

Sacerdotal apologiae

Definition: Private prayers recited by the priest during the Mass which express his sinfulness and unworthiness. Apology-type prayers more generally were private penitential prayers expressing the same sinfulness and unworthiness in the face of God.

1. Development of the apology-type of prayer:

- Early interaction of the Roman and Celtic styles of prayer led to the emergence of completely new genre of prayer texts.
- The intense need to express personal repentance and ask for forgiveness was channeled into the recitation, composition, and collection of these apology-type prayers.
- These prayers focus exclusively on one's own state of soul, not in order to become the best possible human being one could be, but to become angelic...something quite different. The Spirituality also had a Christological focus on the divine Christ as triumphant victor. The development of the role of the Emperor in the liturgy resonated with the focus on Old Testament imagery, which was both kingly and rural.
- By the beginning of the 11th century these apologiae saturated the ordo missae, in what Jungman calls a bewildering profusion. They fall out of use and are no longer found by the end of the same century.
- Many have speculated that the apologiae represent a particular response to a spiritual need; apologiae filled the void that existed between regular canonical penance and the rise of tariff or auricular penance.
- Their disappearance has been associated with the reforms of Pope Gregory VII, the proliferation of auricular confession, and the clarification of notions of forgiveness, which remedied the Gallican confusion of God and Christ, which obscured the concept of saving grace.
- These prayers then represent an early example of liturgical inculturation to the Franco-Germanic world. Pierce says that "respect for the antiquity of the Roman rite did not stop medieval Christians from augmenting that rite to address more adequately their cultural and spiritual needs." Elsewhere she states that this "is an important example of how the Christian liturgy (here, the Eucharist) is adapted to respond to the needs of a particular culture, and how that culture, in turn, influenced the development of the Mass as a whole."
- The modern Confiteor was an apology-type prayer, reduced in length from its use in the 11th century when it was more detailed and outlined specific sins. Jungman cites that this prayer developed in Normandy, where it came to be inserted between the Introit and the collect.

- These all witness to the movement of private devotions into the public liturgical arena.

2. Sources of Apologiæ:

- Ordo Missæ contain a large number of these prayers, as was noted above. This MS is one example of such an Ordo.
- Jungman attests to a phenomenon akin to this in the 10th century Sacramentary of St-Thierry (near Reims).
- Many of the private apology-type prayers were eventually collected into *precum libelli*.
See Driscoll, Michael: "The *precum libelli* and Carolingian Spirituality."
- Our primary sources are from collections of prayers (*libelli precum*), from Minden, Amiens, Reichenau, Ivrea and Salins. The MS from Minden is the most important of these collections and has most recently been edited by Joanne Pierce. This MS will be focus of our further discussion.

3. Codex Helmstadiensis 1151 (Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Germany).

- The MS has been shown to come from the Archbishopric of Minden, on the Weser River in northern Germany. The MS was part of a collection of nine books commissioned by the Bishop of Minden, Sigebert around 1030.
- Physical information: 121 folios, 15 lines per page, 85mm x 115mm, written in late Carolingian miniscule script with a separate rubric script and three fully illuminated initials. The original MS was covered in ivory panels that have been separated from it, but are housed in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. germ. qu. 42, bookcover. (Ivory plaque, 14 x 7 cm).
- This MS was first studied by the Lutheran Matthias Flacius Illyricus in 1557, from which the MS has received its popular name, *Missa Illyrica*. Illyricus' commentary on the MS argued for the antiquity of liturgical diversity and thus was used as justification for Lutheran liturgical differences. Additionally, Illyricus found evidence of the use of the cup, a focus on communion, rather than sacrifice, and other deviations from the "Romish" Mass. For this commentary, the text was placed on the Index of forbidden books.
- The controversy surrounding the text continued for several hundred years. The modern study of this MS (and all the members of the collection) dates to the early 20th century with the work of Josef Braun. Braun correctly established the provenance and date of the MS. He based his conclusions on the vestments included in the vesting prayers, most notably the reference to the *rationale* (see examples, prayer 30). Only three German bishops were known to have the *rationale* at this time: Regensburg, Minden, and Bamberg. Braun also utilized the ivory cover of this MS, which contained an image of the bishop Sigebert.
- Modern scholarship continued in 1954 with Boniface Luykx, O.Praem. Luykx notes that the MS shows the "increased privatization and clericalization of the liturgy." He also categorized a large number of *Ordo*, placing this MS in the Rhenish category. The characteristics of this type are: "apologies and other added prayers tied together by longer groups of rubrics; replacement of earlier texts (e.g., at hand washing); elaboration of vesting; elaboration of new "Eingangsritus";

increased clericalization of the offertory (e.g., multiple hand washings); elaboration of private prayers during the *Sanctus*; and the development of the thanksgiving rite following Mass.

- The most recent study and critical edition of the MS was done as a doctoral thesis for the University of Notre Dame by Joanne Michelle Pierce. Pierce has created a new critical edition of the MS, as well as providing commentary on every prayer contained in the MS. Please see the outline of the prayers contained in her critical edition, as well as the examples provided of individual prayers.
- When the MS was commissioned, the other texts included a hymnbook, a Gospel book, a gradual, a book of tropes and sequences, a Sacramentary, an epistolary, an Evangelary, and another lavishly decorated Gospel book. (See image from Lectionary).

Bibliography:

1. Driscoll, Michael. "The *precum libelli* and Carolingian Spirituality." *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy*, pp. 68-75. 1991.
2. Jungman, J. *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development* / translated by Francis Brunner / revised and abridged edition, Charles K. Riepe. Benziger Bros., 1961
3. Macalister, R.A.S. *Ecclesiastical Vestments: their development and history*. London: Elliot Stock, 1896.
4. Pierce, Joanne Michelle. *Sacerdotal Spirituality at Mass: text and study of the prayerbook of Siegbert of Minden (1022-1036)*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1988.
5. Pierce, Joanna Michelle. "Early Medieval Liturgy: some implications for contemporary liturgical practice." *Worship*, 65, pp. 509-522. 1991.
6. Pierce, Joanna Michelle. "New Research Directions in Medieval Liturgy: the liturgical books of Siegbert of Minden (1022-1036)" in *Fountain of Life* / edited by Gerard Austin, OP, pp. 51-67. Washington, D.C.: Pastoral Press, 1991.

Outline of Prayers contained in Codex Helmstadiensis 1151:

I. Prayers to be used during the Eucharist (1 – 205)

The *Missa Illyrica*

- A. Preparatory rites in Sacristy (1 – 38)
 - i. Pre-vesting prayers at Altar (1 – 8)
 - ii. Vesting prayers in Sacristy (9 – 32)
 - a. Preparation for vesting (9 – 14)
 - b. Vesting Prayers (15 – 30)
 - c. Prayers after Vesting (31 – 32)
 - iii. Preparation for Entrance Procession (33 – 38)
- B. Entrance Rites (39 – 70)
 - i. Entrance Procession (39 – 47)
 - ii. Approach to Altar (48 – 53)
 - iii. *Apologia* during *Introit/Kyrie* (54 – 67)
 - iv. Prayers during *Gloria* (68 – 70)
- C. The Readings (71 – 96)
 - i. Prayers during *Gradual/Alleluia/Sequence* (71 – 87)
 - ii. Reading of the Gospel (88 – 95)
 - a. Incense Prayers (88 – 89)
 - b. Blessing and Deacon's Prayers (90 – 93)
 - c. Salutation of Gospel book (95 – 95)
- D. The Creed (96)
- E. Offertory Rite (97 – 154)
 - i. Hand washing and Preparation of Altar (98 – 109)
 - ii. Reception of the Gifts (110 – 118)
 - iii. Offering of the Bread (119 – 137)
 - iv. Offering of the Cup (138 – 142)
 - v. Blessing of the Gifts (143 – 144)
 - vi. Incensation of the Altar (145 – 149)
 - vii. *Orate pro me* (150 – 151)
 - viii. Prayers before the Canon (152 – 154)
- F. The Canon and Commixtion (155 – 174)
 - i. Prayers/Psalms by assisting ministers (155 – 158)
 - ii. Canon interpolation (159 – 165)
 - iii. The *Pax* (166, 172 – 174)
 - iv. Commixtion Rite (167 – 171)
- G. Communion Rite (175 – 195)
 - i. Presider's communion (175 – 184)
 - ii. Priests/Deacons (185 – 187)
 - iii. Subdeacons and Clerics (188)
 - iv. People (189)
 - v. Presider's post-communion Prayers (190 – 195)
- H. Closing Rites (196 – 198)
- I. Thanksgiving After Mass (199 – 205)

II. Prayers to be used for other occasions

- A. Veneration of the Cross (206 – 222)
- B. Other general prayers (223 – 231)

What is a *Rationale*?

The *Rationale* is an Episcopal humeral, a counterpart of the Pallium, and like it worn over the chasuble. During the Middle Ages the use of the rationale was affected by a number of German bishops, e.g. the Bishops of Würzburg, Ratisbon, Eichstätt, Naumburg, Halberstadt, Paderborn, Minden, Speier, Metz, Augsburg, Prague, Olmutz, and by the Bishops of Liège and Toul, whose dioceses at that time belonged to the German Empire.

From the tenth to the thirteenth century, the rationale was the name of an Episcopal ornament similar to a large pectoral clasp, made of precious metal, ornamented with diamonds, and worn over the chasuble. It is frequently met with in pictures of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and is generally square, seldom round in form. Its use was discontinued in the course of the thirteenth century, and it is only at Reims that its use can be traced to the beginning of the sixteenth century. It originated undoubtedly in the pomp developed in Episcopal vestments during the tenth century, and took its name from the breast ornament of the Jewish high-priest. The edges were generally adorned with small bells.

The Rationale is an imitation and an equivalent of the Pallium. It appears, however, that the humeral ornaments of the Jewish high-priests (ephod, etc.) were not without influence in evoking this pontifical adornment, as may be seen from the original rationales preserved at Bamberg and Ratisbon. The name at least is derived from the appellation of the breast ornament of the high-priest Aaron. These consisted of a wooden brooch, overlaid with enameled metal, which was fastened high up on the breast of the chasuble when the chasuble had had no central orphrey.

adapted from Braun, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient* (Freiburg, 1907) as found in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1908) and Macalister, *Ecclesiastical Vestments: their development and history* (London, 1896).



Lectionary page depicting Bishop Sigebert with two deacons. This is from the same collection of books as the *Missa Illyrica*.