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## The Good Friday Oration for Non-Christians in the Background of the 20th Century Liturgical Reforms

### Introduction

In some aspects the Good Friday orations were “a hard nut to crack” by the reformers of the Catholic liturgy in the second half of the twentieth century. On the one hand, their ancient form established in the first millennium demanded respect and reverence, but on the other hand, its provenance from ancient Christianity caused that some of their phrases and formulations were gradually perceived as harmful and intolerant<sup>2</sup>. This especially concerned the orations: *pro haereticis et schismaticis* (for heretics and schismatics), *perfidis Judaeis* (for the faithless Jews) and *paganis* (for the pagans). Attempting to match the texts of the ancient Good Friday orations to the new age, some traditional intercessions, including these three prayers, were changed. The Oration for the pagans (now “For Those Who Do Not Believe in Christ”) is a very interesting source material as it was changed twice within several years. This shows that the reformers faced

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<sup>2</sup> See A. Nocent, *The Liturgical Year: The Paschal Triduum, The Easter Season*, Collegeville 1977, p. 90; K. Lijka, *Dzieje Triduum Paschalnego* [in:] *Historia liturgii*, ed. W. Świerzawski, Zawichost 2012, p. 112; J. Bagrowicz, *Czy wiemy, co sprawujemy? Wtajemniczenie w ofiarę Mszy Świętej*, Włocławek 2012, p. 99; B. Nadolski, *Leksykon liturgii*, Poznań 2006, p. 1108. Some people derived the Good Friday orations from the apostles. See J. Gaume, *Zasady i całość wiary katolickiej, czyli wykład jej historyczny, dogmatyczny, moralny, liturgiczny, apologetyczny, filozoficzny i socjalny od stworzenia świata aż do naszych czasów*, Kraków 1871, p. 76.

great difficulties with determining a correct version of the oration which would be adequate to the new period of history.

This paper is an attempt to compare the three versions of the prayer for non-Christians in the light of its contents<sup>3</sup>. This aim will be realised by juxtaposing all of the versions of the oration, especially analysing the phrases which belong to the same category. The research are four liturgical books: Benedict XV's Roman Missal from 1920, *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus* from 1955, *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae* from 1965 and the first typical edition of Paul VI's Roman Missal prepared in 1970<sup>4</sup>. The paper is divided into two main parts. The first one presents the historical contexts and forms of the orations, while the second one is an analysis of the prayers.

## I. Historical contexts and forms of the orations

The traditional Good Friday oration for those who were not Christians or Jews had the following form,

Let us pray also for the pagans: that almighty God would remove iniquity from their hearts: that, putting aside their idols, they may be converted to the true and living God, and His only Son, Jesus Christ our God and Lord. (Let us pray. Let us kneel. Arise.)<sup>5</sup>. Almighty and everlasting God, whoever seekest not the death, but the life of sinners: mercifully hear our prayer, and deliver them from the worship of idols: and join them to Thy holy Church for the praise and glory of Thy Name<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> The oration for Jews was analysed several times by different authors, the orations for non-Catholics and Public Office have been discussed recently. See D. Mielnik, *Wielkopiątkowa modlitwa za niekatolików na tle posoborowych reform liturgicznych*, „Teologia. Kultura. Społeczeństwo” 4 (2018), pp. 191-201; Idem, *Wielkopiątkowa modlitwa za władzę świecką na tle dwudziestowiecznych reform liturgicznych*, „Teologia. Kultura. Społeczeństwo” 5 (2019), pp. 115-125.

<sup>4</sup> *These documents are the sources: Missale romanum ex decreto Concilii Tridentini restitutum S. PII V pontificis maximi jussu editum aliorumque pontificum cura recognitum a S. Pio X reformatum et Benedicti XV auctoritate Vulgatum*, Vatican 2004; *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus. Editio iuxta typicam vaticanam*, Ratisbonae 1955; *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae. Editio Typica*, Vatican 1965; *Missale Romanum ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Pauli PP. VI Promulgatum. Editio iuxta Typicam*, Vatican 1970.

<sup>5</sup> The words in brackets were the formula which separated the intention of the oration from the text of prayer (except the oration for the Jews). Each phrase was announced by different people, *oremus* by the celebrant, *genua flectamus* by the deacon, *levate* by the subdeacon. After the reforms of the 1950s the last phrase was ascribed to the deacon. See Ch.G. Moroni, *Fonctions papales à Saint-Pierre de Rome, pendant la semaine sainte*, Paris 1845, p. 98; F.R. McManus, *The Rites of Holy Week: Ceremonies, Preparations, Music, Commentary*, Paterson 1956, p. 123.

<sup>6</sup> The Latin text, “Orémus et pro pagánis: ut Deus omnipotens áuferat iniquitátem a córdibus eórum; ut, relictis idólis suis, convertántur ad Deum vivum et verum, et únicum Fílium ejus Jesum

This form of the prayer is testified by very old liturgical books derived from the first millennium, which is the evidence that Catholics used it in primitive Christianity. Different medieval transcriptions of this form of prayer survived to the age of the Protestant Reformation and via Pius V's Roman Missal (1570) it was a binding version of the Good Friday Solemn Intercessions for the Universal Church till the second half of the 20th century. The first non-essential change took place due to Pius XII's reforms of the Holy Week celebration. Some parts of the Good Friday liturgy were reformulated significantly (for example, the so-called *Missa praesantificatorum* was deleted, the liturgy of the word was reworked, the chasuble and maniple were substituted by a cope in the second part of the liturgy). However, the Good Friday orations were not changed considerably<sup>7</sup>. As for the oration for non-Christians, only the title was added – *pro conversione infidelium* (for the conversion of the unbelievers)<sup>8</sup>.

In fact, the Good Friday oration for non-Christians was changed radically during Paul VI's pontificate (1963-1978). The first modification took place in *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae* from 1965. According to the new guidelines, the oration received a new title – *pro nondum in Christum credentibus* (For Those Who Do Not Believe in Christ yet). The modification concerned both parts of the prayer (its intention and text). After these changes the prayer read, "Let us pray for those who do not believe in Christ yet that they became decent to enter on the way of salvation by Holy Spirit's lumen illumed. Let us pray. Let us kneel. Arise. Almighty and everlasting God who gave all nations for your beloved Son, gather all people to family of your Church that by searching the lumen of truth they will deserve for achieving you, God true and the only one"<sup>9</sup>.

The next change of the Good Friday solemn intercession occurred in the new edition of the Roman Missal in 1970. In Paul VI's Missal, the structure of the Good Friday orations was changed on the one hand, but on the other, the wording

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Christum, Deum et Dóminum nostrum. Orémus. Flectámus génuá. Leváte. Omnípotens sempitérne Deus, qui non mortem peccatórum, sed vitam semper inquiris: súscipe propítius oratióem nostram, et líbera eos ab idolórum cultúra; et ágregga Ecclésiæ tuæ sanctæ, ad laudem et glóriam nóminis tui".

<sup>7</sup> More important changes resulted in the introduction of fixed formulas in the other orations, the introduction of a genuflexion during the oration for the Jews and modification of the oration for the Emperor (after the reforms – for all in Public Office).

<sup>8</sup> Formerly there were no headings before the orations and the prayer text was continuous.

<sup>9</sup> The translation is mine. The Latin text reads, "Orémus et pro nondum Christum credéntibus: ut, Sancti Spíritus luce repléti, et ipsi viam salútis váleant introíre. Orémus. Flectámus génuá. Leváte. Omnípotens sempitérne Deus, qui omnes gentes Filio tuo dilécto tradidísti: cunctórum Ecclésiæ tuæ ágregga fámilias populórum; ut, veritátis lumen inquiréntes, ad te, Deum verum et únicum, perveníre mereántur".

of the prayers was modified<sup>10</sup>. The editors of the new Roman Missal changed the title of the oration (*pro iis qui in Christum non credunt* – Those Who Do Not Believe in Christ) and modified the second part of the prayer significantly. In the first part of the oration, there was only a minor language revision<sup>11</sup>. Thus, the final version of the Good Friday oration for non-Christians had the following form:

Let us pray for those who do not believe in Christ, That the light of the Holy Spirit May show them the way to salvation. Almighty and eternal God, Enable those who do not acknowledge Christ To find the truth As they walk before you in sincerity of heart. Help us to grow in love for one another, To grasp more fully the mystery of your godhead, And to become more perfect witnesses of your love In the sight of men. We ask this through Christ our Lord<sup>12</sup>.

This form of the oration was reproduced in the third typical edition of Paul VI's Missal in 2002.

## II. Analysis of the oration for non-Christians

Before analysing the intercession for non-Christians it is important to define the Catholics being prayed for in the Good Friday oration for non-Christians (Those Who Do Not Believe in Christ, the pagans). Considering that the Good Friday orations should be universal forces to claim that all the particular prayers should form a whole, that is to say, they should include all people<sup>13</sup>. Therefore, after the orations concerning the Catholic Church there are prayers for those who are out of the complete unity with the Roman Catholic Church<sup>14</sup>. In the first place, there

<sup>10</sup> The succession of the orations was changed (for example, the prayer for those in Public Office and Those in Special Need), as for the prayer for the Jews its text was changed in its intention, and in the second part of the oration, the phrase *acquisitionis antiquae* was substituted by *acquisitionis prióris*.

<sup>11</sup> What is more, the formula separating both parts of the oration, which was announced by the deacon, has become facultative.

<sup>12</sup> The Latin text, "Orémus et pro iis qui in Christum non credunt, ut, luce Sancti Spíritus illustráti, viam salutis et ipsi váleant introíre. Omnípotens sempitérne Deus, fac ut qui Christum non confiténtur, coram te sincéro corde ambulántes, invéniant veritátem, nosque, mútuo proficiéntes semper amóre et ad tuae vitae mystérium plénius percipiéndum sollicitos, perfectióre effíce tuae testes caritátis in mundo".

<sup>13</sup> See A. Mazzinelli, *The Office of Holy Week with the Ordinary Rubrics*, Baltimore 1870, p. 366; A. Pleszczyński, *Treściwy wykład ceremonii: czyli obrzędów kościoła rzymsko-katolickiego*, Warszawa 1908, p. 50.

<sup>14</sup> About division of Good Friday oration see Cz. Krakowiak, *Święte Triduum Paschalne w Mszałe Rzymskim Pawła VI i w Liturgii Godzin. Liturgia i teologia*, Sandomierz 2017, pp. 56-57.

is a prayer for those who were baptized and confess Christ, but they are not in the complete unity with the Roman Catholic Church because of dogmatic or discipline differences (here there is a traditional oration for heretics and schismatics, now the oration for Those Who Believe in Christ)<sup>15</sup>. Then follows the oration for the Jews who have rejected Christ's redemptive message, so for the non-Christians who have a special status because of the covenant which was made by the God of the Christians with this nation. In this context, the oration for the non-Christians include believers of a non-Christian religion, excluding the religion of the Jews<sup>16</sup>. Therefore, the prayer includes believers from such religions like Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, *et cetera*.

Another problem is the presence of an additional oration in Paul VI's Roman Missal from 1970. This prayer was absent in the traditional collection of the Good Friday Solemn Intercessions. The prayer is for Those Who Do Not Believe in God. This oration was introduced just in *novus ordo missae*<sup>17</sup>. The presence of this prayer was to make the Good Friday orations universal by adding a new group to be prayed for. In this context, we should ask whether the traditional Good Friday oration was not universal because the oration for Those Who Do Not Believe in God was absent. Tackling this problem, it is important to take into account the very issue – the formation of the Good Friday oration fell on the period when atheism was marginal and belief in God was common. Reverence and respect for the traditional cultic form were so forceful that even after the emergence of atheism the Good Friday oration was not modified and adapted to the new context<sup>18</sup>. Taking these facts into account, one can claim that the traditional Good Friday oration was universal because it included all the states of the historical context in which it was formed<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Because of reforms from the fiftieth of the twentieth century this oration was titled "for unity of Christian". Even Bugnini claimed that this nomenclature is theological error. See A. Bugnini, *Le "Variationes" ad alcuni testi della Settimana Santa*, "L'Osservatore Romano" 105 (1965) 65, p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Very interesting tension between the oration for Jews and pagans [in:] K.H. Digby, *The Broad Stone of Honour: or the True Sense and Practice of Chivalry*, London 1848, p. 316.

<sup>17</sup> Consequently the number of oration was increased from nine to ten. In this way there was changed the number of traditional Good Friday prayers which was connected to the number of *Kyrie elejson* and *Christe elejson* during the Holy Mass. What is more, this modification violated symbolic universality ( $9 = 3 \times 3$  where 3 is a symbol of fullness).

<sup>18</sup> A good example is the oration for the Emperor. This prayer ceased to be used at the beginning of the nineteenth century because of the Holy Roman Empire's dissolution and Francis II's abdication. Notwithstanding of these facts, the oration was still present in the Roman Missal, the evidence being the prayer in the typical edition of the Roman Missal of Benedict XV. See G.M. Baggs, *The Ceremonies of Holy-week at the Vatican and S. John Lateran's Described*, Rome 1839, p. 75.

<sup>19</sup> See A. Martini, *Ufficio della settimana santa colla versione italiana*, Milano 1837, p. 468.

Further research will assume the following structure. First, the nomenclature used for the non-Christians, the Church and God will be analysed. Then, the terminology applied to God's work as well as the content and purpose of the intercession will be investigated.

### 1. Nomenclature used for non-Christians

In the traditional oration for the non-Christians there is only one term which can clearly be referred to those who do not confess Christianity, namely "pagans". The prayer also has the word "sinners" but this word is problematic because it is not certain whether this term can be referred to non-Christians. First of all, it occurs in the context of the general truth about God's mercy which is visible in his will to give life even to those that are submerged in sins. However, this word alone gives no solid ground for the understanding of this term as a reference to the non-Christians. It may as well refer to all people who live in sins (also to Catholics).

There are two circumstances suggesting that the term "sinners" implies non-Christians. The first argument refers to the intention of the prayer. In this part of the oration, we read about "removing iniquity" from the hearts of the pagans. Because of the fact that iniquity is closely connected to sin (and this word is connected to the term "sinner") it can be claimed that the term "sinners" in this context is referring to non-Christians. The second argument is connected with the pronoun "them" in the second part of prayer. On the basis of the semantic character of this pronoun it can be referred to two nouns, "pagans" or "sinners". Since the latter is closer to this term, it must have referred to sinners. On the other hand, the subject which is hidden under this pronoun according to the prayer has to be saved from "the worship of idols," and the oration speaks about idols in its intentional part. And this intention concerns just pagans. Of course, this pronoun may not refer to "sinners" but to "pagans".

Summarising, it can be asserted that in the Good Friday oration, the only definite term for non-Christians is the term "pagans". In a broader interpretation, the words "sinners" and "them" can also be added to the collection of terms defining non-Christians, but the latter will not be particularly helpful while juxtaposing the nomenclature used in individual orations.

In the context of the reforms introduced during the pontificate of Pius XII, it should be noticed that in 1955 the nomenclature of non-Christians was broadened only in the title of the oration. Beside the term "pagans" the word "unbelievers" was used in the Missal.

In the context of the 1965 publication of *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae* (this document caused some changes on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday), the nomenclature of non-Christians was changed significantly.

First of all, the words “pagans” and “unbelievers”<sup>20</sup> were deleted. The document introduced (both in the title and intention) the periphrasis “Those Who Do Not Believe in Christ yet”. Among the words used for non-Christians we can see “all peoples”. The term “all nations” is problematic because we do not know how to classify it. On the one hand, in this context this term can express a general truth (and then it can refer not only to non-Christians), but on the other hand, it can be understood as an additional nomenclature for non-Christians. The Latin term *gens* is used in the ecclesial terminology for non-Christians. This fact can be used as a solid argument for the second solution.

Finally, in the final version of the oration in the new typical 1970 edition of the Roman Missal non-Christians are defined by only one term – “Those Who Do Not Believe in Christ”. It is not hard to notice that the only difference concerning the previous version of the prayer used in its new form is the removal of the word “yet”.

In the context of the above juxtapositions, it can be claimed that the nomenclature of non-Christians used in the subsequent missals and documents was softened. At first, the terms for non-Christians were pejorative (pagans, sinners, then – unbelievers). The version of the 1960s introduced significant changes. First of all, it removed any pejorative nomenclature from *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae*. The editor uses such phrases as “all peoples” and “all nations”, which, on the one hand, are not free of a pejorative character, but on the other hand, they are weaker in its character than the traditional version of the oration. What is more, the aim of the main periphrasis in the title and intention of the prayer was to describe the status of non-Christians in a neutral way. Therefore, it was devoid of any pejorative character. Yet, some pejorative character (from the view of non-Christians) may be still hidden in the word “yet” suggesting that the present status of non-Christians is not final and will be changed. Therefore, those who do not believe in Christ should begin to believe in him in a while<sup>21</sup>.

Nevertheless, within several years even this periphrasis was weakened by the removal of the word “yet”. This seemingly minor modification, however, added a new nuance to the nomenclature regarding non-Christians. They were presented in an absolutely neutral way and, what is more, in the final version of the oration there is no soft allusion to the thesis that the right way for non-Christians is to believe in Christ. The next change neutralising this nomenclature was the deletion of the words “all peoples” and “all nations” which, as mentioned above, had some pejorative sense.

<sup>20</sup> And also, the term “sinners” was not present.

<sup>21</sup> This fact can be understood as the validation of Church evangelisation. See M. Karas, „*Una voce dicentes*”. *Hierarchiczna wizja rzeczywistości w rycie Mszy trydenckiej i w jej teologicznym uzasadnieniu* [in:] *Rytuały w wybranych religiach i wyznaniach od starożytności do współczesności*, ed. J. Drabina, Kraków 2010, p. 101.



## 2. Nomenclature concerning the Church and God

The only one expression for calling the Church in the traditional oration is the periphrasis “Thy holy Church”. The modified version of *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae* has the expression “family of your Church”. The final version of the oration did not use any phrase to describe the Church. Comparing these two periphrases it can be claimed that the first one shows the Church in a stronger way, which is testified by the adjective “holy”. In the Old Testament this word was used to express the separation between God’s sphere from the human reality. In the context of the whole oration, “holy” used to define the Church was to stress the opposition between the earthly religions which are deprived of true holiness and the Catholic Church is holy because of her provenance from God. But the role of the Church was weakened in the final version of the oration in which, as aforementioned, there was no allusion to the Church. In the two previous versions, it was underlined that the Church belonged to God (“Thy holy Church” and “your Church”). In this way, it was suggested that other religions did not belong to God. By omitting these expressions, the other religions were equated with the Catholic Church because in the new oration the Catholic Church has no longer been distinguished from other religions.

There is yet another important issue in the nomenclature concerning God. The phrase “Almighty and everlasting God”, which is present at the beginning of the second part of the oration, should not be considered in detail since this phrase is present in the majority of the Good Friday orations and no concrete character has been ascribed to this specific prayer.

Taking into consideration these observations, we can conclude that in the traditional oration there are mentions of God the Father and God the Son (not the Holy Spirit). There are two ways in which God the Father was called. The first way – “almighty God” and the other – “the true and living God”. God the Son was referred in the much expanded periphrasis “His only Son, Jesus Christ our God and Lord”. In the modified oration of *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae* only the Trinity is mentioned. God the Father was called “God true and the only one”, God the Son was called “beloved Son” and the third person of the Holy Trinity was called “Holy Spirit”. In the final version, excluding the repetitive phrase, only the third person of the Holy Trinity was indicated as “Holy Spirit”.

On the basis of these juxtapositions, it can be noticed that the titulary of God was gradually weakened. The traditional oration underlined to a great extent these components of the Catholic doctrine of God which were in strong opposition to the beliefs of non-Christians. God the Father was called “the true and living God”, which was an allusion to non-Christian idols who do not possess these attributes and what is more, God the Son who was emphasized. The expanded



periphrasis is ascribed to the second person of the Holy Trinity. On the one hand, this periphrasis refers to salvific power<sup>22</sup>, and on the other hand, it refers to God's authorization<sup>23</sup> and equality with God which indicates being true God. The last attribute of the Son suggests that the one who does not consider Son's claims cannot worship true God.

In the new oration this rich nomenclature of God the Son with its contents was removed. Consequently, the suggestion of recognising Christ as true God was not still present. This does not mean that the new oration equates Catholicism with other religions. The idea of the special status of the Catholic Church in relation to other religions was still present by calling God the Father "true and living God". The final version has no extended periphrasis of God the Son and the mentioned way of describing God the Father was not preserved, either. In this way, the oration has ceased to underline the special status of the Catholic Church in relation to the non-Christian religions.

### III. God's activity recalled in the oration

Recalling God's activity in the oration should be understood as an allusion to some deed which was created by God or to one of His attributes which justifies the intercession. In the traditional version, God's activity is the truth about God's universal salvific will visible in His desire to offer life to sinners and not to destroy them. In the new oration of *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae*, "God's activity" is justified by the fact that God the Father gave all the nations of the world to Christ. In the final oration there is no mention of God's activity.

All these reflections lead us to conclude that the traditional prayer for non-Christians firmly and distinctly underlined the redemptive dimension and the pejorative character of non-Christian religions<sup>24</sup>. The former was underlined by the willingness of giving life even to them who do not deserve it; the latter was stressed by the negative term "sinners". The renewed version of the oration

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<sup>22</sup> The name Jesus means in the Hebrew language "YHWH saves/YHWH is a salvation". It can be understood that it was Jesus of Christians who is a source of salvation, while other idols have no power like that.

<sup>23</sup> In Hebrew "Christ" means "anointed". In the Old Testament books, there was YHWH who commanded the prophets to anoint people who had been chosen by God. This title can be understood in the sense that unlike the founders of other religions only Jesus was truly anointed to this task and thus, only the religion which He established (Catholicism) is authorised by God, that is to say, is true.

<sup>24</sup> Naturally, when considering the word "sinners" it refers to the pagans. More detailed analyses were undertaken in the previous part of the paper.

focuses on the positive aspect of non-Christian religions – all the nations were given to Christ, and thus even non-Christians belong to Christ in a certain sense.

#### IV. Content of the intercession

The traditional oration has four prayer requests for non-Christians. Firstly, believers ask for removing iniquity from the pagans' hearts. Secondly, they ask God to mercifully hear the Church's prayer, i.e. the request to removing iniquity. Thirdly, they ask for freeing the pagans of their cult of idols, i.e. idolatry. Finally, they ask for joining non-Christians to the Catholic Church. The oration of *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae* was deprived of three requests. However, the last intercession was preserved, but in a slightly modified form – the celebrant asked for gathering all the nations into the family of the Church. In relation to the final version of the oration it should be noticed that it has a specific construction which mixes the request with its purpose<sup>25</sup>. As a consequence, the distinction between these two components is not unambiguous, and one can even claim that these two components should be considered as a whole. Because of the suggested schema of research it is reasonable to distinguish these components using grammatical categories (participles, *ablativus absolutus*). Firstly, the celebrant asks God to illuminate non-Christians with light of the Holy Spirit<sup>26</sup>. Secondly, he asks for their decent activity (walk before you in sincerity of the heart). Thirdly, he prays for growing with Christians in common love and better understanding of the mystery of God's life.

In the light of the juxtapositions it can be claimed that non-Christians were presented in the most pejorative way in the traditional version of the oration since it stressed negative features and deeds (iniquity, idolatry). In turn, this caused the necessity of leaving iniquity and improper behaviours and entering the Catholic Church. In the modified version all the negative allusions to the pagans were deleted, and the non-Christians were presented in a less negative manner. First of all, it was not directly said what they did wrong. This negative character was rather suggested by speaking about the necessity of the Holy Spirit's illumining light and entering the Church. The former assumed that they did not possess the gift of the Holy Spirit, while the latter – not belonging to the Catholic Church, that is to say, the community of the redeemed.

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<sup>25</sup> The problem of distinguishing is connected with using the forms of participle and *ablativus absolutus*.

<sup>26</sup> Accepting this criterion it is necessary to supplement the oration of *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae*. In this prayer there are two requests: gathering all nations to the family of the Church and the illumination of non-Christians by the light of the Holy Spirit.

The final oration definitely emphasizes some kind of community between the Catholic Church and non-Christian religions. Also, this prayer presents non-Christians in a less pejorative way by stressing their positive features. This community was underlined by presenting common activities of Catholics and non-Christians (growing in love, grasping more fully the mystery of godhead). It is worth noting that members of the Catholic Church have been presented as those who do not fully possess the mystery of God because even they have to grow in the understanding of his mystery. The pejorative character of non-Christians was suggested, as previously, by necessity of the Holy Spirit's illumination and the obligation of walking before God with pure hearts, which can suggest that non-Christians do not do that.

## V. Purpose of the request

The traditional Good Friday oration included three purposes of the prayer for the pagans. Firstly, the celebrant asks non-Christians to reject idolatry. Secondly, he prays that Catholics want the pagans to approach true God (God the Father and God the Son), meaning to confess that the Catholic Church is the only true religion. Thirdly, the prayer aims to increase God's glory and the praise of His name. In the oration of *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae*, the celebrant also asked for three requests; however, none of them was taken from the previous version. Firstly, the celebrant wants the pagans to become decent to enter the way of salvation (rejecting their idols). Secondly, the celebrant wants the pagans to begin seeking the truth. Finally, the celebrant wants the pagans to become worthy of reaching God. In the final oration there are also three goals; however, two of them were repeated: becoming worthy to enter the way of salvation and finding the truth<sup>27</sup>. The third purpose of the oration is that the pagans become more perfect witnesses of God's love in the world.

To sum up, the traditional version of the oration emphasizes differences between Catholics and non-Christians to the greatest extent. At the same time, this version presents non-Christians in the most pejorative way (as idol-worshippers). Although the new version shows non-Christians in a pejorative way, this is done indirectly. There is no direct allusion to non-Christian idolatry, but the necessity of entering the way of salvation by the pagans (which suggests that non-Christians are not on this way) and reaching God (which suggests that non-Christians have not approached Him yet) is indicated. The final version also indirectly presents non-Christians in a pejorative way because it mentions the necessity of entering the way of salvation by the pagans and finding the truth by them. Only

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<sup>27</sup> The second goal was modified insignificantly; however, it still conveys the same sense.

the last goal seems to speak positively about becoming more perfect (*gradus comparativus*) witnesses of God's love in the world, which suggests that non-Christian have been witnesses of His love in some sense. It is worth noting that in the final version of the oration its redemptive character was weakened as compared with the previous versions, and its focus is directed more to temporality.

## Conclusion

The aim of the paper was to compare three versions of the Good Friday oration for non-Christians. It was realised by juxtaposing and analysing the prayers taking into account the phrases which belong to the same category. The sources were Benedict XV's Roman Missal promulgated in 1920, *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus* from 1955, *Variationes in ordinem Hebdomadae Sanctae inducendae* from 1965 and Paul VI's Roman Missal published in 1970. The paper was divided into two parts. The first one presented the texts of the orations and their historical contexts. The other one gave an analysis of the content of the oration.

In the light of our analysis, the phenomenon of progressive weakening of the pejorative presentation of non-Christian could be observed. In the updated orations the Church gradually stopped demanding the refusal of idolatry by the pagans and accepting the Catholic faith by them. What is more, one can see the strong tendency to underline the elements shared by Catholics and non-Christians. The new text of the oration has transferred its emphasis from the salvific dimension to the temporal character.

## Summary

The paper is an attempt to compare the three versions of the Good Friday Solemn Intercessions for non-Christians. It was made possible by juxtaposing and analysing the prayers in the light of their particular phrases. The paper was divided into two parts. The first one shows the three prayers and their historical contexts, while the other analyses their contexts. As a result, the process of decreasing the pejorative way of presenting non-Christians could clearly be seen. There is also a tendency for emphasizing elements shared by Christians and non-Christians. Finally, the comparison of the versions emphasises the transition from the salvific dimension to temporality.

## Keywords

Good Friday orations, non-Christians, pagans, liturgical reforms

## **Wielkopiątkowa modlitwa za niechrześcijan na tle dwudziestowiecznych reform liturgicznych**

### **Streszczenie**

Celem niniejszej pracy jest próba porównania trzech wersji wielkopiątkowej modlitwy za niechrześcijan. Realizacja celu pracy jest możliwa dzięki zestawieniu oraz przeanalizowaniu poszczególnych oracji pod względem obecnych w nich sformułowań. Praca dzieli się na dwie części. W pierwszej kolejności podano brzmienie poszczególnych modlitw oraz przedstawiono ich historyczne uwarunkowania. W części drugiej dokonano właściwych analiz. W świetle przeprowadzonych badań można stwierdzić postępujące osłabianie pejoratywnego sposobu przedstawiania niechrześcijan w reformowanych modlitwach. Dąży się również do podkreślania elementów wspólnych dla katolików i niechrześcijan. Zauważalne jest także przeniesienie akcentów z wymiaru zbawczego na wymiar doczesny.

### **Słowa kluczowe**

wielkopiątkowa ektenia, niechrześcijanie, poganie, reformy liturgiczne

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