

The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Dominica decima septima post Pentecosten

Missale Romanum 1962 · Proper of Time

The whole heart, the one Lord, and the plea for mercy:
a study of the proper in three readings

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The Two Questions of the Seventeenth Sunday

The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, *Dominica decima septima post Pentecosten*, is a Sunday of the second class in the Proper of Time of the 1962 *Missale Romanum*. Its Mass stands on pp. 398–400 of the typical edition, under the marginal numbers 1602–1611. In 2026 it falls on 20 September. The Mass is said in green, with Gloria and Credo. The calendar’s commemoration of Saints Eustace and Companions on that day gives way to the Sunday, since a Sunday of the second class admits no commemoration but that of a feast of the same class (*Rubricae generales* 111 b; *Rubricae generales Missalis* 434 b). The Preface is that of the Most Holy Trinity, which the Missal appoints for every Sunday of the second class outside the Christmas and Easter seasons. The September Ember Days follow on the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of the same week.

At the centre of the Mass stand two questions asked in the Temple at Jerusalem in the last days before the Passion. A doctor of the law asks Jesus, “Master, which is the great commandment in the law?” He is given two commandments for one: the love of God with the whole heart, the whole soul and the whole mind, and the love of neighbour, “like to this”. Then Jesus asks the Pharisees a question of his own: “What think you of Christ? Whose son is he?” When they answer “David’s”, he presses them with the psalm in which David, speaking “in spirit”, calls the Christ his Lord. The Gospel ends in silence: “no man was able to answer him a word: neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.”

Around these two questions the Missal gathers texts of other books and other ages. Three of them are prayers of petition in the mouth of a people: the Introit’s plea to be dealt with in mercy and not in justice, Daniel’s prayer for the desolate sanctuary at the Offertory, and the three orations, which ask to escape the devil’s contagion, to be stripped of past and future sins, and to have our vices cured. Two are praise: the Gradual’s blessing of the nation whose God is the Lord, and the Communion’s summons to pay vows to the God who is terrible to the kings of the earth. One is a cry for a hearing, the Alleluia’s verse from the fifth penitential psalm. And one is an apostle’s appeal from prison, the Epistle, for a unity kept in humility and patience and grounded in “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all”. Each stands in the table below in the order of the Mass.

The day’s texts thus put three questions to those who pray them: what God commands to be loved, and how; who the Christ is whom David calls Lord; and in what words a people that knows its own injustice stands before a just God. The continuation of Guéranger’s *The Liturgical Year* (Dom Lucien Fromage) records that the present Gospel gave the day its name, “the Sunday of the love of God”. The Introit, the Offertory and the Communion, which already stand together at this Sunday in the earliest graduals, speak instead of justice, mercy and vows. These threads, taken in turn, give the three readings of the formulary that follow. The first hears the whole Mass from the Gospel’s first question, as the prayer of a people learning to love God wholly and to keep the unity that such love makes. The second hears it from the Gospel’s second question, as the confession of the one God in his Word and his Spirit, whose Son is David’s Lord. The third hears it from the Introit and the Offertory, as the prayer of a humbled people that confesses God’s justice and receives his mercy. The Fathers and saints who taught about the particular texts supply all three, every element of the formulary has a place in each, and four senses of its own, literal, allegorical, moral and anagogical, close each reading. The three share more than they divide.

The appointed elements at a glance

Element	Text and reference	What it says
Introit	<i>Iustus es, Domine</i> ; Ps 118:137, 124; verse 1	God is just and his judgment right; the servant asks to be dealt with according to God’s mercy.
Collect	<i>Da, quaesumus, Domine, populo tuo</i>	That the people may shun the devil’s contagion and follow God alone with a pure mind.

Element	Text and reference	What it says
Epistle	Eph 4:1–6	Paul, a prisoner, pleads for a life worthy of the calling: humility, mildness, patience, mutual support in charity, the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.
Gradual	<i>Beata gens</i> ; Ps 32:12, 6	Blessed the nation whose God is the Lord, the people he chose for his inheritance; the heavens made firm by his word, their power by the spirit of his mouth.
Alleluia	<i>Domine, exaudi</i> ; Ps 101:2	“Hear, O Lord, my prayer: and let my cry come to thee.”
Gospel	Mt 22:34–46	The great commandment and the second like it; Christ’s question about the Son of David whom David calls Lord; the questioners’ silence.
Offertory	<i>Oravi Deum meum ego Daniel</i> ; from Dan 9:17–19	Daniel prays that God hear his servant, make his face shine on the sanctuary and look with favour on the people called by his name.
Secret	<i>Maiestatem tuam, Domine</i>	That the holy things we do may strip us of past sins and of future ones.
Communion	<i>Vovete et reddite</i> ; Ps 75:12–13	Vow and pay to the Lord, all you round about him who bring gifts, to the God who takes away the spirit of princes.
Postcommunion	<i>Sanctificationibus tuis</i>	That by God’s sanctifying gifts our vices may be cured and eternal remedies come to us.

The Appointed Texts

The Latin below is that of the 1962 typical edition, *Missale Romanum* (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis), pp. 398–400, nos. 1602–1611, read on the page images of the CMAA facsimile. Every element’s wording already stands in the Pustet *Missale Romanum* of Ratisbon, 1862; the two books differ only in spelling, pointing, citation form and the length at which a conclusion is printed. The English of the scriptural elements is the Douay–Rheims Bible in Bishop Challoner’s revision, which translates the Clementine Vulgate at the Missal’s own Vulgate numbering. It is given at the canonical verses, so that wherever a chant or lesson adapts its source the English and the Latin part company; each such place is named beneath the text. The English of the three orations is the anonymous translation printed in *The Roman Missal, Translated into the English Language for the Use of the Laity* (Philadelphia: Eugene Cumiskey, 1861). Neither English is an approved liturgical translation of the 1962 Missal. Psalms are cited in the Missal’s numbering, with the Hebrew numbering in parentheses.

Introit

Ps 118:137 and 124 (Heb. 119); verse Ps 118:1. Missal p. 398, no. 1602.

Iustus es, Dómine, et rectum iudícium tuum: fac cum servo tuo secúndum misericórdiam tuam.
 Ps. ibid., 1 *Beáti immaculáti in via: qui ámbulant in lege Dómini.* *Ÿ. Glória Patri.*

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), Ps 118:137, 124, 1

¹³⁷Thou art just, O Lord: and thy judgment is right. ¹²⁴Deal with thy servant according to thy mercy: and teach me thy justifications. ¹Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.

The antiphon joins verse 137 to the first half of verse 124; the words “and teach me thy justifications” are not sung. After the *Gloria Patri* the antiphon is repeated, as the general rubrics direct (no. 427); the typical edition prints no repetition cue.

Collect

Oratio. Missal p. 399, no. 1603.

Da, quæsumus, Dómine, pópulo tuo diabólica vitáre contágia: et te solum Deum pura mente sectári. Per Dóminum nostrum.

CUMMISKEY, THE ROMAN MISSAL (1861), XVII SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, COLLECT

Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that thy people may avoid all contagion of the devil: and with a clean heart follow thee, the only true God. Thro’.

The Collect is the only oration of the Mass. The 1862 Missal adds a second and a third collect, which belong to the discipline before 1955 and are no part of the 1962 formulary.

Epistle

Lectio Epistolæ beati Pauli Apostoli ad Ephesios. Eph 4:1–6. Missal p. 399, no. 1604.

Fratres: Obsecro vos ego vinctus in Dómino, ut digne ambulétis vocatióne, qua vocáti estis, cum omni humilitáte et mansuetúdine, cum patiéntia, supportántes ínvicem in caritáte, solliciti serváre unitátem spíritus in vínculo pacis. Unum corpus, et unus spíritus, sicut vocáti estis in una spe vocatiónis vestræ. Unus Dóminus, una fides, unum baptísma. Unus Deus, et Pater ómnium, qui est super omnes, et per ómnia, et in ómnibus nobis. Qui est benedíctus in sæcula sæculórum. Amen.

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), EPH 4:1–6

¹I therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called: ²With all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity. ³Careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴One body and one Spirit: as you are called in one hope of your calling. ⁵One Lord, one faith, one baptism. ⁶One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.

The Missal opens the lesson with *Fratres: Obsecro vos* where the Vulgate reads *Obsecro itaque vos* (“I therefore . . . beseech you”), and it closes the lesson with *Qui est benedictus in saecula saeculorum. Amen*, which is not part of Ephesians 4. No verse of the Douay answers either addition.

Gradual

Ps 32:12 and 6 (Heb. 33). Missal p. 399, no. 1605.

Beáta gens, cuius est Dóminus Deus eórum: pópulus, quem elégit Dóminus in hereditátem sibi. V̇. Verbo Dómini cæli firmáti sunt: et spíritu oris eius omnis virtus eórum.

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), PS 32:12, 6

¹²Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: the people whom he hath chosen for his inheritance. ⁶By the word of the Lord the heavens were established; and all the power of them by the spirit of his mouth:

The respond is verse 12 and the versicle verse 6, against the psalm's own order. The Missal reads *Dominus Deus eorum . . . quem elegit Dominus* where the Clementine Vulgate, which the Douay translates, reads *Dominus Deus ejus . . . quem elegit*.

Alleluia

Ps 101:2 (Heb. 102:2; 102:1 where the title is not numbered). Missal p. 399, no. 1606.

Allelúia, allelúia. V. Ps. 101, 2 Dómine, exáudi oratióem meam, et clamor meus ad te pervéniat. Allelúia.

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), PS 101:2

Hear, O Lord, my prayer: and let my cry come to thee.

The Missal's *perveniát* stands where the Clementine reads *veniat*.

Gospel

Sequentia sancti Evangelii secundum Matthaeum. Mt 22:34–46. Missal p. 399, no. 1607.

In illo témpore: Accessérunt ad Iesum pharisæi: et interrogávit eum unus ex eis legis doctor, tentans eum: Magíster, quod est mandátum magnum in lege? Ait illi Iesus: Díliges Dóminum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo, et in tota ánima tua, et in tota mente tua. Hoc est máximum et primum mandátum. Secúndum autem símile est huic: Díliges próximum tuum sicut teípsum. In his duóbus mandátis univérsa lex pendet, et prophétæ. Congregátis autem pharisæis, interrogávit eos Iesus, dicens: Quid vobis vidétur de Christo? cuius fílius est? Dicunt ei: David. Ait illis: Quómodo ergo David in spíritu vocat eum Dóminum, dicens: Dixit Dóminus Dómino meo, sede a dextris meis, donec ponam inimícos tuos scabéllum pedum tuórum? Si ergo David vocat eum Dóminum, quómodo fílius eius est? Et nemo póterat ei respondére verbum: neque ausus fuit quisquam ex illa die eum ámplius interrogáre.

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), MT 22:34–46

³⁴But the Pharisees, hearing that he had silenced the Sadducees, came together. ³⁵And one of them, a doctor of the law, asked him, tempting him: ³⁶Master, which is the great commandment in the law? ³⁷Jesus said to him: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind. ³⁸This is the greatest and the first commandment. ³⁹And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets. ⁴¹And the Pharisees being gathered together, Jesus asked them, ⁴²Saying: What think you of Christ? Whose son is he? They say to him: David's. ⁴³He saith to them: How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying: ⁴⁴The Lord said to my Lord: Sit on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool? ⁴⁵If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? ⁴⁶And no man was able to answer him a word: neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

The Missal's opening, *In illo tempore: Accesserunt ad Iesum pharisaei*, stands for the Vulgate's verse 34, which the Douay renders "But the Pharisees, hearing that he had silenced the Sadducees, came together." The Gospel carries three citations of its own: Deut 6:5 in verse 37, Lev 19:18 in verse 39 and Ps 109:1 (Heb. 110:1) in verse 44. The Creed follows.

Offertory

Antiphona ad Offertorium, cited Dan 9:17, 18 and 19. Missal p. 399, no. 1608.

Orávi Deum meum ego Dániel, dicens: Exáudi, Dómine, preces servi tui: illúmina fáciem tuam super sanctuárium tuum: et propítius inténde pópulum istum, super quem invocátum est nomen tuum, Deus.

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), DAN 9:17–19, THE SOURCE VERSES

¹⁷Now, therefore, O our God, hear the supplication of thy servant, and his prayers: and shew thy face upon thy sanctuary, which is desolate, for thy own sake. ¹⁸Incline, O my God, thy ear, and hear: open thy eyes, and see our desolation, and the city upon which thy name is called: for it is not for our justifications that we present our prayers before thy face, but for the multitude of thy tender mercies. ¹⁹O Lord, hear: O Lord, be appeased: hearken, and do: delay not, for thy own sake, O my God: because thy name is invoked upon thy city, and upon thy people.

The antiphon is a compilation and not a continuous quotation, and no Douay verse renders it. Its narrative frame, *Oravi Deum meum ego Daniel, dicens*, stands outside verses 17–19 (compare 9:2 and 9:4), and its petitions condense those verses. Where the Vulgate reads *ostende faciem tuam*, the chant has *illumina faciem tuam*, of a face made to shine.

Secret

Secreta. Missal p. 399, no. 1609.

Maiestátem tuam, Dómine, suppliciter deprecámur: ut hæc sancta, quæ gérimus, et a præteritis nos delictis éxuant, et futúris. Per Dóminum nostrum Iesum Christum, Fílium tuum: Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte.

CUMMISKEY, THE ROMAN MISSAL (1861), XVII SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, SECRET

We humbly beseech thy Majesty, O Lord, that the sacred mysteries we celebrate may cleanse us from all past offences, and from those we may hereafter be guilty of. Thro'.

The typical edition prints the conclusion only as far as *in unitate*; the conclusion said is the full form of the general rubrics (no. 115 a), continuing *Spiritus Sancti, Deus, per omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen*. A direction to say the Preface of the Most Holy Trinity follows the Secret.

Communion

Ps 75:12–13 (Heb. 76:12–13; 76:11–12 where the title is not numbered). Missal p. 399, no. 1610.

Vovéte et réddite Dómino Deo vestro, omnes, qui in circúitu eius affértis múnera: terríbili, et ei qui aufert spíritum princípum: terríbili apud omnes reges terræ.

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), Ps 75:12–13

¹²Vow ye, and pay to the Lord your God: all you that are round about him bring presents. To him that is terrible, ¹³Even to him who taketh away the spirit of princes: to the terrible with the kings of the earth.

The Missal reads *apud omnes reges terrae*; the Clementine, which the Douay translates, has no *omnes*.

Postcommunion

Postcommunio. Missal p. 400, no. 1611.

Sanctificatiōnibus tuis, omnípotens Deus, et vítia nostra curéntur, et remédia nobis æténa provéniant. Per Dóminum nostrum.

CUMMISKEY, THE ROMAN MISSAL (1861), XVII SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, POSTCOMMUNION

May our vices be cured, O Almighty God! and an eternal remedy procured for us by these sacred mysteries. Thro’.

Each Element in Its Own Setting

The ten elements of this Mass come from several books. Four psalms give the Introit, the Gradual, the Alleluia and the Communion; the ninth chapter of Daniel gives the Offertory; the Letter to the Ephesians and the Gospel of Matthew give the lessons; and the three orations come from the sacramentaries. Each element’s principal witnesses are those on which the three readings draw, and each witness’s argument is fullest in the reading that relies on it.

Introit: the just God and the servant’s plea

The Introit is taken from Ps 118, the long alphabetical psalm in praise of God’s law. Its antiphon joins two verses from different strophes. Verse 137 opens the strophe *Sade* (vv. 137–144), whose theme is the justice of God and of his testimonies: “Thou art just, O Lord: and thy judgment is right.” Verse 124 belongs to the strophe *Ain* (vv. 121–128), in which the servant asks for help and instruction: “Deal with thy servant according to thy mercy.” The chant sings only this first half and leaves aside “and teach me thy justifications”. The confession of justice and the plea for mercy thus stand side by side with nothing between them. The psalm verse is the psalm’s opening beatitude, “Blessed are the undefiled in the way”. Two verses before the antiphon’s opening verse 137, in the strophe the antiphon passes over between verses 124 and 137, the psalm prays *Faciem tuam illumina super servum tuum* (v. 135), “Make thy face to shine upon thy servant”, with the verb and construction the Offertory will use of the sanctuary.

Ildefonso Schuster notes that Ps 118 was used in Rome as a processional psalm, sung on the afternoon of Good Friday as the procession passed from the Lateran to the Sessorian basilica. Augustine, Hilary of Poitiers and Cassiodorus hear the two verses as the words of a penitent who asks mercy and not reward, and St Robert Bellarmine reads the *iudicium* of verse 137 as God’s law; their reasoning carries the third reading.

Collect: to shun the devil's contagion and follow God alone

The Collect asks one gift under two infinitives: that God's people may shun *diabolica contagia*, the defilements that come from contact with the devil, and follow God alone, *te solum Deum, pura mente*. The verb *sectari*, a frequentative of *sequi*, means to follow after closely, to pursue. The first petition turns the heart from what corrupts it, and the second turns it to the one it is to seek. The 1861 English renders the second "with a clean heart follow thee, the only true God".

The prayer's own history bears on its wording. Its earliest witness, the Old Gelasian Sacramentary (Vat. Reg. lat. 316, in H. A. Wilson's edition, Liber III, sect. XIII), places it in a Sunday Mass without number and reads *te solum Dominum puro corde sectari*. The eighth-century Frankish Gelasians of Rheinau and St Gall set it, with this Sunday's Secret and Postcommunion, at the twenty-first week after Pentecost. The Supplement to the Gregorian Sacramentary sets it at the eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, where one manuscript reads *dominum* and another *deum*, both with *pura mente*. The 1962 wording *te solum Deum pura mente* is thus the later form of the prayer. Its *mente* meets the Gospel's *in tota mente tua*, as the older *corde* would have met *ex toto corde tuo*. The 1962 Missal borrows the second clause once more, in a postcommunion that names St Jane Frances: *fácias terréna despícere, et te solum Deum pura mente sectári*. There it asks for a heart that despises earthly things and follows God alone.

Epistle: a life worthy of one calling

The lesson opens the moral part of the Letter to the Ephesians (chapters 4–6). In the Vulgate it begins *Obsecro itaque vos*, "I therefore beseech you", drawing the consequence of the first three chapters. Those chapters set out the mystery of the Church as Christ's body, in which Jews and gentiles are made one: "he is our peace, who hath made both one ... by him we have access both in one Spirit to the Father" (Eph 2:14, 18). They end with Paul's prayer and doxology (3:14–21). The Missal's *Fratres* replaces the "therefore", and its closing *Qui est benedictus in saecula saeculorum. Amen* gives the lesson a doxology of its own. Verses 1–3 describe the manner of life the calling asks: humility, mildness and patience, mutual support in charity, and care for "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace". Verses 4–6 give its ground in a sevenfold "one": one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. Verse 7, which the Mass does not read, turns to the diverse gifts given to each.

The lesson stands in the Missal's course of Pauline epistles for the Sundays after Pentecost. The Sixteenth Sunday reads Eph 3:13–21. After 1 Cor 1:4–8 on the Eighteenth, Ephesians returns on the Nineteenth, Twentieth and Twenty-first Sundays (4:23–28; 5:15–21; 6:10–17). Its principal interpreters, St John Chrysostom, St Jerome, Theodoret of Cyrus and St Thomas Aquinas, read verses 1–3 as a school of humility and forbearance; at verse 6 they follow two lines, set out in the second reading.

Gradual: the blessed nation and the creating word

The Gradual takes two verses of Ps 32, a hymn whose Vulgate title is *Psalmus David*. Its first part praises the word and counsel of God that created all things and stand for ever (vv. 4–11). Its centre blesses the nation he chose (v. 12). Its close watches over those who fear him (vv. 13–22). The Gradual reverses the psalm's order: the respond is the beatitude of verse 12 and the versicle the creation verse 6. Its wording, *Dominus Deus eorum ... quem elegit Dominus*, is not the Clementine Vulgate's, but it is the reading of the psalter Augustine expounded (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 32, I, 12).

The same Gradual serves three other Masses of the 1962 Missal: the Wednesday of the fourth week of Lent, where it follows the lesson "Wash yourselves, be clean" (Isa 1:16–19); the Wednesday of the September Ember Days, three days after this Sunday; and the votive Mass of the Holy Spirit. In the votive Mass the versicle is printed with a capital, *Spíritu oris eius*; at this Sunday it is printed *spíritu*. Schuster observes of this Sunday that, "whether by coincidence or design, it carries on the idea which the Epistle began to

expound". Its verse 12, the people God chose for his inheritance, belongs chiefly to the first reading; its verse 6, the heavens made firm by the word and the spirit of the Lord's mouth, to the second.

Alleluia: the cry of the poor man

The Alleluia verse is the first petition of Ps 101, whose title the Douay renders "The prayer of the poor man, when he was anxious, and poured out his supplication before the Lord". The psalm moves from the afflicted man's lament (vv. 2–12) to God's enduring reign and the rebuilding of Sion ("Thou shalt arise and have mercy on Sion", v. 14), and to God's permanence against the heavens that "shall perish but thou remainest" (vv. 26–28). It is the fifth of the seven penitential psalms. Bellarmine notes that "This verse is used daily by the Church as a preparation to any other petitions"; Schuster, that it precedes almost all the solemn prayers of the Church. The Missal's *perveniat* is the reading both Augustine and Cassiodorus expounded.

The psalm's two principal witnesses divide over who prays it. Augustine hears Christ, head and body, praying in one voice. Cassiodorus declines to give the psalm to Christ, because Christ is nowhere said to have been "anxious" and the ashes and tears of the psalm do not befit his immaculate incarnation; he hears instead the poor of Christ interceding for the whole world. Both hearings return in the three readings.

Gospel: the great commandment and the Son of David

The Gospel is the last of the controversies in the Temple that run from Mt 21:23 to 22:46: the question of Jesus' authority, the tribute to Caesar (22:15–22), the Sadducees' question about the resurrection (22:23–33), and now the Pharisees. After it "neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions", and chapter 23 turns to the woes against the scribes and Pharisees. When he has ended "all these words", Jesus tells his disciples, "after two days shall be the pasch" (26:1–2). The Missal's opening, *Accesserunt ad Iesum pharisaei*, drops the link with the silenced Sadducees and lets the pericope begin with the Pharisees' approach.

The passage has two halves. In the first, a doctor of the law asks which is the great commandment; Jesus answers with Deut 6:5, the love of God with the whole heart, soul and mind, and adds unasked the second, Lev 19:18, "like to this", on which with the first "dependeth the whole law and the prophets". In the second, Jesus asks the Pharisees whose son the Christ is and confronts their answer with Ps 109:1, "The Lord said to my Lord". The Fathers give different reasons for the lawyer's question. Chrysostom says the Pharisees hoped that Jesus would amend the first commandment "for the sake of showing that Himself too was God" (*Homilies on Matthew* 71). Jerome says the question was captious because every commandment of God is great, so that any answer could be attacked. Aquinas reports both, and adds Augustine's reconciliation of Matthew's "tempting him" with Mark's scribe who was "not far from the kingdom of God". The first half is the anchor of the first reading and the second half of the second.

In the 1962 Missal the pericopes that precede it in Matthew come later in the year: the wedding feast (Mt 22:1–14) on the Nineteenth Sunday and the tribute money (22:15–21) on the Twenty-second.

Offertory: Daniel's prayer for the desolate sanctuary

The Offertory comes from the ninth chapter of Daniel. In the first year of Darius the Mede, Daniel understands from the book of Jeremias that the seventy years of Jerusalem's desolation are nearly accomplished (9:1–2). He sets his face to pray "with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes" (9:3). He confesses the sins of Israel and the justice of God: "To thee, O Lord, justice: but to us confusion of face" (9:7); "the Lord, our God, is just in all his works" (9:14). He begs mercy for the desolate sanctuary, the city and the people called by God's name (9:17–19). While he is still speaking, Gabriel comes to him with the prophecy of the seventy weeks (9:20–27). The antiphon frames the petitions of verses 17–19 with a narrative opening, *Oravi Deum meum ego Daniel, dicens*, formed from the chapter's own first-person voice, and it condenses the

petitions into three: hear thy servant, make thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary, look with favour on this people.

Its *illumina faciem tuam* is not the Vulgate's *ostende*. It agrees with the verb of Theodotion's Greek version of Daniel; Brenton's English of the Greek Daniel reads "cause thy face to shine on thy desolate sanctuary". The Hebrew, as the Revised Version translates it, has the same sense. Which Latin version the chant followed has not been identified. St Jerome's commentary on Daniel is the principal patristic witness to the prayer itself; it carries the third reading.

Secret: stripped of past and future sins

The Secret asks the divine majesty that "these holy things which we do" (*haec sancta, quae gerimus*) may strip us, *exuant*, as one strips off a garment, both of past sins and of future ones. The 1861 English has "cleanse us from all past offences, and from those we may hereafter be guilty of". The prayer stands with this Sunday's Collect in the Old Gelasian Mass of Liber III, sect. XIII, and in the Frankish Gelasians and the Gregorian Supplement with both the Collect and the Postcommunion. The Council of Trent teaches that Christ willed the Eucharist to be received *tanquam antidotum, quo liberemur a culpis quotidianis, et a peccatis mortalibus praeservemur* (sess. XIII, *Decretum de ss. Eucharistia*, cap. 2), a remedy for past faults and a safeguard against future ones. The same chapter calls the sacrament *symbolum unius illius corporis, cuius ipse caput existit*, the sign of the one body of which Christ is head, bound together *arctissima fidei, spei et caritatis connexione*. The Secret's conclusion is printed only as far as *in unitate* and is said in full. The Missal then directs the Preface of the Most Holy Trinity.

Communion: vows before the God who is terrible to kings

The Communion is taken from Ps 75, which the Vulgate titles "for Asaph: a canticle to the Assyrians". The psalm sings of God known in Judea, whose abode is in Sion and who there broke "the powers of bows, the shield, the sword, and the battle" (vv. 2–4); of the day "When God arose in judgment, to save all the meek of the earth" (v. 10); and, in the verses sung here, of vows and gifts brought to the God "who taketh away the spirit of princes" (vv. 12–13). The Missal's *apud omnes reges terrae* has an *omnes* that neither the Clementine Vulgate nor the psalters of Augustine and Cassiodorus contain.

Augustine reads the vows and the "spirit of princes" morally, as the first and third readings show. Cassiodorus reads *omnes qui in circuitu eius affertis munera* of the faithful who bring their gifts to the altar: *In circuitu quippe res agitur, cum munera fidelium sacratissimis altaribus offeruntur*. Bellarmine gives the same reading, "all you that are in the habit of approaching his altars and offering your gifts upon them". In both, the psalm's words are heard at the place where the Communion is sung.

Postcommunion: vices cured, eternal remedies

The Postcommunion asks that by God's *sanctificationes*, his sanctifying gifts, "our vices may be cured" and "eternal remedies" may come to us. The 1861 English has "an eternal remedy procured for us by these sacred mysteries". The prayer is older in Lent than at this Sunday. The first part of Wilson's Gregorian Sacramentary gives it as the postcommunion of the Lenten Ember Saturday and of Tuesday in Holy Week (there with *sempiterna*), and the 1962 Missal keeps it on both days. It reached the Sundays after Pentecost with this Sunday's Collect and Secret in the Frankish Gelasians and the Supplement.

The 1962 Missal also borrows its second clause for a later composition, the Collect of St John of God (8 March), which asks, through that saint's merits, *ut igne caritatis tuæ vitia nostra curéntur, et remédia nobis æterna provéniant*: the clause stands there with *igne caritatis tuæ* before it, so that the cure is sought through the fire of God's charity. The Mass of St John of God reads this Sunday's Gospel, Mt 22:34–46.

That later Collect hears the Postcommunion's cure as the work of charity, and sets it beside the Gospel of the great commandment.

The Preface of the Most Holy Trinity

The Preface is not proper to this Sunday. The Missal appoints it for every Sunday of the second class outside the Christmas and Easter seasons (p. 293, no. 1082). It is nonetheless the confession this Mass makes before the Canon. Its proper clause, *Qui cum unigénito Fílio tuo, et Spírítu Sancto, unus es Deus, unus es Dóminus*, confesses the one God with the Son and the Holy Spirit, "not in a singularity of one Person, but in a Trinity of one substance" (1861 English). It ends by adoring *et in persónis propriétas, et in esséntia únitás, et in maiestáte . . . æquálitas*. Its "one God . . . one Lord" stands close in wording to the Epistle's "one Lord . . . one God and Father". That closeness returns in the second reading.

Parts of different ages in one Mass

No biblical author or ancient commentator wrote about this Mass as a finished sequence, and not every part reached the Sunday at the same time. The three old chants already belonged together before the present Gospel was appointed here; the Pauline lesson belongs to the Missal's course through the Epistles; the prayers have their own sacramentary history; and the Trinity Preface comes from the Sunday rubric rather than from this formulary. Each element therefore carries its own scriptural argument into the Mass, and the liturgical sequence adds what it makes audible between the elements.

That sequence is heard from three different places. One reading begins with the commandment and asks how the Epistle's unity and the prayers of the people sound when charity controls the hearing. One begins with Christ's question and asks how the Epistle's confession, the Gradual's word and spirit, and the appointed Preface sound when the identity of David's Lord controls it. One begins with the older chant cycle and asks how every element is received by a people that first confesses divine justice and then petitions for mercy. Every part of the Mass enters each; in each only some texts actually bear the claim, and at some places another reading explains more.

Each witness speaks of the passage he expounds, and the witnesses' agreements carry the readings. They also disagree: Augustine and Cassiodorus hear different speakers in the poor man, and Jerome and Chrysostom construe the Epistle's final words differently, so that neither the psalm's speaker nor the verse's construal is common ground. The patristic and saintly testimony supplies the tested parts of each reading, and the editor's comparison of the appointed texts the unity that joins them.

The Whole Heart for the One God, and the One Body That Love Gathers

Heard from the lawyer's question, the Mass is a lesson in one love with two objects. God is to be loved with the whole heart, and the neighbour within that same love; the Epistle then shows what such love looks like when it is lived by many people at once: humility, patience, mutual bearing and a unity kept in the bond of peace. Around the Gospel and the Epistle the other texts become the prayer of a people that asks to follow God alone, rejoices to possess him and to be his possession, prays with the one voice of head and members, pays the vows common to every Christian, and asks the sacrament to heal the vices that break charity.

Two commandments, one love

The lawyer asks for "the great commandment". Jesus gives him the Shema's command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind" (Deut 6:5), and then a second that he did not ask for, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Lev 19:18). The second is "like to this", and on the two together "dependeth the whole law and the prophets". The Fathers ask two questions of this answer: what the threefold "whole" requires, and in what sense the second commandment is "like" the first.

St Augustine answers the first question in the opening book of *De doctrina christiana*. Only what is eternal and unchangeable is to be enjoyed for its own sake; everything else, even oneself and one's neighbour, is to be loved for the sake of God (I.22.20–21). When the commandment says "with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind", Augustine writes, "He means that no part of our life is to be unoccupied, and to afford room, as it were, for the wish to enjoy some other object." Whatever else presents itself as worthy of love "is to be borne into the same channel in which the whole current of our affections flows". Love of neighbour is therefore not a second stream beside the first. The one who loves his neighbour aright urges him to love God wholly, and so "turns the whole current of his love both for himself and his neighbor into the channel of the love of God, which suffers no stream to be drawn off from itself by whose diversion its own volume would be diminished". Love so ordered has a measure and an order: "every man is to be loved as a man for God's sake; but God is to be loved for His own sake" (I.27.28). Its reach is universal. When the lawyer of Luke's Gospel asks "who is my neighbour?", the Lord answers with the man who showed mercy, so that every man is our neighbour; the holy angels are neighbours too, for they show us mercy; and "even God Himself, our Lord, desired to be called our neighbor", since Christ points to himself in the figure of the one who brought aid to the man left half dead on the road (I.30.31–33).

St Gregory the Great puts the same answer in the form of a contrast. One of his homilies on the Gospels expounds the parable that opens the same chapter of Matthew, the king's wedding feast (Mt 22:1–13). The wedding garment, he says, is charity. As a garment is woven between two beams, *sicut in duobus lignis*, so charity is held in two precepts, the love of God and the love of neighbour. In the love of neighbour a measure is given, "as thyself"; the love of God is bound by no measure, for the commandment says not how much but out of how much, *ex toto: quia ille veraciter Deum diligit, qui sibi de se nihil relinquit*, for he truly loves God who leaves nothing of himself to himself (*Homiliae in Evangelia* 38.10). The curtains of the tabernacle had to be woven with scarlet twice dyed, and charity must be dyed twice as well: whoever so loves God that he neglects his neighbour is scarlet but not twice dyed, and whoever so loves his neighbour that he abandons the contemplation of God is not twice dyed either. Gregory cites the commandment from Mark (12:30) and expounds the parable, not this pericope; what he supplies is the sharpest statement of "the whole heart" beside Augustine's.

St John Chrysostom takes up the second question in his seventy-first homily on Matthew: "But wherefore 'like unto this?' Because this makes the way for that, and by it is again established." Both clauses speak of the second commandment: the love of neighbour opens the road to the love of God, and the love of God in its turn re-establishes the love of neighbour. The four texts he sets beside the sentence run alternately in

the two directions. “Every one that doeth evil hateth the light” (Jn 3:20) and “The love of money is the root of all evils; which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith” (1 Tim 6:10) run from the failure of charity to the loss of God; “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God”, with what follows from it, “They are corrupt, and become abominable in their ways” (Ps 13:1; Heb. 14:1), and “He that loveth me, will keep my commandment” (Jn 14:15) run from God back to the neighbour. His conclusion holds both ends at once: “If therefore to love God is to love one’s neighbor . . . but to love one’s neighbor worketh a keeping of the commandments, with reason doth He say, ‘On these hang all the law and the prophets.’” Each commandment holds the other up. He also notices that Jesus answers more than he was asked. By rehearsing the second commandment unbidden, he shows the questioners “whence the question had arisen, that it was from hatred. ‘For charity envieth not.’” They were led to their test “from having no charity, from pining with envy, from being seized by jealousy”. The homily’s moral close turns on the vice that makes such envy: “terrible is this passion and many-headed”, he says of vainglory.

St Thomas Aquinas, lecturing on the same verses, gathers the earlier answers and adds his own. The first commandment is *maximum capacitate*, greatest in what it holds, since the love of neighbour is contained in it. The second is like the first because man is made to the likeness of God, so that in the neighbour *diligitur Deus in illo*, God himself is loved; and with Augustine he counts both men and angels as neighbours (*Super Matthaeum* c. 22, lect. 4).

The four witnesses agree that the two commandments cannot be separated and that the love of neighbour is ordered to God. They differ in what they make the link. For Augustine it is the one current of love that carries everything toward the one good. For Gregory it is a measure set against measurelessness. For Chrysostom it is mutual dependence in both directions: the second commandment makes the way for the first, and the first establishes the second again. For Aquinas it is the image of God in the neighbour. None of these excludes the others.

The unity that charity keeps

Paul’s appeal in the Epistle is the same love seen from the side of a community. He writes as “a prisoner in the Lord” and asks the Ephesians to walk worthily of their calling, “With all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity”. They are to be “Careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”, because there is one body and one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all.

Chrysostom reads the calling first. “Ye were called as His body”, with Christ as head. The way to walk worthily of that call is lowliness: “This is the basis of all virtue”, since the one who remembers “that all is of grace” will humble himself. Forbearance follows from the same logic of mercy: “If thou, he would say, art not forbearing to thy neighbor, how shall God be forbearing to thee?” The unity of the Spirit is a work of God: “to this end was the Spirit given, that He might unite those who are separated by race and by different manners”. He compares it to fire, which works dry wood into one blazing pile but cannot unite wet timber: “with this bond let us bind ourselves together with one another and unto God” (*Homilies on Ephesians* 9). The one body, he adds, is “The faithful throughout the whole world, both which are, and which have been, and which shall be” (hom. 10). Its members have one standing: “God hath called you all on the same terms. He hath bestowed nothing upon one more than upon another . . . whence is it that ye are high-minded?” “For can it be,” he asks, “that thou art called by the name of a greater God, another, of a lesser God?” (hom. 11).

St Jerome reads the same verses with a teacher’s eye for the weak. True humility is *non tam in sermone, quam in mente*, not so much in speech as in the mind. “Supporting one another in charity” is asked of those still in the beginnings of virtue, and it means bearing the sick brother, the poor, the widow. The command to keep the unity of the Spirit “in the bond of peace” tells most against heretics who, having broken the bond of peace, suppose that they still hold the unity of the Spirit. The “one hope” of the calling

is the kingdom, the one house of the Father in which there are many mansions (*Commentarii in epistulam ad Ephesios* II, on 4:1–4).

Theodoret of Cyrus explains why Paul begins with lowliness at all. The gifts of the Spirit, miracles, tongues and prophecy, could puff up those who received them. All of them, he says, have received one grace, and one spring sends out the different streams; so they are to bear with one another according to the law of love. When Paul sets “one” before every term of verses 5–6, he is binding the Church into concord, and the conclusion Theodoret draws is that the Ephesians, as brothers, owe one another agreement (*Interpretatio epistolae ad Ephesios*, on 4:1–6). The image of one spring and many streams makes the Epistle’s unity a work of love among people unequally gifted.

Aquinas names the end of the whole exhortation: that unity be kept among the faithful. Charity is the joining of minds, *conjunctio animorum*, and no union holds unless it is bound; the true bond of charity is peace. Bearing one another in charity means bearing one another’s defects, and the one who falls short is not to be corrected at once, out of season, but awaited with mercy, *misericorditer expectari, quia charitas omnia sustinet*. The one body and one spirit are one by the unity of faith and charity; or the body is turned toward the neighbour and the spirit toward God (*Super Ephesios* c. 4, lect. 1).

Set beside the Gospel, the Epistle shows the second commandment at work inside the Church. Chrysostom’s mercy that forbears because God forbears, Jerome’s bearing of the weak, Theodoret’s streams from one spring and Aquinas’s patient waiting describe one kind of love. It is ordered to God, and for that very reason it holds the neighbour fast. Chrysostom’s “bind ourselves together with one another and unto God” names both directions in one clause, and could stand as a gloss on “like to this”.

The Gospel’s second half inside this reading

The question that follows the first commandment belongs to the same Gospel, and Chrysostom joins the two halves himself, bringing in Mark’s scribe (12:32). Jesus praises his confession of one God, then asks whose son the Christ is, “that they may not be able to say, that He did miracles indeed, yet was an adversary to the law, and a foe to God”. The question leads them on “to confess Him also to be God”. On Chrysostom’s account, then, the one God who is to be loved wholly is not loved apart from his Christ, and the question about David’s son belongs to the question about the great commandment. What the question reveals belongs to the second reading; that it follows from the commandment is all the first needs.

The prayers and chants of a people that loves

Around the Gospel and the Epistle, every element of the formulary can be heard as the prayer of the people these texts describe.

The Collect asks as a gift what the Gospel commands: *te solum Deum pura mente sectari*, to follow God alone with a pure mind. Augustine, in *De moribus Ecclesiae catholicae*, joins following God to loving him: “Following after God is the desire of happiness; to reach God is happiness itself. We follow after God by loving Him”, and the commandment to love God with all the heart is the one “which leads to happy life” (I.11.18). The Collect’s first petition, to shun the devil’s contagion, asks that nothing foreign occupy the heart; its second asks for the undivided heart Augustine describes, in which no part of life is left free for another object of enjoyment.

The Gradual blesses that heart’s possession. *Beata gens, cuius est Dominus Deus eorum*: Augustine finds here the happiness all men desire, and answers it in two words, *Hoc ama, hoc posside*: love this, possess this. God is his people’s possession, and they are his inheritance, *alterutrum se possident*, each possessing the other (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 32, II, s. 2, 15–18). Cassiodorus reads the nation as the people gathered from all nations into the heavenly Jerusalem. The Christian people is an inheritance acquired and not bequeathed, because its Maker possesses it, *quem praedicationibus sanctis et pretioso sanguine conquisivit*,

won by holy preaching and precious blood (*Expositio psalmorum*, on Ps 32:12). Aquinas adds that the beatitude which all desire, cleaving to God by knowledge and love, is possessed now *inchoative et in spe*, in beginning and in hope, and perfectly hereafter (*Super Psalmos* 32, n. 11).

The Alleluia gives that people one voice. For Augustine the poor man of Ps 101 is Christ, head and body: *Christus et Ecclesia utrumque unus . . . unus quidam vir perfectus*, and he confirms it with the chapter of Ephesians from which this Sunday's Epistle is taken: "Until we all meet into the unity of faith . . . unto a perfect man" (Eph 4:13). *Vox ergo una, quia caro una*: one voice, because one flesh. When the next verse asks God to incline his ear "in the day when I am in trouble", Augustine hears the head speaking for every member in every age, *quicumque in meo corpore tribulantur, ego tribulor*: whoever are troubled in his body, he is troubled (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 101, s. 1, 2–3). The charity of the one body, in which one member suffers and all suffer, becomes prayer.

The Offertory shows that charity interceding. Daniel prays for "this people, upon which thy name is invoked", and Jerome notes that when he confesses the sins of the people in the first person he does so *quia unus e populo est*, because he is one of the people (*Commentarii in Daniele*, on 9:5). The prayer from which the antiphon is drawn opens by naming God as the one who keeps "the covenant, and mercy to them that love thee, and keep thy commandments" (Dan 9:4). Jerome comments that God fulfils his promises in those who keep his commandments. These words are not sung at this Mass, but they stand at the head of the prayer the Offertory condenses.

The Communion calls the people to its vows. Augustine counts first the vows that are common to all Christians, to believe, to hope for eternal life, to live well, before the particular vows that some freely add; and he reads "all you that are round about him" of those who hold the truth in common and humbly (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 75, 16–17). Cassiodorus places the same words at the altar, where the faithful bring their gifts.

The Introit has a smaller place here. Its plea to be dealt with "according to thy mercy", not according to the servant's own justice, as Augustine glosses it, reminds the people that its love of God begins as mercy received.

The Secret and the Postcommunion ask the sacrament to heal. The Council of Trent calls the Eucharist the sign of the one body of which Christ is head, whose members are bound to him by faith, hope and charity, so that there be no schisms among them (sess. XIII, cap. 2). The Secret's release from past and future sins and the Postcommunion's cure of *vitia nostra* are then the healing of what breaks that bond. The 1962 Missal itself hears the Postcommunion's clause this way when it borrows it for St John of God, where the cure is sought through the fire of God's charity, at a Mass that reads this Sunday's Gospel.

The chants that speak of mercy

The chants of this Sunday speak of justice, mercy, humility and vows more than of love. The Introit, the Offertory and the Communion already stood together at this Sunday in the earliest graduals, and the present Gospel came to the day later; Fromage dates the name "the Sunday of the love of God" from that change. Heard with the Gospel of the great commandment, those chants become the voice of people who love and know their need: the plea for mercy, the intercession for a whole people, the vows paid together. Their own theme, justice confessed and mercy asked, is the subject of the third reading, and the Gospel's second half, joined here through Chrysostom, is the subject of the second. The centre of the Gospel's first half and the whole of the Epistle's appeal belong to this one, and every other text of the Mass can be heard as the prayer of the people those two passages describe.

The four senses of this reading

Literal.

In the Temple, Jesus answers a doctor of the law that the greatest commandment is to love God with the whole heart, soul and mind, that the second, to love one's neighbour as oneself, is like it, and that the law and the prophets depend on both. Paul, a prisoner, urges the Ephesians to walk worthily of their calling in humility, mildness and patience, bearing one another in charity and keeping the unity of the Spirit, because they are one body with one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God and Father of all.

Allegorical.

The one body is Christ and the Church, one voice of head and members, so that the poor man of the Alleluia is Christ praying in his members (Augustine). The blessed nation of the Gradual is the people gathered from all nations into the heavenly city and won by Christ's blood (Augustine; Cassiodorus). The neighbour who showed mercy to the man left half dead is Christ himself, who "desired to be called our neighbor" (Augustine).

Moral.

Love God without reserving any part of life for another enjoyment (Augustine) and without measure, leaving nothing of oneself to oneself (Gregory); love every neighbour for God's sake, and see God loved in him (Aquinas). Bear with the weak brother, the poor and the widow (Jerome), wait with mercy on another's defects (Aquinas), forbear as God forbears (Chrysostom), and refuse the vainglory that breeds envy. Hold the truth in common and in humility, and pay the vows common to every Christian (Augustine).

Anagogical.

The one hope of the calling is the kingdom, the one house of the Father with its many mansions (Jerome). There the blessed nation will possess God and be possessed by him (Augustine), and the beatitude now held in beginning and in hope will be held perfectly (Aquinas). The Postcommunion's *remedia aeterna* look to that same end, the healing of every vice that divides love completed in glory.

David's Son and David's Lord: The One God Confessed in His Word and Spirit

Heard from Christ's own question, the Mass is a confession of faith. "What think you of Christ? Whose son is he?" The Fathers answer that the Christ is David's son according to the flesh and David's Lord according to his eternal birth from the Father, equal to him in honour and power. The Epistle's "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all" is read by some of them as the confession of the Trinity, and by others as the one God's lordship, providence and indwelling, which the Son shares without inferiority. The Gradual's "By the word of the Lord the heavens were established, and all the power of them by the spirit of his mouth" is the verse in which the Fathers hear the Father creating by his Word and his Spirit. The God whom the Collect asks to follow "alone", and whom the Gospel commands to be loved with the whole heart, is then the God whose Son sits at his right hand; and the Preface appointed for this Sunday confesses him as "one God, and one Lord . . . in a Trinity of one substance".

Christ's question and the Fathers' answer

Jesus asks the Pharisees whose son the Christ is. They answer, "David's". He replies with Ps 109:1, "The Lord said to my Lord: Sit on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool", and asks, "If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" The point turns on David's speaking "in spirit": the psalmist calls his own descendant his Lord, and he does so by the Spirit.

St Augustine opens his exposition of Ps 109 with this Gospel. The psalm prophesies Christ *certe aperteque*, surely and openly. Christians must answer Christ's question as the Pharisees did, "David's", *sed non remaneamus ubi Judaei*: but they must not stay where the questioners stayed. The answer the Pharisees could not give is the prologue of John, which Augustine addresses to Christ himself. Thou wast in the beginning the Word, and all things were made by thee: *ecce Dominus David*, behold David's Lord. For our weakness the Word was made flesh to dwell in us: *ecce filius David*, behold David's son. Or, in the words of Philippians, being in the form of God he is David's Lord, and emptying himself, taking the form of a servant, he is David's son. In asking "how is he his son?", Augustine tells Christ, *non te filium ejus negasti, sed modum quo id fieret inquisisti*: he did not deny that he was David's son, but asked how it came to be. As for the questioners, *maluerunt inflata taciturnitate disrupti, quam humili confessione edoceri*: they preferred to burst with a swollen silence rather than be taught by a humble confession (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 109, 3–6).

St Jerome presses the same logic from the side of the psalm. If the Christ is a mere man and only David's son, how can David call him his Lord, and that not by error or by his own will but in the Holy Spirit? *Dominus igitur David vocatur, non secundum id quod de eo natus est, sed juxta id quod natus ex Patre semper fuit, praeveniens ipsum carnis suae patrem*: he is called David's Lord not by his birth from David but by his birth from the Father, which always was, and which goes before the father of his flesh. Jerome meets a Jewish reading that applied the psalm to Abraham with the psalm's own later words, "from the womb before the day star I begot thee" and "a priest for ever" (*Commentarii in Matthaeum* IV, on 22:41–46).

St John Chrysostom attends to the way Christ teaches, bringing in the scribe's confession from Mark 12:32. Jesus had just praised that confession of one God, and he explains why that praise does not exclude himself: the saying "There is one God" is spoken "not to the rejection of the Son, but to make the distinction from idols". The counter-question follows, "secretly leading them on to confess Him also to be God". Since they held him a mere man, he brings in David witnessing "to His being Lord, and the genuineness of His Sonship, and His equality in honor with His Father". He adds the second half of the verse, "Till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool", "in order to move them to fear". He teaches by question and inference, "in condescension", so that the saying might not give offence (*Homilies on Matthew* 71).

St Thomas Aquinas gathers these threads into a doctrinal statement. Christ has two generations, and the Pharisees answered only of the flesh. The psalm shows three things of the Son: *praeeminentiam ad sanctos, aequalitatem ad patrem, et dominium super rebelles*, his pre-eminence over the saints, his equality with the Father and his dominion over the rebellious. The conclusion is plain: *filius est secundum carnem . . . et dominus secundum divinitatem* (*Super Matthaeum* c. 22, lect. 4). The liturgical commentator William Durandus reads its second half as Christ reproving the Pharisees *de infidelitate, quia non credebant ipsum esse Deum*: for their unbelief, because they did not believe him to be God (*Rationale* VI.135).

The three Fathers and the Doctor agree on the answer to Christ's question. They differ in what they bring out: Augustine the form of God and the form of the servant, and the humble confession that the proud silence refused; Jerome the eternal birth that precedes the father of the flesh; Chrysostom the patient pedagogy that leads toward confession and the equality of honour it reveals; Aquinas the threefold dignity of the Son.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father

Paul grounds the Church's unity in a sevenfold "one" that ends with "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all". The Fathers who comment on it read the last phrases in two ways.

St Jerome, writing against Sabellius and the Arians, gives the three phrases to the three Persons. *Unus est Dominus, et unus est Deus, quia Patris et Filii dominatio, una divinitas est*: one Lord and one God, because the lordship of Father and Son is one godhead. The faith is one because we believe alike in Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the baptism is one, though we are immersed three times, *ut Trinitatis unum appareat sacramentum*, so that the one mystery of the Trinity may be shown. Then the phrases themselves: *Super omnes enim est Deus Pater, quia auctor est omnium. Per omnes Filius, quia cuncta transcurrit, vaditque per omnia. In omnibus Spiritus sanctus, quia nihil absque eo est*: the Father is above all as author of all, the Son through all as passing through and pervading all things, the Holy Spirit in all, because nothing is without him (*Commentarii in epistolam ad Ephesios* II, on 4:4–6).

St Thomas Aquinas reaches the same end by two steps. He reads "One Lord" as Christ, "one faith" as both the thing believed and the habit of believing, and "one baptism" as one because Christ baptizes within, because it is given *in nomine unius, scilicet trinitatis*, and because it is not repeated. "One God" recalls *Audi Israel, Dominus Deus tuus unus est*, and "Father of all" God's kindness toward us. Then he commends the one God's dignity *ex tribus*: the height of his godhead, "who is above all"; the breadth of his power, "through all"; the largesse of his grace, "in us all". Only after reading the phrases of the one God does he appropriate them: *Sed primum appropriatur patri qui est fontale principium divinitatis*, the first to the Father as the fountain-source of the godhead, the second to the Son, who is wisdom reaching from end to end mightily, the third to the Holy Spirit, who fills the whole world (*Super Ephesios* c. 4, lect. 2).

St John Chrysostom reads the verse otherwise. In his eleventh homily on the letter, in the English of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: "'Who is over all,' that is, the Lord and above all; and 'through all,' that is, providing for, ordering all; and 'in you all,' that is, who dwelleth in you all. Now this they own to be an attribute of the Son; so that were it an argument of inferiority, it never would have been said of the Father." He does not give the three phrases to three Persons. He reads them as three relations of the one God and Father to all things: over all as Lord, providing for all, dwelling in all. Theodoret of Cyrus names the same three relations lordship, providence and indwelling. What Chrysostom adds is an argument about the Son: an attribute that is also ascribed to the Son, and is here said of the Father, cannot mark inferiority in the Son.

These are two lines of exegesis, and neither denies the other. The distribution of "above all, through all, in all" among the Persons rests on Jerome and on Aquinas's appropriation; the Greek commentators read the phrases of the one God and Father, and Chrysostom draws from them the Son's equality. Aquinas holds both, reading first of the one God and then appropriating. For the confession this reading follows, Jerome

and Aquinas supply the Trinitarian sense of the verse, and Chrysostom supplies its bearing on the Son. The Epistle thus confesses what the Gospel's question uncovers: the one Lord whom Paul names is the Christ whom David calls Lord.

By the word of the Lord and the spirit of his mouth

The Gradual's versicle, Ps 32:6, gathers a remarkable consensus. St Irenaeus of Lyons, stating the rule of faith against those who divided God, uses it as a proof text: "The rule of truth which we hold, is, that there is one God Almighty, who made all things by His Word . . . Thus saith the Scripture . . . 'By the Word of the Lord were the heavens established, and all the might of them, by the spirit of His mouth.'" God "by His Word and Spirit, makes, and disposes, and governs all things", and is "the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, above whom there is no other God" (*Adversus haereses* I.22.1). Irenaeus does not expound the psalm; he uses its verse to name the one Creator who works by his Word and his Spirit.

St Basil the Great, in his treatise on the Holy Spirit, reads the verse's terms directly: "the Word is He who was with God in the beginning and was God, and the Spirit of the mouth of God is the Spirit of truth which proceeds from the Father. You are therefore to perceive three, the Lord who gives the order, the Word who creates, and the Spirit who confirms" (*De Spiritu Sancto* 16.38). St Augustine, preaching on the psalm, stops his hearers at the same verse: *Sane, fratres, videte eadem opera Filii et Spiritus sancti . . . Verbum certe Dei Filius est, et Spiritus oris ejus Spiritus sanctus est*: the works are the same works of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, for the Word of God is the Son and the Spirit of his mouth is the Holy Spirit. And lest the Father be left out: *Hoc ergo facit Filius et Spiritus sanctus. Numquid sine Patre?* The Son and the Spirit do this; but not without the Father (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 32, II, s. 2, 5). Cassiodorus finds the Trinity in the grammar of the verse itself. In saying *Verbo* the psalm declares the Son, in adding *Domini* the Father, in *spiritu oris eius* the Holy Spirit, *et ut in tribus personis manifestam intelligeres unitatem, eius dixit, non eorum*: and to make the unity in three persons plain, the psalm says *eius*, his, and not *eorum*, theirs (*Expositio psalmorum*, on Ps 32:6).

Aquinas reads the verse by appropriation, as he reads Eph 4:6. *Dominus est nomen potestatis, et potentia appropriatur patri*; the Word is the Son; the Spirit of his mouth is the Holy Spirit, "spirit of the mouth" because the mouth is appropriated to the Word, so that it means the spirit of the Word. The works of the Trinity are undivided, but the psalm speaks *secundum appropriationem* (*Super Psalmos* 32, n. 5). St Robert Bellarmine keeps the literal sense, God's word of command in the first chapter of Genesis, and the mystery together. Although God's orders are what the verse means, "there is no doubt but the Holy Ghost meant to glance at the mystery of the Holy Trinity to be revealed in the New Testament". He guards the unity at once: "the acts of the Trinity cannot be separated, by reason of the unity of essence". Augustine, Cassiodorus and Aquinas also read the "heavens" made firm as the apostles, weak men strengthened by the Word and the Spirit.

The Missal prints the versicle at this Sunday with a small letter, *spíritu*, as it prints the *spíritus* of the Epistle; setting the same Gradual in the votive Mass of the Holy Spirit, it prints *Spíritu*. Basil, Augustine and Cassiodorus read the Word and the Spirit out of the psalm's own words.

The other texts as confession

The Collect's *te solum Deum* asks to follow the one God alone. Heard beside the Gospel, it is Chrysostom's point in prayer: "one God" shuts out the idols, not the Son. Its earliest witness reads *te solum Dominum*; both words stand together in the Gospel's *Diliges Dominum Deum tuum*.

The Alleluia divides its witnesses here as elsewhere. For Augustine the poor man who prays is the eternal Word made poor for us. *Unde illi labor, unde gemitus Verbo, per quod facta sunt omnia?*, he asks: whence labour and groaning to the Word through whom all things were made? He answers that the Word deigned to take our death. In the same place he sets three unions side by side and distinguishes them by the gender

of a single pronoun: *Christus et Ecclesia, utrumque unus: sed Verbum et caro non utrumque unum; Pater et Verbum utrumque unum; Christus et Ecclesia utrumque unus, unus quidam vir perfectus*. Christ and the Church are *unus*, masculine: the two are one man, the perfect man of Eph 4:13. The Father and the Word are *unum*, neuter: one thing, one in substance. The Word and the flesh are not *unum* in that sense, since Godhead and manhood are not one substance; they are one person, and only because they are one person can the head be called *unus* with his body in the same breath (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 101, s. 1, 2). That distinction is what this reading needs. The one Christ is David's son in the flesh he took and David's Lord in the substance he has of the Father, and the second confession takes nothing from the first. Cassiodorus, by contrast, declines to put the psalm in Christ's mouth and hears the prophet speaking for the poor of Christ. The two are not reconciled; only Augustine's reading belongs to the confession of the Word.

The Offertory reaches Christ through the answer Daniel received. While he was still praying, Gabriel came to him (Dan 9:20–21), and Jerome remarks *grandis orationis effectus*: great was the prayer's effect. The angel brought the prophecy of the seventy weeks (9:24–27). Jerome sets out the computations of Africanus, Eusebius, Hippolytus, Apollinaris, Clement, Tertullian and the Jews, and declines to choose among them: *periculosum est de magistrorum Ecclesiae judicare sententiis*, since it is perilous to sit in judgment on the opinions of the Church's masters (*Commentarii in Daniele*, on 9:21–24). The 1962 antiphon ends at the petitions of 9:17–19; the answer Jerome reads comes in the verses that follow them (9:20–27).

Read beside the Gospel, the Communion's God “who taketh away the spirit of princes” and is “terrible with the kings of the earth” is the Lord of Ps 109, to whom every enemy is made a footstool. In the Gospel's psalm Aquinas finds the Son's *dominium super rebelles*, and Chrysostom says the footstool is added “to move them to fear”. The Introit's *Iustus es, Domine* is addressed to that one Lord; Cassiodorus hears in it the confession by which Daniel was saved among the lions, a link to the Offertory's prophet that is his own.

The Postcommunion adds nothing distinctive to this reading. Its address is to the *omnipotens Deus*, with no distinction of Persons; what it asks — that by God's *sanctificationes* our vices be cured and eternal remedies come to us — is the healing the first and the third readings develop, not a confession of the Word and the Spirit; and its only Trinitarian words are the conclusion it shares with the Collect and the Secret, which the typical edition prints here merely as *Per Dóminum nostrum* and which the general rubrics complete (no. 115 a).

The Secret addresses the Father's *maiestas*. Its words name neither the Son nor the Spirit, and it concludes, like the other two orations, through the Son who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Its first word meets the Preface the Missal directs immediately after it, whose last clause adores *in maiestate . . . æqualitas*. That adjacency belongs to every Sunday of the second class that uses this Preface. The Preface itself is the confession this Mass makes, and it gathers what the Gospel and the Epistle have shown. In the 1861 English: “Who together with thy only begotten Son and the Holy Ghost, art one God, and one Lord not in a singularity of one Person, but in a Trinity of one substance . . . So that in the confession of the true and eternal Deity, we adore a distinction in the Persons, an unity in the essence, and an equality in the Majesty.”

Three texts that resist, and two that hold

Three texts resist being made simple witnesses of the Trinity. The distribution of Eph 4:6 among the Persons rests on Jerome and on Aquinas's appropriation; Chrysostom and Theodoret read the verse of the one God and Father, and Chrysostom's support for the Son comes by argument, not by distribution. The Christological Alleluia is Augustine's and is contested by Cassiodorus. The Offertory's Christological weight lies in verses of Daniel 9 that the 1962 antiphon does not sing, where Jerome reads the answer the prayer received. The Preface, finally, is the ordinary Sunday Preface of the season and speaks for every such Sunday. What remains firm is the Gospel's second half, on which the Fathers are unanimous, and

the Gradual's versicle, on which Irenaeus, Basil, Augustine, Cassiodorus, Aquinas and Bellarmine agree in hearing the one God who creates by his Word and his Spirit.

The four senses of this reading

Literal.

Jesus asks the Pharisees whose son the Christ is and, when they answer "David's", asks how David, speaking by the Spirit in Ps 109, can call him Lord; no one can answer him. Paul grounds the Church's unity in one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God and Father of all. The psalmist praises the Lord by whose word the heavens were made firm and all their host by the breath of his mouth.

Allegorical.

Christ is David's son in the flesh and David's Lord from eternity, in the form of the servant and in the form of God (Augustine, Jerome, Chrysostom, Aquinas). The one God who creates by his Word and his Spirit is Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Irenaeus, Basil, Augustine, Cassiodorus, Aquinas, Bellarmine), above all, through all and in all (Jerome, Aquinas). The heavens made firm by the Word and the Spirit are also the apostles made strong (Augustine, Cassiodorus, Aquinas).

Moral.

Answer Christ's question as the Church does, and do not stop where his questioners stopped; exchange a proud silence for a humble confession (Augustine). Guard the one faith and the one baptism against the division that breaks the bond of peace (Jerome). Follow the one God alone, knowing that "one God" shuts out the idols and not the Son (Chrysostom).

Anagogical.

The Son sits at the Father's right hand until every enemy is made his footstool (Ps 109:1), with dominion over the rebellious (Aquinas). The blessed nation of the Gradual's psalm is, for Bellarmine, most happy "when we shall see him as he is", and for Aquinas its beatitude, begun now in hope, is to cleave to God by knowledge and love, perfectly hereafter. The vision so promised is of the God whom the Preface confesses, adored in a distinction of Persons, a unity of essence and an equality of majesty.

“Thou Art Just, O Lord”: The Humbled People Prays with Daniel for Mercy

Heard from its opening chant, the Mass is the prayer of a people that confesses God’s justice and asks his mercy. The Introit begins with a confession, “Thou art just, O Lord: and thy judgment is right”, and asks to be dealt with “according to thy mercy”. The Offertory is Daniel’s own prayer for the desolate sanctuary and for the people on whom God’s name is called, drawn from a chapter that confesses the same pair: “To thee, O Lord, justice”, “But to thee, the Lord our God, mercy and forgiveness”. The Alleluia is the cry of the poor man from the fifth penitential psalm. The orations ask escape from the devil’s contagion, release from past and future sins, and the cure of vices; the Communion renders vows to the God who takes away the spirit of the proud. The Epistle’s humility, mildness and patience describe the bearing of such a people, and the Gospel ends with questioners who fall silent where a humble confession was asked of them.

The confession of justice and the plea for mercy

St Augustine reads verse 137 of Ps 118 as the words of a penitent. Having wept over his transgressions, the psalmist gives the reason for his tears: God’s justice and right judgment *omni est metuenda peccanti*, is to be feared by every sinner, and no one condemned can justly complain of the just God; *inde fletus rectus est poenitentis*, hence the penitent’s weeping is right (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 118, s. 28, 1). The plea of verse 124 follows from the confession. *Fac cum servo tuo secundum misericordiam tuam: non utique secundum iustitiam meam*: deal with thy servant according to thy mercy, not according to my justice. The *iustificaciones* the psalmist then asks to be taught are those *quibus Deus facit iustos, non ipsi se*, by which God makes men just and they do not make themselves just (s. 26, 5).

St Hilary of Poitiers, writing in the 360s, reads the same two verses in the order in which the psalm gives them. The servant may say *fac* without presumption, because he has done judgment and justice; he adds *secundum misericordiam tuam quia miseratione eius opus est, ut in hac servitutis nostrae professione maneamus*, because we need God’s pity if we are to remain in this profession of servitude. Human weakness can obtain nothing by itself, and it is God’s mercy *ut uolentes adiuuet, incipientes confirmet, adeuntes recipiat*, to help those who will, strengthen those who begin, and receive those who come (*Tractatus super Psalmos* 118, *Ain* 10). On verse 137 he turns the confession into a rule for suffering. In persecution and sickness, in loss, grief and bereavement, *semper utamur hac, qua nunc propheta usus est uoce dicens: iustus es, domine*, we are always to use the prophet’s words, “Thou art just, O Lord”, for *si quid est, quod patimur, ex iudicio bonitatis suae accidit*, whatever we suffer comes from the judgment of his goodness (*Sade* 1).

Cassiodorus reads the two verses as the prayer of penitents. Asking mercy, the psalmist *infinita petiit*, asked for things without end. After sins washed away in tears, the saints praise God’s judgments, since God afflicts sinners in order to heal them. And he adds a link of his own: *Hoc enim dicto Daniel inter ferocissima leonum ora salvatus est, his verbis trium puerorum flamma superata est*. By this saying Daniel was saved among the fiercest jaws of lions, and by these words the flame was overcome for the three young men. *Dicamus igitur et nos hunc versum in quibuslibet periculis, dicamus in gaudiis*: let us too say this verse in every danger, and say it in joy (*Expositio psalmorum*, on Ps 118:124, 137). The link with Daniel is Cassiodorus’s own, and it joins the Introit’s verse to the prophet whose prayer the Offertory sings.

St Robert Bellarmine adds a precision about the Introit’s key word. On verse 124 he writes that the psalmist begs God to deal with him “not according to his own merits, ‘but according to thy mercy’”, a mercy that “especially consists in teaching him ‘thy justifications’”, which God does “when God gives one a great amount of love”. On verse 137: “you alone have the justice that excludes all manner of injustice”. But he notes that “Throughout this Psalm the word ‘judgment’ always means the law, though taking the word even to mean God’s allocation of rewards and punishments, it is then also most just, though we may not see the justice of it” (*Commentary on the Psalms*, O’Sullivan’s abridged English). The liturgical commentator William Durandus hears the Introit’s *rectum iudicium* otherwise, as the judgment *quo Deus*

exaltat humiles, et superbos deprimit, by which God exalts the humble and casts down the proud (*Rationale* VI.131). Bellarmine and Durandus differ in what the Introit’s word names, not in what they believe of God.

Hilary and Augustine agree that the Introit asks for mercy and not for reward. They place the beginning differently. Augustine’s justifications are those by which God makes men just; Hilary, writing before the controversy with the Pelagians, says that mercy perfects what begins from us, *ex nobis autem initium est, ut illa perficiat*. Augustine’s account is the one on which the priority of grace rests; Hilary’s gives the Introit its note of perseverance in God’s service and its word for the day of affliction.

Daniel’s prayer and Daniel’s people

The Offertory is the heart of this reading. Daniel prays in the first year of Darius the Mede, when he has understood from Jeremias that the seventy years of Jerusalem’s desolation are almost accomplished. St Jerome notices what the promise did to him: *quae res Daniele non facit negligentem, sed magis provocat ad rogandum*, it did not make Daniel careless but provoked him to pray, so that what God had promised in his clemency might be fulfilled through Daniel’s prayers, lest negligence breed pride and pride give offence (*Commentarii in Daniele*, on 9:2). The prayer is a confession. Jerome marks its logic. First comes justice: *Tibi, Domine, iustitia*, to God justice and to us confusion of face, *Iuste enim patimur, quod meremur*, we suffer justly what we deserve. Then comes mercy: *nunc quia Dominus non solum iustus, sed et misericors est, dicit: Tibi, Domine, misericordia, ut post sententiam judicantis, eum provocet ad clementiam*, because the Lord is not only just but merciful, Daniel appeals, after the judge’s sentence, to his clemency (on 9:7–9). At the petition the Offertory sings he writes *Imple opere, quod sermone pollicitus es*: fulfil in deed what thou hast promised in word (on 9:17).

The same chapter carries, just outside the antiphon, the reason the petition dares to ask: “for it is not for our justifications that we present our prayers before thy face, but for the multitude of thy tender mercies” (9:18). St Thomas Aquinas cites this verse, in the Vulgate’s words, as the ground of the confidence every prayer needs: *debet esse cum fiducia impetrandi, et hoc ex Dei misericordia*, prayer must be made with confidence of obtaining, and that confidence comes from God’s mercy (*Super Philippenses* c. 4, on 4:6). The Introit’s “according to thy mercy” and Daniel’s “not for our justifications” say the same thing in two books.

Daniel prays for “this people”. Jerome observes that he confesses the people’s sins in the first person, *quia unus e populo est*, because he is one of the people (on 9:5). When Daniel later says that he was “confessing my sins, and the sins of my people” (9:20), Jerome gives two readings: either Daniel confessed his own sins as one of the people, or, *humiliter, cum peccatum ipse non fecerit, se jungit populo peccatori, ut ex humilitate veniam consequatur*, humbly, though he had not sinned himself, he joined himself to a sinful people, so as to obtain pardon by humility. St Augustine will not allow the second. Against those who said that the saints confessed sins only on others’ behalf, he points to the very words of the verse. Daniel, he says, “expresses himself in language so distinct and precise, as if he were full of the distinction himself, and wanted above all things to commend it to our notice: ‘My sins,’ says he, ‘and the sins of my people.’” (*De peccatorum meritis et remissione* II.13). Jerome and Augustine agree that Daniel’s is a true confession made from within the people and that mercy, not merit, is its ground; they differ over whether the prophet had sins of his own to confess.

The antiphon’s words echo the Introit’s psalm. *Illumina faciem tuam super sanctuarium tuum* has the verb and construction of Ps 118:135, *Faciem tuam illumina super servum tuum*, a verse the Introit does not sing. Its “servant” (*preces servi tui*) answers the Introit’s (*fac cum servo tuo*). The prophet who in the Introit is Cassiodorus’s example of the confession “Thou art just” is in the Offertory the one who prays.

The poor man’s cry and the vows of the humble

The Alleluia comes from the fifth penitential psalm, headed “The prayer of the poor man”. Augustine hears in the following verse, Ps 101:3, humility inclining God’s ear: *si me extollo, longe fis; si me humilio, inclinas aurem tuam ad me*, if I exalt myself, thou art far; if I humble myself, thou inclinest thine ear to me (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 101, s. 1, 3). Cassiodorus, who hears the psalm in the voice of Christ’s poor rather than of Christ, draws its scope to the whole world: *Tales sunt pauperes Christi, qui non solum pro suis malis, verum etiam pro totius mundi calamitatibus intercedere comprobantur*, such are the poor of Christ, who are found interceding not only for their own ills but for the calamities of the whole world (*Expositio psalmorum*, on Ps 101). Bellarmine calls the verse the Church’s daily preparation for every other petition, and asks with it for the gift of prayer itself: “make me so pray that I may be worthy of being heard”. What hinders prayer, he says, is “want of faith, of confidence, of humility, desire”.

The Communion completes the movement in vows. Augustine counsels *Quisque quod potest voveat, et reddat*, let each vow what he can and pay it, relying not on his own strength but on the one to whom he vows. The “spirit of princes” that God takes away is the spirit of the proud, *Spiritus enim principum, superbi sunt spiritus*, and he reads the kings of the earth morally: *Rege terram, et eris rex terrae*, rule the earth, that is, your flesh, and you will be a king of the earth (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 75, 16–18). Cassiodorus sets the vows at the altar, where the faithful bring their gifts, and adds that God is terrible chiefly to the devout, to whom he is also sweet. Bellarmine reads the verses just before the Communion’s, “When God arose in judgment, to save all the meek of the earth”, of “the day of general judgment”, when the meek will no longer be “harassed by their proud and cruel persecutors”. The God of the Communion is then “terrible” in his judgments, “not only to ordinary men, but even to kings and princes”.

The orations, the Epistle, the Gradual and the Gospel

The three orations are the penitent’s own prayers. The Collect asks to shun *diabolica contagia*; the Secret asks that the holy things we do may strip us of past sins and of future ones; the Postcommunion asks that our vices be cured and eternal remedies given. What they ask is what the Council of Trent teaches of the Eucharist, an antidote that frees from daily faults and preserves from mortal sins (sess. XIII, cap. 2).

The Epistle describes the bearing of such a people: the lowliness that Chrysostom calls “the basis of all virtue” because “all is of grace”, and that Jerome places in the mind rather than in speech. The Gradual’s people is chosen by God and not by its own merit. Augustine writes of the nation in verse 12, *neque haec a seipsa, sed Dei munere electa est*: it was chosen not of itself but by God’s gift (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 32, I, 12).

The Gospel enters this reading at its end, through Augustine’s contrast between the swollen silence of the Pharisees and the humble confession asked of them (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 109, 6). The people that prays the Introit confesses where the questioners were silent.

A Gospel that is not penitential

The Gospel is not penitential. It enters here only through Augustine’s contrast of proud silence and humble confession, and its primary sense belongs to the first and second readings. Jerome and Augustine differ over Daniel’s own sins. The chants themselves are older at this Sunday than any of these difficulties: the Introit, the Offertory and the Communion already stand together here in the earliest graduals, and in them the tone of the day is set by justice confessed, mercy asked and vows paid.

The four senses of this reading

Literal.

In the first year of Darius, Daniel, understanding from Jeremias that the seventy years of Jerusalem's desolation were ending, prays in fasting, sackcloth and ashes, confesses Israel's sins and God's justice, and begs God to make his face shine on the desolate sanctuary and to hear for his own name's sake. The psalmist confesses God just and his judgment right and asks to be dealt with in mercy; the poor man pours out his prayer; the faithful are summoned to pay their vows to the God who is terrible to kings.

Allegorical.

The poor man who prays is Christ praying in his afflicted members (Augustine) or every poor one of Christ interceding for the whole world (Cassiodorus). The desolate sanctuary and the people called by God's name are the Church in her trials; Schuster, offering it as his own suggestion, hears the antiphon as the prayer of Rome under the Lombards. Daniel's answered prayer opens onto the prophecy of the seventy weeks (9:24–27), whose computations Jerome sets out without choosing among them; the 1962 antiphon itself ends at the petitions.

Moral.

Confess God's justice and your own sin, and not only the sins of others (Augustine). Ask mercy and not reward, and pray with confidence because of God's mercies and not your justifications (Aquinas). Intercede for the whole people as one of it (Jerome), and for the calamities of the world (Cassiodorus). Say "Thou art just, O Lord" in every danger and in every affliction (Cassiodorus, Hilary). Vow what you can and pay it, relying on God; rule the earth of your own flesh, and let God take away the spirit of pride (Augustine).

Anagogical.

The Introit asks the just God for mercy and not for the servant's own justice (Augustine), and Durandus hears its judgment as the one by which God exalts the humble. Bellarmine reads the Communion's psalm of the general judgment, which saves all the meek of the earth, and its God as terrible in judgment even to kings. The Postcommunion calls the remedies it asks eternal. The judgment the people confesses as just is the judgment at which it hopes to find mercy.

The Three Readings Compared

The three readings share more than they divide. All three hear the Mass as the prayer of one people before the one God. The Collect speaks for *populo tuo* and asks to follow *te solum Deum*; the Gradual blesses the *beata gens* whose God is the Lord; the Offertory prays for *populum istum, super quem invocatum est nomen tuum*. All three take the Gospel and the Epistle as central. In all three St Augustine is the witness whose own reading reaches across more than one element: his exposition of Ps 101 quotes the Epistle's chapter of Ephesians, his sermons on Ps 32 join the blessed nation to the love that possesses God, and his exposition of Ps 109 begins from this Sunday's Gospel. All three hear the orations as prayer rather than as the anchors of an argument. Where the first and the third readings ask what the sacrament those prayers seek actually does, both call on the same chapter of the Council of Trent (sess. XIII, cap. 2): the first for the Eucharist as the sign of the one body, the third for the antidote that frees from daily faults. That chapter has no place in the second reading, which hears the Collect's *te solum Deum* and the Secret's *maiestas* beside the Preface appointed after it as confession, and to whose question the Postcommunion gives nothing of its own.

They part on the questions below.

Question	The whole heart and the one body	David's son and David's Lord	"Thou art just, O Lord"
Where it is anchored	The Gospel's first half (vv. 34–40); the Epistle's appeal (vv. 1–4)	The Gospel's second half (vv. 41–46); the Epistle's "one Lord . . . one God and Father" (vv. 5–6); the Gradual's versicle	The Introit; the Offertory; the Alleluia; the Communion
What "one" means	One love, and one body that love keeps	One Lord and one God, confessed in Father, Word and Spirit	One people, called by one name, praying
The Gradual	The blessed nation that possesses God and is his inheritance (v. 12)	The heavens made firm by the Word and the Spirit (v. 6)	The people chosen by God's gift and not its own merit (v. 12)
The Alleluia	One voice of head and members (Augustine)	The Word made poor for us (Augustine), against Cassiodorus's poor penitent	The poor man's cry and intercession for the world (Cassiodorus); humility that inclines God's ear (Augustine)
The Offertory	Intercession for the neighbour, made as one of the people	A prayer answered by the prophecy of Christ's coming	Justice confessed and mercy asked for the whole people
What follows for faith and life	Charity ordered to God builds and keeps the Church's unity	Faith confesses Christ equal to the Father and the one God as Trinity	Humility confesses sin and receives mercy

The readings differ in emphasis more than in what they identify. The first and the second divide the Gospel between them, the commandment and the question about the Christ, and St John Chrysostom's seventy-first homily on Matthew is the witness that they belong together. In his exposition, which brings in the scribe's confession from Mark 12:32, Christ praises the confession of one God and asks about the Christ, so that the God who is to be loved with the whole heart is shown to be the God whose Son is David's Lord. The third rests on the chants that have stood together at this Sunday longest, the Introit, the Offertory and the Communion, and gives the Mass its tone: the first two supply its doctrine, and the third the posture in which that doctrine is received.

No witness called on here opposes another's controlling claim. The disagreements are real but narrow, and each belongs to one text. Augustine hears Christ in the poor man of Ps 101 and Cassiodorus hears the poor of Christ. Jerome allows that Daniel, though sinless, joined himself to a sinful people, and Augustine insists that Daniel confessed sins of his own. Jerome and Aquinas give "above all, and through all, and in us all" to the three Persons, and Chrysostom and Theodoret read it of the one God and Father. Hilary and Augustine place the beginning of the servant's mercy differently. Chrysostom and Jerome give different reasons for the lawyer's question. Bellarmine takes the Introit's *iudicium* for the law, and Durandus for the judgment that exalts the humble.

Each reading ends at the same place, the silence that closes the Gospel. "No man was able to answer him a word." The first reading answers that silence with love, the second with confession, the third with prayer; and the Mass itself, having heard the Gospel, answers it with the Creed.

Scriptural Date and Location

Each passage the Mass reads or sings from Scripture, once, in canonical order; beneath each, its historical judgment and critical horizon.

Proper	Citation	Location	Date
Gradual	Ps 32:6, 12 (Heb. 33)	No place named	Traditional attribution – disputed: David (reign in the usual chronology), B.C. 1055–1015. Composition: Before c. 165 B.C.
Titled <i>Psalmus David</i> , “A psalm for David” (v. 1): a Davidic attribution whose displayed regnal era is a reference point, not a composition date. A hymn of the just to God’s creating word (vv. 1–9) and to the nation he chose (v. 12). The composition bound is the modern critical boundary for the whole Psalter, within which no single psalm can be dated securely.			
Communion	Ps 75:12–13 (Heb. 76)	Judea and Sion named as God’s dwelling (vv. 2–3)	Composition: Before c. 165 B.C.
Titled “a psalm for Asaph: a canticle to the Assyrians” (v. 1), with no date or era attached. God broke the weapons of war in Sion and rose to judgment “to save all the meek of the earth” (vv. 4, 10). The date is the Psalter’s critical boundary only.			
Alleluia	Ps 101:2 (Heb. 102)	Sion named in the psalm’s turn to hope (vv. 14, 17)	Composition: Before c. 165 B.C.
Titled “The prayer of the poor man, when he was anxious” (v. 1); no author named, no traditional date held. The fifth penitential psalm, moving from lament to the rebuilding of Sion. The date is the Psalter’s critical boundary only.			
Introit	Ps 118:1, 124, 137 (Heb. 119)	No place named	Composition: Before c. 165 B.C.
An alphabetical psalm in praise of God’s law, with no title beyond <i>Alleluia</i> ; no author named, no traditional date held. The date is the Psalter’s critical boundary only.			
Offertory	Dan 9:17–19, compiled	Daniel at the court of Babylon; for the Jews of his own time and after. Event: the kingdom of the Chaldeans, first year of Darius the Mede (9:1); prayer for the desolate sanctuary of Jerusalem (9:17)	Historical setting: “seventy years” (duration). Composition: B.C. 570–536.
Traditional attribution: Daniel the prophet, in the Exile, telling his own prayer (“I, Daniel”, 9:2) when he understood from Jeremias that the seventy years of desolation were ending. The 1908 <i>Catholic Encyclopedia</i> article that holds the traditional date sets against it a more recent critical theory, widely accepted by scholars of its time, that an unknown later author composed the book; no date is given for that position here. The same article’s grounds for the traditional position give the place and the hearers: only “a resident in Babylon” could have written the book’s details, and Daniel, “owing to his position at the court of Babylon”, wrote “for the comfort of the Jews of his time and of subsequent ages”. For the later author it supposes, the article names no place of writing at all.			

Proper	Citation	Location	Date
Gospel	Mt 22:34–46	Matthew in Judea, before he left Jerusalem; to the Jews who had believed. Event: the Temple, Jerusalem (21:23)	Event – Narrated event date unresolved. Composition – disputed: c. A.D. 38–45; c. A.D. 40–42; A.D. 40–45; c. A.D. 60–68; c. A.D. 64–67; c. A.D. 50. Composition (Catholic critical chronology, for comparison) : The Greek Gospel of Matthew in the NABRE introduction, post-A.D. 70 date.

Narrated event: the last of Christ's controversies in the Temple (21:23–22:46), before the Passion is foretold "after two days" (26:1–2).

Traditional attribution: St Matthew the Apostle, whom the Missal's heading names (*secundum Matthaeum*); the Date column keeps the traditional ranges of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1911, 1912) as disputed alternatives, not equally established estimates. Jacquier's c. A.D. 38–45 counts eight or fifteen years after the Ascension with early writers; c. A.D. 40–42 follows an apostolic dispersal tradition he calls "admittedly not too reliable"; A.D. 40–45 reports the Catholic critics of his own day. His c. A.D. 60–68 depends on a later proposed apostolic departure; his c. A.D. 64–67 rests on Irenaeus's statement about Peter and Paul at Rome, whose difficulties of interpretation prevent a positive conclusion. Durand's c. A.D. 50 concerns the Aramaic original alone; he leaves the Greek rendering undated. Outside its date section Jacquier's article gives the first hearers and the place of writing; the ecclesiastical writers "agree in declaring that St. Matthew wrote his Gospel for the Jews"; Origen holds that it was "published for Jews converted to the Faith"; Jerome, summarizing tradition, that Matthew "published his Gospel in Judea and in the Hebrew language, principally for those among the Jews who believed in Jesus"; the article has him write "before his departure from Jerusalem". One qualification it quotes without adopting: Zahn thinks the book meant rather for Jews not yet Christians. The NABRE introduction's critical account concerns the Greek Gospel: after A.D. 70, probably at least a decade later, with the overall account presented as probable. It describes an anonymous evangelist using Mark and other traditions, and Jewish and Gentile Christian readers. Antioch in Roman Syria is a plausible suggestion, not an established writing-place. The Temple above locates the controversy the Gospel narrates, not the writing of the Gospel; the corpus gives that encounter no date.

Epistle	Eph 4:1–6	Paul, "a prisoner in the Lord" (4:1), at Rome or Caesarea; to the saints at Ephesus (1:1)	Composition – disputed: A.D. 58–63; A.D. 61.
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Traditional attribution: St Paul, in a letter of his captivity; the *Catholic Encyclopedia* dates the captivity letters within the range shown, leaving Rome or Caesarea open (1909), and its chronology of St Paul gives Ephesians the single year shown (1911). The first hearers are the church at Ephesus, gentiles once "afar off" and now "made nigh" (2:11–18). Most liberal critics since Schleiermacher have denied the letter to Paul (so the 1909 article); no date is given for that position here. That article also holds the words "at Ephesus" in 1:1 to be no part of the primitive text, and reads the letter as a circular to churches Paul had not visited, probably in Asia Minor; the address above is the received biblical text, not a settled identification of the first recipients.

Appendix: Scope and Qualifications

Edition, formulary and occurrence. The study treats the Mass *Dominica decima septima post Pentecosten*, II classis, of the *Missale Romanum*, editio typica, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis 1962, pp. 398–400, nos. 1602–1611, in the universal 1962 calendar and no particular calendar. Its occurrence on 20 September 2026 rests on the Missal’s own calendar and general rubrics (RG 91, 111 b, 127 b; RGMR 427, 434 b, 494 b), and agrees with the dated 2026 Ordos of the Fraternity of St Peter in France and of the Institute of Christ the King in France, which are cited for the date only. The Missal’s Breviary rubrics, which govern the Gloria through the Office, are not printed in its typical edition and were not read.

Text control. Every Latin form of the ten proper elements was read on the page images of the CMAA facsimile of the typical edition and compared with the Benziger *editio iuxta typicam* of 1962 (whose Collect carries two misprints, *Deus* and *sectária*, and is not followed) and with the Pustet Missal of 1862, in which every element’s wording already stands. The collation, the conclusion forms and the comparison with the Clementine Vulgate are recorded in `propers/verified.md`. Two textual questions remain open: the source of the Communion’s *omnes* before *reges*, which neither the Clementine nor the psalters of Augustine and Cassiodorus contain; and the Latin version behind the Offertory’s compilation, which agrees at 9:17 with Theodotion’s Greek and the Hebrew’s sense against the Vulgate.

English. The scriptural English is the Douay–Rheims in Challoner’s revision at the canonical verses; where the Missal adapts its source (the Introit’s half-verse, the Epistle’s opening and doxology, the Gradual’s and Communion’s wording, the Gospel’s opening, the whole Offertory) that English does not render the Missal’s Latin, and no English has been supplied in its place. The English of the three orations and of the Trinity Preface is the anonymous translation printed by Cummiskey in Philadelphia in 1861. Neither is an approved liturgical translation of the 1962 Missal. English renderings of patristic Latin not drawn from a named translation are glosses of the Latin printed beside them.

Reception. Each appointed passage was searched in the Latin and Greek Fathers and later Doctors and saints available to this production, and the witnesses read are those named in the References at their exact loci. The Greek Fathers were read in English (the Nicene and Post-Nicene and Ante-Nicene translations), with Chrysostom’s gloss on Eph 4:6 and Theodoret’s commentary on Eph 4:1–6 also read in Migne’s Greek. Bellarmine was read only in O’Sullivan’s abridged English of 1866, and that in a tracked web transcription of the translation (ecatholic2000.com), not on the 1866 printing. Some Latin texts were likewise read in web deliveries of the standard editions (augustinus.it, monumenta.ch, the Corpus Thomisticum) or in optical text layers of printed editions (Durandus, Schuster, Fromage, Irenaeus, Trent) rather than on printed page images. Not reached: Greek commentaries on the four psalms (Theodoret’s and Basil’s among them); Greek exegesis of Daniel 9 and any medieval or later commentary on Daniel by a Doctor or canonized exegete, St Albert the Great’s above all; St Ambrose on Ps 118; St Hilary, Origen and Bede on Matthew; Marius Victorinus and Ambrosiaster on Ephesians. Hilary on Ps 118 was read only at the strophes *Ain* and *Sade*. The witnesses cited expound the texts they comment on, and none is cited for a reading of this Mass as a whole; William Durandus, whose office of this Sunday had another Gospel, is cited for the Introit and, where his books read it, for this Gospel.

History of the formulary. The chant and sacramentary witnesses are cited in editions and a database view: H. A. Wilson’s editions of the Gelasian (1894) and Gregorian (1915) sacramentaries, read on their page images; and gregorien.info’s view of Hesbert’s *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex* for the earliest graduals. No critical edition of the sacramentaries (Deshusses, Mohlberg), no manuscript, no edition of the Roman psalter and no Old Latin text of Daniel was consulted.

Chronology. The Date cells in Scriptural Date and Location come from the Scripture chronology corpus, through the record generated for this formulary. That default-profile record gives the four psalms the modern critical boundary for the Psalter, from the introduction to the Psalms in the New American Bible, Revised Edition (summarized, not quoted). For Ps 32 it also gives David’s regnal era as the reference point of its traditional attribution, not as its composition date. For Daniel, Matthew and Ephesians it holds only the traditional dates reported by the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. A separate critical-profile query supplies Matthew’s post-A.D. 70 comparison in the explanatory prose; it does not replace or merge the traditional alternatives. No critical date for Daniel or Ephesians is supplied. The Gospel’s narrated event is undated. The record and its sources are audited in `research/scope.md`.

Rights. The Latin of the formulary is published on the basis of its public-domain antecedent, the Pustet Missal of 1862 (17 U.S.C. 103(b)); the Douay–Rheims, the 1861 Cummiskey English, the Latin Fathers in Migne and the nineteenth-century English translations are in the public domain. The Marietti Latin of Aquinas on Matthew and the

Corpus Thomisticum text of his commentary on the Psalms are modern presentations and are quoted briefly. The New American Bible introduction and the dated Ordos are cited, not reproduced.

Records. The appointed-text collation is in `propers/verified.md`; the search, loci, disagreements and negative results in `research/scope.md`; and the reasoning behind the three readings in `research/interpretations.md`. The research records were reviewed independently before this study was written.

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