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The Ritual of the Names
A Practice of Intercession in Early Medieval Gaul

Berend Rose (1925–2016)

Et recitata nomina caelestis syrographo
in libro vitae inbas adscribi


The recitation of the names of those belonging to the Eucharistic community, both living and deceased members, is a central element of Mass in the Christian liturgy. The ritual had a singular position in the liturgy of Mass as it was celebrated in pre-Carolingian Gaul compared to contemporary rites, and as such has received specific attention in studies concerning this particular liturgical tradition. Recent discussions of the Christian commemoration of and intercession practices with regard to the dead have examined the practice of reciting names in the Mass of early medieval Gaul, studying the ritual primarily from the perspective of the dead. The ritual of the names in the context of Mass fits in a larger pattern of intercessory practices in medieval Christian-

1 Most recently Philippe Bernand, Transitions liturgiques en Gaule carolingienne. Une traduction commentée des deux « lettres » faussement attribuées à l’Évêque Germain de Paris, Paris 2008, pp. 226–248. See for a comparative approach Robert E. Taft, A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, vol. 4: The Diphychi (Orientalia christiana analecta 238) Rome 1991. I presented a first draft of this article to the Medieval Seminar of the Historical School, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, when I was a member of this school in the autumn term of 2015–16. I am grateful to the members of this seminar for their invaluable comments and support, to Patrick Geary as the chair, and to Courtney Bookter, Giles Constable, Albrecht Damm, Eric Goldberg, Michael Kulikowski, Jason Moralee, Eric Ramirez-Weaver, and Maria de Lourdes Rosa. I thank the Institute for hosting me during this term and the Herodotus Fund for its financial support.


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The Ritual of the Names

In section 1, a brief introduction of the ritual of the names is given followed in sections 2 and 3 by an analysis of the themes brought up by the collects post nomina, prayers that accompanied the recitation of the names and reflect the ritual's meaning.

1. THE RITUAL

Before we turn to the prayers post nomina, a brief sketch of the ritual context in which these prayers were recited is at place. The ritual of the names is a distinctive character of the celebration of Mass in early medieval Gaul. Until the end of the eighth century, it was customary to recite the names in the context of the offertory procession, linking the participants in the Eucharistic celebration to the gifts they themselves had brought in; homemade bread and, for those who could afford such oblations, wine. The gifts of the faithful were carried to the altar by the deacon, during the solemn offertory procession, to be consecrated by the priest. Towards the end of the eighth century, the Carolingian reforms of the liturgy abandoned the older tradition of reciting the names during the offertory by choosing the custom they considered to be 'Roman', moving the names to the Eucharistic prayer. In a number of Carolingian prescriptive sources, we find the repeated call to follow the summons expressed by Innocent I (401–417) not to concentrate on the names in the context of the offertory ritual, but rather, to focus on the gifts and the prayer of thanksgiving in the context of the Eucharistic prayer itself.

11 Attempts at reconstructing the Gallican Mass ordo are found in studies of more and less recent date. Most recent are PHILIPPE BERNARD, Du chant roman au chant grégorien. IVe–XIIIe siècle (Patri-moines) Paris 1996, pp. 646–650 and, especially with regard to the Gothic Missal, ROSE (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) pp. 44–65.


13 Gregory of Tours gives evidence of this, cf. Id., Liber in Gloria confessorum 64, in: Gregorii Turonensis Opera, part 2: Miscellae opera minora, ed. WILHELM ARNOLD – BRUNO KRUSCH (MGH SS rer. Merov. 1, 2) p. 336, see also ROSE (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) pp. 73–74.


15 Admonitio generalis (789), c. 54, in: Die Admonitio generalis Karls des Grolen, ed. HUBERT MÖRDER et al. (MGH Fontes iuris germanici antiqui in usum scholarum separatim editi 16) Wiesbaden 2013, p. 206; Synod of Frankfurt (794), c. 51, ed. ALBERT WERMMINGHOFF (MGH Concilia sevi Karolini 1) p. 171.

While the liturgy of Rome presumably included the recitation of names in the Eucharistic prayer proper at least from the early fifth century onwards, in this respect the liturgy of late antique and early medieval Gaul, just as the liturgy of early medieval Spain, resembled a variety of Eastern rites in its choice to keep together the oblations, those who brought them in, and those whom they were offered for, to paraphrase Robert Taft. A similar threefold focus is recognisable in the prayers that accompany the ritual, referred to as *collectio post nominis* in the sacramentaries of early medieval Gaul. The prayers, referring to the names of the deceased brothers and sisters on the one hand and, on the other, those of the faithful who are still part of the community on earth, link the lives of the blessed in the hereafter and the dwelling of the living on earth with an indelible bond that is represented by the oblations. At the same time, the prayers include both the living and the dead as the object of intercession, formulating the benefits invoked for both categories.

2. […] **TAM VIVIETIBUS QUAM DEFUNCTIS [..]**

The collects after the names in the Gothic Missal reflect the close relation between the living and the dead that is essential in our understanding of the ritual of the names. Recent studies of the material have overlooked this aspect. Thus, Philippe Bernard in his commentary on the *Expositio missae*—traditionally but falsely attributed to Pseudo-Germain—depicts the collects after the names in the Gothic Missal as "monothématiques", focusing on either the dead or the living, but not on both groups together. This reflects, according to Bernard, a withering ("déperissement") of the ritual of the names in the late Merovingian context. A movement towards a binary system ("système binaire") is also testified, according to Bernard, by the 'stereotyped' wording of the collects in the Gothic Missal, in Bernard's view greatly dependent on the standard incipit *auditis nominibus afferentium*: "now that we have heard the names of those who offer [...]."

A closer analysis of the collects after the names in the Gothic Missal gives an impression of the content and vitality of the ritual of the names which are the exact opposite of the picture Bernard sketches. First of all, the formulac incipit Bernard refers to is found in 13 of the 69 prayers, less than 20%—but such percentages can be interpreted differently and are therefore less interesting. What is more informative is the way living and dead are mentioned explicitly together in a number of collects that start with the formulaic incipit, as is illustrated by the collect after the names in the Mass for the Wednesday in Easter Week (294). The collect includes the living and the dead when it prays that the names recited be inscribed in the eternal Book:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>294 POST NOMINA.</th>
<th>294 AFTER THE NAMES.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auditis nominibus afferentium,</strong></td>
<td>Now that the names of those who offer have been heard, and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>debita cum anagogia haeretica et mortuorum commemeratio sanctorum commemoratum decessus et</td>
<td>commemoration of the most blessed apostles and martyrs and all the saints has been completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afferentem et paenitentiam commemoratum nominis, ut inter</td>
<td>with due reverence, let us commemorate the names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malibus indutia paeniteat sanctis coetibus adgregentur.**</td>
<td>of those who offer and those who have departed,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>so that included in the eternal Book, they may be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>added to the multitude of saints.**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other collects with the same formulaic beginning clearly distinguish the living and the dead in the intercessory part related to those involved in the offertery, such as the collect in the second Sunday Mass (490) that prays for the offerings (*holocausta*) to be beneficial for both categories in distinctive ways:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>490 POST NOMINA.</th>
<th>490 AFTER THE NAMES.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auditis nominibus reverentii,</strong></td>
<td>Now that we have heard the enumeration of the names, most beloved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dilectissimi fratrum, deum piissit et misericordias dispensare, ut habeant oblationis sunt, benigne adsumat. Nudium</td>
<td>brothers, let us pray to the God of love and mercy,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>omnes quos esse tuis, pro quibus holocausta fructuoso, muneri</td>
<td>that he graciously receives what has been offered,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sui octemper esse paenitentiam. Tam in vivis quae defunctis</td>
<td>[and that] he does not allow that one of those for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>renuntiante vel ad merita vel ad paenitentiam alioque intestat ad</td>
<td>whom the offerings are broken is ever excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gratiam, alio ad seminum pertinet.**</td>
<td>from his gift, and that as he considers the merits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as well as the sins of the living and the dead, he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>commands that the last pertain to grace, the first to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>forgiveness.**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These examples, representative of the material in the Gothic Missal, contradict Bernard's suggestion that the collects after the names "are meant to complete a ritual of the names more romanorum [..]"]. i.e., focusing on either living or dead.

Even if there are collects that concentrate on the fate of the dead or single out the living, it is difficult to find a collect that suggests that the preceding recitation of names included only one category. Thus, the collect after the names in the Christmas Vigil (1) mentions only the deceased when it prays for the inscription in the heavenly

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18 On this issue of pseudigraphy that has led many scholars to the conviction that the ancient (sixth-century) Gallican rite could be known through study of this document, see Philippe Bernard (ed.), *Epistola de ordine sanctae oblationibus et de diversis charismatibus ecclesiae / Germano Patrisiam episcopo adscripse* (CC Cont. Med. 187) Turnhout 2007, pp. 49-60 and 156-167, Id., *Transitions* (as note 1) pp. 11-12 and 37-38.
20 Ibid.
21 Ross (ed.), *Missale Gothicum* (as note 8) pp. 462-463. The Latin collects quoted from the Gothic Missal are taken from this edition and numbered accordingly. The texts are presented here without comments on deviant orthography or morphology apart from a few exceptions. For remarks on textual aspects as well as for Scriptural references, the reader be referred to the apparatus in the edition.
22 Ross (transl.), *Gothic Missal* (as note 10) p. 232.
23 Ross (ed.), *Missale Gothicum* (as note 8) p. 531.
24 Ross (transl.), *Gothic Missal* (as note 10) pp. 295-296.
Book, but this does not allow for the conclusion that the names of the living were not included in the recitation:

1 COLLECTIO POST 'NOMINA. Gratia tibi sit dominus, qvaesusum, bohernar festivitatis oblatio, ut tua gratia largiatur per hoc sacrumm communion in illius inveniatur forma in quonam est nostra abhastemi. Spiritus quoque carorum nostrorum tribue, ut mortalibus segregatis ostiibus litteris memorantur consecrati coelestibus.26

1 COLLECT AFTER THE NAMES. Let the offering of this feast day be pleasing to you, O Lord, so we ask, that by the favour of your grace through this holy exchange of gifts, we may be found in the likeness of him in whom our being is with you. Grant also to the souls of our beloved that they, separated from the assembly of mortals, may be considered worthy to be inscribed in the heavenly record.27

On the other hand, examples of the opposite are found, suggesting that the names of both the living and the dead are recited in the ritual that precedes the post 'nomina'. To these belong the collect in the Mass for the Wednesday in Easter week (294: et offeren
tum et paœsanctum commemoramus names) quoted above, and the collect after the names in the Mass for Andrew (130). In the latter prayer, the final sentence indicates that the names of those who offer and of those who have passed away are enumerated in the ritual:

130 COLLECTIO POST NOMINA: Omnipotenten

dum ac dominium nostrum, fratres carissimi, depravorum

et mortuorum collinum, quae pro natales (nobilissimi apostoli)

et martyris salutem et benefactionem semper petuntur.

As a result, the collected names are ordered in a way that indicates their importance:

130 COLLECT AFTER THE NAMES. Let us pray to the almighty God and our Lord, most beloved brothers, that he send vengeance to the enemies of his most blessed apostle and martyr Andrew. And that, as he has today protected Andrew, may the almighty God, through the intercession of his most blessed apostle and martyr Andrew, grant us the grace of celebrating the solemn ceremony of this day, which we have undertaken for the feast of his most blessed apostle and martyr Andrew. And that, as he has today protected Andrew, taken prisoner for preaching his Word, in the bonds of the dungeon and during scourging and crucifixion, and has given him the crown because of his noble martyrdom, he deigns through Andrew's intervention also in all temptations to protect us who believe in him, who are wearied by the oppressions of this world and the snares of the adversary, and to give bountifully of his mercy. And that through the intercession of his apostle he sanctifies the names that have been recited of those who offer and of those who have passed away.28

However, the majority of collects after the names include both the living and the dead in the dedication of the oblations to God's benediction and in the intercession. Three examples follow here to illustrate this dual focus. First, in the collect after the names in the Epiphany vigil (78), the benefit of the oblations and their offering is expressed as a "medicine for the living and consolation for the deceased":

78 COLLECTIO POST NOMINA. Præstis, omnipotentes deus, per inviolabilis sanctissimorum taurorum curarium at
cuius aetatis atque majestatis in mirabilibus turnum divinam claritatem, in nostrum quoque mentionum purificatiónem claritatem.

Præsentem invoco oblationem tuae indulgentiae, at mediolim

salutibus, defunctis refrigerium praebet. Ec illeum tui
corporis sanctissima cursum inter electos sibiens adest.29

78 COLLECT AFTER THE NAMES. Grant, almighty God, through the ineffable love of your mercy, that he whose power and majesty have shone through the diversity of your miracles, will also begin to shine in the purification of our hearts. Come down therefore into the offering present here, such that it supplies a medicine to the living and consolation to the deceased. And let the destiny of those whom the preceding reading has interwoven be included among the elect.30

The collect after the names in the paschal vigil (268) explicates the aim of the offertory as bringing in the gifts on behalf of those who bring the offering, their beloved and their deceased beloved, the latter category linked to the commemoration of the martyrs:

26 Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p. 351.
27 Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 10) p. 115.
29 Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 10) p. 172.
30 Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p. 414.
31 Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p. 185.
32 Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p. 381.
33 Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p. 145.
The Rituale of the Names

534 POST NOMINA. Officinium nominum recensitis, fratres hortizimi, dominum deprecantes et eorum oblationes inter sanctarum dona suscipiant, quorum a nobis suscendam commemoratione est, ut ei nostris memoriam esse digamini. Proneas et pro his, qui nos in dominicae pace promoverunt, ut tertio oratione congregato in een Abrahamos confinientes reciusse teneamus omnesque digerant in prora sua resurrectione, quam factores esse 39.

534 AFTER THE NAMES. Now that the names of those who offer have been enumerated, let us pray to the Lord, most beloved brothers, that he accepts their offering among the gifts of the saints, whose commemoration must be held by us, so that they may be mindful also of us. Let us also pray for those who have gone before us in the peace of the Lord, that the Almighty deigns to raise them from the dead, separated from the horror of hell and placed in the bosom of Abraham, to their first resurrection, which he will bring about 40.

The prayer presents the reciprocal way saints in heaven and the faithful on earth are mindful of one another, in this case in order to make the offerings of the celebrating community acceptable to God.

In the second example, the collect in the Mass for the nativity of John the Baptist (370), the help of the saint is invoked more specifically with regard to those involved in the Eucharistic offering:

370 POST NOMINA. Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, qui habeas honorabilis nominis in beata Iohannis baptistae nativitate festis invocatis, quae maria uti sunt pro se oraculi, qui inter nates multorum nominis non sequeris, nostram fragilitatem quae sequitur consummationem, et carnis nostri, quae sunt nominis resolata, le refugium pietatisque impetr, ut ibi recipiantur nobis, qui eamnem prosequantur in regno cœterorum baptistae 41.

370 AFTER THE NAMES. Almighty and everlasting God, who through the birth of blessed John the Baptist made this venerable day eminent for us, we ask you that your Forerunner, who has arisen among the children of women as the greatest of all, entrusts our weakness to your love, and that he procures such consolation of love for our beloved whose names have been recited, that they may be received there, even if as the last, where the Baptist abides as highest: in the kingdom of the heavens 42.

The intercession of the saint is prayed for, such that “the beloved” (caris nostris) whose names have been recited, may arrive in the heavenly kingdom where John awaits them 43.

Thirdly, the collect after the names in the second general Mass for one martyr (439) invokes the intercession of the martyr specifically to obtain the inscription of the names of the deceased (nosserum carorum) in the heavenly Book:

39 Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p. 542.
40 Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p. 304.
41 Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p. 492.
42 Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p. 260.
43 Given the distinction between “the beloved” and “the souls of the beloved” in collect 268, it cannot be stated with certainty that the caris nostris in collect 370 are the “beloved dead”, although the content of the intercession in this prayer seems to suggest this. See also collect 365 discussed below.
3. THE INTERCESSION

Both the references to the names recited and the focus of the intercession in the collects post nomina in the Gothic Missal suggest that the living and the deceased are closely related and are considered to be two parts of one Eucharistic community. In the present section, I will examine the contents of the intercessory part of the collects in more detail. The examples 78, 268 and 299 above have shown that both the living and the dead are included in the intercession. But what is actually prayed for? And do the collects ask similar or different benefits for the living and the dead?

At first sight, most collects formulate a twofold intercession. They ask for a certain benefit for the living, and another for the dead. One example is found in the collect after the names in the Mass for the martyr Symphorien (416):

416 COLLECTO SEQUITVR. Requisita nominibus afferentibus, festis, laudibus, et laudationibus, qui mortuis meritis postea in aeternum requiescant, ut aetas nostra ad summam trium festorum (451) festivitatem proficiat.

While the prayer asks for the deceased to be liberated from the bonds of hell and gathered in Abraham’s bosom, it entreats for the living “to be strengthened by the guidance of the holy martyr as eius administrativa servitutem” and for the deceased “praeludia” (praeludia) for the living and “rest” (requiem) for the deceased is expressed by the collect in the Mass for Ferreolus and Ferruccio (365), as we have already seen. These examples remain somewhat implicit, since the ‘guidance’ and ‘protection’ of the saints can consist of help in earthly matters, but can also imply spiritual support, such as the strengthening of faith or even intercession mediating the forgiveness of sins. In case of the latter, the divide between requiescet and administrativum becomes small. The collect in the fifth Sunday Mass (523) illustrates this further:

439 COLLECTA POST NOMINA. Intercessit pro nobis, domino, patribus, sanctui tuo martyre sille, qui sanctissiumum tuum inter supernum graviorum fidelis, et ipso intercessione nominum, quae restituant sanet, nostrorum carorum in cælestis regione indecet intemerate.

The two previous examples concentrate on the deceased. The next example, the collect in the Mass for the martyrs Ferreolus and Ferruccio (365), distinguishes between the living (frustre) and the beloved dead (carumque nostri) for whom the help of the saint is requested:

365 POST NOMINA. Requisita nominibus frustre carumque nostri venenum dominicam missionem su in media Hierusalem in congregazione sanctorum haec nominis sibi fuisse absque sanctificatione in beatitudinem æternae gaudii munuscentia hic nostrum sint in praefationem Melchisedech in virtute sanctificat. Prævis quaque afferentia in honorem Dei propitius exaudiat, commenoratione beatissimorum martyrum Ferreoli et Ferrucii omniumque sanctorum, ut eorum praebentibus inuisus, non velum interium praebentius, nossem etiam defuncti cari nostri requiescet omnem mensuravit.

The collect is a composite text including elements taken from a number of prayers belonging to the series of fixed prayers that came to be known as the canon missarum. The help of the saints (not only Ferreolus and Ferruccio but “all the saints”) is invoked on behalf of the living who are in need of protection (praesidium), and of the deceased (cari nostri) for whom eternal rest (requiem) is requested.
This prayer suggests even more strongly that the focus of the intercession is on spiritual matters, even though the text clearly distinguishes between living (effereutum) and deceased (carus quoque nostris, qui in Christo dormient). The collect after the names in the fourth Sunday Mass (512) is at the other end of the spectrum. This text formulates, next to rest for the deceased, support for various categories of living members as the object of the intercession. The support is in all but one case (pro salute omnium viventium) described in terms of help for life on earth:

Apart from the latter example, which is unique among the collects after the names through its resemblance to the great Easter intercession\textsuperscript{56}, the benefits asked for the living on the one hand and the dead on the other are in many cases more or less synonymous. This is illustrated by the collects in the Masses for Christmas (15), Stephen (27), and the first general Mass for one martyr (434). The collect for Christmas phrases the object of prayer as at superstitios usitam, definitis requiem tribus sempiternam. This can be interpreted as “life for the living and eternal rest for the dead”, but the phrase can also be understood as a prayer for both the living and the dead to share in eternal life and eternal rest, as the adjective sempiternam can be linked both to vitam and to requiem\textsuperscript{57};

The construction of the collect in the Mass for Stephen is similar: the prayer can be read as “[…] that the living may gain salvation and the dead eternal rest”, but the adjective aeternam can be linked to salutem as well:

Finally, in the collect after the names in the general Mass for one martyr (434), the words refrigerium and salutem basically refer to the same benefit of bliss and consolatio.\textsuperscript{58}

\textsuperscript{52} Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p.539.
\textsuperscript{53} Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p.302.
\textsuperscript{54} Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p.537.
\textsuperscript{55} Rose (ed.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p.300.
\textsuperscript{56} On the great intercession that is intoned in the Gothic Missal at least for Easter, see Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p.32, and Paul De Clerck, La prêtre universelle dans les liturgies latines anciennes. Témoignages patristiques et textes liturgiques (Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 62) Münster 1977, pp.231-268.
\textsuperscript{57} See Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p.121 note a.
\textsuperscript{58} Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p.356.
\textsuperscript{59} Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) pp.120-121.
\textsuperscript{60} Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p.360.
\textsuperscript{61} Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p.125.
\textsuperscript{62} On refrigerium, see Peter Brown, Ransom of the Soul. Afterlife and Wealth in Early Western Christianity, Cambridge (MA) – London 2015, p.37, where Brown translates the word as “release from the sufferings of this world”; on the use of the word in the Gothic Missal, see Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) Introduction, pp.115-116.
In a number of cases, the equation of the benefit for the living and for the dead is pronounced even more poignantly, namely when one noun or verb expresses what is asked for with regard to both categories. Examples of this are found in a number of collects already quoted in full in the previous section. The collect after the names in the Mass for Andrew (130) and the one in the second Sunday Mass (490) were given to show the close relation between living and dead in the recitation of names, a relation which is underlined by the intercession. In the Mass for Andrew, the prayer in the collect is twofold, asking first for help and mercy for the living in the tempests of this life, but then also, through the intercession of the apostle, for the one benefit of sanctification for both the living and the dead (Et afferentum ut passuum quad rustitae sunt nominem, apostolui sui intercessionis sanctificat). The collect in the second Sunday Mass reflects the relation of the living and the deceased members of the Eucharistic community by phrasing a single request for both categories and asking that those on whose behalf the Eucharist is celebrated (pro quibus homines de franguntur) are all included in the benefits of this celebration (Nullum […] numerus sui externum esse faciatur). This prayer once again emphasizes the twofold character of the Eucharistic assembly, holding together both the living and the deceased.

Next to collects post nomina that use the intercessory part to phrase either one benefit for both the living and the deceased or synonymous benefits concerned with spiritual blessings and the life hereafter for both categories (eternal bliss and everlasting rest 15, 27; consolation for the dead and salvation for the living 434), other collects specify between the needs of the living and those of the dead. The difference between the two groups that define the Eucharistic community is expressed, not surprisingly, particularly prominently in those collects post nomina that are related to periods of fast. In the collects after the names in Masses for Lent or the Rogation Days, the focus of

the intercession is on the living. The second and third Mass for Lent provide examples of this:

172 COLLECT POST NOMINA: Deus, qui non tandum nos curas viribus, sed ab ipso animae nostrae debellatione praecepit invocare, in nobis quassemus, indulgentiam tuae pravae subidae, ut intercedas ab invidia contiguis ad superna rescussam. Et nominis quae restituta sunt, in coeleste pagina conscribere principia.

177 COLLECT POST NOMINA: Deo adiuvante et nobis, quiescens, abitibus humilibus, et iugeris propter in tua misericordia, confidentes necessitibus, in quibus indiget humanae conditionis. Et immortali in his praemunient et afferentium nomine restitute coelesti typographo in librum utam stabiles adsciret.

Even though the invocation in both collects prays that the recited names may be inscribed in the book of heaven, the intercessory part of these texts singles out the living as being subject to the human condition. They are, in a way the deceased are no longer, in need of support and purification in order to arrive ad superna. The collect after the names in the first Rogation Mass (329) is so full of the needs of the living that the recitation of the names or the fate of the deceased is not mentioned at all:

Communities of Early Medieval Gaul, in: Richard Corradini et al. (eds.), Texts and Identities in the Early Middle Ages (Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 12) Vienna 2006, pp. 289–301.
69 Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 8) p. 418–419.
70 Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p. 189.
71 Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p. 420.
72 Rose (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p. 190.
Apart from the specific context of fasting, which for obvious reasons is not applicable to the deceased, the collects after the names in the Masses for Circumcision (53) and for the martyr Leodegarius (427) pray in more general terms for the members of the Christian community still living on earth:

While the request to be victorious over the deceptions of the demons might apply to both living and deceased, in the context of the Mass commemorating Christ's circumcision it is more likely that the prayer focuses on the living only, who still fight the temptations of the flesh this feast seems to struggle against so fiercely. The intercession certainly specifies between the two categories in the second part, where different benefits are requested for both groups. The prayer for correction (emendationem) explicitly applies to the living and expresses the early Christian emphasis on reform, which concerns both spiritual matters and the practical issues of a Christian way of life. The word emendatio in early Christian and early medieval usage has a rich

53 COLLECTIO POST NOMINA. Auditis nominibus offerentium, fratrum dilectionis, Christum dominum deprecantur et sicut pro suis circumcisierni carnali circumcissio celebrant, ut spiritalia sequatur, implendae deonis laudis, praebente pietate tua et honore sacriis sic uenientibus proficiant ad emendationem, ut defuncti spiritualem ad regnum\textsuperscript{75}.

53 COLLECT AFTER THE NAMES. Now that the names of those who offer have been heard, most beloved brothers, let us pray to Christ the Lord that we, just as we celebrate this feast by reason of his fleshly circumcision, may rejoice in the victory over the deception of the demons, while his love grants us that these offers are as beneficial to the correction of the living as they help the dying to find rest.\textsuperscript{76}

Here as well, correction (emendatio) is the key word. In a simple twofold supplication, remission of sins is requested for the deceased, and correction for the living (uuiuentibus emendationem).

4 CONCLUSION

In the light of the examples above, the question could well be raised as to how the phrase \textit{nominis nostrae} in the collect after the names in the Mass for Martin (474) should be interpreted:


\textsuperscript{75} Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p. 476–477.

\textsuperscript{76} Rose (ed.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p. 244.

\textsuperscript{77} See for further comments on the prayers of the Mass for our Lord's circumcision ROSE (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) pp 25–26.

\textsuperscript{78} Rose (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p. 513.

\textsuperscript{79} Rose (ed.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p. 279.
Must we understand “the names of us who bring the offering” in the concrete exclusive sense of those bodily present at the Eucharistic offering? If we consider – in the light of the image of the Eucharistic assembly that comes up in the collects post nomina in the Gothic Missal – the ritual act of ‘offering’ in a more encompassing way as the sacrament in and through which the identity of the Eucharistic community is established, nomina nostra seems to essentially include the names of the living and the dead, embracing all in the one recitation and subsequent intercession. The dead and the living are closely interwoven in the ritual of the names as reflected by this Merovingian Mass book. The enumeration of names by the deacon, in as far as time allowed, included not only the dead, nor was it limited to a proclamation of the names of those who contributed to the celebration of the Eucharist with the material gifts of bread and wine. Living and dead were held closely together in the celebration of Mass, as two parts of one community and different members of one body. This intertwining is ultimately the most distinctive character of the late antique and early medieval ritual of the names.

81 ROSE (ed.), Missale Gothicum (as note 8) p. 527.
82 ROSE (transl.), Gothic Missal (as note 10) p. 291.