

# The Pre- and Post-Vatican II Collects of the Dominican Doctors of the Church

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The post-Vatican II reform of the Sacred Liturgy brought the Church a great many blessings. This does not dispense us, however, from the scholarly duty of carefully reviewing and evaluating specific revision decisions made by those charged with carrying out the reform. Those who produced the new liturgical books did not simply select time-tested and well-prayed prayers from earlier liturgical books and incorporate them into the new ones. They revised a great many of the older prayers in order better to accommodate them to what they described as the needs and sensibilities of modern persons.<sup>1</sup> And when it seemed necessary, they composed new prayers.<sup>2</sup> Inevitably the editors brought to these revisions and new compositions both the insights and limitations of their own times. Moreover, the revisers did a huge amount of work in a relatively short span of time and, as one of them put it, “material failures” cannot be lacking.<sup>3</sup> In December 2003, we celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the promulgation of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. The milestone reminds us of the blessings which the reform as a whole has brought to the Church and invites us to review its various aspects with the objectivity afforded by the distance and experience of the intervening decades.

This essay examines the old and new versions of the collects for the three Dominican saints who are also Doctors of the Church: Saint Thomas Aquinas, Saint Albert the Great, and Saint Catherine of Siena. The order of consideration follows the order in which they were named Doctors of the Church.

<sup>1</sup> C. Braga, II ‘*Proprium de Sanctis*,’ *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 84 (1970) pp. 399, 405–406; Antoine Dumas, ‘Les oraisons du nouveau Missel’ *Questions Liturgiques* 25 (1971) pp. 263–270 *passim*. An English translation of Dumas’s essay is available in Lauren Pristas, ‘The Orations of the Vatican II Missal: Policies for Revision,’ *Communio* 30 (Winter, 2003) pp. 621–653 at 629–639.

<sup>2</sup> Antoine Dumas, ‘Les oraisons du nouveau Missel,’ pp. 268–69.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 270.