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FORMULAS FOR THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER IN THE TYPICAL EDITIONS OF THE POST-CONCILIAR MISSAL

Abstract. The study presents the results of research on changes in the formulas for the universal prayer in the subsequent typical editions of the Missal. The universal prayer is the climax of the liturgy in which the universal priesthood of the faithful is fulfilled. The Council postulated its restoration according to the ancient practice. *Concilium ad Exsequendam Constitutionem de Sacra Liturgia* published (before the first typical edition of the Missal) a basic document *De oratione communi seu fidelium*. The formulas for the universal prayer were given in it. They form the basis on which the national bishops' conferences should publish their own formulas in the national language. Out of 54 models of the universal prayer given in *De oratione*, 11 were added in an appendix to the post-conciliar Missal. This confirms the concept that they are only examples, not a set for use in the liturgy.

Key words: universal prayer; prayer of the faithful; Missal of Paul VI; formulas for prayers.

The universal prayer, restored thanks to the provisions of Vaticanum II, has gained its rightful place in the liturgy and plays an important role as the climax of the universal priesthood fulfilment in the Holy Mass. The aim of the following study is to present the issue of including the formulas for the universal prayer in the typical editions of the Paul VI Missal.¹ These guidelines were taken from the publication released in 1966, which adopted the recommendations of the Council Fathers to restore the universal prayer.²

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¹ *Missale Romanum*. Editio typica (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970) [hereinafter referred to as MR 1970]; *Missale Romanum*. Editio typica altera (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1975) [hereinafter referred to as MR 1975]; *Missale Romanum*. Editio typica tertia (Typis Vaticanis, 2002; Reimpresio emendata — Typis Vaticanis, 2008) [hereinafter referred to as MR 2008].

² CONCILIIUM AD EXSEQUENDAM CONSTITUTIONEM DE SACRA LITURGIA, *De oratione communi*

1. THE ORIGINS OF THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

The Constitution on the Liturgy stipulates that the reform must take into consideration restoring «*oratio communis*» seu «*fideliū*» in the Holy Mass after the Gospel and the homily.³ The roots of the prayer of the faithful go back to the Apostolic Age, and its existence was documented in the Letter of St Clement and in the *Apology* of St Justin. In the first centuries, there developed the intercessory prayer complementing the Liturgy of the Word; it was the prayer for various categories of participants in a liturgical gathering (catechumens, penitents etc.), who, according to the *Apostolic Constitutions* (about 380), left the congregation one group after the other — only the participants of the prayer of the faithful remained.⁴ Solemn orations accompanying the prayer of the faithful (the same as today's on Good Friday) appeared in the 3rd century; and due to the influence of the East in the 5th century, the universal prayer assumed a form of a litany. The disappearance of the catechuminate and the presence of catechumens in the congregation resulted in some changes in the Roman liturgy at the turn of the 5th and 6th centuries: the appeals of the prayer of the faithful were transferred to a litany (e.g. Gelasian) sung *ad introitum* during the long-lasting papal procession at the beginning of the mass. At the turn of the 6th and 7th centuries, this form of a prayer completely disappeared, the only relic which survived was the response *Kyrie eleison*.⁵

The Germanic and Gaulish codices dating back to the beginning of the 10th century included the recommendation of the prayer analogous to the universal prayer (before the offertory). In the period from the 12th to the 16th century, prayers were said after the homily in Germany, Czechia, Poland — the countries where the Roman Rite was used, but outside Rome itself. The model of the universal prayer in the Polish language dating back to the end of the 15th century is in manuscript — a card sewn into the Code of the Gniezno Sermons⁶. Post-

seu fidelium. Natura, momentum ac structura. Criteria atque specimina Coetibus territorialibus Episcoporum proposita (Città del Vaticano, 1966).

³ Cf. CSL, 53.

⁴ Cf. Josef Andreas JUNGSMANN, *Missarum sollemnia*, vol. 1 (Wien, Freiburg, Basel: Herder, 1962), 614–16.

⁵ Cf. Noëlle Maurice DENIS-BOULET, “Analyse des rites et des prières de la messe,” in *L'Église en prière*, ed. Aimé-George Martimort, et al. (Paris, Tournai, Rome, New York: Desclée, 1965), 369; Piotr KULBACKI, “Modlitwa powszechna jako modlitwa wiernych,” *Roczniki Liturgiczno-Homiletyczne* 2/57 (2010): 142–46.

⁶ *Kazania Gnieźnieńskie. Podobizna, transliteracja, transkrypcja*, ed. Stefan Vrtel-Wierczyński (Poznań: Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1953), 146–47; cf. *Modlitwa Powszechna*, ed. Franciszek Małaczyński (Katowice: Księgarnia Św. Jacka, 1970), VII–VIII.

Tridentine liturgical books unifying the liturgy contributed to moving the previous universal prayers to popular piety in Italy, Spain and Poland. In Germany, the form of the universal prayer was unified in the 16th century. In France, it was to be said before the homily in the 17th century; however later, until the end of the 19th century the so-called prayers were generally said after the sermon. Additional prayers said parallel to the liturgy were multiplied as they were believed to be really effective. The demand for restoring the universal prayer in its previous form appeared in the liturgical movement in the middle of the 20th century.⁷

2. THE NATURE OF THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

The Council Fathers approved the restoration of the prayer “*pro sancta Ecclesia, pro iis qui nos in potestate regunt, pro iis qui variis premuntur necessitatibus, ac pro omnibus hominibus totiusque mundi salute*” after the Gospel and the homily.⁸ Due to its dimension referring to the salvation of people coming from different circles—which was strongly emphasized in the reform program of the Council,⁹ the name given to this prayer was the historic one *oratio communis*; and since in the Church tradition only those who were allowed to take part in sacred activities were the subject of the prayer, the other name *oratio fidelium* was also used.¹⁰ The Constitution on the Liturgy indicated that universal prayer should be one of these elements in the Holy Mass which ought to be celebrated in the national language with the aim of implementing the demand *actuosa participatio*¹¹. Both names—the *universal prayer* and the *prayer of the faithful*—were used in the title of the document issued by the Council (*Concilium*) for Implementing the Constitution on the Liturgy. This document explains the nature, role and structure of this prayer and gives a series of formulas.¹² It provides 54 formulas given in Latin and French in the section entitled *Specimina orationes Fidelium*. These formulas are arranged according to the formularies of the

⁷ Cf. P. KULBACKI, “Modlitwa powszechna,” 146–48.

⁸ Cf. CSL, 53.

⁹ See PAWEŁ VI, Encyklika *Ecclesiam suam Ecclesiam suam* (August 6, 1964), n. 96–111, in JAN XXIII, PAWEŁ VI, JAN PAWEŁ II, *Encykliki. Tekst łacińsko-polski* (Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1981), 211–223.

¹⁰ Cf. CSL, 53

¹¹ Cf. CSL, 54; cf. Bartłomiej MATCZAK, *Cipriano Vaggagini OSB i reforma liturgiczna* (Kraków-Tyniec: Wydawnictwo Benedyktynów, 2013), 57–60.

¹² Cf. footnote 2.

pre-conciliar Missal.¹³ To facilitate the use of the formulas, the handbook of the Council includes a systematic index arranged according to the four series of prayer intentions¹⁴:

- ◆ 1st group of intentions: 1) *Ecclesia et res ecclesiae*; 2) *Varii status in ecclesia*;
- ◆ 2nd group of intentions: 1) *Res civiles et saeculares*; 2) *Variis status in civitate*;
- ◆ 3rd group of intentions: *In aliqua necessitate positi*;
- ◆ 4th group of intentions: *Pro membris ipsius coetus*.

Furthermore, an alphabetical index was added to the series of the formulas.¹⁵

The document *Concilium* suggests that the name *prex* or *deprecatio universalis* should be used instead of the historical name, as it would emphasize that the whole mass is a universal prayer, and in particular *Pater noster* is the prayer of the faithful.¹⁶ The heading *oratio universalis* is therefore used in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal of Paul VI. Then it is specified (also in the text of *ordo missae*): *oratio universalis, seu oratio fidelium*¹⁷; similarly the formulas of this prayer included in the appendix are described as *specimina formularum pro oratione universali*¹⁸.

The formulas for the universal prayer in *De oratione* are based on the following principles¹⁹: it is directed to the Father (*supplicatio ad Deum*), it contains universal appeals with which the congregation is concerned and which also embrace those who are absent (*petit a Deo praesertim beneficia universalia*)²⁰; it is an appeal of all participants of the liturgy (*spectat ad populum fidelem; «populo eam participatione»*). It should be added that the prayer is regulated by a priest—the main celebrant, who begins it with an introduction in which he invites the faithful to pray to God; the introduction is not the prayer to God. The intentions are announced by the deacon, the celebrant or a concelebrant. The main celebrant, even if he does not announce intentions, should be the one who says the concluding prayer.²¹

¹³ Cf. *De oratione*, 15.

¹⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 175–77.

¹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 178–80.

¹⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 13.

¹⁷ Cf. MR 1970, 37, 390; MR 1975, 37, 390; MR 2008, 34, 514.

¹⁸ Cf. MR 1970, 893; MR 1975, 921; MR 2008, 1259.

¹⁹ Cf. *De oratione*, 7.

²⁰ Cf. Bogusław NADOLSKI, *Leksykon liturgii* (Poznań: Pallottinum, 2006), 954; Paul DE CLERC, *Le prière universelle dans les liturgies anciennes* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1977), 299.

²¹ Cf. *De oratione*, 9.

3. SPECIMINA FORMULARUM IN THE PAUL VI MISSAL

Recommendations included in *De oratione* clearly emphasized that it is not a liturgical book but the formulas to be used by the bishops' conferences in order to prepare their own handbooks with the formulas for the universal prayer approved by them.²² The typical edition of the Paul IV Missal provides only a few formulas taken from *De oratione* with minor revision. Due to the fact that they are in the Missal, these texts are considered to be part of a liturgical book, but since they are in annexes with the heading *Specimina formularum pro oratione universali*, they are not treated as obligatory texts, just as it was declared in the comprehensive study of *De oratione*. The bishops' conferences are still expected to prepare their own aids for the universal prayer.

The typical edition of the Paul IV Missal provides 11 examples of the universal prayer. They were taken out of 54 formulas included in *De oratione* in the following way²³:

1. *Formula Generalis, I* – 1. *Formula Generalis, I*;
2. *Formula Generalis, II* – 2. *Formula Generalis, II*;
3. *Tempore Adventus* – 3. *Tempore Adventus, I*;
4. *Tempore Nativitatis* – 5. *Tempore Nativitatis Domini*;
5. *Tempore Quadragesimae, I* – 9. *Tempore Quadragesimae, I*;
6. *Tempore Quadragesimae, II* – 10. *Tempore Quadragesimae, II*;
7. *Tempore Feriis Hebdomadae Sanctae* – 11. *Tempore Passionis*;
8. *Tempore Paschali* – 15. *Tempore Paschali, I*;
9. *Tempore „Per Annum”, I* – 23. *Tempore Post Pentecosten, II*;
10. *Tempore „Per Annum”, II* – 24. *Tempore Post Pentecosten, III*;
11. *In Missis Defunctorum* – 53. *In Exsequiis Defunctorum, I*.

After the two formulas intended for ordinary time the Missal states that *formularia generalia* can be used in this period.²⁴

The formulas for the universal prayers given in *De oratione* were adapted to the arrangement of the pre-conciliar liturgical calendar. That is the reason for the differences in the terminology of the headings of the above-men-

²² In Poland, the formulas of the universal prayer preceded by the rules of its editing have been published on the basis of the reformed liturgical calendar. See *Modlitwa Powszechna*, ed. F. Małaczyński. This is the only handbook which, according to the recommendation of *De oratione* was officially approved by the Polish Episcopal Conference. Cf. *De oratione*, 13.

²³ Cf. MR 1970, 893–903; MR 1975, 921–31; MR 2008, 1259–69.

²⁴ Cf. MR 1970, 901; MR 1975, 929; MR 2008, 1268.

tioned series of the selected prayers. The remaining 43 formulas were not introduced into the post-conciliary Missal. It must be noted that some of the suggestions were no longer apt after the reform of the calendar (e.g. 7. *Tempore Post Epiphaniam*; 8. *Tempore Septuagesimae*). *De oratione* also contains formulas for the feast of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary and Lord's saints according to the pre-conciliar standards and terminology (e.g. 30. *In Festo Purificationis B.M.V.*). They were not included in the typical edition of the Missal. By limiting examples, it was possible to avoid the situation in which the annexe to the Missal would play the role of an "established" liturgical text due to numerous *specimina* from the other celebrations of the liturgical year, and this would be contrary to a dialogical nature of the universal prayer as the one which makes the responses to the word of God relevant.

4. THE STRUCTURE OF THE FORMULAS IN TYPICAL EDITIONS

The 1st and the 2nd typical editions retained, the same as *De orationis*, a system of prayers marked with the letters from A to F. *Admonitio praevia* is marked with the letter A; *1^a series intentionum*—B; *2^a series intentionum*—C; *3^a series intentionum*—D; *4^a series intentionum*—E; *Collecta sacerdotalis conclusiva*—F²⁵. The arrangement of the series of the prayers and their meaning were explained in *De oratione* in the chapter entitled *Directorium practicum*.²⁶

The change to the way the formulas were presented was introduced in the 3rd typical edition. Since the explanation concerning the structure of the universal prayer petitions and presiding over them was included in typical editions in the General Instruction of the Missal,²⁷ the formulas were rightly simplified in the 3rd typical edition. The following elements were altered: the letter A was no longer used for marking the celebrant's invitation to the universal prayer, the same changes were made to the letter F for the celebrant's concluding prayer and from B to E for the particular thematic series of the universal prayer. This arrangement became more legible and transparent both substantively, formally and typographically. The sections described as

²⁵ Cf. MR 1970, 893; MR 1975, 921.

²⁶ Cf. *De oratione*, 9–10.

²⁷ Cf. MR 1970, 38; MR 1975, 38; MR 2008, 34–35.

Admonitio sacerdotis and *Oratio sacerdotis* were not numbered, only appropriate typography was used, whereas *Intentiones* were provided with numbers from 1 to 4, and if two formulas of petitions were given, they were numbered 1a, 1b, 2a, etc.²⁸.

5. CHANGES IN THE TEXTS OF THE FORMULAS FOR THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

The formulas for the universal prayer intentions taken from *De oratione*, apart from a few examples, were not changed. Only two petitions in the 2nd *Formula generalis*, II included in the series E were connected with certain current events in the local community (“*pro felici successu missionis in hac nostra paroecia; pro N., qui sabbato proximo ordinem sacrum presbyteratus accipiet*”), and therefore the Missal provided other appeals so that the spectrum of their use could be broadened.

The prayer 5. *Tempore Nativitatis Domini* in the series D was supplemented with one word added in brackets, and it resulted in extending the use of the text: “*ut per misterium Nativitatis (manifestationis) Christi*”. In the prayer 24. *Tempore Post Pentekosten*, III, the edition of the prayer in the series E was changed.

The document *De oratione*, released before the Paul VI Missal arranged particular places and their role in the celebration, does not indicate the place from which the priest presides over the universal prayer. Only the 1st and 2nd typical editions indicate that a priest leads the prayer from the presiding place or the ambo; the 3rd edition says only about the presiding place, thus emphasizing the role of the celebrant in the universal prayer.²⁹

It is possible to omit the celebrant’s invitation addressed to the congregation to pray to God if it is included in the ending of the homily.³⁰ The priest invites the faithful to pray to God the Father; only in the two formulas in the Missal (no 2,3), the same ones as in *De oratione*, the invitation is addressed to Christ the Lord. *De oratione* and the 1st and 2nd typical editions use the term *admonitio praevia*, whereas the 3rd typical edition — *admonitio sacerdotis*.

²⁸ Cf. MR 2008, 1259–60

²⁹ Cf. MR 1970, 50; MR 1975, 50; MR 2008, 47.

³⁰ Cf. *De oratione*, 9.

The priest concludes the universal prayer without the invitation *Oremus* in order to avoid repeating the invitation included in *admonitio*.³¹ *De oratione* and the 1st and the 2nd typical editions use the term *collecta sacerdotalis conclusiva*,³² whereas the 3rd typical edition—*oratio sacerdotis*.³³

De oratione refers to the tradition of the Roman liturgy dating back to the synod of Hippo (393) addressing prayers to the First Person of the Holy Trinity,³⁴ and therefore all the prayers concluding the universal prayer are addressed to God the Father (*Deus; Dominus*) while emphasizing the saving intercession of Christ.³⁵ Admittedly, *De oratione* does not completely exclude the possibility of addressing the prayer concluding the universal prayer to the Son (*potest*); however, it does not include any of such formulas, even in the case of the petitions addressed to the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.³⁶ This principle was retained in the formulas included in the subsequent typical editions.

De oratione as *collecta sacerdotalis conclusiva* contains a certain number of prayers taken from sacramentaries, or from the pre-conciliar Missal. In this way, it refers to the tradition of the collect concluding the Gelasian Litany after the papal procession came to the place of the celebration. *De oratione* states that the same collect cannot be used as a day prayer and at the end of the universal prayer. In the formulas included in the Paul VI Missal (*oratio sacerdotis*), concluding prayers taken from the Pius V Missal were replaced with others (no. 1,3).

Since the universal prayer is the response of the faithful to the given intentions (marked: *R* as *responsorium*), the 1st, 2nd editions and *De oratione* define it as *Participatio populi*.³⁷ The 3rd typical edition omits this term.³⁸

De oratione proposes, in the case of Latin, the following acclamations of the faithful: addressed to the Father—*Praesta, aeterne omnipotens Deus; Te rogamus, audi nos; Domine miserere*; addressed to Christ—*Christe, audi nos*;

³¹ Cf. *ibid.*, 9, 11, 16-18.

³² Cf. MR 1970, 893; MR 1975, 921.

³³ Cf. MR 2008, 1259.

³⁴ “*Et cum altari assistitur, semper ad Patrem dirigatur oratio.*” Cf. Michael KUNZLER, *Liturgia Kościoła*, trans. Lucjan Balter (Poznań: Pallottinum, 1999), 328–29; Franciszek BLACHNICKI, “Konicznosc odnowy liturgii na tle jej tradycyjnej koncepcji,” in IDEM, *Jaka odnowa liturgii?*, ed. Irena Kucharska (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Światło-Życie, 2015), 8-11.

³⁵ Cf. *De oratione*, 11.

³⁶ “*Secundum traditionem romanam, collecta sacerdotalis conclusiva potest ad Deum Patrem dirigi, etiam si oratio communis populi, que praecedit, directa est ad Filium.*” Cf. *De oratione*, 26.

³⁷ Cf. MR 1970, 893; MR 1975, 921.

³⁸ Cf. MR 2008, 1259.

*Exaudi, Christe; Kyrie eleison.*³⁹ *De oratione* gives priority to the ancient Greek acclamation *Kyrie eleison* over the others owing to the liturgical tradition of the Greek language and the possibility of active participation (*actuosa participatio*) of the particular congregation in which the people speak various languages in the universal prayer.⁴⁰ The response of the faithful is addressed to God (*Praesta, aeterne omnipotens Deus* — no. 1), the Lord (*Domine, miserere* — no. 4; *Domine deprecemur* — no. 5, 7, 8, 9, 11; *Dominum exoremus* — no. 6, 10), and two responses of the faithful addressed to Christ refer to the tradition of the Gelasian Litany (*Christe, audi nos* — no. 2; *Kyrie, eleison* — no. 3).

It should be noted that liturgical books on the celebration of other sacraments contain the texts of the universal prayer petitions included in the proper places during the celebration; however, they are also given as examples. In addition, they are used while celebrating sacraments during the Holy Mass.⁴¹

CONCLUSIONS

The annexe to the Missal provides only 11 formulas, with minor revision, out of 54 presented in *De oratione*. A limited number of examples are in accordance with the line taken in the document introducing the universal prayer, as a missal should not include a series of ready texts of invitations to the universal prayer being the community's response to the word of God. Such a concept is also present in rituals, for example texts of calls for universal prayer included in *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium*⁴² are also clearly identified as a *specimina*. The thing that is important is to retain the proper structure and order of petitions.

The universal prayer model presented in the Missal confirms that the text of the prayer should be prepared for each specific celebration. Then the complementing the Liturgy of the Word universal prayer, which is the fulfillment of the common priesthood of the faithful, shows the relationship particular celebration of Mass with daily and special circumstances of the Christian life.

³⁹ Cf. *De oratione*, 14. For the French language it was proposed: *Seigneur, écoute-nous; Seigneur, exauce-nous; O Seigneur, écoute et prends pitié; Kyrie, eleison*. Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 24.

⁴¹ See Piotr KULBACKI, "Modlitwa powszechna w polskich księgach liturgicznych," in *Praedicamus Christum Crucifixum. Słowo Boże w liturgii Kościoła*, ed. Andrzej Żądło (Katowice: Księgarnia Św. Jacka, 2010), 356–63.

⁴² Cf. *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium*. Editio typica altera (Typis Polyglotis Vaticanis, 1991), 20.

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WZORY MODLITWY POWSZECHNEJ
W TYPICZNYCH WYDANIACH MSZAŁU POSOBOROWEGO

Streszczenie

Opracowanie prezentuje wyniki badań dotyczących zmian we wzorach modlitwy powszechnej w kolejnych wydaniach typicznych mszału. Modlitwa powszechna stanowi szczytową część liturgii, w której wypełnia się powszechne kapłaństwo wiernych. Sobór postulował przywrócenie jej według starożytnych wzorów. *Concilium ad Exsequendam Constitutionem de Sacra Liturgia* jeszcze przed pierwszą edycją typiczną mszału wydało podstawowy dokument *De oratione communi seu fidelium*. Podano w nim wzory modlitwy powszechnej, na podstawie których krajowe konferencje biskupów powinny wydać własne wzorce w języku narodowym. Spośród 54 podanych w *De oratione* wzorów modlitwy powszechnej w dodatku do posoborowego mszału umieszczono 11. Potwierdza to koncepcję, że mają one stanowić tylko przykłady, a nie zbiór do stosowania w liturgii.

Słowa kluczowe: modlitwa powszechna; modlitwa wiernych; mszał Pawła VI; wzorce modlitw.