

# The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Dominica decima octava post Pentecosten

Missale Romanum 1962 · Proper of Time

Peace for the city, power on earth to forgive, and a gift not our own:  
a study of the proper in three readings

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## Peace Asked For, and Power Given to Men

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, *Dominica decima octava post Pentecosten*, is a Sunday of the second class in the Proper of Time of the 1962 *Missale Romanum*. Its Mass stands on pp. 410–411 of the typical edition, under the marginal numbers 1669–1678, immediately after the Mass of the Ember Saturday of September. In 2026 it falls on 27 September, the Sunday after the September Ember Days of the 23rd, 25th and 26th. The Mass is said in green, with Gloria and Credo, and with the Preface of the Most Holy Trinity, which the Missal appoints for the Sundays of the second class outside the Christmas and Easter seasons. The calendar’s feast of Saints Cosmas and Damian, a feast of the third class, gives way entirely: a Sunday of the second class admits no commemoration but that of a feast of the second class (*Rubricae generales* 111 b; *Rubricae generales Missalis* 434 b), and the Mass has a single oration of each kind.

The Sunday’s place after the Ember Days has shaped how its Mass was read. Bl. Ildefonso Schuster heads it *Tertia post natale Sancti Cypriani*, the third Sunday after St Cyprian’s feast, and explains that at Rome it “should be styled *Dominica vacat*”: the Ember Saturday’s night vigil ended with the Mass that served as the Sunday’s own, and outside Rome, where that vigil was not kept in the Roman way, “the *Dominica vacat* of the Roman Sacramentaries soon received . . . its own liturgical formulary”. The continuation of *The Liturgical Year* (Dom Lucien Fromage) reads the same Mass in the light of the ordinations that the Ember Saturday brought: the gifts for which the Epistle gives thanks, it writes, are above all “the powers conferred by the imposition of the bishop’s hands on the ministers of the Church”.

The Mass opens with a request for something it does not define. *Da pacem, Domine, sustentibus te*: the Introit asks peace for those who wait on the Lord. Its psalm verse is a pilgrim’s joy, “I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: We shall go into the house of the Lord”, and the same verse returns as the Gradual, now joined to a prayer for peace in the city’s strength and abundance in its towers. The Alleluia sings of nations and kings who will fear the Lord’s name. The Communion bids the worshippers bring up sacrifices and come into his courts. Between these chants stand two lessons. The Epistle is St Paul’s thanksgiving for the grace given to a divided church at Corinth, rich in utterance and knowledge and waiting for the day of the Lord. The Gospel is the healing of the paralytic whom others brought to Jesus. The Lord forgives his sins before he heals his body, so that those who doubt may know “that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins”. The Offertory recalls Moses hallowing an altar and offering sacrifice before the children of Israel; the Secret names the *veneranda commercia* of the sacrifice, the holy exchange by which God makes us sharers in his one supreme Godhead; and the Postcommunion gives thanks for the gift received and asks to be made worthy of it. The Mass has one Collect, and it gives as its reason what the whole formulary assumes: *quia tibi sine te placere non possumus*. In the English of the 1861 Philadelphia missal, “for without thy help we can do nothing well pleasing to thee”; in the Latin, the one without whom we cannot please God is God himself, *sine te*.

The day’s texts thus put three questions to those who pray them. What is the peace for which the Introit asks, and where is it found? What is the power that the Gospel shows, and where is it exercised now? And what, in all this, is the part of the one who prays, if without God he cannot please God? These questions, taken in turn, give the three readings of the formulary that follow. The first hears the Mass from its chants, as a single ascent from the prayer for peace to the entry into the Lord’s courts, and finds the peace of the city in the charity of which it is built. The second hears it from the Gospel, as the Son of man’s power on earth to forgive, proved in his own city and brought to bear at the altar that the Offertory’s Moses prefigures. The third hears it from the Collect, as a Mass that gives thanks at both ends for what no one in it earned, with a man at its centre who was carried. 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>Da pacem, Domine</i> ; cited Ecclus 36:18; verse Ps 121:1 | Peace for those who wait on the Lord, that his prophets may be found faithful, and a hearing for the prayers of his servant and of his people Israel. The verse: the pilgrim's joy at going into the house of the Lord.                                                                                                                          |
| Collect       | <i>Dirigat corda nostra</i>                                  | That the working of God's mercy may direct our hearts, because without him we cannot please him.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Epistle       | 1 Cor 1:4–8                                                  | Paul thanks God for the grace given to the Corinthians in Christ, their riches in utterance and knowledge, and the testimony confirmed among them; nothing is wanting to them as they wait for the Lord's revelation, and he will confirm them to the end, without crime, in the day of his coming.                                              |
| Gradual       | <i>Laetatus sum</i> ; Ps 121:1, 7                            | The Introit's verse again: joy at going into the house of the Lord. The versicle: peace in the city's strength, abundance in its towers.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Alleluia      | <i>Timebunt gentes</i> ; Ps 101:16                           | "The Gentiles shall fear thy name, O Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Gospel        | Mt 9:1–8                                                     | Jesus crosses to his own city; a paralytic is brought on a bed; seeing their faith, Jesus forgives the man's sins; to the scribes who think "He blasphemeth" he shows that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive, and tells the man to rise, take up his bed and go home; the crowds fear and glorify God, "that gave such power to men". |
| Offertory     | <i>Sanctificavit Moyses</i> ; cited Ex 24:4–5                | Moses hallows an altar to the Lord and offers holocausts, victims and an evening sacrifice upon it, in the sight of the children of Israel. A compiled antiphon, not a quotation of the cited verses.                                                                                                                                            |
| Secret        | <i>Deus, qui nos, per huius sacrificii</i>                   | God makes us partakers of his one supreme Godhead through the venerable exchanges of this sacrifice; may we pursue by worthy conduct the truth we know.                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Communion     | <i>Tollite hostias</i> ; Ps 95:8–9                           | "Bring up sacrifices, and come into his courts: Adore ye the Lord in his holy court."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Postcommunion | <i>Gratias tibi referimus</i>                                | Thanks for the sacred gift that has quickened us, and a plea that God's mercy make us worthy of our share in it.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

## The Appointed Texts

The Latin below is that of the 1962 typical edition, *Missale Romanum* (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis), pp. 410–411, nos. 1669–1678, read on the page images of the CMAA facsimile. Every element's wording already stands in the Pustet *Missale Romanum* of Ratisbon, 1862 (pp. 350–351); the two books differ only in spelling, pointing, capitalisation, citation form and the rubrics on additional orations that the 1962 book no longer prints. 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 adapts its source the English and the Latin part company; each such place is named beneath the text, and where the Douay has no verse that carries the chant's words, none is printed in its place. 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

Antiphon cited Ecclus 36:18; verse Ps 121:1 (Heb. 122). Missal p. 410, no. 1669.

*Da pacem, Dómine, sustinentibus te, ut prophétæ tui fideles inveniántur: exáudi preces servi tui, et plebis tuæ Israël. Ps. 121, 1 Lætátus sum in his, quæ dicta sunt mihi: in domum Dómini ibimus. V. Glória Patri.*

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), PS 121:1, THE VERSE

I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: We shall go into the house of the Lord.

The antiphon is not the Vulgate's verse, and no Douay verse carries it. It asks peace for those who wait on the Lord, that his prophets may be found faithful, and a hearing for the prayers of his servant and of his people Israel. At the cited place the Clementine Vulgate reads *Da mercedem sustinentibus te, ut prophetae tui fideles inveniantur: et exaudi orationes servorum tuorum*, which the Douay renders "Reward them that patiently wait for thee, that thy prophets may be found faithful: and hear the prayers of thy servants". The chant keeps the middle clause word for word, asks *pacem* where the Vulgate asks *mercedem*, adds the vocative *Domine*, and closes with one servant and the people Israel where the Vulgate has many servants. The Greek of the same verse (Sir 36:15 in its numbering) asks a reward, as the Vulgate does. 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. 410, no. 1670.

*Dírigat corda nostra, quæsumus, Dómine, tuæ miseratiónis operátio: quia tibi sine te placére non póssumus. Per Dóminum.*

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

May the influence of thy mercy, O Lord, direct our souls: for without thy help we can do nothing well pleasing to thee. Thro'.

The Collect is the only oration of the Mass. The 1862 Missal adds a second and a third, which belong to the rubrics before 1960 and are no part of the 1962 formulary. The conclusion is printed short; it is said in the full form of the general rubrics (no. 115 a).

## Epistle

*Lectio Epistolæ beati Pauli Apostoli ad Corinthios.* 1 Cor 1:4–8. Missal p. 410, no. 1671.

*Fratres: Grátias ago Deo meo semper pro vobis in grátia Dei, quæ data est vobis in Christo Iesu: quod in ómnibus dívites facti estis in illo, in omni verbo, et in omni sciéntia: sicut testimónium Christi confirmátum est in vobis: ita ut nihil vobis desit in ulla grátia, expectántibus revelatiónem Dómini nostri Iesu Christi, qui et confirmábit vos usque in finem sine crímine, in die advéntus Dómini nostri Iesu Christi.*

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), 1 COR 1:4–8

<sup>4</sup>I give thanks to my God always for you, for the grace of God that is given you in Christ Jesus: <sup>5</sup>That in all things you are made rich in him, in all utterance and in all knowledge; <sup>6</sup>As the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, <sup>7</sup>So that nothing is wanting to you in any grace, waiting for the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup>Who also will confirm you unto the end without crime, in the day of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The address *Fratres* is the liturgy's and has no Douay verse; thereafter the lesson follows the Vulgate word for word. It ends at verse 8, one verse before *Fidelis Deus* and two before the appeal against schisms (1:10).

## Gradual

Ps 121:1 and 7 (Heb. 122). Missal p. 410, no. 1672.

*Lætātus sum in his, quæ dicta sunt mihi: in domum Dómini ibimus. V. Fiat pax in virtúte tua: et abundantia in túrribus tuis.*

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), PS 121:1, 7

<sup>1</sup>I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: We shall go into the house of the Lord. <sup>7</sup>Let peace be in thy strength: and abundance in thy towers.

The respond is the Introit's verse, sung a second time; the versicle is verse 7. The psalm's title, *Canticum graduum*, which the Vulgate counts within verse 1, is not sung.

## Alleluia

Ps 101:16 (Heb. 102:16; 102:15 where the title is not numbered). Missal p. 410, no. 1673.

*Allelúia, allelúia. V. Ps. 101, 16 Timébunt gentes nomen tuum, Dómine, et omnes reges terræ glóriam tuam. Allelúia.*

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), PS 101:16

And the Gentiles shall fear thy name, O Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

The Missal drops the Vulgate's opening *Et*, which the Douay's "And" translates, and ends the sentence where the psalm runs on into verse 17, *quia aedificavit Dominus Sion*, "For the Lord hath built up Sion".

## Gospel

*Sequentia sancti Evangelii secundum Mattheum.* Mt 9:1–8. Missal pp. 410–411, no. 1674.

*In illo témpore: Ascéndens Iesus in navículam, transfretávit, et venit in civitátem suam. Et ecce offerébant ei paralýticum iacéntem in lecto. Et videns Iesus fidem illórum, dixit paralýtico: Confíde, fili, remittúntur tibi peccáta tua. Et ecce quídam de scribis dixerunt intra se: Hic blasphemát. Et cum vidísset Iesus cogitatíones eórum, dixit: Ut quid cogitátis mala in córdibus vestris? Quid est facílius dícere: Dimittúntur tibi peccáta tua; an dícere: Surge, et ámbula? Ut autem sciátis, quia Fílius hóminis habet potestátem in terra dimitténdi peccáta, tunc ait paralýtico: Surge, tolle lectum tuum, et vade in domum tuam. Et surréxit, et ábiit in domum suam. Vidéntes autem turbæ timuérunť, et glorificavérunt Deum, qui dedit potestátem talem homínibus.*

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), MT 9:1–8

<sup>1</sup>And entering into a boat, he passed over the water and came into his own city. <sup>2</sup>And behold they brought to him one sick of the palsy lying in a bed. And Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the man sick of the palsy: Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee. <sup>3</sup>And behold some of the scribes said within themselves: He blasphemeth. <sup>4</sup>And Jesus seeing their thoughts, said: Why do you think evil in your hearts? <sup>5</sup>Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee: or to say, Arise, and walk? <sup>6</sup>But that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then said he to the man sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house. <sup>7</sup>And he arose, and went into his house. <sup>8</sup>And the multitude seeing it, feared, and glorified God that gave such power to men.

The Missal's opening, *In illo tempore: Ascendens Iesus in naviculam*, supplies the subject where the Vulgate's verse 1 begins *Et ascendens in naviculam*; the Douay translates the Vulgate. The Creed follows.

## Offertory

*Ant. ad Offertorium*, cited Ex 24:4 and 5. Missal p. 411, no. 1675.

*Sanctificávit Móyses altáre Dómino, offerens super illud holocáusta, et ímmolans víctimas: fecit sacrificium vespertinum in odórem suavitátis Dómino Deo, in conspéctu filiórum Israël.*

The antiphon is a compilation and not a quotation of the verses it cites, and no Douay verse renders it, so it stands without English. Its subject is Moses at the altar: he hallows it, offers holocausts and victims upon it, and makes an evening sacrifice of sweet savour, while the children of Israel look on. The cited verses share only its substance: in the Douay, Moses “built an altar at the foot of the mount, and twelve titles according to the twelve tribes of Israel”, and the young men “offered holocausts, and sacrificed pacific victims of calves to the Lord” (Ex 24:4–5). The antiphon's *sanctificavit* stands where the Vulgate says *aedificavit*; its evening sacrifice and odour of sweetness are the language of the daily sacrifice (Ex 29:41) and of the evening offering of Ps 140:2; and its last words, *in conspectu filiorum Israel*, occur in the same chapter at verse 17, where the glory of the Lord is seen on the mountain “in the eyes of the children of Israel”.

## Secret

*Secreta*. Missal p. 411, no. 1676.

*Deus, qui nos, per huius sacrificii veneranda commercia, unius summæ divinitátis participes efficiis: præsta, quæsumus; ut, sicut tuam cognoscimus veritatem, sic eam dignis moribus assequámur. Per Dóminum.*

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

O God, who by the participation of this august sacrifice makest us partakers of the one supreme divine nature: grant, we beseech thee, that as we know thy truth, so we may shew it by a worthy conduct of life. Thro’.

A direction to say the Preface of the Most Holy Trinity follows the Secret on the printed page.

## Communion

Ps 95:8–9 (Heb. 96). Missal p. 411, no. 1677.

*Tóllite hóstias, et introíte in átria eius: adoráte Dóminum in aula sancta eius.*

DOUAY–RHEIMS (CHALLONER), PS 95:8B–9A

Bring up sacrifices, and come into his courts: Adore ye the Lord in his holy court.

The antiphon begins inside verse 8, leaving aside “Bring to the Lord glory unto his name”, and stops before the second half of verse 9. Where the Missal sings *in aula sancta eius*, the Clementine Vulgate reads *in atrio sancto eius*, which is what the Douay’s “holy court” translates; the Pustet Missal of 1862 already has *aula*.

## Postcommunion

*Postcommunio.* Missal p. 411, no. 1678.

*Grátias tibi reférimus, Dómine, sacro múnere vegetáti: tuam misericórdiam deprecántes; ut dignos nos eius participatióne perfícias. Per Dóminum.*

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

Being fed, O Lord, with this holy sacrifice: we give thee thanks, humbly beseeching thy mercy: that thou wouldst make us worthy of what we have received. Thro’.

## Each Element in Its Own Setting

The ten elements of this Mass come from several books. The Introit’s antiphon is cited to Ecclesiasticus and the Offertory to Exodus; the Introit’s verse, the Gradual, the Alleluia and the Communion are taken from three psalms; the lessons are St Paul’s first letter to Corinth and St Matthew’s Gospel; and the three orations stand together in the Gelasian and Gregorian sacramentaries.

### Introit: peace for those who wait

The antiphon is cited to Ecclus 36:18, the close of a prayer that fills the whole first part of the chapter. The son of Sirach asks God to have mercy on “thy people, upon whom thy name is invoked”, to “have mercy on Jerusalem, the city which thou hast sanctified, the city of thy rest”, to “fill Sion” with his words and his people with his glory, and to “raise up the prophecies which the former prophets spoke in thy name” (36:14–17). The verse the Missal cites follows, and it asks God to reward those who wait for him, “that thy prophets may be found faithful”. The chant keeps that clause exactly and changes its frame. It asks *pacem* where the Vulgate asks *mercedem* and the Greek a reward; it adds *Domine*; and it prays for *servi tui, et plebis tuae Israel*, one servant and the people, where the Vulgate has *servorum tuorum*. The words *Da pacem* stand in no verse of the Clementine Vulgate, and *plebis tuae Israel* only in Simeon’s canticle (Lk 2:32). The nearest scriptural shape for the closing petition is Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the Temple, that God “hearken . . . to the prayers of thy servant, and of thy people Israel” (2 Par 6:21; compare 3 Kings 8:30), though neither verse is the chant’s wording.

The psalm verse is the opening of Ps 121, a Song of Ascents, the pilgrim’s joy at the call to go up to the house of the Lord. The same verse returns as the Gradual’s respond, so that it is sung twice in the Mass.

The continuation of *The Liturgical Year* notes that from this Sunday the Introits of the season cease to follow the Psalter and are taken from other books of the Old Testament, with one exception. The liturgical commentators on the Mass do not read the antiphon alike. Rupert of Deutz hears in it the pastor's plea for the forgiveness of his people's sins: *pax enim Dei, peccatorum remissio est*. William Durandus and the continuation identify the prophets as the Church's pastors (*Prophetae tui, id est, Praelati*; "the pastors, whom the Church sends"). Honorius and Sicard hear the voice of Daniel praying for the people's return from captivity, and Honorius, in a second reading, the prayer of St Gregory the Great for peace between the Romans and the Lombards. Schuster reads the prophets' promises spiritually, of the salvation that grace brings, against any expectation "after the manner of the Jews and the ancient Millenarians".

### **Collect: the working of mercy that directs the heart**

The Collect asks that *tuae miserationis operatio*, the working of God's mercy, may direct our hearts, and it gives the reason in a clause as short as any in the Missal: *quia tibi sine te placere non possumus*. The one we are to please is God, and the one without whom we cannot please him is God himself: the clause names no other help. The 1861 English and the continuation's English both render *sine te* "without thy help".

The prayer is older than any Sunday number the Missal gives it. In the Old Gelasian Sacramentary it opens a Mass headed only *Item alia missa* (Book III, sect. XIV, in H. A. Wilson's edition), with a second collect beside it and with this Sunday's Secret and Postcommunion. Wilson's apparatus reports that the Rheinau and St Gall books and Gerbert's edition assign that Mass to the twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost, and Pamelius to the nineteenth; the Gregorian sacramentary in Wilson's edition sets the whole oration-set at the Nineteenth Sunday (sect. CXXXVII); the 1962 Missal sets it at the Eighteenth. Berno of Reichenau, in the eleventh century, explains the Collect from the Communion that follows it: because we can please God neither in sacrifice nor in the offering of victims without his help, *nec in atria ejus introire, nec in aula ejus adorare eum*, the priest rightly prays *Dirigat corda nostra*. Schuster reads it as the confession that "All the good which we do is the work of grace", and adds St Paul's question, *quid gloriaris, quasi non acceperis?* (1 Cor 4:7).

### **Epistle: thanksgiving for a grace already given**

The lesson is the thanksgiving with which St Paul opens his first letter to Corinth, written from Ephesus (1 Cor 16:8) to a church he had founded. He thanks God "always for you, for the grace of God that is given you in Christ Jesus": they are "made rich in him, in all utterance and in all knowledge", the testimony of Christ was confirmed among them, and nothing is wanting to them in any grace as they wait for the revelation of the Lord, who "will confirm you unto the end without crime, in the day of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ". The lesson stops one verse before *Fidelis Deus* and two before the appeal that follows it: "that there be no schisms among you" (1:10), for "every one of you saith: I indeed am of Paul; and I am of Apollo; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (1:12). The name of Christ stands in four of the lesson's five verses.

Its readers divide twice. St John Chrysostom hears the thanksgiving as a physician's approach to a divided church, praise under which he "touches them sharply", and he hears in verse 8 a covert accusation; Theodoret and Theophylact agree that the last verse shows the Corinthians still liable to charges. Ambrosiaster, St Thomas Aquinas and Cornelius a Lapide read verse 8 as a promise to a body most of whose members were sound, and they divide the praise between the sound and the unsound where Chrysostom addresses it to the whole church. On one point all agree: the gifts for which Paul gives thanks were given, and given by God.

The lesson breaks into the series of Sunday lessons from the Letter to the Ephesians, which resumes on the Nineteenth Sunday. Schuster and the continuation both note the interruption, and the continuation reads the Epistle's gifts, after the Ember ordinations, as the powers given to the Church's ministers. In the Würzburg epistle list, which Germain Morin published as the oldest lectionary of the Roman Church, the

lesson already stands with the 1962's exact extent, as the second lesson under *In nat. angeli*, immediately after the lessons of the September Ember Saturday. Morin notes that the pericope does not seem to belong specially to the dedication of St Michael, and that Alcuin's lectionary, like the Roman Missal of his own day, assigns it to the Sunday after the Ember Days.

### **Gradual: the house of the Lord and the peace of the city**

The Gradual sings verses 1 and 7 of Ps 121, the third of the fifteen Songs of Ascents (Pss 119–133 in the Missal's numbering). Between the two verses the psalm sets the pilgrims' feet in the courts of Jerusalem, describes the city "built as a city, which is compact together", and names the tribes that go up "to praise the name of the Lord" and the seats of judgment "upon the house of David" (vv. 2–5). It bids them "pray ye for the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem" (v. 6); verse 7 is that prayer; and the psalm ends "Because of the house of the Lord our God, I have sought good things for thee" (v. 9).

The witnesses divide over what city the psalm is about, and this division runs through the first reading. St Augustine, St Hilary of Poitiers and Cassiodorus read the heavenly Jerusalem built of living stones, and Hilary refuses the earthly city in terms. St John Chrysostom and Theodoret read the earthly Jerusalem rebuilt after the Babylonian captivity, and nothing further. St Robert Bellarmine gives both, the return from exile first and the heavenly city as the higher sense, and Schuster, commenting on this Mass, reads the Gradual in the same order. Augustine's own psalter read the first verse differently from the Missal: *Jucundatus sum in his qui dixerunt mihi*, I rejoiced in those who said to me, where the Missal sings *Laetatus sum in his, quae dicta sunt mihi*, in the things that were said.

On the second clause of verse 7 the readings multiply. For Augustine and Cassiodorus the city's *virtus* is charity; for Hilary it is the firmness that the Church's peace and unity confer. The towers are the martyrs for Cassiodorus, the steadfast among the faithful for Hilary, and for Augustine the city's *excelsi*, the few who will sit in judgment and receive the many into the eternal tabernacles. Chrysostom and Theodoret take the walls, towers and palaces as the ruined city's own.

The gregorien.info database, reporting the six manuscripts of the *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, gives *Laetatus sum* as the Gradual of the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost in four of them, the books of Rheinau, Mont-Blandin, Corbie and Senlis. The same four give this Sunday's Offertory and Communion, and three of them its Introit.

### **Alleluia: the nations and the building of Sion**

The Alleluia verse is Ps 101:16. The psalm is headed "The prayer of the poor man, when he was anxious, and poured out his supplication before the Lord", and its lament turns to hope at verse 14: "Thou shalt arise and have mercy on Sion: for it is time to have mercy on it". Verse 15 speaks of the servants who love Sion's stones; verse 16, the Alleluia, of the Gentiles and kings who will fear the Lord's name; verse 17 gives the reason, "For the Lord hath built up Sion: and he shall be seen in his glory". The Missal drops the connective *Et* and ends the verse before that reason.

The direct witnesses agree on the structure of the verse: the fear of the nations follows from the building of Sion, and Sion is the Church. Augustine hears "another wall" approaching from the heathen to meet the first at the Corner Stone. Cassiodorus hears the nations turning from their idols *per timorem*, and names the building *mater Ecclesia, de vivis lapidibus fabricata*. The Greek expositions printed under St Athanasius's name in Migne make Sion the Church. Theodoret gives the verse a first sense in the return from Babylon and then says that it was fulfilled "properly and truly" only after the Incarnation. Bellarmine refuses the historical reading altogether.

In the Sextuplex graduals, as gregorien.info reports them, this Sunday's alleluias are other verses, and *Timebunt gentes* stands in all six books as a Gradual at other Sundays.

## Gospel: the paralytic forgiven and healed

The Gospel is Mt 9:1–8. It follows the healing of the two possessed men “in the country of the Gerasens” (8:28), whose townsmen “besought him that he would depart from their coasts” (8:34), and it is followed at once by the call of Matthew at the custom house (9:9). Jesus crosses the lake “and came into his own city”. Men bring a paralytic lying on a bed; seeing their faith, Jesus says to the sick man, “Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee”. Some of the scribes say within themselves, “He blasphemeth”; Jesus, seeing their thoughts, asks which is easier to say, “Thy sins are forgiven thee” or “Arise, and walk”, and to show “that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins” he bids the man rise, take up his bed and go home. The man does so, and the crowds fear and glorify God “that gave such power to men”. St Mark and St Luke tell the same story more fully (Mk 2:1–12; Lk 5:17–26).

Three questions in the text divide its interpreters, and each returns in the readings below. Which city is “his own”? Chrysostom says Capernaum; St Jerome says Nazareth. Augustine, reconciling Matthew with Mark, takes “his own city” first as Nazareth and places the healing at Capernaum, with two explanations: Galilee may be called Christ’s city, Capernaum being its chief town, or Matthew has passed over what happened between Christ’s coming into his own city and his reaching Capernaum (*De consensu evangelistarum* II.25.58). Aquinas harmonises with three cities, Bethlehem by birth, Nazareth by upbringing and Capernaum by dwelling, and St Hilary, who names no town, reads the city allegorically as the people of the faithful. Whose faith did Jesus see? Jerome says the bearers’ and not the sick man’s, and St Ambrose, on Luke’s telling, agrees; Chrysostom says that the sick man shared it. And what did the crowd mean by “such power to men”? Chrysostom hears a confession that fell short of the truth; Hilary hears fitting praise for what men had received; and later Latin readers give the words further senses.

The Gospel has also travelled. The seventh-century Roman gospel list of Würzburg sets it on the third Sunday after St Cyprian’s feast, the name Schuster gives this Sunday. The Frankish comes of Murbach and the *Liber Comitis* set it with a lesson from Ephesians, and set this Sunday’s Epistle with a Gospel from Mt 22 at a different Sunday. The Pustet Missal of 1862 prints this Gospel with this Offertory, as the 1962 book does, and Schuster and the continuation expound the Mass with it.

## Offertory: Moses at the altar

The antiphon is cited to Ex 24:4–5 and is a compilation. The chapter narrates the ratifying of the covenant at Sinai: Moses writes the words of the Lord, rises in the morning, builds an altar at the foot of the mountain with “twelve titles according to the twelve tribes of Israel”, and sends young men to offer holocausts and pacific victims; he pours half the blood upon the altar, reads the book of the covenant, and sprinkles the people with the rest: “This is the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you” (24:4–8). The antiphon keeps the altar, the holocausts and the victims. It says *sanctificavit* where Exodus says *aedificavit*, a verb the Vulgate uses of Moses’ altar at its consecration (Lev 8:11; Num 7:1); it adds *fecit sacrificium vespertinum in odorem suavitatis*, the language of the evening lamb of the daily sacrifice (Ex 29:41) and of the evening sacrifice of Ps 140:2; and its closing words, *in conspectu filiorum Israel*, stand at 24:17, where the glory of the Lord burns on the mountain before the people. Neither the Vulgate nor the Greek of verses 4–5 contains those clauses.

The antiphon once had verses. Rupert of Deutz gives the first, in which Moses intercedes for his people after the golden calf, *Obsecro, Domine, dimitte peccata populi tui*; Berno names two; the continuation prints both, the second being Moses’ prayer to see God’s glory. The 1962 Missal sings the antiphon alone, and the covenant blood of the chapter it cites is taken up in the second reading.

## Secret: the holy exchange

The Secret says that God, *per huius sacrificii veneranda commercia*, through the venerable exchanges of this sacrifice, makes us *unius summae divinitatis participes*, sharers in the one supreme Godhead, and asks that as we know his truth, so we may attain it *dignis moribus*, by a worthy life. The verb *efficis* is present: the prayer speaks of what the sacrifice does now. The Old Gelasian carries the prayer in the same Mass as the Collect, and again in a Mass of its first book; Wilson's apparatus shows that the 1962's *efficis*, *cognoscimus* and *dignis moribus* without *et mentibus* each stand in early witnesses of the prayer. On the printed page the Secret is followed at once by the direction to say the Preface of the Most Holy Trinity. What the exchange is belongs to the second reading.

## Communion: the sacrifices and the courts

The Communion takes the middle of Ps 95:8–9. The psalm is headed in the Vulgate *Canticum ipsi David, quando domus aedificabatur post captivitatem*, “when the house was built after the captivity”, and it calls the whole earth and the kindreds of the Gentiles to sing a new song and bring glory to the Lord. The antiphon begins after “Bring to the Lord glory unto his name” and ends before “Let all the earth be moved at his presence”. Where the Vulgate reads *in atrio sancto eius*, the Missal sings *in aula sancta eius*. Augustine and Cassiodorus both read *atrio* in their psalters. Berno of Reichenau, paraphrasing this Sunday's Communion in the eleventh century, already writes *in aula sancta ejus*; the 1862 Missal prints *aula*.

Augustine takes the psalm's title as the key to the whole: the house built after the captivity is the Church, built of those redeemed from the captivity of the devil. On the Communion's two clauses the witnesses agree that the courts are the Church's, and divide over the sacrifices. For Augustine and Cassiodorus they are the contrite heart and the pure offerings of conscience; for Theodoret and the expositions under Athanasius's name they are the spiritual sacrifices that the Church's priests offer in the churches; St Robert Bellarmine gives both, and names the Eucharistic sacrifice in the second place. Schuster sets the two covenants side by side: “In the Old Covenant it was the people who brought gifts to God in his temple, in the New it is God who gives himself to his people.”

## Postcommunion: thanks, and a plea to be made worthy

The Postcommunion begins *Gratias tibi referimus*, thanks for the sacred gift, *sacro munere*, by which the communicants have been *vegetati*, quickened or refreshed, and it asks that God's mercy make them worthy of their share in it: *ut dignos nos eius participatione perficias*. The Old Gelasian carries it twice: in the Mass it shares with the Collect and Secret, and again as the Postcommunion of a Mass for the dedication of a place that had been a synagogue (Book I, sect. XCIII). Schuster draws the practical consequence of its plea: “a fervent Communion . . . is the best preparation for the next”. The Mass whose Epistle begins *Gratias ago* thus ends its prayers with *Gratias tibi referimus*.

## The Peace of a City Still Being Built: From “Da pacem” to the Courts of the Lord

Heard from its chants, the Mass is one ascent from a request to an entry. The Introit asks for peace and names a destination, “We shall go into the house of the Lord”. The Gradual sings the same words again and prays for the peace of the city whose walls and towers it names. The Alleluia sees the nations and their kings coming to fear the Lord’s name as Sion is built. The Communion tells the worshippers to bring up sacrifices and come into his courts. The peace for which the Introit asks is therefore not the mere absence of trouble. It is the completion of a building: the house of the Lord to which the people go up, the city whose strength that peace is, and the courts into which, at the end of the Mass, they are told to enter. St Augustine, expounding all three psalms, St Hilary of Poitiers on the Gradual’s, and Cassiodorus beside them read the house and the city as the Church being built of living stones and completed in heaven, and they say what it is built of. St John Chrysostom, expounding the Epistle, says what threatens it.

### Going up to the house: Ps 121:1 in Augustine, Hilary and Cassiodorus

St Augustine begins his exposition of Ps 121 from its title, *Canticum graduum*, a Song of degrees, “for these degrees are not of descent, but of ascent”. What the singer ascends to is not the sky but a city: “there is in heaven the eternal Jerusalem, where are our fellow-citizens, the Angels: we are wanderers on earth from these our fellow-citizens. We sigh in our pilgrimage; we shall rejoice in the city.” Then he gives the first verse its point: “we find companions in this pilgrimage, who have already seen this city herself; who summon us to run towards her. At these he also rejoiceth, who saith, ‘I rejoiced in them who said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord’” (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 121, 2). Augustine’s psalter did not read the verse as the Missal sings it. Where the Missal has *Laetatus sum in his, quae dicta sunt mihi*, joy in the things that were said, his text read *Jucundatus sum in his qui dixerunt mihi*, joy in those who said, and he builds on the persons: *Jucundatus sum in Prophetis, jucundatus sum in Apostolis. Omnes enim isti dixerunt nobis, In domum Domini ibimus*. The reading therefore belongs to Augustine’s words and not to the Missal’s; what it brings to the Mass is the plural of the verse’s second half, *ibimus*, which the Missal and Augustine share. No one goes up to this house alone.

St Hilary of Poitiers reaches the same city by another road. The psalm, he says, holds nothing obscure for one who is held by the hope of it: *Qui spe caelestis desiderii detinetur, nihil obscuritatis in psalmo habebit*. A man who remembers that he is coheir, *futurumque incolam civitatis caelestis vivis lapidibus extructae*, a future dweller in the heavenly city built of living stones, must cry with the prophet *Laetatus sum in his, quae dicta sunt mihi* (*Tractatus super Psalmos*, in Ps. 121, 1). The house is the Sion that the Lord chose for his rest, and Hilary refuses the earthly city in so many words: *non utique . . . hanc terrenam et caducam . . . sed illam liberam et caelestem Hierusalem, quia eadem et Sion est* (121, 2). He names its builders: *a Moyse in lege, a prophetis in passionibus suis, a domino in corpore, ab apostolis in martyriis, a sancto spiritu in virtutibus. hi aedificatores, haec aedificia, haec civitas* (121, 3). The psalm’s “built as a city” means what it says: *non civitas, sed ut civitas*, not a city but as a city, because the building of the earthly city, the raising of the Temple and the setting up of the tabernacle foreshadowed the eternal and heavenly one, which is being built still and so is given no date (121, 4).

What Hilary adds to Augustine is the reason for the plural. We go up together because the Church is one body: *quia unum ecclesiae corpus est, non quadam corporum confusione permixtum . . . sed per fidei unitatem, per caritatis societatem, per operum voluntatisque concordiam, per sacramenti unum in omnibus donum, unum omnes sumus* (121, 5). The unity he describes is not a heap of bodies thrown together but the oneness of faith, charity, common work and the one gift of the sacrament in all. Among his proofs he sets Paul’s plea to the Corinthians as his text gives it, that all be of one mind, exercising the same charity (121, 5). Zingerle’s edition refers the plea to 1 Cor 1:10, two verses after this Sunday’s Epistle ends; Paul’s own verse there also asks “that there be no schisms among you”.

Cassiodorus, reading the same verse, asks who said the words at which the psalmist rejoices, and answers *Scilicet Spiritus sanctus, qui cordi eius tacita voce loquebatur*: the Holy Spirit, speaking to his heart with a silent voice. The house is *domus desiderabilis, domus de vivis lapidibus fabricata*, a house to be longed for, made of living stones, and the joy is worthy of it: *O digna exsultatio illuc ire contendere, unde nunquam aliquis velit exire!* (*Expositio psalmorum*, in Ps. 121). The three agree on what matters to this reading: the house to which the Introit and the Gradual go up is a city of persons, built of those who go up to it.

### Peace in thy strength: what the city is built of

The Gradual's versicle prays *Fiat pax in virtute tua*, "Let peace be in thy strength". Augustine asks what a city's strength is and answers with charity: "O Jerusalem, O city, who art being built as a city, whose partaking is in 'The Same:' 'Peace be in thy strength:' peace be in thy love; for thy strength is thy love." He proves it from the Song of Songs, "Love is strong as death", and draws the consequence for the one who is built into the city: "since this love slayeth what we have been, that we may be what we were not; love createth a sort of death in us" (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 121, 12). The peace the Introit asks for is thus received as charity, and charity is costly: it puts to death the self that could not be at peace. Cassiodorus reaches the same identification in almost the same words: *Virtus quippe ipsius pax sine dubitatione sanctorum est, quae vocatur et charitas*; by it the saints *fiunt unum*, and by it they deserve to be the Creator's temple (*Expositio psalmorum*, in Ps. 121).

Hilary reads the verse otherwise. For him peace and strength are joined but not identical: *pax atque virtus domus huius conexa sunt sibi*, and nothing can be strong except out of peace (in Ps. 121, 13). And again: *pax enim ecclesiae et unitas uirtutem nobis firmitatemque praestat*, the Church's peace and unity give us strength and firmness (121, 14). For Augustine and Cassiodorus the city's strength is its charity; for Hilary it is the firmness that its peace confers. On the towers of the same verse the three part further. Cassiodorus reads them as the martyrs, who defend the city of God by setting their bodies against its enemies in faithful confession. Hilary reads them as the faithful and holy men who give the rest of the city the firmness of towers (121, 14). Augustine, in the Latin that the English translation of his sermon abridges, reads them as the city's *excelsi*: *Pauci enim sedebunt in iudicio; sed multi ad dexteram positi facient populum civitatis illius*, the few who will sit in judgment, to whom the many at the right hand belong. The three witnesses give the same clause three allegories.

### The second wall: the nations of the Alleluia

The Alleluia's verse, "The Gentiles shall fear thy name, O Lord", is for Augustine the moment when a second wall arrives. He reads it in the order of the psalm: God has had mercy on Sion, his servants have loved her stones, and therefore the nations come. "Now that Thou hast pitied Sion, now that Thy servants have taken pleasure in her stones, by acknowledging the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets . . . hence preaching hath increased among the heathen: let the heathen fear Thy Name, let another wall approach also from the heathen, let the Corner Stone be recognised, let the two who come from different regions, but who no longer differ in belief, meet in close union" (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 101, s. 1, 16). The next verse, which the Alleluia does not sing, gives the work its present tense: "This work is going on now. O ye living stones, run to the work of building, not to ruin" (101, s. 1, 17). Cassiodorus names the same building from the same verse: *aedificata est Sion, hoc est mater Ecclesia, de vivis lapidibus fabricata* (*Expositio psalmorum*, in Ps. 101).

At this psalm the Greek exegesis joins the Latin. Theodoret, who reads Ps 121 of the earthly city alone, reads Ps 101:16 first of the neighbours who would marvel at Israel's return from Babylon, and then says that it was fulfilled properly and truly only after the Incarnation of our God and Saviour, when the nations and their kings were converted (*Interpretatio in Psalmos*, in Ps. 101; PG 80, cols. 1679–1680). The Greek

expositions printed in Migne under the name of St Athanasius join the calling of the nations to the stones of the former people and read the Sion of the next verse as the Church (PG 27, col. 429).

### Into the courts: the Communion

The Communion's psalm carries the building in its title, "when the house was built after the captivity", and Augustine reads the whole psalm under it. The house of the title, he tells his hearers, is no house of hewn stone and raised columns: "It is no such house that is in building; for behold where it is built, not in one spot, not in any particular region" (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 95, 1). At the Communion's own verse he describes the entry: "Behold the house increasing: behold the edifice pervade the whole world. Rejoice, because ye have entered into the courts; rejoice, because ye are being built into the temple of God. For those who enter are themselves built up, they themselves are the house of God" (95, 9). And of the second clause he says plainly which court is meant: "O worship the Lord in His holy court: in the Catholic Church; this is His holy court" (95, 10).

Cassiodorus reads the title on two levels at once. According to the letter it signifies the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem by Zorobabel after the captivity; according to the spirit, *Domus enim ista, id est universalis Ecclesia, in qua Christus inhabitat, vivis lapidibus semper exstruitur: quia quotidie de confitentibus aedificationis sumit augmentum; nec aedificari desinit donec usque ad finem saeculi praedestinatorum numerus impleatur*. The Church in which Christ dwells is always being built of living stones, growing every day by those who confess him, and it will not cease to be built until the number of the predestined is filled at the end of the age (*Expositio psalmorum*, in Ps. 95). With that sentence Cassiodorus uses one image, the house of living stones, at the Gradual's psalm, at the Alleluia's and at the Communion's.

Set in the order of the Mass, the three psalms describe one movement. The Introit and the Gradual go up to the house; the Alleluia sees the second wall come from the nations; the Communion enters the courts, and those who enter are themselves built into the house. The request of the first words, *Da pacem*, is answered in the chants by the completion of a building whose strength is charity.

### What threatens the city: the Epistle, and Christ's own city

The Epistle shows a church that is not at peace. The Corinthians are rich "in all utterance and in all knowledge", and, as the verses after the lesson reveal, they are dividing into parties. St John Chrysostom reads Paul's thanksgiving with that division in view. Under the colour of praise, he says, Paul "touches them sharply", and his remedy is a name repeated until it binds: "consider how he always fastens them as with nails to the Name of Christ", so that "by incessant application of that glorious Name he may foment their inflammation, and purge out the corruption of the disease" (*Homilies on First Corinthians* 2). A city is not held together by its gifts. It is held together by the one Name its members bear in common.

Augustine and Chrysostom agree that the city's unity is not its citizens' achievement: for Augustine the two walls meet in the Corner Stone, for Chrysostom the parties are nailed to one Name. They differ in what they are looking at. Augustine watches a building rise; Chrysostom attends to one that is coming apart. Chrysostom's Corinth is what Augustine's Jerusalem is not yet, and the Mass sets the lesson of a divided church between two chants of the city at peace.

The Gospel's "his own city" enters this reading through St Hilary's commentary on Matthew. Hilary reads the Gerasene episode and the healing of the paralytic as one figure. The town that came out to meet Christ and begged him to leave its borders *Judaici populi habet speciem*, bears the likeness of the Jewish people, for the law does not receive the Gospels: *a qua repudiatus, in civitatem suam revertitur . . . Deo civitas fidelium plebs est. In hanc igitur navi, id est Ecclesia, vectus introiit*. Rejected by that town, Christ returns to his own city, and to God the city is the people of the faithful; he entered it carried in the boat, which is the Church (*Commentarius in Matthaeum* VIII.4; PL 9, cols. 959–960). Hilary names no town, so the allegory stands beside any literal identification of the place. Aquinas, in his lectures on Matthew, gives the

same kind of reading beside his harmony of the Gospels: *Et venit in civitatem suam, scilicet in civitatem gentium, quae sibi datae sunt*, with the promise of Ps 2:8, “I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance” (*Super Matthaeum* c. 9). Read with Hilary and Aquinas, the boat that crosses to the city in the Gospel and the house that the chants go up to are the same Church seen from two sides.

## The prayers and the altar

The orations speak in the plural of a people. The Introit’s antiphon ends with *plebis tuae Israel*; the Collect asks that God direct *corda nostra*, and gives the reason that no one who goes up can supply: *tibi sine te placere non possumus*. The ascent is not self-propelled. The Offertory ends where the city’s life begins, *in conspectu filiorum Israel*: Moses offers, but the people are present at their own sacrifice, and those closing words are the one clause of the antiphon that stands verbatim in the chapter it cites, at 24:17. The Secret names the unity toward which the city is built, and names it first as God’s: *unius summae divinitatis participes*, sharers in the one supreme Godhead. The Postcommunion is the thanksgiving of those who have entered the courts, and it still asks, *ut dignos nos eius participatione perficias*, that they be made worthy of what they share: the courts have been entered, and the city is still ahead.

## The earthly city rebuilt, the Donatists and the four chants

The first difficulty is that the Gradual’s psalm, on which this reading leans most, has another reading among its Greek interpreters, and it is not an allegory. St John Chrysostom reads Ps 121 of the exiles returning from Babylon. The captivity made them better; they longed for the house of prayer and the city; and at verse 3 the city built as a city is the city they found in ruins, its towers thrown down and its walls cast to the ground (*Expositio in Psalmum CXXI*, PG 55, cols. 347–348). At the Gradual’s versicle he explains “strength” as the city’s substance, its inhabitants and its plenty, and says the psalmist prays peace for her because war had destroyed her (col. 350). Theodoret reads the psalm the same way: the returning exiles rejoice not as men about to recover their houses but as men about to see the house of God, and the prayer of verse 7 is for the city’s walls, palaces and houses (PG 80, cols. 1879–1882). Neither reads the Church or heaven at this psalm. Chrysostom’s own turn to his hearers is moral, and it serves this reading’s literal sense well: call men to the hippodrome and many run together, but call them to the house of prayer and few are not sluggish, so that Christians show themselves slower to go up than the returning Jews were.

In this reading the return from exile is therefore the literal sense of the Gradual, and the heavenly city of Augustine, Hilary and Cassiodorus its allegorical sense. St Robert Bellarmine holds both in that order: the psalm is “the language of God’s people, expressive of their joy on hearing the welcome news of their return to their country”, but “Christ, however, was the bearer of a far and away more happy message”, and the psalm “treats of the celestial, and not the earthly Jerusalem” (*A Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, on Ps 121). So does Schuster, commenting on this Mass: the psalmist rejoices “after the afflictions of the Babylonian exile”, and then “All this is, of course, to be glorified by a spiritual interpretation. The peace which is here described is the atmosphere of the heavenly Jerusalem.” The medieval commentators on the Mass carry the same division into the chant. Sicard, and Honorius in the first of his two readings, hear its chants of the people’s return from captivity; in his second, Honorius hears St Gregory the Great pray in the Gradual’s verse *ut pax in turribus Ecclesiae fiat*, that there be peace in the Church’s towers.

A second difficulty lies in Augustine’s sermons themselves. Their sharpest paragraphs belong to his controversy with the Donatists and turn the psalms against those who “say, Peace be with you: and have not the peace which they preach to the people” (121, 13). The three of their propositions on which this reading rests stand without that setting: the city’s peace is its charity, the courts into which the faithful enter are one, and those who enter are built into the house.

A third difficulty is the objection that the chants are simply four texts, each with its own word, *pacem*, *domum*, *gentes*, *hostias*, and that they describe no movement at all. One fact about the formulary tells

against that account: Ps 121:1 is sung twice, as the Introit's verse and as the Gradual's respond, so that the destination named at the entrance is named again after the Epistle.

## The four senses of this reading

### Literal.

A people waiting on the Lord prays for peace and for its prophets to be found faithful. Pilgrims rejoice at the call to go up to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, and pray for peace within the walls and abundance in the towers of a city that the exiles found in ruins (Chrysostom, Theodoret). A psalm written for the house built after the captivity summons the nations to bring their sacrifices into its courts, and another foretells that the nations and their kings will fear the Lord's name when he has built up Sion.

### Allegorical.

The city is the Church, built of living stones (Augustine, Hilary, Cassiodorus). Its builders are the law, the prophets, Christ in his body, the apostles and the Spirit (Hilary); its two walls, from Israel and from the nations, meet in the Corner Stone (Augustine); its strength is charity (Augustine, Cassiodorus), or the firmness its peace and unity give (Hilary); and its holy court is the Catholic Church (Augustine). Christ enters it carried in the boat of the Church, and the city he returns to, rejected by the town that figures the law, is the people of the faithful (Hilary, on Matthew).

### Moral.

Peace is received as charity, and charity "slayeth what we have been, that we may be what we were not" (Augustine). No one goes up alone: the plural *ibimus* is the unity of faith, charity and the one sacrament (Hilary), and the gifts that divide a church are held together only by the Name of Christ (Chrysostom). Christians who are slower to the house of prayer than the exiles were to Jerusalem are to go up (Chrysostom), and the living stones are to "run to the work of building, not to ruin" (Augustine).

### Anagogical.

The house the Introit says we will go into is entered in this Mass in sign; the psalm's *ibimus* stays future. The Communion's court is the city's forecourt, and the city itself is the eternal Jerusalem where the Angels are fellow-citizens (Augustine), *unde nunquam aliquis velit exire* (Cassiodorus). The building goes on until the number of the elect is filled (Cassiodorus), and "when the building is finished, and the house dedicated" the time for running is over (Augustine, on Ps 101).

## Power on Earth to Forgive Sins: The Paralytic in His Own City and the Altar of the Covenant

Heard from its Gospel, the Mass turns on a sentence about power and place: *Ut autem sciatis, quia Filius hominis habet potestatem in terra dimittendi peccata*, “But that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins”. The Gospel proves an unseen act by a seen one. The forgiveness of the paralytic’s sins cannot be verified; his rising from his bed can, and the second is done so that the first may be believed. The rest of the formulary moves in the opposite direction. It takes visible things, an altar, victims, an evening sacrifice, bread received, and asks that an invisible work be done through them. The Offertory recalls Moses at the altar of the covenant, and the Secret names the holy exchange by which God makes his people sharers in his Godhead. Read from the Gospel, the Mass sets beside the power shown in Christ’s own city the altar at which the Church offers the sacrifice of the covenant whose blood, in the words of institution, is shed “for the remission of sins”. The principal witnesses are St John Chrysostom and St Augustine on the Gospel, St Jerome beside them, St Ambrose on Luke’s telling of the same healing, and St Thomas Aquinas, who in his lectures on Matthew asks how the Son of man’s power stands to the power his apostles would exercise. Bl. Ildefonso Schuster, commenting on this Mass, reads the Gospel’s last verse of that same communicated power.

### The unseen healing proved by the seen

The healing happens at a place. Jesus crosses the lake “and came into his own city”, and the witnesses name the town. St John Chrysostom says: “By His own city here he means Capernaum. For that which gave Him birth was Bethlehem; that which brought Him up, Nazareth; that which had Him continually inhabiting it, Capernaum.” St Jerome says as flatly that the city is Nazareth, *unde et Nazaræus appellatus est* (PL 26, col. 54). St Augustine, reconciling Matthew with Mark, places the healing at Capernaum, either because Galilee may be called Christ’s city or because Matthew passes over what happened between Christ’s coming into his own city and his reaching Capernaum (*De consensu evangelistarum* II.25.58). Chrysostom and Jerome disagree about the town, and nothing in the text settles it; all three agree that there was one. The power to forgive is shown in a town, before scribes who can see the man walk.

Chrysostom’s reading turns on the order of the two healings. Christ, “to signify His indifference to honor”, “did not straightway hasten to heal the visible body, but He takes His occasion from them; and He healed first that which is invisible, the soul, by forgiving his sins; which indeed saved the other, but brought no great glory to Himself”. The visible miracle is then offered as evidence. Christ’s question, which is easier to say, means: “by how much a soul is better than a body, by so much is the doing away sins a greater work than this; but because the one is unseen, the other in sight, I throw in that, which although an inferior thing, is yet more open to sense; that the greater also and the unseen may thereby receive its proof” (*Homilies on Matthew* 29, 1–2). The scribes supply a second proof by their silence. They say nothing aloud, and Christ answers what they think: “But that it belongs to God only to know men’s secrets, hear what saith the prophet”. And Chrysostom notices the grammar of the two sayings. At first “He said not, ‘I forgive thee thy sins,’ but, ‘thy sins be forgiven thee:’ upon their constraining, He discloses His authority more clearly”. He does not say that the Son of man needs another, or that authority has been given him, “but, ‘He hath authority’”.

St Jerome gives the same argument in fewer words. *Inter dicere, et facere, multa distantia est*: between saying and doing there is a great distance. Whether the paralytic’s sins were forgiven, only the one who forgave them knew, and so *Fit igitur carnale signum, ut probetur spirituale*: a sign is given in the flesh so that the spiritual may be proved. Of Christ’s reading of the scribes’ thoughts he says that Christ shows himself God, able to know the secrets of the heart, and speaks in silence: *Eadem maiestate et potentia qua cogitationes vestras intueor, possum et hominibus peccata dimittere*, by the same majesty and power with which I see your thoughts I can also forgive sins to men (*Commentarii in Matthaeum* I, on 9:4–6; PL 26,

col. 55). He adds a further consideration of his own, and offers it as a possibility: *datur nobis intelligentia, propter peccata plerasque evenire corporum debilitates. Et idcirco forsane dimittuntur prius peccata tua, ut causis debilitatis ablatis, sanitas restituatur*. Many bodily weaknesses come of sin, and perhaps the sins are forgiven first so that, the cause of the weakness taken away, health may be restored. St Thomas Aquinas makes the same point without Jerome's hesitation: the sins are forgiven first *quia peccatum erat causa aegritudinis*, and God did as a good physician does, *qui causam curat* (*Super Matthaeum* c. 9).

### Son and man: who forgives, and where

St Augustine, harmonising the Gospels, finds in one word of address the whole point of the episode. Matthew's Christ says "Son", Luke's "Man"; the difference, far from a discrepancy, brings out the meaning more fully: "For these sins were [thus said to be] forgiven to the 'man,' inasmuch as the very fact that he was a man would make it impossible for him to say, 'I have not sinned;' and at the same time, that mode of address served to indicate that He who forgave sins to man was Himself God" (*De consensu evangelistarum* II.25.57). One word establishes that the patient is every man and that the physician is not a man only. Chrysostom and Augustine reach the same conclusion by different roads, Chrysostom from the order of the healings and the reading of hearts, Augustine from Luke's *homo* beside Matthew's *fili*: the episode is a demonstration that the one who forgives is God.

St Thomas Aquinas presses the words of verse 6 one by one. Christ confutes the scribes *sua cognitione, verbo, et facto*, by his knowledge, his word and his deed, for *sicut soli Deo pertinet dimittere peccata, sic cognoscere secreta cordis*. The phrase *Filius hominis* excludes Nestorius, who divided the Son of man from the Son of God, since it says of the one what belongs to the other. The phrase *in terra* excludes Photinus, who held that Christ began from the Virgin and earned his divinity, and who appealed to "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth" (Mt 28:18): the power to forgive belongs to Christ already on earth. Then Aquinas raises the objection on which this reading turns. The verse seems not to prove Christ's divinity, *quia etiam ipsi Apostoli habebant potestatem*, since the Apostles too had the power to forgive sins; and he answers, *Sed dicendum, quod ipsi habebant per viam administrationis, non auctoritatis*: they had it by way of ministry, not of authority (*Super Matthaeum* c. 9). The distinction between Christ's authority and the Apostles' ministry is drawn at the very verse that says *in terra*, and it is drawn to keep the authority Christ's.

### What the crowd said: "such power to men"

The Gospel ends with the crowds, who "feared, and glorified God that gave such power to men". Chrysostom hears in the words a confession that falls short. Having shown himself Creator of souls and bodies, Christ "makes the invisible evident by that which is in sight. But nevertheless they still creep upon the earth"; "the flesh was an offense unto them". He does not rebuke them but raises their thoughts by his works, "Since for the time it was no small thing for Him to be thought greater than all men, as having come from God. For had they well established these things in their own minds, going on orderly they would have known, that He was even the Son of God. But they did not retain these things clearly" (*Homilies on Matthew* 29, 2). St Ambrose, at Luke's parallel, judges the fear more severely. Those who watch the man rise are unbelievers, *Spectant surgentem increduli*, and *divini operis miracula malunt timere quam credere*, they would rather fear the miracles of the divine work than believe them. Had they believed, they would not have feared but loved, and so *quia non diligebant, calumniabantur*: because they did not love, they calumniated (*Expositio in Lucam* V.15). Chrysostom's crowd glorify God and fall short; Ambrose's fearers are the calumniators. St Hilary judges otherwise. For him all things have been concluded in their order, *conclusa sunt omnia suo ordine*, and the honour the crowd pays is fitting; yet the power was owed to Christ alone, *soli de communione paternae substantiae*, and the men for whom God is glorified are those who receive the forgiveness, not those who give it (*Commentarius in Matthaeum* VIII.8; PL 9, cols. 961–962).

St Jerome passes from the risen man carrying his bed straight to the call of Matthew. Aquinas notes that it is the crowds and not the scribes who fear and give glory, *quia omnia in Deum retulerunt*.

Schuster, commenting on this Mass, gives the verse three senses in order. The crowd's words "may be understood as a subjective judgement on the part of the people who had not yet grasped the divine nature of Christ", which is Chrysostom's reading. "The words, however, have a still deeper meaning": the divine nature worked the miracle through the human nature united to it. And "Further, the Gospel narrative ... is both symbolical and prophetic. This power of remitting sins had to be communicated to men—that is, to the apostles and to their successors in the priesthood; consequently, the Holy Ghost widens the field of this evangelizing energy, and the crowd at once rejoices that men also have received from heaven such truly divine authority" (*The Sacramentary* III, p. 169). The continuation of *The Liturgical Year*, also commenting on this Mass, invites the faithful "to meditate upon the prerogative which these same men", the Church's pastors, "have of forgiving sins and healing souls", and it reads the paralytic as the human race, brought to the Church by the apostles' faith, to which the Church, speaking as a mother, says "Be of good heart, son! thy sins are forgiven thee!": "And the angels, beholding such a spectacle of conversion and holiness, are in amazement, and sing glory to God, who gave such power to men" (vol. XI, pp. 403, 405).

### Moses at the altar, and the blood of the covenant

The Offertory takes the Mass from the house in Christ's own city to the foot of Sinai. Its Moses hallows an altar, offers holocausts, immolates victims and makes the evening sacrifice, and the words that describe him are not those of Exodus 24:4–5 but the language of consecration and of the daily evening offering. The chapter it cites goes on to the blood. Moses pours half upon the altar and sprinkles the people with the rest, saying "This is the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you" (Ex 24:6–8).

St John Chrysostom expounds that sacrifice as the Letter to the Hebrews tells it (Heb 9:18–22), and joins it to the remission of sins. "Tell me then why is the book of the testament sprinkled, and also the people, except on account of the precious blood, figured from the first?" The old rites purged "almost" all things, "Because those [ordinances] were not a perfect purification, nor a perfect remission, but half-complete and in a very small degree. But in this case He says, This is the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, for the remission of sins." And again: "With this blood not Moses but Christ sprinkled us, through the word which was spoken". There the body was cleansed outwardly; "but here, since the purifying is spiritual, it enters into the soul, and cleanses it, not being simply sprinkled over, but gushing forth in our souls" (*Homilies on Hebrews* 16, 3–5). Chrysostom is expounding Hebrews and not the Offertory's verses, but his reading joins Moses' covenant sacrifice to the forgiveness of sins that the Gospel proclaims. Cornelius a Lapide, commenting on Exodus 24 itself, reads the twelve *tituli* as the twelve tribes' share in the covenant sacrifice, the young men who offered as the firstborn who were priests before Aaron, and the covenant blood as the type of the blood by which Christ sealed the new covenant and which he named in instituting the Eucharist (*Commentaria in Pentateuchum*, on Ex 24:4–8).

The antiphon once had verses that made Moses an intercessor for sinners. Schuster regrets that the Roman Missal has cut the Offertory down to its antiphon, and describes the verses in which the lawgiver "intercedes for the apostate people, imploring mercy for them". The continuation prints the verses in full and calls Moses "the model of those true leaders of God's people, who devote themselves in order to procure mercy and peace for those whom they guide" (vol. XI, pp. 406–408). The 1962 Missal sings only the antiphon, and in the antiphon Moses sanctifies and offers.

## The exchange and the courts

The Secret says what the altar is for. *Per huius sacrificii veneranda commercia*, through the venerable exchanges of this sacrifice, God makes us sharers in his one supreme Godhead, and the verb is present, *efficit*. Schuster explains the exchange: “whilst we offer him our gifts he, in his turn, bestows on us the gift of himself”. The prayer claims for a visible rite an invisible effect, as the Gospel’s sign claimed an invisible forgiveness.

At the Communion three witnesses read *Tollite hostias* of the Church’s sacrifice offered by its priests. Theodoret reads the sacrifices as the rational sacrifices that “we see continually offered and sacrificed by the priests”, and the plural courts as the churches, with the prophecy of Malachias of a clean oblation among the nations (*Interpretatio in Psalmos*, in Ps. 95; PG 80, cols. 1647–1648). The expositions printed under St Athanasius’s name call the “families” of the psalm the leaders of the churches, “priests, I mean, and presidents”, who offer spiritual sacrifices in God’s courts (PG 27, cols. 415–416). St Robert Bellarmine gives the contrite heart first and then adds: “This may also apply to the Eucharistic sacrifice, that took the place of all the Jewish sacrifices, according to the prophecy of Malachy, and which is offered . . . to God, by the converted gentiles, through the hands of the priests of the New Testament”. Augustine and Cassiodorus read the same *hostiae* as the contrite heart and name no altar; their reading belongs to the third reading of this Mass. The continuation holds both together: the Communion “is addressed to the priests, and, at the same time, to us all: for if the priest offers the Victim, which is the holiest that can be, we should not think of accompanying him into the court of our God, without bringing up, that they may be united to the divine Host, other victims, that is ourselves” (vol. XI, pp. 408–409).

## The other elements in this reading

The Introit asks as a servant asks, *exaudi preces servi tui*, and claims nothing. The Collect asks that God’s mercy do the directing; the authority at work in the Mass is not ours. The Epistle gives thanks for gifts given “in Christ Jesus” and for the testimony of Christ confirmed among the Corinthians, and the continuation of *The Liturgical Year*, reading it after the September Ember ordinations, hears in those gifts “the powers conferred by the imposition of the bishop’s hands on the ministers of the Church” (vol. XI, p. 394). The Gradual’s *in domum Domini ibimus* stands beside the Gospel’s *vade in domum tuam*: the forgiven man is sent to his house, and the Church goes up to God’s. Aquinas, reading the command morally, sends the forgiven sinner *in domum aeternitatis, vel in conscientiam propriam*, into the house of eternity, or into his own conscience. Ambrose, at the same command in Luke, reads the house as paradise: *domum suam repetere, hoc est, ad paradisum redire . . . ea est enim vera domus, quae hominem prima suscepit: non jure amissa, sed fraude*, the true home that first received man, lost not by right but by fraud (*Expositio in Lucam* V.14). Hilary makes the return home the last step of an order: Christ first grants the remission of sin, then shows the power of resurrection, then in the lifted bed teaches that weakness and pain will leave the body, and last, in the man’s return to his own house, shows that the way into paradise, which Adam left, is to be given back to believers (*Commentarius in Matthaeum* VIII.7; PL 9, col. 961). The Alleluia’s *Timebunt gentes* widens to the nations the fear of the crowds who saw the paralytic walk, *timuerunt*. The Postcommunion gives thanks for a gift by which the communicants have been quickened, *sacro munere vegetati*, a present effect claimed for what they have received, and still asks that they be made worthy of it.

## Where the ministerial sense stands, and where it does not

The weightiest evidence against this reading’s most obvious form comes from the Fathers read here. Read quickly, the crowd’s “such power to men” names the Church’s power to absolve, and the Offertory’s altar and the Secret’s exchange are where that power acts. Of the Fathers read here, none reads verse 8 in that way. Chrysostom hears the crowd’s words as a confession that fell short of Christ’s divinity; Hilary hears in them the many who receive forgiveness, not those who minister it; Jerome does not comment on the words

at all; Augustine's harmony does not reach them; and Luke's parallel, on which Ambrose comments, does not contain them.

One Father does connect Christ's forgiving with men to whom the power is given, and at this healing. Ambrose, commenting on Luke's "Which is easier to say", recalls the scribes' question and answers it in a parenthesis: *quis enim potest peccata dimittere nisi solus Deus, qui per eos quoque dimittit, quibus dimittendi tribuit potestatem*, who can forgive sins but God alone, who forgives also through those to whom he has given the power to forgive (*Expositio in Lucam* V.13). He says it in order to rank the forgiving of sins below the raising of bodies, and he says it of the scribes' question, the parallel of Matthew's verse 3, not of the crowd's words; St Bede takes the clause into his own commentary on Luke. Below the Fathers the sense stands in several places. Aquinas states it at verse 6, where the Apostles forgive *per viam administrationis, non auctoritatis*. Schuster, a Blessed, reads verse 8 itself of the power communicated "to the apostles and to their successors in the priesthood", as the third of his senses and after the crowd's inadequate confession. The continuation reads the present Gospel of the pastors' prerogative of forgiving sins, which it names as the power of the keys exercised in the sacrament of Penance, and applies the verse's closing words to the Church's power allegorically. At the Communion's psalm Theodoret, the Greek expositions and Bellarmine read the sacrifices of the Church's priests.

Not every commentator on these chants reads them of the ministry. Honorius and Sicard read them of the people returning from the Babylonian captivity, who must build an altar as Moses built one; St Anthony of Padua, preaching this Gospel as a Sunday Gospel, gives its last verse no ministerial sense.

What the witnesses support together is this. The Gospel establishes that the authority to forgive is exercised on earth, visibly, by one who is also man. Ambrose, glossing the scribes' question, says that God forgives also through those to whom he has given the power. Aquinas says at verse 6 that the Apostles exercise it by ministry and not by authority. Schuster reads the crowd's praise, in its prophetic sense, of that power communicated to men. And the Mass's own prayers claim a present effect for a visible rite: *efficis* in the Secret, *vegetati* in the Postcommunion. The altar is not where that power absolves: the continuation places absolution in the keys and in Penance. What the Offertory and the Secret concern is the sacrifice whose blood, in the words of institution, is shed "for the remission of sins", and through that blood alone the altar meets the Gospel's power.

A simpler reading of the same texts is possible. The Offertory's Moses may be heard as pure figure, recalled at the offering because the Church's sacrifice fulfils his, with no claim about authority at all, and the Gospel's power as Christ's alone, remembered in the Mass. That reading and this one differ over the two words *in terra*. In this reading they state where the power is exercised, and the Mass's altar is a place on earth.

The Pustet Missal of 1862 already sets this Gospel beside this Offertory, as the 1962 book does, and Schuster and the continuation expound them together.

## The four senses of this reading

### Literal.

Jesus, come to his own city, is brought a paralytic; he forgives the man's sins and then, so that the scribes who think him a blasphemer may know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive, tells him to rise, take up his bed and go home. The visible command proves the invisible word (Chrysostom, Jerome). At Sinai Moses builds an altar, offers holocausts and victims, and seals the covenant with blood sprinkled on the altar and on the people.

### Allegorical.

The one who forgives the man is God, as the word "Son" beside Luke's "Man" shows (Augustine), and he has the authority as his own (Chrysostom). The altar of the covenant is a figure of the one where the

blood of the New Testament is poured out “for the remission of sins”, with which “not Moses but Christ sprinkled us” (Chrysostom on Hebrews); its blood is the type of the blood Christ named at the institution of the Eucharist (a Lapidé). The power shown in his own city is exercised in the Church by way of ministry and not of authority (Aquinas), and the crowd’s praise foretells its communication to the apostles and their successors (Schuster).

### **Moral.**

The sinner is brought, laid down, and given one command, *Surge, tolle lectum tuum*. Aquinas makes it penitential: *Surge, a peccato per contritionem; tolle lectum, per satisfactionem*, and go home into your own conscience. St Bede, on Luke’s telling, reads the taking up of the bed as the flesh itself curbed by the reins of continence and, in hope of heavenly rewards, deprived of earthly delights (*In Lucam* II, on 5:24). The Communion bids those who enter the courts bring with the priest’s Victim “other victims, that is ourselves” (the continuation of *The Liturgical Year*).

### **Anagogical.**

The power is exercised *in terra*, and the forgiven man is sent home. Hilary reads the command as the last step of the cure’s order: the remission of sins, the power of resurrection, the end of the body’s weakness and pain, and last the way into paradise, which Adam left, given back to believers. Ambrose calls that home the true one, which first received man and was lost not by right but by fraud; Aquinas calls it the house of eternity. Forgiveness given at a place on earth is the first step of the way home.

## Thanks at Both Ends, and a Man Who Was Carried: The Grace the Collect Confesses

Heard from its Collect, the Mass is unusually plain about the grammar of grace, and it is plain in its structure as well as in its words. The lesson's first clause is a thanksgiving for a grace already given: *Gratias ago Deo meo semper pro vobis in gratia Dei, quae data est vobis*. The last prayer of the Mass is a thanksgiving for a gift just received: *Gratias tibi referimus, Domine, sacro munere vegetati*. The single oration between them states the reason for both: *quia tibi sine te placere non possumus*. And the man at the centre of the Gospel is carried in, spoken to, forgiven and healed without saying a word. The petitions of such a Mass are all of one kind: that God should do in us what we cannot begin. St John Chrysostom, reading the Epistle clause by clause, takes the Corinthians' gifts out of their hands and gives them back to God; St Augustine, reading the Communion, names the one present a creature may bring; and St Jerome, with St Ambrose on Luke's telling, and Chrysostom, reading the Gospel, disagree about whose faith brought the paralytic to Christ.

### Thanks for a grace already given

St Paul, Chrysostom observes, begins almost every letter with thanksgiving, and here the occasion is more urgent than elsewhere: "For he that gives thanks, does so, both as being well off, and as in acknowledgment of a favor: now a favor is not a debt nor a requital nor a payment: which indeed every where is important to be said, but much more in the case of the Corinthians who were gaping after the dividers of the Church." Each phrase of the lesson then becomes a correction. On "the grace of God": "Do you see how from every quarter he draws topics for correcting them? For where grace is, works are not; where works, it is no more grace. If therefore it be grace, why are you high-minded? Whence is it that you are puffed up?" On "which is given you": "And by whom was it given? By me, or by another Apostle? Not at all, but by Jesus Christ." And of the praises that follow he says that they are only praises in appearance: "I say, seem; for not even did this praise belong to them, but to the grace of God. For that they had remission of sins, and were justified, this was of the Gift from above" (*Homilies on First Corinthians* 2, 1–5). In the Epistle, then, what the Corinthians most admire in themselves, their utterance and their knowledge, is listed among the things they were given, and the first of the gifts Chrysostom names is the remission of sins that the Gospel of this Mass proclaims. Theophylact, following him, repeats that grace is neither a debt nor a repayment.

Theodoret and St Thomas Aquinas keep what Chrysostom keeps, that the gifts are God's, and add what he does not stress, that the praise is true. Theodoret says that Paul, being about to accuse, first soothes his hearers so that the cure may be received, and yet says nothing false, since he gives thanks to God for gifts that had really been given them (*Interpretatio in I ad Corinthios*, PG 82, col. 229). Aquinas says that the thanks are given first *ut correctionem suorum defectuum tolerabilius ferant*, so that they may bear the correction of their faults more easily, and that the riches of utterance and knowledge belong to the more perfect in the Church, whom the rest share through the charity that joins them (*Super I ad Corinthios* c. 1, lect. 1). The Latin commentary that goes under the name of Ambrosiaster names the grace given in Christ as the gift by which the believer *gratis accipit remissionem peccatorum*, receives the remission of sins freely.

At the lesson's last verse the readers divide. For Chrysostom the promise that Christ "will confirm you unto the end without crime" is "also covertly accusing them: for, to say, He shall confirm, and the word unreprouable marks them out as still wavering, and liable to reproof" (2, 7); Theodoret agrees. For Aquinas *sine crimine* means *sine peccato mortali*, and the verse is a promise of perseverance, as it is for Ambrosiaster and Cornelius a Lapide. On either reading the confirming is the Lord's work and not the Corinthians': the verse is a promise of it, or a reminder to the wavering that they still need it.

## “Without thy help”: the Collect

The Collect says outright what the Epistle implies. It asks that *tuae miserationis operatio*, the working of God’s mercy, may direct our hearts, and its reason is *quia tibi sine te placere non possumus*. The two English books that translate it, the Philadelphia missal of 1861 and the continuation of *The Liturgical Year*, render *sine te* “without thy help”. The Latin says more simply that without God himself we cannot please God. The continuation introduces the prayer with a sentence that could stand as its commentary: “The surest way to obtain grace is to be ever humbly acknowledging to our God our deep conviction that, of ourselves, we cannot please His divine Majesty” (vol. XI, p. 395).

Two commentators on the Mass read the Collect in exactly this way. Berno of Reichenau explains it from the Communion that follows it: *Et quia Deo nec in sacrificio, nec in oblatione hostiarum sine ejus adiutorio placere possumus, nec in atria ejus introire, nec in aula ejus adorare eum, merito sacerdos ex sua et nostra voce Deum deprecatur, dicens: Dirigat corda nostra* (*Libellus V*; PL 142, col. 1070). Without God’s help, that is, we can neither sacrifice nor enter his courts nor adore him there; therefore the priest prays, in his own voice and ours, that God direct our hearts. Schuster, commenting on the 1962 Mass, says that the Collect “should establish us in humility. All the good which we do is the work of grace, it is a gift received from God”, and he quotes St Paul, *Si autem accepisti, quid gloriaris, quasi non acceperis?* (*The Sacramentary III*, p. 168). The question he quotes stands in the same letter to the Corinthians as the Epistle (1 Cor 4:7).

## The man who was carried

St Jerome reads the Gospel’s *videns Iesus fidem illorum* in its strongest form. The paralytic was brought lying on his bed *quia ipse ingredi non valebat*, because he could not come in himself, and *Videns autem Iesus non ejus fidem qui offerebatur, sed eorum qui offerebant*: Jesus saw not the faith of the man who was offered but the faith of those who offered him (*Commentarii in Matthaeum I*, on 9:1–2; PL 26, col. 54). The reason Jerome gives is incapacity, not merit. And he marvels at the word with which Christ greets such a man: *O mira humilitas, despectum et debilem, totisque membrorum compagibus dissolutum, filium vocat, quem sacerdotes non dignabantur attingere*, O wonderful humility: he calls son one despised and feeble, loosed in every joint of his limbs, whom the priests would not deign to touch. His moral reading follows the same line. *Juxta tropologiam interdum anima jacens in corpore suo, totis membrorum virtutibus dissolutis, a perfecto doctore offertur curanda Domino, quae si misericordia ejus sanata fuerit, tantum roboris accipit, ut portet statim lectulum suum*: the soul that lies powerless in its body is offered to the Lord for healing by a perfect teacher, and if his mercy heals it, it receives such strength that it immediately carries its bed (col. 55). The soul is brought by another, and its strength comes afterward.

St Ambrose, expounding Luke’s telling of the same healing, takes Jerome’s side in so many words: *Magnus Dominus qui aliorum merito ignoscit aliis, et dum alios probat, aliis relaxat errata*, great is the Lord who pardons some for the merit of others, and while he approves some, releases the errors of others. He turns it at once to his hearer: *Si gravium peccatorum diffidis veniam, adhibe precatores, adhibe Ecclesiam quae pro te precetur*, if you despair of pardon for grave sins, call in those who will pray, call in the Church to pray for you (*Expositio in Lucam V.11*).

A sermon preached on this Gospel as the day’s reading takes the same side and reads even the man’s silence against him. Migne prints it both as St Peter Chrysologus’s Sermo 50, *De paralytico curato*, and as St Maximus of Turin’s Homilia CVIII, and its author is disputed; the Roman Breviary, as Maximus’s editor reports, read part of it on this Sunday under Chrysologus’s name. *Audit veniam, et tacet paralyticus, nec ullam respondet gratiam, quia plus corporis quam animae tendebat ad curam*: he hears the pardon and is silent, and returns no thanks, because he was reaching for the cure of his body more than of his soul. His soul was healed before his body *fidei alienae suffragio*, by the suffrage of another’s faith, and the preacher draws the lesson: *Deum non quaerere insipientium voluntates, non spectare ignorantium fidem . . . sed ad*

*alterius fidem subvenire, quod per solam gratiam conferebat*, God does not look for the will of the foolish or the faith of the ignorant, but comes to their help at another's faith, giving by grace alone (PL 52, col. 341).

St John Chrysostom begins from the same point and then refuses to stop there. The bearers "put the sick man before Christ, saying nothing, but committing the whole to Him", and what Christ saw, Chrysostom says, was "the faith of them that had let the man down. For He doth not on all occasions require faith on the part of the sick only". But he adds: "Or rather, in this case the sick man too had part in the faith; for he would not have suffered himself to be let down, unless he had believed". And when the scribes murmur, the one who might have complained is silent: "he for his part utters no such word, but gives himself up to the power of the healer" (*Homilies on Matthew* 29, 1–2). St Thomas Aquinas, at the same verse, will not choose: *Curat aliquando Dominus aliquem propter fidem suam: aliquando propter preces suas, et aliorum*, the Lord heals sometimes for a man's own faith, sometimes for his prayers and those of others; the bearers, read morally, are *illi qui suis monitionibus portant eum ad Deum*, those who carry the sinner to God by their counsel (*Super Matthaeum* c. 9).

The disagreement between Jerome and Ambrose on one side and Chrysostom on the other is real, and Mt 9:2 does not settle it: it says *fidem illorum* and no more. Jerome's reading makes the case at its strongest, a man saved by other people's faith, and it serves the allegory of the nations. Chrysostom's attends more closely to the story, since the man consented to be let down through a roof. What both readings share, and what this interpretation rests on, is that the man did not come by himself. Whether the faith Christ saw was the bearers' alone or his as well, it brought him only as far as he was carried.

St Hilary carries the story over to the whole of humankind: *Jamque in paralytico gentium universitas offertur medenda*, now in the paralytic the whole body of the nations is offered for healing. The man is brought by angels, *Angelis ministrantibus curandus offertur*; he is called son *quia primum Dei opus est*, because Adam was God's first work; and what is forgiven him is *indulgentia primae transgressionis*, pardon of the first transgression, *non enim paralyticum peccasse aliquid accepimus*, for we do not read that the paralytic had sinned at all (*Commentarius in Matthaeum* VIII.5; PL 9, col. 960). The nations, too, were brought, and the first sin forgiven them is Adam's. Hilary reads the end of the story in the same key. When the crowd glorifies God, he judges the honour fitting, *conclusa sunt omnia suo ordine*, and he says what it is paid for. It is not paid for what one man could do, for then the praise would have been of one man and not of many. It is paid because a gift has been given: *potestas hominibus ac via data sit per verbum ejus, et peccatorum remissionis, et corporum resurrectionis, et reversionis in coelum*, a power and a way have been given to men through his word, of the remission of sins, of the resurrection of bodies, and of the return to heaven (VIII.8; cols. 961–962). The power and the way are given now, through the word; the resurrection of bodies and the return to heaven are where the way ends. Read so, the Gospel closes as the Epistle opens, with God glorified for what men have been given. St John Chrysostom hears the same praise otherwise, as a confession that fell short of who Christ is.

## The one present that is not empty

The Communion commands something: *Tollite hostias, et introite*. St Augustine names what the command asks for. "Confession is a present unto God. O heathen, if ye will enter into His courts, enter not empty. 'Bring presents.' What presents shall we bring with us? The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, 'O God, shalt not Thou despise.' Enter with an humble heart into the house of God, and thou hast entered with a present. But if thou art proud, thou enterest empty. For whence wouldest thou be proud, if thou wert not empty?" (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 95, 9). The *hostiae* the Communion requires are not something the worshipper owns and hands over. They are the one thing that costs nothing but pride. Cassiodorus reads the same word the same way, *Hostias non victimas pecudum dicit, sed conscientiae pura libamina, unde non sanguis currat, sed piae lacrymae defluant*: not the victims of cattle but the pure offerings of conscience, from which no blood runs but holy tears flow. He notices the order of the two imperatives, which Augustine does not press: *Sed considera quia prius posuit, tollite, et sic introite*, first

bring, and so enter, for those who do not bring such sacrifices are not reckoned to enter the Lord's courts (*Expositio psalmorum*, in Ps. 95).

## The other elements in this reading

The Introit's word for those who pray is *sustinentibus te*, those who wait for thee: its verb is patient endurance, and the antiphon asks God to give what waiting cannot produce. The Gradual's joy is joy at what was said to the psalmist, *in his, quae dicta sunt mihi*; in Augustine's psalter it was joy in the persons who said it, the companions who summon the pilgrim to run. Either way, even the gladness of the ascent is received from others. The Alleluia's nations fear the Lord's name because God has had mercy on Sion and built her, not because they found him: Augustine reads the verse in that order, "Now that Thou hast pitied Sion . . . hence preaching hath increased among the heathen" (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 101, s. 1, 16).

In the Offertory every finite verb has Moses for its subject. He sanctifies the altar, offers the holocausts, immolates the victims and makes the evening sacrifice; the people are named only at the end, *in conspectu filiorum Israel*, as those in whose sight it is done. The Secret divides its verbs in the same way: *sicut tuam cognoscimus veritatem*, as we know thy truth, is indicative and already given; *sic eam dignis moribus assequamur*, so may we attain it by a worthy life, is subjunctive and asked for. The Postcommunion gives thanks first and then asks to be made worthy of what has already been received, *ut dignos nos eius participatione perficias*. Its order is this reading in small: the gift, the thanks, and then the prayer to become fit for it. Schuster draws the practical conclusion, that a fervent Communion "is the best preparation for the next".

## Not quietism: rise, take up thy bed, and walk

Pressed too far, a reading governed by the confession that without God we cannot please him would become quietism, and the formulary itself refuses that. Three of its ten elements ask something of the one who prays: the Secret's *dignis moribus assequamur*, the Communion's *Tollite hostias, et introite*, and the Gospel's own *Surge, tolle lectum tuum, et vade*. Chrysostom, the principal witness of the reading, says as much in the same homily. On the lesson's "waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:7) he says that Paul terrifies the Corinthians with the judgment seat, "implying that not only the beginnings must be good, but the end also", and that "there is need of many labors to be able to come unto the end" (*Homilies on First Corinthians* 2, 6).

The Collect itself answers the objection. It does not say that we cannot please God; it says that we cannot please him *sine te*, without him. The distinction lies in the Latin, and it is the whole of this reading. The man in the Gospel does rise, take up his bed and walk. What he could not do was be forgiven, or bring himself to the house where forgiveness was given. St Thomas Aquinas notices the exact shape of the command. The sick man had three disabilities: he lay in bed, he was carried by others, and he could not walk; so Christ says *Surge* to the one who lay; *quia portabatur, praecepit ut portaret*, because he was carried, he commanded him to carry; and *quia ire non poterat, dixit, Et ambula*, because he could not walk, he said, Walk (*Super Matthaeum* c. 9). The one who was carried now carries what carried him. The grace that brought him is not taken back when he stands; it is what he stands in.

## The four senses of this reading

### Literal.

Paul thanks God for gifts the Corinthians did not earn and are misusing, and promises that Christ will confirm them to the end. A paralysed man is carried to Jesus by others and forgiven before he is healed. A psalm tells the nations to come into the Lord's courts bringing sacrifices. The Collect confesses that without God we cannot please him.

**Allegorical.**

The paralytic is the Church of the nations, brought into the presence of the one who forgives first and heals after. In him the whole body of the nations is offered for healing, carried by angels, and pardoned the first transgression, Adam's, though the man himself is not said to have sinned (Hilary). The one who calls such a man "son" shows the humility of God (Jerome).

**Moral.**

The gifts that most tempt to pride, utterance, knowledge and understanding, are the ones Paul lists as given, and where grace is, boasting has no ground (Chrysostom). The soul that lies powerless is brought to the Lord by another, and receives strength afterward (Jerome). The one present a creature can bring is a contrite heart, and the proud enter empty (Augustine). The one who was carried is told to carry (Aquinas).

**Anagogical.**

The end is given as the beginning was. The Corinthians, for whose grace Paul thanks God as a thing already given, wait for the revelation of Christ, "who also will confirm you unto the end without crime, in the day of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ": whether the verse promises or reproves, the confirming is his and not theirs (Chrysostom, Aquinas). And the last prayer of the Mass asks God himself to make the communicants worthy of their share, *ut dignos nos eius participatione perficias*: even the fitness for what is given at the end is asked of him.

## The Three Readings Compared

The three readings share more than they divide. All three need the Collect, though only the third is governed by it. *Quia tibi sine te placere non possumus* is the Mass's single oration, and it has a place in each reading: in the first because a city that no one can build for himself is still the city to which the people go up; in the second because the power at work in the Mass is expressly not ours; in the third because the Collect is its controlling claim. All three hear the Communion as an entry rather than a conclusion. All three hear the Postcommunion's *ut dignos nos eius participatione perficias* asking for something still to come: for the first, the courts have been entered and the city is still ahead; for the second, the communicants who have been quickened are still to be made worthy; for the third, even fitness for the gift is asked of God. All three take the Offertory as it is sung, a compiled antiphon in which Moses sanctifies and offers and the people are present, rather than as a quotation of Exodus. And no Father read here takes a sense of the Church's ministry from the crowd's praise at the end of the Gospel. The second reading, the only one that develops that sense, takes it from four places: St Ambrose's gloss on the scribes' question in Luke's telling (*Expositio in Lucam* V.13), Aquinas at verse 6, the third of Schuster's senses of verse 8, and the continuation of *The Liturgical Year*, which names the pastors' power of forgiving as the keys exercised in Penance. The readings do not hear the crowd's praise itself alike. The first does not use the verse; the second reports St John Chrysostom's reading of it first; the third draws on St Hilary's.

They part on the questions below.

| Question               | The peace of a city                                                                  | Power to forgive                                                                   | Thanks at both ends                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What the Mass is about | A city being built                                                                   | A power being exercised                                                            | A gift being acknowledged                                                                                                            |
| Where it is anchored   | The chants, above all Ps 121:1 sung twice                                            | The Gospel, Mt 9:6, with the Offertory and Secret                                  | The Collect, with the Epistle's and Postcommunion's thanks                                                                           |
| What the Gospel gives  | The boat and the city: Christ enters the people of the faithful (Hilary, on Matthew) | The centre: the unseen forgiveness proved by the seen healing (Chrysostom, Jerome) | The man who was carried, and whose faith brought him (Jerome, Ambrose, Chrysostom); the crowd's praise as thanks for a gift (Hilary) |

| Question                 | The peace of a city                                                                               | Power to forgive                                                                                                        | Thanks at both ends                                                                                   |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What the Offertory gives | The people present at their own sacrifice, <i>in conspectu filiorum Israel</i>                    | The altar of the covenant, whose blood is joined to the remission of sins (Chrysostom on Hebrews)                       | An antiphon in which every verb is Moses'                                                             |
| What <i>pax</i> is       | The city's strength: charity (Augustine, Cassiodorus), or the firmness its peace confers (Hilary) | Not addressed directly                                                                                                  | Not addressed directly                                                                                |
| Principal witnesses      | Augustine on three psalms; Hilary and Cassiodorus on Ps 121                                       | Chrysostom and Augustine on the Gospel; Aquinas at Mt 9:6; Schuster at Mt 9:8                                           | Chrysostom on 1 Corinthians; Augustine on Ps 95; Jerome, Ambrose and Chrysostom on the bearers' faith |
| Where it is weakest      | Chrysostom and Theodoret read its governing psalm of the earthly city rebuilt, and nothing more   | No Father reads Mt 9:8 of the Church's ministry, and some commentators on the chants read them of the return from exile | Pressed too far it becomes quietism                                                                   |

No doctrine of one reading is denied by another; they differ in emphasis. They are three governing questions put to one set of texts, and each accounts for something the others leave aside. The first alone gives weight to the return of the Introit's psalm verse as the Gradual, so that the house named at the entrance is named again after the Epistle. The second alone gives a meaning to the placing, at the offering of this Gospel, of a Mosaic altar and the covenant sacrifice. The third alone gives weight to the thanksgiving at both ends of the Mass, the Epistle's *Gratias ago* and the Postcommunion's *Gratias tibi referimus*.

The Gospel's first verse shows how the readings relate. Christ "came into his own city", and the three readings use the clause in ways that do not compete. The first reads it allegorically, with St Hilary: rejected by the Gerasene town, which figures the Jewish people and the law, Christ goes back to his own city, and *Deo civitas fidelium plebs est*, to God the city is the people of the faithful (*Commentarius in Matthaeum* VIII.4; PL 9, col. 960). Hilary names no town, and his allegory holds whichever town the literal sense names. The second reading takes the clause as the literal place of a verifiable sign: the Son of man has this power *in terra*, before scribes who can watch the man walk. The third does not use the clause at all. St Thomas Aquinas shows that the literal and the allegorical uses stand together, for in one lecture he gives both the three-city harmony, Bethlehem by birth, Nazareth by upbringing and Capernaum by dwelling and miracles, and the allegory *in civitatem gentium, quae sibi datae sunt*. St Augustine, reconciling Matthew with Mark, places the healing at Capernaum and offers two explanations of "his own city": Galilee may be called Christ's city, with Capernaum its chief town, or Matthew has passed over what happened between Christ's arrival in his own city and his coming to Capernaum.

Most of the real disagreements among the witnesses stand inside single readings. Which town is meant divides St John Chrysostom, who names Capernaum, "that which had Him continually inhabiting it", from St Jerome, who says *Civitatem ejus non aliam intelligimus quam Nazareth* (PL 26, col. 54); that dispute belongs to the second reading, whose literal sense needs a place and is served by either town. Whose faith Christ saw divides Jerome, and St Ambrose beside him on Luke's telling, who say the bearers', from Chrysostom, who says that the sick man shared it; that dispute belongs to the third reading, which rests on what both sides grant, that the man did not come by himself. What Ps 121 is about divides Chrysostom and Theodoret, who read the earthly Jerusalem rebuilt after the exile, from Augustine, Hilary and Cassiodorus, who read the heavenly city; that dispute belongs to the first reading, which takes the one as the psalm's literal sense and the other as its allegory.

One disagreement runs between two readings. What the crowd's praise at the end of the Gospel amounts to divides Chrysostom from St Hilary. Chrysostom hears a confession that fell short of who Christ is: the crowd "still creep upon the earth", and had not grasped that he was the Son of God. Ambrose, at Luke's parallel, judges the fear more severely: those who fear are the unbelieving, who would rather fear than believe, and he makes them one with those who calumniated (*Expositio in Lucam* V.15). His judgement is negative, as Chrysostom's is, but it is his own. Hilary hears fitting honour, paid to God because a power and a way, of the remission of sins, of the resurrection of bodies and of the return to heaven, have been given through Christ's word to the many who receive them. In the second reading Chrysostom's judgement comes first and Hilary's after it, and the reading's own sense of the verse is neither Father's but Schuster's; Hilary shows there that the men of the verse are those who receive forgiveness and not those who minister it. The third reading takes Hilary's side, and the choice changes where its Gospel ends. On Chrysostom's reading the Gospel closes on praise that still falls short and must be raised. On Hilary's it closes as the Epistle opens, with God glorified for what men have been given, and the third reading hears in it the thanksgiving that stands at both ends of the Mass.

The readings' own answers part, in the table above, on what the Mass is about, where it is anchored, and what the Gospel and the Offertory give. Those are differences of governing emphasis.

Each reading ends where the Mass sends its people. The first leaves them at the courts, with the city still ahead. The second leaves them forgiven and sent home, with a perfecting still to be asked. The third leaves them giving thanks for a gift and asking to be made worthy of it. In all three the last word of the formulary is the one the Postcommunion gives: *ut dignos nos eius participatione perficias*.

## 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                                 |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Offertory | Ex 24:4–5, compiled | Sinai: an altar at the foot of the mount, with twelve titles for the twelve tribes of Israel (24:4) | <b>Event:</b> Rising in the morning. |

*Narrated event: the ratifying of the covenant at Sinai, after Moses has told the people all the words of the Lord and they have answered with one voice (24:3); the altar is built “rising in the morning” (24:4), a relative date within the narrative.*

The chronology record dates the narrated event only, and only relatively; it holds no composition date for the Book of Exodus at these verses, and none is given here. The antiphon is the liturgy’s own compilation: beside the altar, holocausts and victims of 24:4–5 it sets the verb of Moses’ consecration of the altar (Lev 8:11; Num 7:1), the evening sacrifice and odour of sweetness of the daily offering (Ex 29:41; Ps 140:2), and the closing *in conspectu filiorum Israel* of 24:17, where the glory of the Lord is seen on the mountain.

|           |                     |                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Communion | Ps 95:8–9 (Heb. 96) | The house of God and its courts; by the title, the house built after the captivity, at Jerusalem | <b>Superscription setting:</b> B.C. 537.<br><b>Composition:</b> Before c. 165 B.C. <b>Prophetic referent</b> – disputed: B.C. 3; c. B.C. 7. |
|-----------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Titled in the Vulgate *Canticum ipsi David, quando domus aedificabatur post captivitatem*, “A canticle for David himself, when the house was built after the captivity” (v. 1). The title names David and a setting after the exile together; the chronology record reads that setting against the raising of the Temple from its ruins under Zorobabel after the return (the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, “Temple of Jerusalem”), and holds no Davidic era for the psalm. For its composition the record gives only the modern critical boundary for the whole Psalter, within which no single psalm can be dated securely. The third date is not a date of the psalm: the record reads Ps 95, with Pss 67, 96 and 97, as looking prophetically to Christ’s coming, and the two years it gives are two *Catholic Encyclopedia* articles’ dates for the Nativity.

|          |                      |                                                    |                                        |
|----------|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Alleluia | Ps 101:16 (Heb. 102) | Sion, to be rebuilt and seen in glory (vv. 14, 17) | <b>Composition:</b> Before c. 165 B.C. |
|----------|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|

Titled “The prayer of the poor man, when he was anxious, and poured out his supplication before the Lord” (v. 1); the title names no author, and the chronology record holds no traditional date for the psalm. Its lament turns at verse 14 to Sion, on which the Lord will have mercy, and verse 17 gives the reason for the nations’ fear: “the Lord hath built up Sion”. The date is the Psalter’s critical boundary only.

|         |                                                             |                                                                                     |                                        |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Gradual | Ps 121:1, 7 (Heb. 122); verse 1 is also the Introit’s verse | Jerusalem: the house of the Lord, and the city’s courts, walls and towers (vv. 1–7) | <b>Composition:</b> Before c. 165 B.C. |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|

Titled in the Vulgate *Canticum graduum*, one of the Songs of Ascents (from Ps 119 to Ps 133 in the Missal’s numbering), sung by pilgrims going up to the house of the Lord; the Vulgate title names no author, and the chronology record holds no traditional date for the psalm. Among its ancient interpreters St John Chrysostom and Theodoret set it at the return from the Babylonian exile, of a city whose walls and towers lay in ruins. The date is the Psalter’s critical boundary only.

|         |                                                                                    |                                                                                            |                                                                       |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Introit | Ecclus 36:18 (the antiphon, adapted); its verse, Ps 121:1, stands with the Gradual | “Jesus the son of Sirach, of Jerusalem” (50:29), praying for Jerusalem and Sion (36:14–16) | <b>Composition</b> – No single date applies across every cited locus. |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|

Traditional attribution: Jesus the son of Sirach, whom the Greek prologue names and whom the Greek and Latin text calls a man of Jerusalem (50:29); his grandson rendered the book into Greek after coming into Egypt (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, “Ecclesiasticus”, which calls the authorship universally assigned to him). The chapter is a prayer for Israel’s deliverance, for Jerusalem, and for the fulfilment of the prophets’ words. The chronology record dates the element’s composition passage by passage. Ecclus 36:18: B.C. 190–170 or c. B.C. 280, the composition of the Book of Ecclesiasticus under the traditional Catholic profile, the interval preferred and the approximate year its alternate, both from the *Catholic Encyclopedia*’s article “Ecclesiasticus” (1909). Ps 121:1: before c. 165 B.C., the Psalter’s critical composition boundary, already given with the Gradual. Neither date holds at both loci, so the Date cell gives the element none. The antiphon’s wording is liturgical: at its opening and its close it is neither the Vulgate’s nor the Greek’s.

| Proper | Citation | Location                                                                                                                                                        | Date                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Gospel | Mt 9:1–8 | Matthew in Judea, for the Jews, before his departure from Jerusalem. Event: “his own city” across the lake (9:1), Capernaum for Chrysostom, Nazareth for Jerome | <b>Event</b> – No narrated-event date in the chronology corpus. <b>Composition</b> – 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. |

*Narrated event: the healing of the paralytic, after the crossing from the country of the Gerasens (8:28–9:1) and before the call of Matthew (9:9); the chronology record gives the episode no date.*

Traditional attribution: St Matthew the Apostle, whom the Missal’s heading names (*secundum Matthaeum*). The Date column keeps the *Catholic Encyclopedia*’s ranges as disputed alternatives, not equally established estimates. The article “Gospel of St. Matthew” (1911) reports early writers who count eight or fifteen years after the Ascension; a dispersal of the Apostles by a tradition it calls “admittedly not too reliable”; the Catholic critics of its own day; a later apostolic departure after Eusebius; and St Irenaeus, whose statement it finds too uncertain for any positive conclusion. The article “The New Testament” (1912) dates the Aramaic original alone and says nothing definite of its rendering into Greek. The Matthew article gives the first hearers and the place: the ecclesiastical writers “agree in declaring that St. Matthew wrote his Gospel for the Jews”, and the Evangelist, having preached to the Hebrews, wrote in his mother tongue “before his departure from Jerusalem”. The same article reports the Protestant and liberal critics of its day as widely divided, from shortly before the fall of Jerusalem to well into the second century. The town in the Location column locates the healing the Gospel narrates, not the writing of the Gospel.

|         |             |                                                                         |                                                  |
|---------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Epistle | 1 Cor 1:4–8 | Paul at Ephesus (16:8), to “the church of God that is at Corinth” (1:2) | <b>Composition</b> – disputed: A.D. 56; A.D. 57. |
|---------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|

Traditional attribution: St Paul, with Sosthenes named beside him (1:1). The *Catholic Encyclopedia*’s article on the Epistles to the Corinthians (1908) has Paul, at Ephesus, learn of party strife and other disorders at Corinth and of a letter from the Corinthians, write at once, and send the Epistle by Titus; the chronological table in the article “St. Paul” (1911) gives the year of the letters to Corinth and Galatia. The two dates are two Catholic authorities disagreeing, and both are shown. The first article calls the historical and internal evidence for Paul’s authorship so strong that the most advanced critical schools of its day admitted it. The same article describes Corinth as a centre of traffic and wealth, in which Paul had spent upwards of eighteen months.

## Appendix: Scope and Qualifications

**Edition, formulary and occurrence.** The study treats the Mass *Dominica decima octava post Pentecosten*, II classis, of the *Missale Romanum*, editio typica, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis 1962, pp. 410–411, nos. 1669–1678, in the universal 1962 calendar and no particular calendar. Its occurrence on 27 September 2026 rests on the Missal’s own calendar and general rubrics (RG 111 b, 127 b; RGMR 427, 434 b, 494 b); the dated 2026 Ordos of the Fraternity of St Peter in France and of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest in France agree on the Sunday, its class and its colour, and are cited for the date only. The particular solemnity of St Thérèse of the Child Jesus that each prints belongs to those institutes and is not part of the universal formulary. The precedence table of the general rubrics and the Breviary rubric behind the Gloria, which the typical edition does not print, were not reread.

**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 pointing and one accent differ and are not followed) and with the Pustet Missal of 1862, in which every element’s wording already stands. The marginal numbers 1671–1674 are clipped in the facsimile and are fixed by continuity. The collation, the conclusion forms and the comparison with the Clementine Vulgate are recorded in `propers/verified.md`. The Latin source of the Introit’s and the Offertory’s distinctive wording, and the psalter behind the Communion’s *in aula sancta*, were not identified: the Vulgate and the Greek of the Septuagint account for none of them, and no Roman Psalter or chant manuscript was consulted.

**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 antiphon, the Epistle’s address, the Alleluia’s opening, the Gospel’s opening, the Communion’s *aula*, and 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 is the anonymous translation printed by Cumiskey in Philadelphia in 1861, read in the library’s tracked text of that book and not on its page images. Neither English is an approved liturgical translation of the 1962 Missal. The Trinity Preface is cited and not reproduced. English renderings of patristic and medieval Latin that are 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 the later Doctors, saints and exegetes available to this production, and the witnesses read are those named in the References at their exact loci. The Greek of Chrysostom on Ps 121, Theodoret, the expositions printed under St Athanasius’s name and Theophylact was read in Migne’s columns. Chrysostom on Matthew, and Augustine on the psalms and the harmony of the Gospels, are quoted from the CCEL text of the nineteenth-century Nicene and Post-Nicene English, with Augustine’s Latin read in Migne at the loci quoted; Chrysostom on First Corinthians and Hebrews is quoted from New Advent’s delivery of the same translation, which modernises its second person. Bellarmine was read only in O’Sullivan’s abridged English of 1866, in a tracked web transcription. Cornelius a Lapide was read in optical text layers of the Antwerp printings, not on their page images, and is summarised rather than quoted. St Hilary’s commentary on Matthew was read on the page images of the Maurist text as Migne reprints it; its modern critical edition was not reached. St Ambrose and St Bede on Luke’s telling of the healing were read in transcriptions of Migne, not on page images; Sermo 50 on the page images of PL 52, in no critical edition. Aquinas’s *Catena aurea* on Matthew, which splices and rewords several authors at this Gospel, served only to find leads, and each author is cited from his own work. No patristic commentary on Eccles 36:18 or at the Offertory’s cited verses of Exodus was located; the Introit and the Offertory are read by the liturgical commentators on the Mass. Anthony of Padua’s Sunday sermon on this Gospel was read in a modern translation and is summarised, not quoted. The attribution of the continuation of *The Liturgical Year* to Dom Lucien Fromage rests on the library’s standing registry and the initials that sign the French preface. No witness is cited for a reading of this Mass as a whole except the liturgical commentators. Rupert of Deutz, Honorius, Sicard, Durandus and Berno expounded books in which this Mass had another Gospel, and they are cited only for the elements it shares with this one.

**History of the formulary.** The sacramentary witnesses are cited in H. A. Wilson’s editions of the Gelasian (1894) and Gregorian (1915) sacramentaries, read on their page images; the chant witnesses in gregorien.info’s report of the six manuscripts of Hesbert’s *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, which was not itself opened; and the lectionaries in the editions of Morin, Wilmart and Migne. No manuscript, no critical edition of the sacramentaries and no Roman Psalter was consulted, and none of these witnesses shows when this Gospel first stood beside this Offertory.

**Chronology.** The Date cells in Scriptural Date and Location come from the Scripture chronology corpus, through the record generated for this formulary under its default profile. For the composition of the three psalms that record gives only the modern critical boundary for the Psalter, which it takes from the introduction to the Psalms in the New

American Bible, Revised Edition (summarized, not quoted), and holds no traditional date of their composition. For the Gospel and the Epistle it holds the traditional dates reported by the *Catholic Encyclopedia*; for the Communion's psalm a superscription setting and a prophetic referent; for the Offertory a relative date within the narrative; and for the Introit two separate answers, one for each of its loci: the *Catholic Encyclopedia*'s dates for the Book of Ecclesiasticus at the antiphon's verse, and the Psalter's boundary at its psalm verse. 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 and Greek Fathers in Migne, Zingerle's Hilary and the nineteenth-century English translations are in the public domain, as are the 1909 English of the continuation of *The Liturgical Year* and the 1927 English of Schuster. The Corpus Thomisticum text of Aquinas on First Corinthians is a modern presentation and is 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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