

Orate, Fratres et Sorores in the Medieval Mass Liturgy. *Documentation*

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Frank Henderson's Page on Liturgy and Medieval Women

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Introduction

In his history of the eucharistic liturgy, Joseph Jungmann tells us that from the eighth century the priest, after receiving the gifts, “turned around and, stretching out his arms, asked the other priests to pray for him” (p 82). When addressed to priests, it was indeed appropriate for the text to be worded, *orate, fratres* – pray, brothers / brethren.

Joseph A Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development* (Missarum Sollemnia). Translated by Francis A Brunner. New York: Benziger Bros 1955; reprint Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics 1986. Vol II, pp 82-90.

From the ninth century, however, this petition was addressed to the people and not just to the priest's fellow clergy. Jungmann goes on to tell us that in the later period this text was most commonly worded *Orate, fratres et sorores* – pray, brothers and sisters (p 86). This explicit reference to women as well as to men is found in many manuscripts from England, France, The Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and occasionally also in Italian and Hungarian manuscripts. Jungmann explains, “the unrestricted addition of *sorores* corroborates the belief that the medieval liturgists were in agreement with us [today] in extending the word to include everyone, men and women” (p 86).

Fratres alone remained the rule in monasteries of men and in many Italian and Spanish manuscripts. Jungmann explains, “The present day wording of the formula used by the priest [with *fratres* only] first appears in Italian Mass ordines of the twelfth century and after” (p 86).

Jungmann identified 28 manuscripts of liturgical books that used *fratres et sorores* in this context. These are listed in Table 1. I have been able to check these references in some cases, and have thus been able to supply fuller references than originally given. This has not always been possible, however.

I have also identified at least a dozen manuscripts that use *sorores* and were not known to

Jungmann. They come from England, France, Norway, Hungary and Germany; several are different editions and translations of the Sarum missal. These are listed in Table 2.

It may be added that the earliest translation of the ordinary of the mass into German used *Schwestern* (sisters), based on a Latin version which read, *Oratre, fratres et sorores*. See Franz Rudolf Reichert, *Die älteste Deutsche Gesamtauslegung der Messe (Erstausgahn ca 1480)*. Munster Westfallia: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung 1967, p 107.

Other Uses of *Fratres et Sorores*

In some manuscripts the invitation to pray for the priest at the offertory was followed by an invitation to pray for the dead, and sometimes this text too began *Orate, fratres et sorores*. In J. Wickham Legg's 1916 Latin edition of the Sarum missal, p 219, this text read:

Orate fratres et sorores pro fidelibus defunctis.

Responsio populi

Requiem eternam dona eis domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis. Quam olim Abraham promisisti et semini eius.

In the English translation of the Sarum missal prepared by F. E. Warren (1913, vol 1, p 33), this was rendered as follows:

Brethren and Sisters, pray for the faithful departed.

Grant them, O Lord, eternal rest, and let perpetual light shine upon them, which thou didst promise to Abraham and to his seed of old.

Additionally, in some manuscripts the prayer *Misereatur* following the *Confiteor* also began with *Fratres et sorores*. Here Jungmann p 300, quotes Edmond Martene, *De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus*, 4 vol. Antwerp 1736; reprint Georg Olms 1967, vol 1, col 361. The text of this prayer is as follows: It includes an additional gender balanced usage, *sanctorum et sanctarum*.

Fratres et Sorores, per misericordiam Domini nostri Jesus Christi, per auxilium et signum sanctae crucis, per intercessionem beatae et gloriae semperque Virginis Mariae, et per merita B. Apostolorum Petri et Pauli, B. Michaelis archangeli, B. Martini et omnium Sanctorum et Sanctarum, misereatur vestri omnipotens Deus et dimittat vobis omnia peccata vestra, et perducatur vos Jesus Christus Filius Dei ad vitam aeternam. Amen.

Addendum

Examination of Adelbert Ebner's *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kunstgeschichte des Missale romanum im Mittelalter. Iter Italicum* (Graz, 1957) confirms that liturgical books from Italy use *fratres* alone in a consistent manner (when this text is included at all). One such book, however, is interesting in that it provides a gender-inclusive response to this exclusively masculine verse. Thus:

Orate pro me, fratres.

Orent pro te omnes sancti et sancte Dei. (p 329)

Table 1 **References to *Orate, fratres et sorores* in** **Joseph Jungmann's *Mass of the Roman Rite***

“Alphabetum sacerdotum”

in J. Wickham Legg, *Tracts on the Mass*. London, 1904

p 42

Jungmann, vol II, pp 83-84, n. 12; p 86, n 26

A. Beck, *Kirchliche Studien und Quellen*. Amberg, 1903

p 238: Incipit liber missalis secundum breuiarium chori ecclesiae ratisponensis,

Orate pro me peccatore fratres et sorores...

Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

p 268: Ordo missae secundum morem Ecclesiae Ratisponsensis,

Orate fratres et sorores

Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

p 308: Incipit ordo missalis secundum breuiarium chori ecclesiae Frisingensis

Orate pro me peccator fratres et sorores

Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n. 26

A. J. Binterim, *Die vorzuglichsten Denkwürdigkeiten der chriskatholischen Kirche*, 7 vol.

Mainz, 1825-1841

vol IV, p 3

Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

G. Durandus, *Rationale divinorum officiorum*. Lyons 1574,

vol. IV, 32, 3

Jungmann, vol 2, pp 83-84, n 12

Aldolph Franz, *Die Messe im deutschen Mittelalter: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Liturgie und des religiösen Volkslebens*. Freiberg 1902; reprint Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963.

p 753: Das Augsburger Ordinarium missae in der 2. helfte des 15. Jahrh.

Zum Volke gewendet: Orate pro me fratres et sorores.

Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

F. A. Hoeynck, *Geschichte der kirchlichen Liturgie des Bisthums Augsburg*. Augsburg, 1889

p 374

Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

Hugo of St Cher, *Tractatus* (ed. Solch, 23)

Jungmann, vol II, pp 83-84, n 12

E. Javor, *Het Keziratus Pozzony Missale a Nemzeti Muzcumban*. Budapest, 1942.

p 121

Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

J. Koch, *Handschriftliche Missalien in Steiermark*. Graz 1916

p 120

p 121

p 122

p 125

p 126

Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

J. Wickham Legg, *Tracts on the Mass*. London 1904

p 5

p 221

Jungmann, vol 2, p 84, n 17; p 86, n 26

J. Wickham Legg, *The Sarum Missal edited from three early manuscripts*

Oxford University Press, 1916; reprint 1969

p 219: one ms: Orate fratres, note 5: et sorores, add. B, M

Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 17; p 86, n 26

V. Leroquais, *Les Pontificaux des bibliothèques de France*, 4 vol. Paris, 1937

p 167: Et respondeant fratres et sorores: Suscipiat.

Jungmann, vol. II, p 89, n 51

Edmond Martene, *De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus*, 4 vol. Antwerp 1736; reprint Georg Olms 1967. Vol 1.

col 396 A: Denique in missali Majoris-monasterii, in Toronensi ms annorum circiter 300

& et in editio 1531: Orate, fratres et sorores, & ego oropro vobis, ut meum pariter & vestrum sit acceptum in conspectu Dei sacrificium
Jungmann, vol II, pp 83-84, n 12, p 86, n 26

col 512 A: Ordo IV, col. 490ff. Continens missam a Matthia Flacco Illyrica editam
Orate pro me peccatore, fratres & sorores, ut meum, & vestrum sacrificium acceptum fiat
Domino Deo omnipotenti ante conspectum suum.
Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

col 526 D: Ordo V, col 518ff. Ex pervetusto codice insignis monasterii S. Dionysii in
Francia circa tempora Caroli Magni exarato. Orate pro me, fratres & sorores, ut meum
pariter & vestrum sacrificium sit acceptum in conspectu Domini.
Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

col 638 A: Ordo XXVI, col 635ff. Ex ms. missali Fiscamnensis monasterii ad usum
ecclesiae Rotomagensis ab annis circiter 400. Exarato. Orate, fratres & sorores, pro me
miserrimo peccatore ut meum ac vestrum pariter in conspectu Domini sit acceptum
sacrificium
Jungmann, vol II, p 84, n 17; p 86, n 26

col 644D: Ordo XXVIII, col 642ff. Ex ms missali Gemmeticensi, secundum usum
ecclesiae Ebronensis, ante annos 300 exarato. Orate pro me, fratres & sorores, & eo pro
vobis, ut meum & vestrum in conspectu Domini acceptum sit hoc sacrificium
Jungmann, vol II, pp 83-84, n 12; p 84, n 17

col 663 C: Ordo XXIV, col 661ff. Ex ms. Missali A, De ongeuil episcopi Leonensis
Orate pro me fratres & sorores, & ego orago pro vobis ad Dominum Deum nostrum, ut
meum pariter ac vestrum coram Deo acceptum sit sacrificium.
Jungmann, vol II, pp 83-84, n 12; p 86, n 26

col 668 A: Ordo XXV col 664ff. Ex veteri missali insignis ecclesia Sarisberigensis in
Anglis. Orate, fratres & sorores, pro me, ut meum pariterque vestrum aptum sit Domine
Deo nostro sacrificium
Jungmann, vol II, p 84, n 17; p 86, n 26

col 668 B: Ordo XXV, col 664ff. Ex veteri missali insignis ecclesia Sarisberigensis in
Anglis. Orate fratres & sorores pro fidelibus defunctis.
Jungmann, vol II, p 84, n 17; p 86, n 26

William Maskell, *The Ancient Liturgy of the Church of England according to the uses of Sarum, York, Hereford and Bangor*, 3rd ed. Oxford 1882.

Pp 98-99: Sarum, Bangor and York: Orates fratres et sorores (Hereford: Orate fratres)
Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

Ludovico Antonio Muratori, *Liturgica Romana Vetus*, 2 vol. Venice 1748
vol I, 92: ex Codico Mutinensis Ecclesiae ante annus sexcentos scripto [Sacramentary of
Modena]. Orate, fratres et sorores
Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

Thos F. Simmons, ed., *The Lay Folks Mass Book*. Early English Text Society, original series 71.
London 1879
p 100: Orate, fratres et sorores
Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

M. Smits van Waesberge, "Die misverklaring van Meester Simon van Venlo," in *Ons geestelijk
Erf* XV (1941)
p 325-327 [Netherlands Mass orders]
p 327: [Cologne]
Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

H von Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundentgebet nach dem Brauche der Rigaschen
Kirche im spateren Mittelalter*. Riga, 1904
p 81 [Riga]
Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

E. E. Ylverton, *The Mass in Swedish*. London 1920.
p 15
Jungmann, vol II, p 86, n 26

Table 2
Uses of *Orate, fratres et sorores* not given by Jungmann

J. Bona, *Rerum liturgicarum libri duo*. Cologne 1674
p 222

p 224

Helge Faehn. *Manuale Norweigicum* (Presta Handbok) ex tribus codicibus saec XII-XIV. Oslo:
Norsk Historisk Khejeskraft-Institut 1962
p 111

Victor-M. Leroquais. *Les Sacramentaires et les Missels Manuscrits des Bibliothèques Publiques de France*. Paris, 1924

vol 1, p 215: Missel de Cologne, 12th s. Orate... fratres et sorores

vol 1, p 314: Sacramentaire de Saint-Martin-de-Tours, 12th s. Orate fratres et sorores

vol 1, p 327: Sacramentaire d'Arles, 12th s. Obsecro vos, fratres et sorores

vol 2, p 18: Missel de Reims, 13th s. Orate, fratres et sorores

vol 3,;p 57: Missel de Cologne a l'usage de Neuss, 15th s. Orate pro me peccatore, fratres et sorores

Franz Rudolf Reichert, ed. *Die älteste Deutsche Gesamtauslegung der Messe (Erstausgahn ca 1480)*. Munster Westfallia: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung 1967

p 107: Orate pro me, fratres et sorores / ... Ir prueder und schwestern

Hermann Reifenberg. *Messe und Missalien im Bistum Mainz seit dem zeitalter der Gotik*.

Munster Westfalen: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung

p 61, n 380

p 67, p 419

Anselm Strittmatter. "Liturgical manuscripts preserved in Hungarian libraries." *Traditio* 19 (1963) 487-505

497: National Museum of Budapest, Sacramentary; MS 93, 14th c

The Sarum Missal in English. London: Church Press, 1868.

P 299, Brethren and Sisters, pray for me that my and your sacrifice may alike be accepted by the Lord our God.

P 300, Brethren and sisters, pray for the faithful departed.

The Sarum Missal in English, trans. Frederick E. Warren, 2 vol. Alcuin Club Collections xi.

London: Mowbray 1913. Reprint University Microfilms 1989

Part I, p 33

Brethren and Sisters, pray for me, that my and your sacrifice may be alike acceptable to the Lord our God.

Brethren and sisters, pray for the faithful departed...

[Another witness to this tradition:]

Frank H Weston, *The Prayer Book in the Making*. London: John Murray, 1907, p 46.

[Another witness:]

The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe, ed. Stephen Reed Cattley. London: R. B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1838, vol 4, p 373.

The Use of Sarum. I. The Sarum Customs as set out in the Consuetudinary and Customary ed. Walter Howard Frere, 2 vol. Cambridge University Press, 1898; reprint University Microfilms 1989

p 78, Orate, fratres et sorores (p 139 Orate fratres)

Missale ad Usum Insignis Ecclesiae Eboracensis, 2 vol. Surtees Society 59. Durham: Andrews 1874.

Vol I, p 171. Orate, fratres et sorores...