyte was born again; now in the Eucharist the grace of his youth is to be nurtured and matured. By grace the old man of sin (Rom. 6:6) is destroyed and the newness of life in the Holy Ghost (Col. 3:9) is created.

Keeping these circumstances in mind, the psalm acquires a new significance in the prayers of the Mass. It is a recall of our own baptismal regeneration whereby we became adopted children of God and He our Father.

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<sup>12</sup> Sanctifying grace and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

<sup>13</sup> The soul's supernatural life is renewed in fresh strength so like the eagle it can fly heavenward (Ps. 102:5)

<sup>14</sup> Ambrose, "Concerning the Mysteries" chap. 8, sec. 43, Select Works and Letters, trans. H. De Romestin, Vol. X of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church (14 vols.; New York: Christian Literature Co., 1890-1900), p. 323.

St. Leo exclaims: "The mystery of this boon is so great and this gift exceeds all gifts that God should call man son, and man should name god Father."<sup>15</sup>

The introduction of Psalm 42 among the prayers at the foot of the altar is shrouded in obscurity. It is not known how this baptismal chant came to be used as the daily prayer before Mass. As Jungmann states,<sup>16</sup> at first the prayers served as a preparatory prayer to be recited before Mass, later they were said on the way to the altar. Parsch<sup>17</sup> notes that in the thirteenth century, according to Innocent III's Commentary on Mass, it was recited at the altar. He likewise remarks that the practice of reciting the psalm was by no means uniform, as can be seen from the Missal of Paul III (1550) which permitted the priest to recite it silently or aloud on the way to the altar. Both writers maintain that Gregory the Great added to the Mass the prayers at the foot of the altar, and it was Pius V's Missal (1570) that first made the prayers obligatory.

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<sup>15</sup>Leo the Great, Sermon 26, sec. 4, "On the Feast of the Nativity," Sermons and Letters, Vol. XII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 138.

<sup>16</sup>Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, p. 199.

<sup>17</sup>Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, p. 91.

### The Offertory

The Church in the Mass generally addresses herself to God the Father, uniting herself to the Savior, who on the altar offers Himself to His heavenly Father.<sup>18</sup> Saint Cyril of Jerusalem attests that the sacrificial gift is: "Christ sacrificed for our sins."<sup>19</sup> The Church declares that she is incapable of offering up her thanks to God in any other way, than by giving Him back who became the victim of the world; as if she were to say in the words of a modern theologian:

Thou didst, O Lord, for Christ's sake, look down with graciousness and compassion, upon us as Thy children; so vouchsafe that we, with grateful hearts may revere Thee as our Father in Christ, Thy Son, here present. We possess nought that we can offer Thee save Christ; be graciously pleased to receive our sacrifice.<sup>20</sup>

The Offertory is the offering of God's family through Christ to the heavenly Father. The Suscipe sanctae Pater is addressed to God the Father. But He is not a strange God. He is our Father and we are His adopted children.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>N. Gihl, op. cit., p. 555.

<sup>19</sup>Cyril of Jerusalem, Lecture 23, sec. 10, "On the Sacred Liturgy and Communion," Catechetical Lectures, Vol. VII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 155.

<sup>20</sup>J. A. Moehler, Symbolism, trans. J. B. Robertson (London: Gibbings and Co., 1894), p. 240.

<sup>21</sup>A. Frenay, Spirituality of Mass (St. Louis: Herder Book Co., 1952), p. 74.

The solemn rite of offering is the right and duty of the adopted children of God as the Councils, the Fathers and Pontiffs constantly proclaim.

The Council of Trent proclaimed "that Mass is celebrated by the public minister of the Church, not for himself alone, but for all the faithful who pertain to the body of Christ."<sup>22</sup> St. Augustine teaches that all Christians are priests because they are members of One Priest.<sup>23</sup> The baptized were told by St. Peter, "You are a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation" (1 Peter 2:9). St. John echoed his words, "He has proved his love for us by washing us clean from our sins in his own blood, and made us a royal race of priests to serve God, his Father" (Apoc. 1:6).

An exposition of this doctrine is found in the two encyclicals by Pope Pius XII. In the Mystici Corporis the Pontiff teaches: "The sacred ministers represent not only our Savior but also the whole of the mystical body and each one of the faithful . . ."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>The Church Teaches, p. 291.

<sup>23</sup>St. Augustine, The City of God, Bk. XX, chap. 10, Vol. X of The Fathers of the Church, p. 281.

<sup>24</sup>Pope Pius XII, Mystici Corporis, June, 29, 1943 (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference), p. 31.

The same Pontiff, in his encyclical Mediator Dei states that in order that the oblation by which the faithful offer the Divine Victim in this Sacrifice to the Heavenly Father may have its full effect, it is necessary that the people add something else, namely, the offering of themselves as a victim.<sup>25</sup>

Pope Pius XI in his encyclical Miserentissimus Redemptor, on the reparation due to the sacred Heart of Jesus, dated May 7, 1928, teaches:

Participation in this mysterious priesthood and in the duty of offering satisfaction and sacrifice is not limited to those whom our High Priest Jesus Christ uses as his ministers to offer the clean oblation to the divine Majesty in every place from the rising of the sun to its very setting, but also it is the duty of the entire Christian family, which the Prince of the Apostles rightly calls "a chosen race, a royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9).<sup>26</sup>

These texts point out that the adopted children of God participate in some manner in the priestly character of the Church. Through Baptism they possess the power to offer through the priest.

On the other hand, the non-baptized person cannot share in the offering. He has not received the power to

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<sup>25</sup>Pope Pius XII, Mediator Dei, p. 32.

<sup>26</sup>Pope Pius XI, Miserentissimus Redemptor, May 8, 1928. (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference), pp. 50-51.

do so. He may offer to God his private interior sacrifice. Because he is not a child of God's family in the strict sense of the term, he is not represented by the priest; he is not connected to the liturgical Action.<sup>27</sup>

Another symbolism of our divine sonship is expressed in the mingling of the water and wine. It has in the first place a historic basis. St. Cyprian tells us that Christ Himself mixed water with wine at the Last Supper.<sup>28</sup> All our earliest descriptions of the Mass liturgy, including that of St. Justin, Martyr, speak of a mingling of wine and water: "To the president of the brethren, bread and a chalice of water and wine are brought."<sup>29</sup>

The liturgical text in the Roman Missal gives the explanation of this symbolism. The prayer said for the mingling of the water and wine emphasizes the participation of the faithful in the divine nature. The Church prays that our human nature, which is signified by water,

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<sup>27</sup>J. Putz, S.J., My Mass (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1958), pp. 35-37.

<sup>28</sup>Cyprian, Epistle 62, sec. 13, "To Caecilius, On the Sacrament of the Cup of the Lord," The Epistles and Treatises, Vol. V of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, p. 362.

<sup>29</sup>Justin, "The First Apology," chap. 66, Writings of Justin Martyr, Vol. VI of The Fathers of the Church, p. 105.

may by association with the Divinity, which is signified by wine, be found worthy to partake of the grace of adoption through the mystic shedding of the blood on the altar of our sacrifice.

This prayer comes from the Leonine Sacramentary where it appears as a Christmas collect. The words "by the mystery of this water and wine" were added to the original text.<sup>30</sup> In the third century St. Cyprian speaks of its spiritual significance, the indissoluble union of the faithful with Jesus Christ.

In the water is understood the people, but in the wine is showed the blood of Christ. But when the water is mingled in the cup with wine, the people is made one with Christ, and the assembly of believers is associated and conjoined with Him in whom it believes; which association and conjunction of water and wine is so mingled in the Lord's cup, that the mixture cannot anymore be separated. Therefore in consecrating the cup of the Lord, water alone cannot be offered. For if anyone offer wine alone, the blood of Christ is dissociated from us; but if the water be alone, the people are dissociated from Christ; but when both are mingled and are joined with one another by a close union, there is completed a spiritual and heavenly sacrament.<sup>31</sup>

Here again the prayer, Orate Fratres, is a reminder that the faithful are children of the same Father. As Christians they are the Lord's brethren,

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<sup>30</sup>Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, pp. 186-87.

<sup>31</sup>Cyprian, Epistle 62 sec. 13, "To Caecilius, On the Sacrament of the Cup of the Lord," The Epistles and Treatises, Vol. V of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, p. 362.

members of His body, redeemed by His Sacrifice on the Cross, elevated to the rank of the heavenly Father by His grace. The faithful are commissioned to renew the sacrifice of Him who calls them His brethren.<sup>32</sup> For St. Cyril tells us that not according to nature, but according to God's grace, and by adoption, we call Him Father.<sup>33</sup> And again Origen says:

Let our prayer come to Him as God; let us appeal to Him as Father. For the Father can rightly be regarded also as the Lord of His Son, and Lord also of those who have through Him become sons.<sup>34</sup>

God does not simply call us sons; we are His sons. Saint John states this fact quite clearly (1 John 3:1).

The prayer Orate Fratres stresses the idea that the aid of prayer is being asked for the priest's own sacrifice, which is likewise the sacrifice of the congregation, so that it may be acceptable to God the Father.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>J. Kramp, S.J., The Liturgical Sacrifice of the New Law (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1927), p. 126.

<sup>33</sup>Cyril of Jerusalem, Lecture 7, sec. 10, "The Father," Catechetical Lectures, Vol. VII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 46.

<sup>34</sup>Origen, On Prayer, chap. 16, trans. J. J. O'Meara, Vol. XIX of the Ancient Christian Writers, ed. J. Quasten and J. Plumpe (22 vols.; Westminster: The Newman Press, 1954- ), p. 60.

<sup>35</sup>Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, p. 353.

### The Canon

The prayer before consecration Hanc Igitur is also a reminder of the regeneration which makes all Christians children of God and of the Church. They form one great family of God, cuncta familia tua, and they are all brethren one of another, to whom it is granted to say: "Our Father, who art in heaven" (Matt. 23:8). "All you are brethren," says our Savior, "and one is your Father who is in heaven."

Thus it may be concluded that in the prayer Hanc Igitur the priest proclaims before heaven and earth that what is offered in the Mass is not only his "holy gift" to God, but that of the whole Christian family, cuncta familia tua. It is clear that the Father is beseeched to accept the offering made by the whole of God's family. St. Augustine tells us that all Christians belong to a great family and they call upon one Father who is in heaven.<sup>36</sup>

The Canon of the Mass once again reveals the privilege of the adopted children. In the anamnesis, the phrase et plebs sancta, can be paralleled with cuncta familia tua. The Church, the attendant congregation,

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<sup>36</sup>Augustine, "Sermon 9, sec. 2," Sermons on the New Testament, trans. R. G. Macmullen, Vol. XVI of A Library of the Fathers, (40 vols.; Oxford: J. H. Parker 1838-61), p. 99.

composed of the "servants" of God and the "holy people" speaks and acts. The significant words here used, plebs sancta, bring to the fore the sacerdotal dignity of the people of God in the sense implied by (1 Peter 2:5-9).<sup>37</sup>

### Plebs Tua Sancta

All Christians are for Peter a chosen race, a holy and royal priesthood, because God has called them from among the nations and consecrated them for His service by a special legislation and a special worship. Each of the faithful, by reason of his Baptism, belongs to the chosen people and has to bear witness of Christ to the world.<sup>38</sup>

The designs of God to have "a holy people," "a royal priesthood," is revealed in the Scripture and developed in the life of the Church. Let us look at God's plan fully implemented.

In the Apocalypse, Christ is praised by the heavenly court for this precise thing: "He made us to our God a kingdom and priests" (Apoc. 5:10). St. John himself personally praises Christ for the very same thing when he says, "Christ hath made us a kingdom and priests to God and his Father" (Apoc. 1:6).

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<sup>37</sup>Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, pp. 432-33.

<sup>38</sup>F. Buck, S.J., "The Priesthood of the Laity," The Homiletic and Pastoral Review, LVII (1958), 1054.

The Old Testament contains numerous texts which refer to the Israelites as "holy people of God." The book of Exodus describes the "birth" of the chosen people. It is also a reminder to the Jews that they were indeed the "elect" of God. All the precepts of the Mosaic Law are directed toward the creation of a kingdom of priests, a holy people.

If you will hear my voice, and keep my covenant, you shall be my peculiar possession above all people; for all the earth is mine. And you shall be to me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation (Ex. 19:5-6).

When God decided to establish His own chosen people to prepare more immediately for the coming of the true High Priest, He established also a special priesthood and legislated in great detail how that priesthood was to function, and what sacrifices it was to offer. The entire book of Leviticus and a large part of Numbers is devoted to that legislation. The Jews were to be His chosen people, because they were to worship Him more worthily.<sup>39</sup> "You shall be holy unto me, because I the Lord am holy: and I have separated you from other people, that you shall be mine" (Lev. 20:26).

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<sup>39</sup>G. Diekmann, O.S.B., "The High Priesthood of the Bishop," National Liturgical Week (Conception, Mo.: The Liturgical Conference, 1951), p. 33.

In Deuteronomy we read:

Thou art a holy people to the Lord thy God.  
The Lord thy God hath chosen thee, to be his  
peculiar people of all peoples that are on  
earth (Deut. 7:6-7).

Be ye children of the Lord your God . . .  
Because thou art a holy people to the Lord thy  
God: and He chose thee to be his peculiar  
people of all nations that are upon the earth  
(Deut. 14:1-2).

The Lord hath chosen thee this day, to be  
his peculiar people, as he hath spoken to thee  
and to keep all his commandments. And to make  
thee higher than all nations which he hath cre-  
ated, to his own praise, and name, and glory.  
That thou mayest be a holy people of the Lord  
thy God, as he hath spoken (Deut. 26:18-19).

Prophet Isaias also alludes to the royal priest-  
hood in these words: "You shall be called the priests of  
the Lord, men shall speak of you as the ministers of our  
God (Is. 61:6). Next, let us consider some of the steps  
by which God carries out His plan.

The history of the Chosen People begins with the  
call of Abraham to the worship of the one true God and the  
revelations made to him which foretold the destiny of his  
race.<sup>40</sup> God revealed Himself to Abraham and made a cove-  
nant with him (Gen. 15:17-21). This covenant involved  
mutual rights and duties, which obligated Abraham and his  
descendants. The outward sign of the covenant was

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<sup>40</sup>D. B. Orchard, et al. (eds.) A Catholic Commen-  
tary on Holy Scripture (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons,  
1953), p. 84.

circumcision (Gen. 17:8-27).<sup>41</sup> Among the Israelites it had a religious significance from the very beginning and served as a sign which distinguished them from the other nations.<sup>42</sup> The uncircumcised had no share in the privileges of the Hebrew people, because they were by the very fact unfaithful to the covenant. The rite of circumcision signified aggregation to the holy people of God.<sup>43</sup>

The promises of God made to the Patriarchs, Abraham, Jacob, and Isaac, were partly fulfilled in Egypt. The Israelite clan had become a great people there. The Egyptians, fearing their rising prestige, began to enslave them. The demoralizing slavery had almost destroyed their national identity and religious personality.<sup>44</sup> In God's design, however, it was not Israel's lot to perish in Egypt.

The second manifestation of God's plan took place on Mount Sinai or Horeb, when He appeared to Moses in a burning bush and imposed upon him the duty to lead Israel

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<sup>41</sup>P. Heinisch, History of the Old Testament, trans. W. Weidt (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1952), p. 69.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>43</sup>Orchard, op. cit., p. 135.

<sup>44</sup>D. C. Charlier, The Christian Approach to the Bible, trans. H. Richards (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1957), p. 176.

out of Egypt. On this same occasion God revealed His name (Ex. 3:14). The name Yahweh, "He who is," distinguishes him from the impotent gods of other nations. And this God had chosen Israel for his own people.<sup>45</sup>

The choice of Israel as God's first born among the nations (Ex. 4:22) was solemnly ratified by a special covenant between Yahweh and his chosen people amid the thunders on Mount Sinai.<sup>46</sup> God promised them that if they would fulfill the covenant obligations they would not be rejected.

If you are willing to listen to my voice, and keep my covenant, you shall be my peculiar possession above all people; for all the earth is mine. And you shall be to me a priestly kingdom, and a holy nation (Ex. 19:5-6).

The covenant agreed upon was sealed with the blood of animals. By this act God and the people were joined together most intimately and became mutually indebted to each other (Ex. 24:3-11). The chosen people bound themselves to the observance of the Law in their first enthusiasm, but already at Sinai they fell into idolatry and made a golden calf (Ex. 32:4). Later, repeatedly they showed themselves an unfaithful and "a stiff-necked people" (Ex. 32:9; 33:3-5; 34:9).

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>46</sup>Orchard, op. cit., p. 87.

In Deuteronomy, Moses recapitulates the various infidelities of the Israelites in the desert (Deut. 9:7, 12, 13, 22, 24, 31, 32). Psalms 77 and 80 summarize God's great benefits for the chosen people, notwithstanding their ingratitude. And Jeremias, too, alludes to the obstinancy of the Chosen People.

But they hearkened not nor inclined their ear; but walked in their own will and, in perversity of their wicked heart, and went backward and not forward. From that day that their fathers came out of Egypt even to this day. And I have sent to you all my servants the prophets from day to day, rising up early and sending. And they have not hearkened to me nor inclined their ear: but have hardened their neck and have done worse than their fathers (Jer. 7:24-26).

For the manifold rebellions and other sins, Yahweh wishes to destroy the Chosen People but Moses intercedes. God spares them for the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He merely owes it to himself not to reject his unfaithful but chosen people.<sup>47</sup>

And so the first covenant failed. But it was not because of God; He eternally remains faithful: "The works of God are perfect, . . . God is faithful and without any iniquity; he is just and right" (Deut. 32:4). But the covenant failed because of the people who disobeyed: "They have sinned against God, and are none of his children in their filth: they are a wicked and perverse generation" (Deut. 32:5).

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<sup>47</sup>Orchard, op. cit., p. 266.

God now plans a new and eternal covenant with all mankind at which the Blood of His own beloved Son would be shed.<sup>48</sup> He already intimated this in Deuteronomy.

"The Lord will judge his people and will have mercy on his servants" (Deut. 32:36). He promised it through the prophets. "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Juda . . . and I will be their God and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:31-33).

"They shall be my people and I will be their God in truth and in justice" (Zach. 8:8). Ezechiel speaks of the restoration of Israel, the new people, who would fulfill all the demands of morality with the help of God's special grace:

And I will pour upon you clean water and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness; and I will cleanse you from all your idols. And I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you . . . And I will put my spirit in the midst of you . . . and you shall be my people and I will be your God (Ezech. 36:25-28).

The New Covenant that has been promised to the Hebrews of the Old Testament was inaugurated by God through the Mediator, Jesus Christ. Christ obtained a more excellent ministry inasmuch as He is the Mediator of a better covenant established on better promises. The "better promises" are chiefly pardon, grace, and glory.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Orchard, op. cit., p. 93.

<sup>49</sup>Orchard, op. cit., p. 1166.

Scripture says: "He hath obtained a better ministry, by how much also he is a Mediator of a better testament which is established on better promises" (Heb. 8:6). And elsewhere the Scripture states:

He is the mediator of the new testament: that by means of his death for the redemption of those transgressions which were under the former testament, they that are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance (Heb. 9:15).

What Christ mediates is the new covenant of friendship between God and mankind.<sup>50</sup>

The New Covenant was inaugurated by Christ in the desert, who remained faithful to his promises whereas Israel, the original people of God fell away. So in the desert, Christ did not worship a false god (Satan) where Israel did (golden calf). The Israelites were subject to many tests in the desert but they proved themselves unfaithful. In the desert Christ lived through the whole dramatic struggle of His Public Life, and accepted its final issue, the Cross.<sup>51</sup>

Christ's three temptations in the desert are directly related to his role as head of the new, the true Israel, the true people of God. He rejects each of the

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<sup>50</sup>Orchard, op. cit., p. 1168.

<sup>51</sup>J. Fernan, Theology, Vol. I of Christ as Prophet and King (New York: Gregorian Press, Inc., 1959), p. 152.

temptations with the quotations from Deuteronomy (8:3; 6:13; 6:16). This is significant. To appreciate this, we must consider the book of Deuteronomy "as the first Christians knew it," that is, as:

A work which spoke of the love of God for his people, of the good He had done them and the greater good that He promised to do them, on condition of their faithfulness. A work which promised a great Prophet, a second Moses, to communicate to them God's saving will. A work, also, which in its narrative sections spoke of the infidelity of Israel and described the tests to which they had been subjected in the desert and how badly they had come out of them. A work, finally, which pictured the ideal people of God, praising and worshiping Him in the enjoyment of His perfect salvation.<sup>52</sup>

It is important for our present subject to realize that the primitive Christian community apprehended the Deuteronomic prophecies as fulfilled in itself. "Its members thought of themselves as the essential, the genuine Israel, the chosen people of God established at last in the perfection and salvation that had been promised."<sup>53</sup>

Another development of the Deuteronomic theme foretelling the perfect Israel is applied to the glorified Head of the community, Christ Himself.

Like the ancient Israel, He is lead into the desert, there to pass a forty-day period (corresponding to the traditional forty years), of

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<sup>52</sup>R. A. F. MacKenzie, S.J., "The Messianism of Deuteronomy," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XIX (1957), 302.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 303.

solemn preparation and testing of His vocation. His answers to the Tempter are so many quotations from Deuteronomy, expressing the obligations laid upon Israel, which He is faithfully observing. These are the very tests in which the historic Israel had failed; by victoriously surmounting them, Christ demonstrates that He is in Person the loyal covenant-partner sought by God. He offers to His Father the perfect love and obedience which Deuteronomy had so urgently recommended and required, but which the old Israel had shown itself incapable of giving.<sup>54</sup>

Thus the first Christian community, that is, the Church in its first years, looked upon itself as the fulfillment of what was described in Deuteronomy. They considered themselves as the true people of God.

The New Covenant was sealed by Christ's blood. Blood, symbol of union because bond of brotherhood, had been used to ratify the Old Covenant (Ex. 24:8). Jesus now gives his own blood as sacrifice of the New Covenant not merely as a sign but as a real mediatorial cause (Heb. 8:6-13; 9:15-23). The Paschal character of the Supper shows further that the saving blood of Jesus is that of the true Paschal Lamb.<sup>55</sup> "For this is my blood of the new testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). As the annual feast of the Passover was for the Jews a reminder and a renewal of the Sinai Covenant, so the Mass is for the faithful a memorial

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 303.

<sup>55</sup>Orchard, op. cit., p. 799.

and a renewal of the New Covenant that was sealed by the blood of Christ sacrificed on the Cross.<sup>56</sup>

As the Old Covenant, entered through Moses on Mount Sinai, was made with the nation, the group, the Chosen People of God, so the New Covenant, entered through Christ on Mount Calvary, is with the group, the new Israel--Christians now joined to Christ and to each other in the Mystical Body.<sup>57</sup>

The New Covenant is applied to each of the Christians through Baptism. Baptism makes Christians a "holy priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Peter 2:5) sharing in the priesthood of Christ. The Christian is the true seed of Abraham and true heir to the Promise (Gal. 3:29). The Christians are the true "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16).

Numerous New Testament texts support the traditional teaching that the Christian people are especially chosen by God to enjoy a priestly dignity (Apoc. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; 1 Peter 2:9; Jn. 1:12-13, 15, 16; 17:6; Eph. 1:4-5; Gal. 3:27). The faithful are priests because they have access to God through sanctifying grace and the practice of virtues. The royal priesthood is, therefore,

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<sup>56</sup>B. Walsh, "A Plan for Teaching the Riches of the Paschal Mystery," Worship, XXXIV (1960), 161.

<sup>57</sup>Orchard, op. cit., p. 24.

the priesthood of a holy life. It is in this sense that Pope Pius XII in Mediator Dei refers to holiness of life as the offering of the royal priesthood.<sup>58</sup> Christians are the "holy people" and "priests" in a true but wide sense of the word. This does not mean that they are endowed with priestly power. Pope Pius XII says:

The priest acts for the people only because he represents Jesus Christ, Who is Head of all His members and offers Himself in their stead. Hence he goes to the altar as the minister of Christ, inferior to Christ but superior to the people. The people, on the other hand, since they in no sense represent the Divine Redeemer and are not a mediator between themselves and God, can in no way possess the sacerdotal power.<sup>59</sup>

They must realize what Pius XII says that "to participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice is the chief duty and supreme privilege of the faithful."<sup>60</sup> But, only the plebs sancta are privileged to participate in the worship.

The words plebs sancta denote the high dignity of the faithful regenerated by the sacrament of baptism. They are people of God and as such a "holy people" belonging to God. He has purchased them and acquired them with

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<sup>58</sup>K. McNamara, "Aspects of the Layman's Role in the Mystical Body," The Irish Theological Quarterly, XXV (1958), 128.

<sup>59</sup>Pope Pius XII, Mediator Dei, p. 33.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 31-32.

the great price of Christ's blood. They form a community, which in a very special manner, is dedicated to God as His peculiar property.<sup>61</sup>

The faithful, in the liturgy of the Church, assemble around the altar not as strangers and pilgrims but as "holy people" not to be mere witnesses of what Christ performs through the priest at the altar for this is not only the sacrifice of Christ but the sacrifice which as High Priest He wishes to offer at the head of His priestly people.<sup>62</sup>

### Communion

Among all prayers and rites in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the most significant of our sonship is the Pater Noster. In the life of the ancient Church the faithful were accustomed to recite the Our Father at the reception of Communion.<sup>63</sup> St. Augustine bears witness to this.

We take as supplications those prayers which are said in celebrating the Mysteries, before we begin to consecrate what lies on the table of the Lord: prayers are said when it is blessed

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<sup>61</sup>Gehr, op. cit., p. 685.

<sup>62</sup>J. Jungmann, "The Pastoral Idea in the History of the Liturgy," Worship, XXX (1956), p. 619.

<sup>63</sup>Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, p. 464.

and sanctified and broken for distribution; and the whole Church, for the most part, closes this complete petition with the Lord's Prayer.<sup>64</sup>

And again in the Apostolic Constitutions it is stated that the faithful were enjoined to recite the Our Father three times a day to prepare themselves beforehand, that they may be worthy of the adoption of the Father.<sup>65</sup>

The Church then advances two reasons which justify her use of the Lord's Prayer: first, it was composed by Jesus Christ Himself (Matt. 6:9); second, it is a prayer proper to children of God, the baptized. The second recalls to the faithful the ancient Baptismal arrangements: for the Pater would seem to have entered the Mass by way of Baptismal Liturgy.<sup>66</sup> In the ancient Christendom the "Our Father" remained under the rule of secrecy, the disciplina arcani. Not only was it kept secret from the pagans but it was even withheld from the catechumens until shortly before the time when, by Baptism, they became children of the heavenly Father.<sup>67</sup> The following

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<sup>64</sup>Augustine, Letter 149 "To Paulinus," Letters, trans. S. Wilfred Parsons, S.N.D., Vol. XX of The Fathers of the Church, ed. R. J. Deferrari (40 vols.; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1947- ), p. 250.

<sup>65</sup>Apostolic Constitutions, Bk. 7, chap. 24, Vol. VII, of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, p. 470.

<sup>66</sup>D. B. Lebbe, O.S.B., The Mass (Dublin: Richview Press, 1949), p. 99.

<sup>67</sup>Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, p. 465.

passage from the First Apology of St. Justin reveals that only those re-born of water and the Holy Spirit addressed God as Father.

. . . There is invoked over the one who wishes to be regenerated, and who is repentant of his sins, the name of God, the Father and Lord of all; he who leads the person to be baptized to the laver calls Him by this name only. No one is permitted to utter the name of the ineffable God, and if anyone ventures to affirm that His name can be pronounced, such a person is hopelessly mad.<sup>68</sup>

The Our Father has its own brief introduction in which the faithful acknowledge that it is only as a result of divine revelation that they presume to address God as Father. For a man of dust and ashes, a certain boldness (audemus) is implied in making his own prayer such as this, in which he approaches God as a child does its Father. It is only the sonship of adoption by which the members of the Mystical Body are the brothers and sisters of Christ, which gives them the right to stand before God, and address Him with the tender name of Father.<sup>69</sup>

St. Cyril says that the privilege of saying in our prayers, Our Father, is a gift of loving kindness. We call Him Father because we have been transferred from

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<sup>68</sup>Justin, "The First Apology," chap. 61, Writings of St. Justin Martyr, Vol. VI of The Fathers of the Church, p. 100.

<sup>69</sup>G. Ellard, Christian Life and Worship (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1933), pp. 166-167.

servitude to sonship by the grace of the Father, through the Son and the Holy Spirit.<sup>70</sup> A similar expression may be gathered from St. Cyprian's treatise, On the Lord's Prayer when he says, "The new man, born again, and restored to his God by His grace, first of all says, "Father," because he has now become a son."<sup>71</sup>

The Our Father is the most presumptuous prayer: "What pagan would ever have dared to call Jupiter or Apollo 'My Father?' But what pagans would not dare we Christians, made partakers of the divine life, made children of God and relying on Christ's express teaching, say not 'Our God and Master' but 'Our Father.'"<sup>72</sup> The faithful are no longer slaves of God, as in the Old Testament, they are now His beloved children and heirs of heaven. God is their Father; they may call Him by that name. St. Paul tells the early Christians, "You have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we

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<sup>70</sup>Cyril, Lecture 7, sec. 7, "The Father," Catechetical Lectures, Vol. VII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church p. 46.

<sup>71</sup>Cyprian, Epistle 4, sec. 9, "On the Lord's Prayer," The Epistles and Treatises, Vol. V of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, p. 449.

<sup>72</sup>A. Croegaert, The Mass (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1958-59), II, 251.

cry: Abba Father" (Rom. 8:15). It is not as beggars that the Christians enter God's house, but as His own children. They form one great family, brothers and sisters of each other. As St. Augustine tells us, "We say all in common, 'Our Father,' therefore we are brethren having one and the same Father."<sup>73</sup>

### Communion, A Sacrificial Banquet

In receiving Holy Communion at Mass, the faithful manifest in the highest degree their participation in the sacrifice. For this reason the Council of Trent has exhorted: "That the faithful present at every Mass would communicate, not only in spiritual desire, but by a sacramental reception of the Eucharist so that they might receive greater benefits from this most holy sacrifice."<sup>74</sup>

Pope Pius XII expressed the same desire when he said in the Mediator Dei, "Let the faithful participate everyday, if possible, in the divine Sacrifice not only in a spiritual manner, but also by reception of the august Sacrament, receiving the Body of Jesus Christ which has been offered for all to the Eternal Father."<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>Augustine, Sermon 8, sec. 2, "On the Lord's Prayer," Sermons on the New Testament, Vol. XVI of A Library of the Fathers, pp. 90-91.

<sup>74</sup>The Church Teaches, p. 294.

<sup>75</sup>Pope Pius XII, Mediator Dei, p. 119.

In the mind of the Church, Communion is, like other parts of the Mass, a collective act.<sup>76</sup> Christians take part together in a common meal at a common table. This sacrificial meal, taken communally, corresponds to the Savior's expressed intention who wishes them to be bound to one another. "Love one another as I have loved you" (Jn. 15:12).

Christ, "the eldest, born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29), invites the faithful to sit, as His guests, at his Father's table; it is His banquet and theirs only through Him. But only the adopted children of God, sanctified by Baptism, and remaining faithful to the baptismal grace have the right to participate in this Eucharistic banquet. St. Justin gives testimony to this exclusive privilege. He says that only the baptized who lead good lives may attend and receive Holy Communion; the catechumens and penitents are dismissed before the Eucharist.<sup>77</sup> This recalling of regeneration through Baptism and holiness necessary for the reception of the Eucharist goes back to the very ancient times. The Didache gives the same warning: "Let no one eat and drink of your Eucharist

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<sup>76</sup>Chevrot, Our Mass Explained, trans. P. Holland and Smith (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1958), p. 216.

<sup>77</sup>Justin, "The First Apology--On the Eucharist," chap. 66, Writings of St. Justin Martyr, Vol. I of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, p. 185.

but those baptized in the name of the Lord; to this, too, the saying of your Lord is applicable: 'Do not give to dogs what is sacred' (Matt. 7:6). In their original content these words of Our Lord are a general injunction not to divulge (much less, to give) to infidels what is sacred to Christians."<sup>78</sup>

In Communion we are sacramentally united with the Person of Christ. He himself spoke of the abiding spiritual fellowship of ourselves in Him and of Him in us. "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me and I in him" (Jn. 6:57). St. Chrysostom instructs, "That we communicate not only by participating and by partaking, but also by being united. For as the body is united to Christ, so also are we united to Him by this bread."<sup>79</sup> Wherefore by St. Cyril of Jerusalem we are said to be "of one body, of one blood with Christ. For thus we come to bear Christ in us, because His Body and Blood are distributed throughout the members; thus it is that

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<sup>78</sup>Didache, chap. 1, trans. J. A. Kleist, Vol. VI of the Ancient Christian Writers, ed. J. Quaesten and J. Plumpe (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1948), p. 20.

<sup>79</sup>Chrysostom, Homily 24, sec. 4, "The Bread Makes Us Really One Body with Christ," Homilies on 1 Cor., Vol. IV of A Library of the Fathers (40 vols.; Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1838-61), p. 327.

according to Blessed Peter, 'we become partakers of the divine nature'" (2 Peter 1:4).<sup>80</sup> But though the Body of Christ is received through the mouth, yet it does not become part of us, but we become part of Him. "I am the food of great souls," quotes St. Augustine, "grow great and you shall eat of me. But you shall not change Me into thee as you do your bodily food; it is You who will be changed into me."<sup>81</sup> As St. Paul says: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20).

The very same bond that links the individual with Christ, the Head, links him with the other members of Christ's Mystical Body.<sup>82</sup> Communion is food for the soul of the individual Christian; no less is it food for the building up of the Mystical Body as St. Paul tells us, "For we being many, are one bread, one body: All that partake of one bread" (Cor. 10:7).

The adopted children of God who share in the sacrificial banquet enter into an intimate union with God

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<sup>80</sup>Cyril of Jerusalem, Lecture 22, sec. 3, "On the Body and Blood of Christ," Catechetical Lectures, Vol. VII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 151.

<sup>81</sup>Augustine, Confessions, Bk. 7, chap. 10, trans. V. J. Bourge, Vol. XXI of The Fathers of the Church, ed. R. J. Deferrari (40 vols.; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1953), p. 181.

<sup>82</sup>Ellard, Christian Life and Worship, p. 165.

and strengthen the Christian solidarity through their brotherly union.<sup>83</sup> The thought of the bread made from numberless grains of wheat, and the wine pressed from countless grapes, as symbolizing the living unity of Christians, echoes through the whole of the early Christian literature. This symbolism was used by St. Augustine in his Easter sermon to the "infants" baptized the previous night.

When as catechumens you were being deferred, you were under observation in a granary. Then you were enrolled; the grinding process achieved by fastings and exorcisms, began. Afterwards you came to the font; you were sprinkled and you became one (with the whole mass); by the application of the burning heat of the Holy Spirit you were baked and you became the bread of the Lord.

Behold what you have received! Therefore, just as you see that the bread which was made is one mass, so may you also be one Body by loving one another, by having one faith, one hope, and an undivided charity. . . . Thus, too, the wine existed in many clusters of grapes; and now it is one. . . . And now you, in the name of Christ, have come to the chalice of the Lord, . . . There you are on the table, and there you are in the chalice, for you are one with us. We receive together, and we drink together.<sup>84</sup>

A similar line of thought is also expressed by St. Chrysostom:

For what is the bread? The Body of Christ.  
And what do they become who partake of it? The

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>84</sup>Augustine, Sermon 229, "For the Easter Season," Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons, Vol. XXXVIII of The Fathers of the Church, pp. 201-202.

Body of Christ; not many bodies, but one body. For as the bread consisting of many grains is made one so that the grains no where appear; they exist indeed but their difference is not seen, by reason of their conjunction, so are we conjoined both with each other and with Christ.<sup>85</sup>

This same thought is echoed through the prayers at the Masses of the first Christians. It is well illustrated in Didache.

As this broken Bread was (once) scattered over the mountains but was brought together and became one, so let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom, through Jesus Christ forever.<sup>86</sup>

He who by Baptism was implanted in Christ and accepted into the Kingdom of God, should be allowed to regard the bread of heaven as his daily food.<sup>87</sup> Of it St. Augustine says, "The Eucharist is our daily bread, but receive it that it refreshes not only your bodies but your souls."<sup>88</sup> And St. Basil states that they who were

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<sup>85</sup>Chrysostom, Homily 24, sec. 4, "The Bread Makes Us Really One Body with Christ," Homilies on 1 Cor., Vol. IV of A Library of the Fathers, p. 328.

<sup>86</sup>Didache, chap. 9, "The Thanksgiving (Eucharist)," trans. M. B. Riddle, Vol. VII of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, ed. A. Roberts and Donaldson (8 vols.; New York: Christian Literature Co., 1907-16), p. 380.

<sup>87</sup>Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, p. 501.

<sup>88</sup>Augustine, Sermon 7, sec. 7, "On the Lord's Prayer," Sermons on the New Testament, Vol. XVI of A Library of the Fathers, p. 85.

regenerated through Baptism require "to be nourished with the food of eternal life which again the Only-begotten Son of God gave to us when He said: 'Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God'" (Matt. 4:4).<sup>89</sup>

### The Last Gospel

The final conclusion of the Eucharistic Sacrifice is the reading of a portion of St. John's Gospel. He expounds in his Gospel: life and light, grace and truth, and the divine sonship. The Gospel synthesizes all those things that are bestowed upon the Christians in the mystery of the Mass.<sup>90</sup> A summary of the whole work of Redemption, which the Mass itself renews, exists in those golden words: "To as many as received Him, He gave power to become the sons of God" (Jn. 1:12).<sup>91</sup> This final reference reminds the Christian once again, of the unique and exalted dignity which came to him through Baptism. As an adopted son of God, the Christian, participates in the divine life and enjoys an intimate union with Christ who

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<sup>89</sup>Basil, "Concerning Baptism," Bk. 1, chap. 3, Ascetical Works, Vol. IX of The Fathers of the Church, p. 387.

<sup>90</sup>Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, p. 324.

<sup>91</sup>Ellard, Christian Life and Worship, p. 170.

is the true eternal Son of God. St. Chrysostom says: "He who bestowed this honor upon us is both greatest and noblest of all . . . grace does not come to men at random, but only to those who want it and strive for it. But it lies in their power to become sons."<sup>92</sup> And he says:

"Faith and grace of the Holy Spirit, erasing the difference arising from circumstances, has molded all to the same form and has impressed them with one royal stamp."<sup>93</sup>

Further on, St. Chrysostom explains the reason why Christ said He gave the "power to become sons of God." According to St. Chrysostom, the Christian must exert a great deal of effort to retain that image of sonship impressed in baptism, unsullied and intact. Then, too, no one is able to deprive another of the power unless he of his own accord deprives himself.<sup>94</sup>

The power given to those who received the Word, whereby they were enabled to become children of God, is the grace of faith, and faith is the means of appropriating the dignity of divine sonship. Faith is not itself

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<sup>92</sup>Chrysostom, "Homily 10 (John 1: 11-13)," Homilies on the Gospel of St. John, trans. S. M. Thomas Aquinas Goggin, S.C.H., Vol. XXXIII of The Fathers of the Church, ed. R. J. Deferrari (40 vols.; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1947- ), p. 101.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., pp. 100-101.

filiation, but the foundation and root of filiation. These "sons" were not generated from material elements, the blood products of man and woman, nor from the will of the flesh, but were born from God.<sup>95</sup>

St. John's Gospel has been held in the highest esteem from the dawn of Christianity.<sup>96</sup> St. Augustine tells us of a Platonist philosopher, who considered it "fit to be written in the highest places."<sup>97</sup> All classes of people held it in deepest veneration. But it has not been always a part of the Mass. Up to the time of Pope Pius V a priest could say it or omit it, just as he pleased, for it was then only a private prayer. This holy Pontiff realizing how attached the people were to it, inserted it in the Missal and made its recital obligatory.<sup>98</sup> Because of its key statement, "He gave them power to become sons of God," St. John's prologue brings the Eucharistic celebration to a fitting close, for that celebration is eminently the act of the children of God.

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<sup>95</sup>Orchard, op. cit., p. 980.

<sup>96</sup>Ellard, Christian Life and Worship, p. 169.

<sup>97</sup>St. Augustine, City of God, B. X, chap. 29, trans. G. G. Walsh, S.J., and G. Monahan, O.S.U., Vol. XIV of The Fathers of the Church, ed. R. J. Deferrari (40 vols.; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1947- ), p. 174.

<sup>98</sup>J. O'Brien, op. cit., p. 391.

## CHAPTER IV

## SPIRITUAL ADOPTION IN THE PROPER OF TIME

Throughout the entire Liturgical Year, the Mass centers especially around the mysteries of Jesus Christ. Pope Pius XII says: "These mysteries still influence us because each mystery brings its own special grace for salvation."<sup>1</sup> The mystery of divine sonship traced through the Ordinary of the Mass has been considered in the previous chapter. And now, a further survey of this spiritual re-birth will be studied through the Proper of Time, especially Holy Saturday and Easter Week.

The Season of Advent

Introit. On the third Sunday of Advent the liturgy bids the Christians to rejoice. At the very outset the Church proclaims in the Introit: "Rejoice in the Lord" (Phil. 4:4). But it is only the Christians who can rejoice: because they are the children of God through Baptism; because Christ is their Brother; because heaven

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<sup>1</sup>Pope Pius XII, Mediator Dei, p. 57.

is their home; in short, because they are divinely privileged.<sup>2</sup>

Epistle. The Epistle repeats the Introit: "Rejoice for the Lord is near" (Phil. 4:7). Joy is the pledge of the Christians' incorporation in Christ. Through Baptism and the possession of sanctifying grace they became members of the True vine, which is Christ, and children of God. St. Gregory Nazianzen says: "The Christian put on Christ and has been transformed into Christ by Baptism."<sup>3</sup> Christ dwells in His children. They live by the life of Christ as children in the house of their father.<sup>4</sup>

### The Christmas Season

The central point of Christmas season is the birth of Christ. Christmas should accomplish in the faithful a new birth. As Mary gave birth to the human nature of Christ and presented Him to the Church, so the Church also, in the power of the Holy Spirit, gives her children

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<sup>2</sup>Pius Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace, trans. W. G. Heidt, O.S.B. (5 vols.; Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1953-59), I, 87.

<sup>3</sup>Gregory Nazianzen, Oration 40, sec. 10, "On Holy Baptism," Select Orations, trans. C. G. Browne and J. E. Swallow, Vol. VII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, ed. P. Schaff and W. Wace (14 vols.; New York: Christian Literature Co., 1890-1900), p. 363.

<sup>4</sup>Benedict Baur, O.S.B., The Light of the World, trans. E. Malone, O.S.B. (3 vols.; 9th ed. rev.; Saint Louis, Mo.: Herder Book Co., 1955-56), I, 78.

a new life in Christ.<sup>5</sup> The mystery of the Infancy of Jesus in the soul of man, and the infancy of man's soul in Jesus is expressed in the words of St. Leo:

Today's festival renews for us the holy childhood of Jesus born of the Virgin Mary: and in adoring the birth of our Savior, we find we are celebrating the commencement of our new life. For the birth of Christ is the source of life for Christian folk, and the birthday of the Head is the birthday of the body. Although every individual that is called has his own order, and all the sons of the Church are separated from one another by intervals of time, yet as the entire body of the faithful being born in the font of baptism, is crucified with Christ in His passion, raised again in His resurrection, and placed at the Father's right hand in His ascension, so with Him are they born in this nativity. For any believer in whatever part of the world that is re-born in Christ, quits the old paths of his original nature and passes into a new man by being re-born; and no longer is he reckoned of his earthly father's stock but among the seed of the Savior, Who became the Son of man in order that we might have the power to be sons of God.<sup>6</sup>

Each time Mass is celebrated, the liturgy recalls the incarnation, and so Christmas.<sup>7</sup> The faithful, like the shepherds of Bethlehem, bring their gifts to God at the Offertory. In a holy exchange He accepts them, transmutes them, and gives them back at the time of Holy

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<sup>5</sup>Baur, O.S.B., op. cit., I, 105.

<sup>6</sup>Leo the Great, Sermon 26, sec. 2, "On the Feast of the Nativity," The Letters and Sermons, Vol. XII of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 137.

<sup>7</sup>Baur, O.S.B., op. cit., I, 104.

Communion, that through this exchange they may become like unto Him in all things. The Secret of the Mass of Christmas is a recall of this holy exchange. "That we may be found in the form of Him in Whom our substance is united with Thee." According to St. Leo, the coming of Christ in human flesh corresponds with our becoming members of His body. "As the Lord Jesus became our flesh by being born, so we also became His body by being re-born."<sup>8</sup>

At Communion the Church not only speaks of Christ as she prays, "In the brightness of My sanctity before the morning star have I have begotten Thee," but the Church is also speaking of the Christians. In the night of eternity they were chosen by the Father; in the holy night of the Savior's birth they were made brothers and sisters, that re-born with Christ they may be children of God.<sup>9</sup>

The Epistle of the Second Mass on Christmas day emphasizes God's mercy in bestowing grace on man. "According to His mercy He saved us through the bath of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:4-7). The Apostle says that the baptismal regeneration is due to the Father who, without any regard to merits which man

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<sup>8</sup>Leo the Great, Sermon 23, sec. 5, "On the Feast of the Nativity," The Letters and Sermons, Vol. XII of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 134.

<sup>9</sup>Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace, I, 213.

neither possessed nor was capable of acquiring, had mercy on him; it is due also to Jesus Christ who is man's Savior and Mediator; and finally it is due to the Holy Spirit, the Common Envoy of the Father and the Son, the Sanctifier, who is liberally poured out upon man. The life of grace justifies or renders a man just in the sight of God, hence he is a son of God and co-heir with Christ. In a word, baptism is the beginning of a life which is eternal.<sup>10</sup>

The Collect of the Third Mass on Christmas requests that "the new birth" shake off the "old yoke of sin and set us free." Through Christ's mercy and grace man is incorporated into the kingdom of Christ.

In the Gospel of that Mass, St. John announces the incarnation of the Son of God. He is the Light that came to give Life to the world. Without that Life man would die; with that Life man becomes the son of God and shall live forever. In the mass, that Life will be given abundantly, "to as many as receive Him."<sup>11</sup>

The Church prays in the Postcommunion that the adopted children may partake of the immortality of this

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<sup>10</sup> Orchard, op. cit., p. 1150.

<sup>11</sup> Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., "Mass Commentary," Worship, XXXIII (December, 1959), 63.

same Jesus for, by assuming the human nature He has given them the pledge of their receiving a divine life.<sup>12</sup>

Sunday Within the Octave of Christmas

Epistle. The Epistle of the Mass for this Sunday reminds the faithful of their divine sonship. The Apostle thus speaks:

But when the fullness of time came, God sent His Son born of a woman, born under the Law, that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the spirit of His Son in your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So that He is no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, an heir also through God (Gal. 4:1-7).

The faithful stand before God not merely as creatures drawn out of nothingness by His power, but as His children whom He fondly loves. They are the adopted children born to Him through the virginal birth of Baptism, filled with the spirit of His life, by which they are entitled to cry out to God and call Him "our Father." Heaven is not only the throne of His sovereign Majesty, it has now become their inheritance, in which they are joint-heirs with their Brother Jesus, the Son of Mary, Son of Eve, Son of Adam, according to His Human Nature,

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<sup>12</sup> Abbot Gueranger, O.S.B., The Liturgical Year, trans. D. L. Shepherd, O.S.B., and the Benedictines of Stanbrook (15 vols.; Chicago: Benziger Brothers, 1900-20), II, 231.

and (in the unity of Person) Son of God according to His Divine Nature.<sup>13</sup>

Commemoration for the Baptism of Christ

Collect. The feast is a reminder of the great unmerited grace of holy baptism which brings a new life to the adopted children of God. The Collect asks for interior renovation through Christ who assumed our nature. In the symbolism of His baptism, Christ displayed beforehand His redemptive death and resurrection.<sup>14</sup> Himself immaculate, He assumes the sins of the world, descends into the purifying waters, and raises mankind to divine sonship.

In each Holy Mass Christ's baptism is in a certain way, again operative. Through the Holy Sacrifice man is immersed in His sacrificial death; heaven then opens and the Holy Spirit descends in Holy Communion, while through the pledge of the Sacrificial Banquet the Father assures man of renewed and enriched sonship in Himself.<sup>15</sup>

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Collect. The Collect identifies the Christian community as God's family. The words familiam tuam remind Almighty God, so to speak, that the faithful are His

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 377

<sup>14</sup>Parsch, Church's Year of Grace, I, 299.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 299-300.

children and hence utterly dependent upon Him. The notion of dependence is still further urged in the phrase "with continual loving-kindness," and they, like little children, need to be guarded. The guarding and protecting of God's children is accomplished by grace, which is the very tower of defense for God's family.<sup>16</sup>

The term familia also suggests the social character of the Church, for it implies unity and harmony among the members of God's household and a common interest among them in the welfare of the corporate body. For the Apostle says: "Let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith" (Gal. 6:10). The "Family of God" is one, by reason of the only hope which upholds and encourages all, the hope of Salvation through the grace of God.<sup>17</sup>

Epistle (Col. 3:12-17). In the Epistle of the Mass for the day, the faithful are addressed as God's chosen ones. But they are reminded that this privilege carries with it certain obligations. These obligations are all explained in the Epistle by St. Paul, who exhorts

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<sup>16</sup>Sister Mary Gonzaga Haessly, Reflections on the Sunday Collects of the Roman Missal (Cleveland, Ohio: Grail Publications, 1946), p. 26.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

the Christians above all to charity. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12). If the chief privilege of the Christian is to be a child of God, his chief obligation is to love.<sup>18</sup>

### The Pre-Lenten Season

#### Septuagesima Sunday

Collect. The Collect for the first Sunday of the new liturgical season reveals the emotion of God's children. The Church conscious of man's condition turns to God for help: "In clemency hear, we beg, O Lord, Thy people's prayers." The faithful, God's people, offer their prayers to the Father who has compassion on their faults.

The expressions "Thy people," "Thy servants," "Thy household," "Thy faithful" are repeated frequently in the Collects as well as in the Secrets and the Graduals. These phrases remind the adopted children that God's Church is His household to which they belong. Hence, they may expect help from Him who is the Father of the family of the faithful.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Baur, op. cit., I, 249.

<sup>19</sup>Haessly, op. cit., p. 38.

The Season of LentThird Sunday of Lent

Epistle (Eph. 5:1-9). This Sunday's liturgy reminds the faithful that Christ makes them men of light. "You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk, then, as children of light." The faithful are reminded they must be imitators of God, because by Baptism they became His sons, they became saints, they became children of light.<sup>20</sup>

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Epistle (Gal. 4:22-31). "We are not children of a slave-girl, but of the free woman: in virtue of the freedom wherewith Christ has made us free." In the mystical types of Abraham's two wives, Sara and Agar, the Church wishes to show the faithful how their good fortune as Christians shines even brighter when contrasted with Israel's lot.<sup>21</sup> They have become God's free sons, heirs of heaven. They are not slaves of the Old Testament but by Baptism became children of the New Jerusalem, of holy Mother Church. As free men Christians should freely and willingly serve their loving Father.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Diekmann, O.S.B., op. cit., p. 188.

<sup>21</sup>Parsch, Church's Year of Grace, II, p. 215.

<sup>22</sup>Diekmann, O.S.B., op. cit., p. 188.

## Holy Saturday

### Blessing of the Baptismal Water

The liturgy of Holy Saturday is permeated with symbolism which speaks of renovation, of man's spiritual re-birth as adopted child of God. It reminds the Christians year by year that through Baptism they have died and have come to life in Christ. As the Epistle to the Romans explains:

Know you not that all we who are baptized in Christ Jesus are baptized in his death? For we are buried together with him by baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. (Rom. 6:3-5).

St. Paul expresses the same doctrine in his epistle to the Corinthians. "For you were buried together with Him in Baptism and in Him also you rose again, because you believed in the power of God who raised Him from the dead" (Cor. 2:12).

These classical texts serve as a key to the understanding of Baptism by immersion which was administered in that manner in the early Christian Church. According to the Fathers of the Church, the triple immersion had reference not only to the Trinity but also to the three days of our Saviour's burial. Going down into the water represented going down into the grave--a dying. Repeating

it three times represented Christ's staying in the grave for three days. And a rising up out of the water represented rising from the grave--a coming to life.

The Fathers explain the entire Baptismal rite of immersion as being symbolical of the Christian's dying and rising with Christ. St. Cyril of Jerusalem says that Baptism "not only purges our sins, and ministers to us the gift of the Holy Spirit, but it is also a counterpart of the sufferings of Christ."<sup>23</sup> He goes on to point out to the catechumens the symbolism of the immersion. "At the same moment you were dying and being born; and the Water of salvation was at once your grave and your mother. . . . Your birth went hand in hand with your death."<sup>24</sup>

St. John Chrysostom declares that in Baptism are fulfilled the pledges of the Christian's covenant with God: burial and death, resurrection and life.

For when we immerse our heads in the water, the old man is buried as in the tomb below, and wholly sunk forever; then as we raise them again the new man rises in its stead. As it is easy for us to dip and to lift our heads again so it is easy for God to bury the old man and to show forth the new. And this is done thrice, that you may learn that the power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost fulfillleth all this.

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<sup>23</sup>Cyril of Jerusalem, Lecture 20, sec. 6, "On Baptism," Catechetical Lectures, Vol. VII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 148.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 148.

To show this is no conjecture, hear Paul saying,  
 "We are buried with Him by Baptism into death"  
 (Rom. 6:4).<sup>25</sup>

The doctrine of baptismal death and resurrection is mentioned also by St. Gregory Nazianzen. "Let us be buried with Christ by Baptism that we may also rise with Him; let us descend with Him, that we may also be exalted with Him; let us ascend with Him that we may also be glorified together."<sup>26</sup>

Already in the third century it had gradually become the custom throughout the Church to administer Baptism in the course of Easter night in preference to any other. Solemn Baptism during Easter Vigil became obligatory in the fourth century.<sup>27</sup> St. Leo considered it the most appropriate time for Baptism. He says:

For baptizing the sons of men and adopting them as sons of God, that day and that season were chosen on which the actions performed on the members might be, through symbolism and mystical rite, in harmony with what was done in the Head itself. For, in the rite of baptism

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<sup>25</sup>Chrysostom, Homily 25, sec. 2, "Baptism a Generation," Homilies on St. John, trans. G. T. Stupart, Vol. XXVIII of A Library of the Fathers (Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1838-61), 211-212.

<sup>26</sup>Gregory Nazianzen, Oration 40, sec. 9, "On Holy Baptism," Select Orations, Vol. VII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 362.

<sup>27</sup>D. J. Gaillard, Holy Week and Easter, trans. W. Busch (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1957), p. 112.

death comes from the slaying of sin, and the triple immersion imitates the three days of burial, and the rising out of the water is like His rising from the tomb.<sup>28</sup>

The Easter Vigil brings a grace of renewal, a spiritual rejuvenation to all the faithful who take part in it. It is an annual feast of initiation; it is the common anniversary of their Baptism and first Communion. The rites at which the faithful assist increase in them the consciousness of their incorporation in Christ, their assimilation to Him in His mystery of suffering and glory, of death and life.<sup>29</sup>

The baptismal ceremony in the present-day Easter Vigil consists of three parts: the blessing of the baptismal water, the administration of the sacrament and the renewal of the vows.<sup>30</sup>

St. Cyril ascribes the power of water to the consecration of water as imparting to it new power of holiness by invocation of the Holy Ghost, and of Christ, and

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<sup>28</sup>Leo the Great, "Letter 16," Letters, trans. Brother Edmund Hunt, C.S.C., Vol. XXXIV of The Fathers of the Church, ed. R. J. Deferrari (40 vols.; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1957), pp. 17-72.

<sup>29</sup>Gaillard, op. cit., p. 112.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

of the Father.<sup>31</sup> Tertullian ascribes its effect to the Holy Ghost:

The waters, after invocation of God attain the sacramental power of sanctification; for the Spirit immediately supervenes from heaven, and rests over the waters sanctifying them from Himself; and being thus sanctified they imbibe at the same time the power of sanctifying.<sup>32</sup>

And again St. Ambrose tells us that water without Spirit does not cleanse.<sup>33</sup> Any kind of natural water is valid matter for the sacrament. But for the liturgical administration of the sacrament the Church desires that there be a first solemn blessing in order to prepare the water in a certain way for the sacramental function.

In the Roman liturgy the blessing or the consecration of the baptismal water is accompanied by means of a lengthy prayer, composed in the style of a consecration preface.<sup>34</sup> As has been said previously, the general theme

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<sup>31</sup>Cyril of Jerusalem, Lecture 21, sec. 1, "On Chrism," The Catechetical Lectures, Vol. VII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 155.

<sup>32</sup>Tertullian, "On Baptism," chap. 4, trans. S. Thelwall, Vol. III of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (10 vols.; New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1907-16), p. 671.

<sup>33</sup>Ambrose, "On the Mysteries," chap. 4, sec. 19 Select Works and Letters, Vol. IX of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 319.

<sup>34</sup>Gaillard, op. cit., p. 133.

of these prayers is the mystery of water made fruitful by the Spirit. While St. Paul refers to Baptism as dying with Christ and rising again with Him, St. John refers to this re-birth in terms of the Spirit.

Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is born of Spirit is spirit (John 3:5).

That is how the Lord explained it to Nicodemus; natural life was insufficient equipment for the happiness of heaven.

In Baptism "by water and the Holy Spirit" a new life is acquired, a re-birth. In this new birth the Christians are conformed to Christ. St. Cyril makes reference to this conformity when he says:

Having been baptized in Christ, and put on Christ, ye have been made conformable to the Son of God; for God having foreordained us unto adoption as sons, made us to be conformed to the body of Christ's glory. Having therefore become partakers of Christ ye are properly Christs.<sup>35</sup>

The blessing of the water is prefaced by a prayer which expresses the longing of the people after the new life, of which Christ is the source. Thus the Church prays: "Send forth the spirit of adoption to regenerate the new people, whom the font of baptism brings forth."

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<sup>35</sup>Cyril of Jerusalem, Lecture 21, sec. 1, "On Chrism," Catechetical Lectures, Vol. VII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 149.

In the Preface following the collect, the faithful are reminded of two great instances in which water appears as a signal part in the designs of God. In the very beginning of creation "The Spirit of God moved over the waters" (Gen. 1) to make them fruitful and to prepare them for a supernatural function. The other instance is the Deluge (Gen. 6:9) told in the mystery of "the death of vice and a new beginning of virtue."<sup>36</sup> St. Jerome alludes to both of these instances. "The Spirit of God above moved as a charioteer, over the face of the waters, and produced from them the infant world, a type of the Christian child that is drawn from the laver of Baptism."<sup>37</sup> And a little further he says:

When the world falls into sin nothing but a flood of water can cleanse it again. But as soon as the foul bird of wickedness is driven away, the dove of the Holy Spirit comes to Noah as it came afterwards to Christ in the Jordan and carrying in its beak a branch betokening restoration and light, brings tidings of peace to the whole world.<sup>38</sup>

As the Holy Spirit once hovered over chaos and made it fruitful with life, so the Church now asks "the

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<sup>36</sup>Gaillard, op. cit., p. 134.

<sup>37</sup>Jerome, Letter 69, sec. 6, "To Oceanus," Select Works and Letters, trans. W. H. Fremantle, et al., Vol. VI of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, ed. P. Schaff and W. Wace (14 vols.; New York: Christian Literature Co., 1890-1900), p. 145.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

spirit of adoption to regenerate those who are born anew of the baptismal waters," whether by actual receiving of the sacrament or by the renewal of it once conferred.<sup>39</sup> "Look, O Lord upon the face of Thy Church," says the preface in the blessing of the baptismal water, "and multiply in her Thine acts of regeneration . . . open the fountain of baptism for the renewal of the nations throughout the world . . ."

At the end of this prayer the water is divided in the form of a cross and later a threefold sign of the cross is made over the water. This signifies that it is by the cross that this element receives the power of regenerating souls of men. St. Ambrose stresses the importance of the cross necessary for the blessing of the baptismal water when he says:

For what is water without the cross of Christ? A common element without any sacramental effect. Nor again is there the Sacrament of Regeneration without water. Even the catechumen believes in the cross of the Lord, wherewith he too is signed but unless he be baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, he cannot receive remission of sins nor gain the gift of spiritual grace.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Sister Mary Cecilia, Companion to the Missal (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1954), p. 203.

<sup>40</sup>Ambrose, "On the Mysteries," chap. 4, sec. 20, Select Works and Letters, Vol. X of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 319.

The continued prayer for the blessing of the water expresses another symbolism of man's spiritual adoption. When the Church prays "that the Holy Spirit make fruitful the water prepared for the regeneration of men, that a heavenly offspring, conceived in sanctification, may emerge from the immaculate womb of the divine font," it considers the Church a mother from whose womb new life will be born. St. Augustine very expressly alluded to the above prayer in one of his Easter Vigil sermons delivered to the Catechumens. He contrasts the spiritual and human parentage. "We had a father and mother on earth, that we might be born to labours and death: but we have found other parents, God our Father, and the church our Mother, by whom we are born unto life eternal."<sup>41</sup> And he says elsewhere, "Behold the womb of your mother, the Church; behold how she labors in pain to bear you and to bring you forth into the light of faith."<sup>42</sup> In another sermon Saint Augustine regards the Church as Mother when he addressed

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<sup>41</sup>Augustine, Sermon 7, sec. 2, "On the Lord's Prayer," Sermons on the New Testament, Vol. XVI of A Library of the Fathers, p. 82.

<sup>42</sup>Augustine, Sermon 216, "To the Seekers of Baptism," Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons, Vol. XXXVIII of The Fathers of the Church, p. 156.

the newly baptized in these words, "Hear us, O newborn sons of a chaste mother; hear us, O sons of a virgin mother."<sup>43</sup>

The Fathers of the Church also liken the water of the baptismal font to the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. They say just as Christ was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit, the Christian is re-born in the immaculate womb of the Mother Church made fruitful by the Holy Spirit. Pope St. Leo the Great says, "To everyone who is re-born, the water of baptism is like the Virgin's womb; for the same Holy Spirit fills the font Who filled the Virgin."<sup>44</sup> And St. Ambrose comments:

If the Holy Spirit coming down upon the Virgin wrought the conception, and effected the work of regeneration, surely we must not doubt that, coming down upon the Font, or upon those who receive Baptism, He effects the reality of the new birth.<sup>45</sup>

The liturgy prays "that by grace, Mother Church may bring forth all, however different they may be in age

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<sup>43</sup>Augustine, Sermon 223, "For the Vigil of Easter," Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons, Vol. XXXVIII of The Fathers of the Church, p. 182.

<sup>44</sup>Leo, Sermon 24, sec. 3, "On the Feast of the Nativity," Sermons and Letters, Vol. XII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 135.

<sup>45</sup>Ambrose, "On the Mysteries," Chap. 9, sec. 58, Select Works and Letters, Vol. X of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 325.

or sex, into the same spiritual childhood." By this prayer the liturgy reminds the adopted children of God, that they are all re-born whatever their age or sex into one and the same spiritual childhood; all are new-born babes. St. Augustine calls the newly baptized "infants" because "they who were first born to the world, are now born to Christ."<sup>46</sup>

In the blessing of the water, the liturgy would have the faithful understand the meaning of water as pre-figured in the Old Testament, and realized in Christ and in His members in the New Testament. These flowing waters are not merely waters that cleanse, but waters which mean life and death. The symbolism of dividing the baptismal water and sprinkling it to the four corners, is referred to the plenteous water in Eden which symbolizes the life divine of the first parents (Gen. 3). The fateful waters of the Red Sea, which meant death for the Egyptian, paved the way to a new life for the liberated Israelites (Ex. 14:21-31).<sup>47</sup>

In the New Testament, the prayer reminds the faithful that the water has been blessed through Jesus

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<sup>46</sup>Augustine, Sermon 228, "For Easter Sunday," Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons, Vol. XXXVIII of The Fathers of the Church, p. 199.

<sup>47</sup>J. MacGuire, "Life Divine Conquers Gloom," Ave Maria, XCI (April, 1960), 9.

Christ. That Christ was never without water is brought out well by Tertullian:

He Himself is baptized in water; inaugurates in water the first rudimentary displays of His power when invited to the nuptials; invites the thirsty, when He makes a discourse to his own sempiternal water; approves when teaching concerning love, among works of charity, the cup of water offered to the thirsty; recruits his strength at the well; walks over water; willingly crosses the sea; ministers water to the disciples. Onward even to the Passion does the witness of Baptism last; while He is being surrendered to the cross, water intervenes; witness Pilate's hands; when He is wounded, forth from His side bursts water; witness the soldier's lance!<sup>48</sup>

The theme of water in the plan of God comes to a fitting conclusion in the last book of the Bible, in the description of the heavenly Jerusalem. "Then he showed me a river of living water, clear as crystal which issued from the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Apoc. 22:1). "And let him who thirsts come; and he who wishes, let him receive the water of life freely" (Apoc. 22:17).<sup>49</sup>

The Church once again invokes the Holy Spirit in the blessing of the font. "May the power of the Holy Spirit descend upon all the contents of this font; and may He make the whole substance of this water pregnant with the power to regenerate." This invocation of the

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<sup>48</sup>Tertullian, "On Baptism," chap. 9, Vol. III of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, p. 673.

<sup>49</sup>M. Marx, O.S.B., "Living Waters," Worship, XXVII (April, 1953), p. 243.

Holy Spirit is accompanied by symbolic actions and emphasizes the influx of divine power; namely, the sign of the cross, the breathing of the celebrant upon the water, and the lowering of the paschal candle into the font.

At the conclusion of the blessing of the font, the faithful are reminded once more of the effect of Baptism, a re-birth, a new childhood, a divine filiation, the innocence and bloom of supernatural youth which only sin can cause to fade. The consecratory prayer concludes "through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who shall come to judge the living and the dead and the world, by fire," marking a contrast between the water of Baptism which refreshes and vivifies, and the fire of divine judgment which threatens those who refuse that saving grace.<sup>50</sup>

The pouring of the oil into the font recalled the divine ordinance of the Old Testament (Ex. 30:25-31): "You shall make a holy oil of unction." This oil of unction is symbolic of that unction of the Holy Spirit by which Jesus was made the Christ, the Anointed of God, prophet, priest and king. And the Christians have part in that spiritual unction by virtue of the character of the sacraments.<sup>51</sup>

The sacramental character sanctifies its recipient making him holy to God, God's peculiar possession.

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<sup>50</sup>Gaillard, op. cit., p. 136.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

Because of the baptismal character, the Christian people are pre-eminently God's people. The sacramental character is a power enabling the Christian not only to receive but also to bestow upon others things pertaining to the worship of God. The principal act to which baptism deposes the Christian is participation in Mass.<sup>52</sup>

All Christians are in a sense priests. Christ is the great High Priest, who has won man's redemption through His sacrifice.<sup>53</sup> St. Peter wrote to the faithful, "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people God means to have for himself" (1 Peter 2:9). Numerous New Testament texts support the traditional teaching that the Christian people are especially chosen by God to enjoy a priestly dignity.<sup>54</sup> In the Apocalypse is written: "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection! . . . They shall be priests of God and of Christ" (Apoc. 20:6).

In the ancient liturgy when the neophyte emerged from the water, the priest anointed the top of his head with chrism. For in the likeness of Christ, the one baptized, too, is an anointed of the Lord. The formula

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<sup>52</sup>McNamara, op. cit., pp. 179-180.

<sup>53</sup>C. Papali, O.C.D., "The Apostolate of the Laity," Theology Digest, VIII (Autumn, 1960), 174.

<sup>54</sup>McNamara, op. cit., p. 178.

used for the rite of unction is taken from the Gelasian Sacramentary:

May God almighty, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given thee a new life by water and the Holy Ghost, and granted thee remission of all sins, anoint thee with the Chrism of salvation in the same Christ Jesus our Lord, unto life everlasting.<sup>55</sup>

The baptismal water is brought in procession to the font. The prayer which accompanies this symbolic rite expresses the desire of the faithful to enter again spiritually into this life-giving source and to renew the supernatural strength. "My soul longs for thee, O God, as the deer for the running water. My soul thirsts for the living God." And the priest chants a prayer addressing God in these words:

Almighty, everlasting God, look graciously upon the devotion of thy people now to be reborn, who, like the hart panting for the stream, desire thy waters; and mercifully grant that through the rite of baptism their thirsting faith may bring them holiness of body and soul.

In the present-day Roman liturgy, all the faithful assembled for the Easter Vigil are to become in some way neophytes themselves in a solemn renewal of their baptismal vows.<sup>56</sup> This ceremony is a happy addition in the new arrangement of the Easter Vigil by Pope Pius XII in 1951.

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<sup>55</sup>Gaillard, op. cit., p. 141.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 141.

The renewal of the baptismal vows concludes in the recitation of the Our Father. Tertullian testifies that the Lord's Prayer was the first prayer recited by the newly baptized as they entered the Church from the place of baptism.<sup>57</sup> It is known, too, that the handing over of the Lord's Prayer, the traditio orationis dominicae, was an important ceremony during the catechumenate. The candidates for baptism had to learn the wording of the Our Father by heart, but could not use that prayer until they actually became Christians, that is, until they were baptized.<sup>58</sup> Until that time, they were indeed God's servants, but not properly His sons.

The blessing of the baptismal water is followed with logical necessity by the solemn, communal and public protestation of loyalty to Christ, to the Church, to the faith, to a life lived by faith--a public rite binding together all participants. Each participant vows and promises for himself, but also in full awareness that he is responsible for the others. Christianity is not merely personal, it is collective. For that reason the renewal of vows closes with the congregationally recited

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<sup>57</sup>Tertullian, "On Baptism," chap. 20, Vol. III of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, p. 679.

<sup>58</sup>Jungmann, Mass of the Roman Rite, p. 465.

Our Father: all pray for the one, and one prays for all.<sup>59</sup>

The renewal of the baptismal vows is a reminder of the solemn covenant made with All-Holy, whereby God adopted men as His sons and heirs in return for the solemn oath of allegiance to His Fatherhood.<sup>60</sup>

After the renewal of vows, which takes place in a dialogue between the celebrant and the faithful, the priest sprinkles the faithful with the new baptismal water, a sacramental and a reminder of their baptism. In the final prayer the priest asks that God, "who gave us a new birth from water and the Holy Spirit, . . . may now guard us by His grace unto life eternal."

The paschal celebration anticipates in the action of the liturgy that welcome with which our Lord will greet His Church at the end of time when, as St. Paul says, the work of sanctification begun in Baptism is completed:

Christ loved the Church and delivered Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, cleansing her in the bath of water by means of the word; in order that He might present to Himself the Church in all her glory, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she might be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27).

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<sup>59</sup>J. Loew, "We Must Celebrate the Easter Night," Worship, XXVII (March, 1953), 165.

<sup>60</sup>Sister Mary Cecilia, op. cit., p. 205

### The Mass of Easter Eve

Collect. O God, Thou hast made this night radiant by the glory of Our Lord's resurrection! Preserve in Thy new children of Thy family the spirit of adopted sonship Thou hast given them, so that, made new in soul and body, they may offer Thee wholehearted service.

The Collect expresses the mystery of this holy night in fullness, Our Lord is risen in order that man may rise in Him. The spiritual elevation to union with God is accomplished. The Church petitions that the adopted children may fulfill their Christian duties perfectly. Risen in union with the Redeemer, they must rise from the cold and slothful life to one of greater fervor and holiness by giving themselves completely and generously to God the Father.<sup>61</sup>

### The Easter Season

Throughout the Easter Week the Roman liturgy is entirely absorbed by two great thoughts, that of the resurrection of our Lord and that of Baptism. These are, as it were, two mysteries which mutually complete and explain each other. The regeneration of souls to the life of grace through the sacrament of baptism, is a new resurrection of Christ in His Mystical Body.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Pope Pius XII, Mediator Dei, p. 55.

<sup>62</sup>Ildefonso Schuster, The Sacramentary, trans. A. Levelis-Marke (5 vols.; London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1924-1930), II, 313.

The allusions to Christ rising from the grave, and the Church emerging from the font of baptism to a new spiritual life, is stressed in the Proper of the Easter Week including Low Sunday. The theme is especially emphasized in the Collect and Secret for Thursday. The Introit of Low Sunday stressed the same thought.

### Easter Sunday

Collect. O God, who on this day through thine only-begotten Son didst overcome death and open unto us the gate of everlasting life, as by thy preventing grace thou dost breathe on the desires of our hearts, so do thou ever accompany them with thy help.

The resurrection of Christ foreshadows the resurrection of humanity. The members, seeing today that their mystical Head has risen from the grave, are confirmed in the hope that one day they too, in Christ will conquer death and rise to everlasting life.<sup>63</sup>

Communion. The Communion is derived from the words of St. Paul, which already has been read in the Lesson: "Christ our Pâsch is sacrificed, therefore let us feast in the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:7-8). But only those regenerated through Baptism can be nourished in this sacrificial banquet. Christ sacrificed Himself and became the food of the faithful.

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 314.

Post-Communion. In the Post-Communion the Church prays that the spirit of fraternal charity may abide in the children of God. The Son of God, by assuming the human nature, in the mystery of the Incarnation, made the faithful His brothers; by shedding His Blood and dying on the Cross united them to each other by the bond of redemption; and, by His resurrection, He has linked them together in one glorious immortality.<sup>64</sup> The Church inspires the faithful to communicate collectively and frequently. As all the members of a household gather around the family table, so the Holy Eucharist is the visible sign of unity of the Christian family. The fruit which the faithful derive from the Holy Table is a sense of intimate union of mind, heart, and will with Jesus Christ, with the Church, and with our brethren.<sup>65</sup>

#### Easter Monday

Collect. O God, Who by the paschal solemnity has blessed the world with remedies, let Thy heavenly gift, we beseech Thee, go with Thy people that it may both be worthy to attain perfect liberty and may profit by the same unto life everlasting.

The Collect speaks of perfect spiritual freedom. The Church prays that God's people may come to the perfect

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<sup>64</sup>Gueranger, op. cit., VII, 170.

<sup>65</sup>Schuster, op. cit., II, 323.

liberty of which the Resurrection is the type. The slavery to sin should have taught them the worth of that liberty of the children of God, which the Pasch has restored to them.<sup>66</sup>

### Easter Tuesday

Collect. O God, Who dost continually enrich Thy Church with new increase, grant to Thy people that they may by their good life hold fast to the sacrament which they have received by faith.

In the Collect, the Church gives thanks to God for rendering her fruitful, and thus giving her, every Easter, a mother's joy. The new generation enlarges the ranks of the faithful. As St. Leo says: "By the birth of Baptism an innumerable multitude of sons is born to God."<sup>67</sup> The Church also prays for her new children, that they may realize all what Baptism means, inasmuch as it communicates to them the very life of Jesus Christ Himself and that they may have the grace to persevere in the imitation of their risen Lord.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>Gueranger, op. cit., VII, 208.

<sup>67</sup>Leo, Sermon 63, sec. 6, "On the Passion," The Letters and Sermons, Vol. XII, of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 177.

<sup>68</sup>Schuster, op. cit., II, 322.

Wednesday in Easter Week

Collect. O God, who dost gladden us with the yearly celebration of our Lord's resurrection, mercifully grant that by these festivals which we celebrate, we may at last come to the possession of those joys that are eternal.

In this Collect, the Church reminds her children that the feasts of the holy liturgy are a means of their coming to the eternal Feasts of heaven. As children of God they must so celebrate the Easter of time as to deserve to be admitted into the joys of the eternal Easter.<sup>69</sup>

Post-Communion. May we be cleansed, O Lord, we beseech Thee, from our old nature; and may the sacrament, which we reverently take, change us into newness.

In the Post-Communion, the Church prays for the faithful, that they may receive the effects of the divine Food which they have just partaken. She prays that it may purify them and transform them into a new life.<sup>70</sup>

Thursday in Easter Week

Collect. O God, who hast united various nations in the confession of thy name: grant that they who have been born again by the water of baptism, may have the one same faith in their hearts, and the one same piety in their actions.

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<sup>69</sup>Gueranger, op. cit., VII, 247.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., VII, 255.

The Collect alludes to the unity in faith and brotherly harmony which exists among the children of the family re-born of the baptismal font. This is the mark which distinguishes the true Church. Many are the nations and peoples, but there is only one creed, one hierarchy, one rule, one worship. The idea is interpreted by St. Leo in these words:

It is He in whom the seed of Abraham is blessed by the adoption of the whole world. It is He who without excluding any nation under heaven, daily fulfills what He promised saying: 'Other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also I must bring. And they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd' (John 10:16).<sup>71</sup>

Secret. Graciously accept, we beseech thee, O Lord the offerings of thy people; that being renewed by the confession of thy name, and by baptism, they may obtain everlasting bliss.

The Secret reverts to the thought of Baptism, which entails the continuous profession of the Gospel of Christ. The Church beseeches God to accept the gifts presented Him by His new people regenerated through Baptism. Their offerings will be changed by the words of consecration into food that will strengthen them in their journey toward heaven, the home of their Father.

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<sup>71</sup>Leo, Sermon 63, sec. 6, "On the Passion," The Letters and Sermons, Vol. XII of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 177.

Friday in Easter Week

Collect. O Almighty and eternal God, who hast instituted this Paschal mystery in the covenant of the reconciliation of mankind, assist us with Thy holy grace, that what we profess in this solemnity, we may practice in our lives.

The Pasch is the reconciliation of man with God, for the Father can refuse nothing to such a conqueror as our Risen Jesus, His Son.<sup>72</sup> In her Collect the Church prays that the Christians may ever show themselves worthy of such a covenant, by faithfully living up to the mystery of the Paschal regeneration. They must realize the holiness to which they have been called by the sacrament of baptismal regeneration.<sup>73</sup> It is to the Christians especially that God has said: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:46). As children partake of the nature of their father, so they who are the children of God should make it their chief care that the divine likeness in them should become each day more perfect, according to the ineffable beauty of their heavenly Father.<sup>74</sup>

Saturday in Easter Week

Epistle. In the Epistle for this day the Apostle explains the sublime dignity through which the Christian

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<sup>72</sup>Gueranger, op. cit., p. 296.

<sup>73</sup>Schuster, op. cit., p. 334.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 334.

has been raised by Baptism (1 Peter 2:1-10). The Christians are the living stones of the spiritual edifice whose cornerstone of God's house is Christ. They have become priests, able to take part in the offering of the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass. They are the chosen generation, a royal priesthood. All these gifts have been bestowed upon the Christians from a purely gratuitous mercy.<sup>75</sup>

Communion. "All you who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). The Church during this past week repeatedly accentuated the importance of the baptismal initiation. Today's Communion reminds the Christians that Baptism incorporated them into Christ and made them members of His Body.<sup>76</sup> For the Christian, now clothed in the merits of Christ, must live again His life, share His thoughts and His affections, and realize the desires of His heart.

#### Low Sunday

Introit. The Church expresses her maternal love for her new-born children. They are like "new born babes," lovely in their sweet simplicity, and eager to drink from the breast of their Mother Church, the spiritual milk of

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<sup>75</sup>Gueranger, op. cit., VII, 320.

<sup>76</sup>Schuster, op. cit., II, 337.

faith, that faith which will make them strong and loyal.<sup>77</sup> In this Introit is expressed the fundamental principle of liturgical piety: Baptism is preparatory to the Holy Eucharist.<sup>78</sup> The baptized faithful must proceed to the Communion table to attain spiritual maturity.

#### Fourth Sunday after Easter

Introit. Every Sunday between Easter and Pentecost is a continuation of the paschal solemnity. The Introit for today strikes a joyful Easter note. "Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle, alleluia: for the Lord hath done wonderful things, alleluia. He had revealed His justice in the sight of the Gentiles." The Christians are reminded that Christ has revealed His justice by making complete satisfaction for them to the Father, and by having given new life through the sacrament of Baptism. They are justified and holy in the eyes of God.<sup>79</sup>

Secret. The Secret of today's Mass echoes the prayer said at the mingling of the wine and water. "Thou hast made us partakers of one supreme divinity." The sacrifice is a holy exchange whereby God enables the adopted children to share in His divinity.

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<sup>77</sup>Gueranger, op. cit., p. 339.

<sup>78</sup>Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace, III, 51.

<sup>79</sup>Baur, op. cit., p. 293.

Fifth Sunday after Easter

Introit. The antiphon of the Introit proclaims with the voice of joy the Christians' spirit of gratitude for the resurrection with Christ through Baptism. Christ redeemed his people and now they are children of God.

Gospel. In the Gospel, Christ assures the faithful that requests made in His name will always be heard. "If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it to you. Hitherto you have not asked anything in My name" (John 16:23-24). These words imply that the faithful before their Baptism and before it became possible for them to pray with Christ and through Christ in the Mass had not asked anything in His name. But now the prayer of the sacrificing Christian becomes one with the prayer of Christ in the sacrifice of the Mass.<sup>80</sup>

Man's elevation to the dignity of son of God, altered his relationship to God.<sup>81</sup> He is no longer merely a subject and servant but a son, whose prayers have an inalienable right to the heart of his heavenly Father. Our Lord says: "The Father Himself loveth you, because you have loved Me" (John 17:27). If the Father loves and adopts men as his children, if He predestines them to

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 316.

<sup>81</sup>Schuster, op. cit., II, 354.

grace and glory, it is always in Christ and through Christ. For this very reason the Church concludes the consecratory hymn in the Canon of the Mass with the words: "Through Him and with Him, and in Him is to Thee, God the Father almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory."<sup>82</sup>

### Ascension Thursday

Preface. The purpose of Christ's ascension is expressed in the Preface: "That He might make us partakers of His divinity." For the Christians the ascension is an occasion for spiritual joy. The glorification of Christ in this mystery is likewise the Christian's glorification, an elevation of his human nature.<sup>83</sup> A modern liturgist explains the Ascension as follows:

Our human nature now partakes of highest divine honors as in human form Christ, our brother, enters heaven. In His human nature He sits upon the throne of God and will remain there for all eternity. Therefore, we, as human beings enjoy a unique distinction. A member of our race, our Head, is seated at God's right hand; as members of His Body we become divine.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>Ibid., II, 354.

<sup>83</sup>Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace, III, 163.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., III, 163.

In the words of St. Augustine: "The Ascension of the Lord is the Christians' exaltation."<sup>85</sup> For there is hope that the members will follow the Head of the Mystical Body who has gone before them to heaven.<sup>86</sup>

### Vigil of Pentecost

Collect. The prayer is filled with reference to light and to baptism.

Grant, we beseech Thee, O almighty God, that the splendor of thy brightness may shine forth upon us; and the light of thy light may be the illumination of the Holy Ghost strengthen the hearts of those who have been born again by thy grace.

The light is faith, and it is the interior grace of the Holy Ghost which gives the adopted children the comprehension of the things of God.<sup>87</sup>

Preface. In the Preface for this day, reference is made to the descent of the Holy Ghost who communicates to man that divine life which befits the sons of God, the brethren of Jesus Christ, and all the members of His Mystical Body. "Who going up above all the heavens, and sitting at the right hand on this day sent forth the

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<sup>85</sup>Augustine, Sermon 261, "For the Feast of Ascension," Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons, Vol. XXXVIII of The Fathers of the Church, p. 379.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., Sermon 264, p. 407.

<sup>87</sup>Schuster, op. cit., II, 385.

Holy Ghost, as he had promised, on the children of adoption." The Holy Ghost himself transforms and raises the faithful follower of Christ to the dignity of a son of God. This is done not by outward or legal adoption, as is customary among men, but because God shares with him His own life and his own sanctity by means of his divine Spirit.<sup>88</sup>

### Whit-Saturday

Epistle (Rom. 5:1-5). The Apostle summarizes briefly the whole essence of Christian life<sup>89</sup>--regeneration by means of faith in Jesus Christ, hope in the future inheritance of the heavenly glory which belongs to the Christians as being sons of God, and finally charity which is poured into the hearts of Christians by the Holy Ghost.

### The Season after Pentecost

#### Trinity Sunday

Collect. The collect reminds the Christians that God has called them alone to the dignity of acknowledging the majesty of the eternal Trinity and adoring the inherent oneness of nature.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup>Ibid., II, 387.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., II, 416.

<sup>90</sup>Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace, IV, p. 13.

Offertory. The Introit and Offertory are hymns of praise to the Triune God, who, in adopting men as sons and heirs, has shown mercy to them. The Holy Trinity is revealed to the faithful in a tangible manner in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, through which the work of their redemption is repeated and grace is imparted to them. God manifests His grace to them by placing Christ in their hands as their offering, so that together with Christ they become a gift pleasing to the Divinity.<sup>91</sup> With Christ and in Christ they are able to approach the very throne of the Holy Trinity. There, since they are the brothers of Christ, they may address the Father as His children and say, "Our Father."

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Epistle (Rom. 6:3-11). St. Paul in today's Epistle connects the resurrection of Jesus with the sacrament of Baptism. The faithful are reminded of their Christian faith. The baptismal font is like a mystical tomb into which the candidate descends to die to sin, and thence to rise again unto newness of life with Jesus Christ.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>Baur, op. cit., III, 4.

<sup>92</sup>Schuster, op. cit., III, 104.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem pointed this out to the catechumens:

For as Jesus took upon Him the sins of the world, and died, that by putting sin to death He might rise again in righteousness, so thou by going down into the water, and being in manner buried in the waters, as He was in the rock, art raised again walking in newness of life.<sup>93</sup>

So then, the new man, coming forth from the waters of baptism, an image of our Lord rising from the sepulchre, carries within himself the life of grace and the sonship of God.<sup>94</sup>

#### Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Epistle (Rom. 8:12-17). The leading idea which pervades the Epistle today reminds the Christians again of their regeneration, the Holy Spirit, the filial trust in prayer, the dignity of being sons of God, which gives them the right to be admitted to participation in the heritage of God and of his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. The Epistle contains St. Paul's classical passage on spiritual adoption.

For whoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear: but you have received the spirit of adoption

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<sup>93</sup>Cyril, Lecture 3, sec. 12, "On Baptism," Catechetical Lectures, Vol. VII of A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 17.

<sup>94</sup>Baur, op. cit., III, 112.

of sons, whereby we cry: Abba (Father). For the Spirit himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God. And if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God and joint heirs with Christ.

The very moment man received Baptism, sanctifying grace entered his soul. The Holy Ghost produced within man the life of grace just as He produced the miracle of the Incarnation by descending upon the Virgin at Nazareth. The Spirit transforms man making him partaker of divine life.<sup>95</sup> According to St. Leo: "Man was made in the image of God, which although it was corrupted in Adam, was re-fashioned in Christ."<sup>96</sup>

#### Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Gospel. The Church uses the Gospel story as a symbol of Baptism.<sup>97</sup> The circumstances which accompanied the cure of the deaf and dumb sufferer are expressed in the ceremonies of holy Baptism. Through Baptism man first receives the power to hear (i.e., to understand) and to speak supernatural truths. Prior to Baptism he is like the deaf and dumb man. Because he has no faith he cannot

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<sup>95</sup>Baur, op. cit., III, 149-150.

<sup>96</sup>St. Leo, Sermon 27, sec. 6, "On the Feast of the Nativity," The Letters and Sermons, Vol. XII of A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, p. 141.

<sup>97</sup>Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace, IV, 120.

speak to God in prayer nor can he hear the voice of God. But through baptism he becomes a child of God, he receives the life of sanctifying grace.<sup>98</sup>

#### Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Gospel. In the Gospel for this day, the Christian is reminded of his relationship to God. Christ encourages the children of God to have confidence in their heavenly Father. Divine Providence feeds the birds of the skies, and clothes the lilies of the fields; the more so He will clothe and feed man, the child of God. Birds are only His creatures, men are His children and He is their Father.<sup>99</sup>

#### Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Epistle (Eph. 4:1-6). The Church through the words of the Apostle explains to the Christians their unity in Christ, which is both the cause of Christians being God's chosen people of the New Testament, and also their motive of their Christian behavior.<sup>100</sup> Mother Church is concerned in keeping these ideals alive in her

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<sup>98</sup>Ibid., IV, 120.

<sup>99</sup>Baur, op. cit., III, 269.

<sup>100</sup>Clifford Howell, "Mass Commentary," Worship XXXIII (August-September, 1959), p. 557.

children because they alone can transform them into the "blessed nation that He has chosen as His inheritance" (Gradual), a people whose strength is the Triune God.<sup>101</sup>

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Secret. The thought of the faithful participating in divine life dominates the Secret of today's Mass.

"O God, by means of the holy exchange proper to this sacrifice You have made us sharers in Your divine life." The prayer reminds the faithful that through the sacred "exchange" effected by the Holy Sacrifice, God makes them sharers of His divinity.<sup>102</sup> The Fathers of the Church frequently alluded to this doctrine. St. Cyprian says: "Christ willed to become what man is, in order that man may have the power to become what Christ is."<sup>103</sup> And St. Augustine says: "God became man so that man might become God."<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup>Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace, V, 50.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., 59.

<sup>103</sup>Cyprian, Treatise 2, sec. 6, "On the Vanity of Idols," Treatises, trans. Members of the English Church, Vol. III of A Library of the Fathers (40 vols.; Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1838-61), p. 19.

<sup>104</sup>Augustine, Sermon 191, "For the Feast of the Nativity," Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons, Vol. XXXVIII of The Fathers of the Church, p. 27.

This exchange is realized during Holy Mass. One of the modern liturgists<sup>105</sup> explains it thus:

We bring our bread and receive God's bread; we come with our poor humanity and receive "the highest divinity." Every sacrifice is an exchange, a trade between God and man, a taking and a receiving; how absolutely true is this of Christ's sacrifice actualized now at Mass. The prayer under consideration explicitly states the sublime fruit of the exchange: through it we become "sharers in God's own life."

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Epistle (Col. 1:9-14). The faithful are reminded once again at the end of the liturgical year to give thanks to God, the Father, for their spiritual adoption. In the Epistle St. Paul says:

Joyfully render thanks to God the Father, Who has made us worthy to share the lot of the saints in light. He has rescued us into the kingdom of His beloved Son, in Whom we have our redemption, through His blood, the remission of sins.

Here the Apostle summarizes the graces given to the adopted children by God the Father. Although born into the world as children of anger and destruction, they become partakers of the lot of the saints in light, since they share the light of faith here on earth and are one day to share in the light of glory and blessedness in heaven. Although they were born into the world as the

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<sup>105</sup>Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace, V, 67.

slaves of Satan, God has freed them from the domination of the powers of darkness and has made them members of the kingdom of His beloved Son and of His Church. As members of the Church, they become members of the Body of Christ, branches of the living vine, living by the Spirit of Christ, filled with Christ, and destined one day to share his inheritance in heaven.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup>Baur, op. cit., III, 485-486.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this thesis has been to show that the concept of adoptive sonship is found, in different terms and in different connections, throughout the Roman Missal. A survey of the Missal disclosed numerous references which speak of man's participation in the divine sonship. The classical passages of St. Paul and St. John were quoted to bring out the significance and excellence of the adoptive sonship. These showed how spiritual adoption surpasses the legal precisely because it is a true re-birth. The effect of such adoption was stressed, namely, the intimate union with Christ as members of the Mystical Body or branches of the Mystical Vine.

The survey showed the Ordinary of the Mass giving a picture of God's children addressing Him as Pater noster, knowing that in His presence they can refer to themselves as His own, plebs tua sancta, cuncta familia tua. It was pointed out that each of the principal parts of the Mass begins with an invocation of the Father. The prayer of the Offertory starts with the words: Suscipe sancte Pater. God is addressed as the heavenly Father to whom the children bring offering. The offering is not individual, but it is the collective gesture of God's family. The

preconsecratory invocation, Te igitur clementissime Pater, is an appeal of God's children to their most considerate Father. In His Son, Jesus Christ, God has had compassion upon them and has given them the spirit of adoption by which they call Him "Father." The Communion invocation, Pater noster, is the prayer proper to the children of God. Only those who received the grace of divine adoption can say "Our Father." It implies brotherly charity based on the common love of the same Father and on membership in the same family. The adopted children pray as members of God's family and pray for the whole family.

It was pointed out that in the Missal the faithful are addressed as "brethren" regardless of their status or their sex. Thus the plea, Orate Fratres, is a reminder that the sacrifice to be offered is the sacrifice of the whole Church. It designates the members of the Church regenerated through Baptism to form one great "holy family of God" that has the privilege of saying: "Our Father."

The expression cunctae familiae tuae in the second prayer of the Canon was shown to be synonymous with plebs tua sancta in the first prayer after Consecration. They imply that the Eucharist is the offering of the whole Church and that it is offered by all her members and for all her members. The words plebs tua sancta denote the high dignity of the faithful regenerated by

the sacrament of Baptism: they are a people of God. They form a community which, in a very special manner, is dedicated to God as His peculiar property.

The Ordinary of the Mass concludes with the opening verses of St. John's Gospel. These refer explicitly to adoptive sonship given through Christ: "To as many as received Him, He gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in His name" (John 1:12).

In like manner, an analysis of the Temporal Cycle in the Roman Missal, brought out references to adoptive sonship. Expressions like these were found frequently: "Thy family," "sons of adoption," "Thy children," "Thy people." All these imply the spiritual relationship between God and man. Other such references appear in the Missal, when the Holy Mother Church reminds the faithful of the principal mysteries concerning man's adoptive sonship.

The Propers of the Mass for the Christmas season, it was pointed out, stress the mystery of Incarnation, and speak of the exchange between divinity and humanity. In the Secret of the first Mass of Christmas the words "through this holy exchange of gifts," bring out the fact that Christ's human Birth becomes the means of man's birth to divine life. This same trend of thought was found in the Ordinary of the Mass in the prayer recited at the

mixing of the water with wine, "that we may be made partakers of divine nature of Him who vouchsafed to become partaker of our human nature."

In surveying the liturgy of Easter week, especially Holy Saturday, it was noted that the prayers used for the blessing of the water were replete with references to man's re-birth of water and the Holy Spirit. Such expressions as "the spirit of adoption," "new people," "new birth," "new creature," "a regenerating water," "born again new children," all signify the elevation of man to the supernatural state, the state of grace. A very significant reference on adoptive sonship is the one found in the Collect of the Mass for Easter Vigil. It reads: "Preserve in the new children of Thy family, the spirit of adoption which Thou hast given them." In similar language the concept is expressed in the Preface of the Pentecost. The Church sings: "Send down upon the children of adoption the Holy Spirit." Through sanctifying grace men are God's children and, as such, their condition urges the Father to pour gifts upon the adopted children.

From this survey of the Ordinary of the Mass and the Temporal Cycle, it is clear that the Roman Missal from the vocabulary and expressions it uses, presents the Mass as the exclusive property and privilege of God's adopted children, who are members of the family through Christ His only begotten Son.

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# ABSTRACT OF A THESIS ON ADOPTIVE SONSHIP IN THE ROMAN MISSAL

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the holiest and noblest thing that the Christians possess. Participation in the Mass is their exclusive possession. Now Christians are, by definition, adopted children of God. If the Mass is the property and privilege of the adopted children of God, then the Missal, which is the official text used for the celebration of the Mass, should contain references to this adoption.

A preliminary chapter studies the general concept of adoption, and proceeds to contrast the legal with the spiritual adoption. (Chapter One).

Next the Roman Missal is considered. Its historical development is sketched, and its doctrinal authority pointed out. (Chapter Two). This provides a proper setting for a study of the text itself, in view of discovering references and allusions to spiritual adoption. The Ordinary of the Mass is surveyed first. Such expressions as Ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam, Orate Fratres, cuncta familia tua, plebs tua sancta, Pater Noster speak of man's re-birth and his adoptive sonship. So too does the Last Gospel. (Chapter Three).

Similar references are traced in the Masses of the Temporal Cycle, very especially the Easter Vigil. The latter stresses the blessing of the font during Easter Vigil and the Collects of the Masses during the octave of Easter. The prayers used for the blessing of the water contain many references to man's regeneration of water and the Holy Spirit, for example: "the spirit of adoption," "new people," "new birth," "a new creature," "a regenerating water," "born again new children." Noteworthy reference on spiritual adoption is expressed in the Collect for the Mass of Easter Vigil. It reads: "Preserve in the new children of Thy family, the spirit of adoption which Thou hast given them." The frequently repeated expressions such as "Thy family," "Thy children," "Thy people," "sons of adoption," found in the Proper of Time refer to the relationship between God the Father and His adopted children. (Chapter Four).

From the analysis of the references and allusions in the Roman Missal on adoptive sonship, it is shown that the Missal speaks with a voice that is constantly aware of the privilege of supernatural adoption. (Conclusion).