



The History of the Liturgical Use of the *Professio fidei* in the Hispanic Mass

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Abstract: The Hispanic Mass was the first among all Western liturgical traditions to welcome the Symbol of Faith within the ritual sequence. The *Professio fidei*, still present in the rite of the Hispanic-Mozarabic Mass, renewed after the Second Vatican Council, is characterized not only by the retention of the plural at the beginning (*Credimus* in place of *Credo* known in the Roman rite), corresponding to the conciliar text, but also by its specific ritual placement, before the prayer of the Our Father. The present contribution, beginning with a critical study of the sources, offers a historical look at the genesis and development of the liturgical use of the Symbol of Faith in the Hispanic Mass. Based on the insights of the methods of comparative liturgy it also intends to offer a broader context of the process of the evolution of liturgical rites. The study conducted with scientific criteria was also able to challenge, among other things, the idea of the ordinary presence of the *Professio fidei* in the history of the Hispanic Mass from the time of its appearance toward the end of the 6th century.

Keywords: Hispanic Mass, *Professio fidei*, History of the Liturgy, Comparative Liturgy, Hispano-Mozarabic Liturgy

The Profession of Faith, although originating from the baptismal liturgy (Kelly 2006, 30–61), has entered the Mass, in the form of the so-called Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol (Kelly 2006, 296), in virtually all traditional rites of the East and West (Taft and Parenti 2014, 636).¹ The origins of the Symbol of the first two ecumenical councils are still debated today among various scholars.²

In the West, the first to welcome this new element into the Mass was the Hispanic liturgy, which is also the only one to preserve it among the preparatory rites for communion. The originality and, at the same time, the antiquity of this choice merit reflection on its origins and its development throughout history, which is not always linear. The introduction of the Symbol in the Mass is not part of the process of a spontaneous development of the liturgy, since it is a reform operated “from above” with the provisions of a Council.

This article is a slightly expanded version of the first chapter of my study published in Italian (Celiński 2020, 19–38).

¹ As Kelly (2006, 296) points out, “unlike the purely Western Apostles’ Creed, it was admitted as authoritative in East and West alike from 451 onwards, and it has retained that position, with one significant variation in its text, right down to the present day.”

² The best summary of the issue is found in: Kelly 2006, 296–331. See also Taft and Parenti 2014, 636–37.

As we shall see, such an intervention on the ritual structure, did not remain without consequences for the rites that originally composed the preparation for Eucharistic communion. Through historical investigation, with the help of the laws of comparative liturgy (Taft 2001), we will try to better understand the “status of” the Profession of Faith in today’s rite of the Hispanic Mass. The discussion concerning the Eucharistic use of the Creed in other Western liturgies is beyond the scope of this study, although we cannot omit a reference to other liturgies regarding the origins of the very appearance of the Symbol of Faith in the Mass.

1. Early Evidence

The earliest evidence for the use of the *Professio fidei* in the Mass comes from Theodore the Reader’s *Ecclesiastical History* (ca. 528), which recounts the genesis of the introduction of the Symbol into the Liturgy of the Great Church by Timothy I, Monophysite patriarch of Constantinople (511–518) and successor to the Orthodox patriarch Macedonius II, who was expelled due to the machinations of Emperor Anastasius I (Kelly 2006, 349):

Timothy ordered that the symbol of faith of the 318 fathers^[3] be recited at each synaxis out of disparagement for Macedonius, as if he did not accept the symbol. Formerly it was recited only once a year, on Good Friday, during the bishop’s catechesis. (Theodoros Anagnostes, 1995, 509⁴ [Theodore the Reader, ca. 528])

The account of Theodore the Reader is contextualized in the controversy between the Orthodox and the Monophysites, who, in order to show that they did not accept the Council of 451, allegedly imposed the recitation of the Nicene Creed.⁵ Despite this, the presence of the Symbol in the Mass is also confirmed by the Orthodox side to which the acts of the Council of Constantinople of 536 bear witness,

³ As Kelly observes (2006, 350–351), the phrase “faith of the 318 fathers” should not be referred only to the Nicene Creed of 325 as opposed to that confirmed by Chalcedon of 451 as the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol. Instead, it is a fairly elastic statement, pointing not only to the Nicene Creed of 325 in its entirety, but also to its improved version, which the fathers of the Council of Constantinople of 381 had subscribed to.

⁴ English translation from Taft 1975, 398–99.

⁵ Another fragment in Theodore’s work mentions this more explicitly, where we read that a certain Peter Fullon, a fanatical Monophysite, who succeeded, on the patriarchal throne of Antioch, to a certain Calendon of the Chalcedonian faith, who was exiled in 484, allegedly ordered the recitation of the Creed at every synaxis, in order to manifest obedience to the faith of Nicaea and discredit the Chalcedonian Definition (Theodoros Anagnostes, *Historia tripartita* 547). See also Taft and Parenti 2014, 638. However, according to Bernard Capelle’s demonstration (1951, 1004–6), this passage is to be considered an interpolation. See also Kelly 2006, 349 as well as Taft and Parenti 2014, 637–38.

which, in turn, record the events of the one held in 518 (Janeras 2012, 173–74). In them it is recounted that on July 15, 518, the Orthodox Patriarch John II, successor to Timothy I, following the will of the people, solemnly pronounced the condemnation of the Monophysites and confirmed adherence to the four first ecumenical councils:

[...] πίσεως οὔτε ἁγίαν σύνοδον τολμᾷ τις ἀναθεματίζει, ἀλλὰ πάσας τὰς ἁγίας συνόδους τὰς βεβαιώσασας τὸ ἅγιον σύμβολον τῶν τῆ πατέρων τῶν συνελθόντων κατὰ τὴν Νικαέων ὀρθοδόξους γινώσκωμεν καὶ μάλιστα τὰς ἁγίας τρεῖς συνόδους ταύτας, τουτέστι τὴν ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει καὶ τὴν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ καὶ τὴν μεγάλην τὴν ἐν Χαλκηδόνι (Collectio sabbaitica 73 [Council of Constantinople 536]; “No one dares to anathematize a holy synod of faith, but we recognize as orthodox all the holy synods that have confirmed the holy symbol of the fathers who gathered at Nicaea, and especially these three holy synods, that is, the one in Constantinople, the one in Ephesus, and the great one in Chalcedon” [my own translation]).

The following day (July 16) he presided over the Divine Liturgy in the *Hagia Sophia*, of which this testimony remains:

καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν τοῦ ἁγίου εὐαγγελίου ἐξ ἔθους τῆς θείας λειτουργίας ἐπιτελουμένης καὶ τῶν θυρῶν κλεισθεισῶν καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου μαθήματος κατὰ τὸ σύνθετος λεχθέντος τῷ καιρῷ τῶν διπτύχων... (Collectio sabbaitica 76 [Council of Constantinople 536]; “And after the reading of the holy gospel, according to the custom of the divine liturgy being performed, and when the doors had been closed and the holy creed recited, according to the custom, at the time of the diptychs” [my own translation]).

Immediately afterwards the diptychs are mentioned, without naming any other elements. From this we infer, as Robert Taft, that the customary placement of the Creed in the Constantinople liturgy was before the diptychs (Taft and Parenti 2014, 640–644), thus before the anaphora. If as early as 518 the recitation of the Symbol in Constantinople is believed to be customary, there is nothing to prevent us from also accepting the credibility of the testimony of Theodore the Reader.

It appears from the sources cited that the context of dogmatic controversies is very important for understanding the reason for the introduction of the Profession of Faith into the Eucharist. Within the ritual sequence, it, by its very nature, could not be inserted before the dismissal of the catechumens. At the same time, however, the Symbol acquired a new function. As an expression of true faith, it became a condition for being able to celebrate a (true) Eucharist.⁶

⁶ In the primitive idea, the condition for celebrating the Eucharist was reconciliation with the brethren, which was ritually expressed by kiss of peace. After the introduction of the Creed in the Divine Liturgy,

In the face of all this, a testimony from the Hispanic milieu, indicates that not a few problems were created. It is a passage from the *Chronicon* (590–591) of Abbot John of Biclaro (died in 621). In it the Visigothic historian asserts that, in the East, the Symbol of Constantinople would be introduced later, by order of Justin II (565–578) and placed before the Our Father.

Romanorum LIII regnavit IVSTINUS iunior annis XI, qui Iustinus anno primo regni sui ea, quae contra synodum Calchedonensem fuerant commentata, destruxit, symbolumque sanctorumque CL patrum Constantinopoli congregatorum et in synodo Calchedonensi laudabiliter receptum in omni catholica ecclesia a populo concinendum intromisit, priusquam dominica dicatur oratio (Johannes Biclarensis, *Chronica*; MGH.AA 11, 211 [John of Biclaro, 590–591]; “The 53rd Roman Emperor IVSTINUS the Younger reigned for 11 years. In the first year of his reign, Justin destroyed those things that had been written against the Council of Chalcedon, and introduced the creed of the 150 holy fathers gathered in Constantinople and laudably received at the Council of Chalcedon to be sung by the people in every Catholic church before the Lord’s Prayer is said” [my own translation]).

Several scholars noted that Biclaro’s testimony cannot be considered credible, as it more than once contains errors in chronology (Taft and Parenti 2014, 641–43). Indeed, even “what John says about the defense of Chalcedon and the introduction of the creed into the mass is more true of Justin I (518–527) than of his namesake.” (Taft 1975, 402–3) Regarding, on the other hand, the placement of the *Professio fidei*, as Taft observes (1975, 403), the practice “of a symbol of faith before the Our Father is totally foreign to the whole Oriental tradition before and after John. So he must have been wrong.” On the other hand, it cannot be ruled out that the final expression (*priusquam dominica dicatur oratio*), which traces *ad litteram* Canon 2 of the Third Council of Toledo (589), as we shall see later, was, simply, a later addition to a text that, rather than ritual placement of the Creed, wants to speak about the origin of an element, attributing its introduction to an important personage. Operation of this kind is widespread in medieval commentaries on the liturgy.

2. Hispanic Liturgy

Originally, even in Spain, the liturgical use of the Symbol was linked to the rites of Christian initiation. However, the Hispanic liturgy was the first in the West to

the formula of the invitation to peace also underwent an interpolation, creating the link with the Profession of Faith: “Let us love one another so that in unanimity we may confess.” (Taft 1975, 381) See also Lodi 1990, 34–35. The Syriac tradition, however, inserted the Creed before the kiss of peace.

introduce the Profession of Faith into the Mass. Its appearance is linked to the conversion from Arianism of the Visigoth King Recaredo, who, during the Third Council of Toledo (589), under the influence of his uncle Leander, bishop of Seville (ca. 545–600), formally adhered to the Catholic faith on behalf of himself and the people (Kelly 2006, 351; Saitta 1991, 375–86). Despite the declaration manifested in the Acts of the aforementioned Council, about the recitation of the Symbol to imitate the tradition of the Eastern Churches,⁷ the question of its placement within the Mass, entirely original among Christian rites, remains problematic.

2.1. Historical Development

Although, in the East “the customary place of the creed was sometime before the diptychs—i.e. in its present place” (Taft 1975, 402) and, therefore, always before the anaphora, the Acts of the Third Council of Toledo (589), which introduce the *Professio fidei* after the anaphora and before communion, claim an Eastern practice as the source of origin (Janeras 1995, 105–6). To better understand the problem, we will have to make a distinction between the typology of the texts found in the Acts and the specific Eastern praxis they affirm.

2.1.1. Eastern Origin?

The Acts of the Third Council of Toledo (589) contain two speeches by Recaredo—king of the Visigoths between 586 and 601 (Díaz y Díaz 1991, 223–28). In his second speech, the ruler, after making the solemn Profession of Faith, also says about the Profession of Faith:

[...] ut omni sacrificii tempore ante communicationem corporis Christi uel sanguinis iuxta Orientalium partium morem unanimiter clara uoce sacratissimum fidei recenseant symbolum, ut primum populi quid credulitate teneant fateantur et sic corda fide purificata ad Christi corpus et sanguinem percipiendum exhibeant (Concilium Toletanum III, 101–2 [Third Council of Toledo, 589]; “that at every time of sacrifice, before the communion of the body or blood of Christ, according to the custom of the Eastern parts, they unanimously recite the most sacred Creed in a clear voice, so that the people may first confess what they hold by belief and thus present their hearts purified by faith to receive the body and blood of Christ” [my own translation]).

The quoted text refers to an Eastern custom (*mos*) of reciting the Creed together at each Mass, before communion. The problem is not insignificant since, as we saw above, the practice of reciting the Creed after the anaphora is completely unknown in the East. It is true that in the Agiopolite tradition there are sources in which

⁷ More generally on oriental influences in the Hispanic liturgy see Janeras 1995, 93–127.

the Creed is provided before the Our Father, but the context is always communion outside the Mass. In addition, these are sources not earlier than the 9th century.⁸ As Stefanos Alexopoulos notes (2009, 86–87), these rituals are modeled on the Agiopolite Liturgy of the presanctified. Recaredo, therefore, could not refer to this practice. To solve the problem we must, perhaps, change register and note, meanwhile, that in the quoted words of the Visigoth king, there is indicated neither which Symbol is referred to, nor which Church of the East had this practice, nor what was the precise place of the Profession of Faith within the ritual sequence. Looking, however, in a broader perspective at the structure of the Mass in the East, some light on the question might come from the ancient rite of elevation, which, though with various facets, belongs, in fact, to an *ordo communis*. Among the various Eastern traditions, in fact, there is preserved a response of the people to the acclamation *Sancta sanctis* (Arranz 1973, 31–67; Brock 1985, 30–31; Taft 2000, 240–248; Winkler 2002, 249–64) that is either Christological in nature (One Holy, one Lord, Jesus Christ, for the glory of God the Father), or, the most widespread, Trinitarian in nature (One Holy Father, one Holy Son, one Holy Spirit) (Hanssens 1932, 494–503). Not going into the question of the origin and historical development of this response, it, in both forms, is attested long before Recaredo (559–601).⁹ As Matthieu Smyth notes (2003, 220–221), in the early 5th century, in the West, the Christological version of this formula is alluded to by Niceta of Remesia (died in ca. 414).¹⁰ It can, with reason, be considered a Profession of Faith before communion.¹¹ It is likely, then, that this is precisely the practice, to which Recaredo refers in his discourse.

2.1.2. The Formula

Of a different kind from Recaredo's discourse is the text of Canon 2 of the Third Council of Toledo, which says:

Pro reuerentia sanctissimae fidei et propter corroboratas hominum inualidas mentes consultu piissimi et gloriosissimi domni Reccaredi regis sancta constituit synodus ut per omnes ecclesias Spaniae, Galliae uel Galliciae secundum formam Orientalium ecclesiarum concilii Constantinopolitani, hoc est centum quinquaginta episcoporum, symbolum fidei recitetur, ut priusquam Dominica dicatur oratio, uoce clara a populo praedicetur, quo et fides uera manifestum testimonium habeat et ad Christi corpus et sanguinem

⁸ The earliest evidence of this practice is preserved in the 9th-century Palestinian Horologion (ms. Sinai gr. 863). See Mateos 1964, 55. The sequence is also confirmed in 12th- and 13th-century sources (Alexopoulos 2009, 81–82).

⁹ The Christological version already appears in the Catecheses of Cyril/John of Jerusalem (Taft 2000, 240). The Trinitarian version, on the other hand, is attested in the Homilies of Theodore of Mopsuestia (died in 428), as well as in the earliest recension of Basil's Liturgy (Winkler 2002, 256).

¹⁰ "Sicut in mysteriis ore nostro dicimus, ita conscientiam teneamus: Vnus Sanctus (utique spiritus) unus dominus Iesus Christus in gloria dei patris. Amen." (Nicetas Remesianensis, 1964, 3.3.31)

¹¹ I thank Prof. Enrico Mazza for this suggestion.

praelibandum pectora populorum fide purificata accedant (Concilium Toletanum III, can. 2, 110 [Third Council of Toledo, 589]; “Out of reverence for the most holy faith and for the strengthening of the weak minds of men, the holy synod, by the advice of the most pious and most glorious lord Reccaredo, king, has decreed that the symbol of faith be recited throughout all the churches of Spain, Gaul, or Gallicia, according to the form of the Eastern churches of the Council of Constantinople, that is, of one hundred and fifty bishops, so that before the Lord’s Prayer is said, it may be proclaimed by the people in a clear voice, so that both the true faith may have a clear testimony and the hearts of the people may approach the offering of the body and blood of Christ, purified by faith” [my own translation]).

In this case we are dealing with a legislative text, the authorship of which is claimed by the Council itself (*synodus*), which, after consulting King Recaredo, establishes that the form of the Creed to be recited in the Mass is that of the 150 Fathers, fixed by the Constantinopolitan Council. The text of the Symbol is given in Acts twice: once in the context of Recaredo’s solemn Profession of Faith and, a second time, with some slight variations, in the context of the Goths’ Profession of Faith. In both cases there is first a recension of the Nicene Symbol (up to the words *et in Spiritum Sanctum*) with some anathemas followed by:

Item sancta fides quam exposuerunt centum quinquaginta Patrum, consona magnae Nicaenae synodo.

Credimus in unum Deum Patrem omnipotentem, factorem caeli et terrae, uisibilium omnium et inuisibilium conditorem; et in unum Dominum Iesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula, Deum ex Deo, lumen ex lumine, Deum uerum ex Deo uero, natum, non factum, homousion Patri, hoc est eiusdem cum Patre substantiae, per quem omnia facta sunt quae in caelo et quae in terra, qui propter nos et propter nostram salutem descendit et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto et Maria uirgine homo factus, passus est sub Pontio Pilato, sepultus tertia die resurrexit, ascendit in caelos, sedet ad dexteram Patris iterum venturus in gloria iudicare uiuos et mortuos, cuius regni non erit finis; et in Spiritum Sanctum, dominum et uiuificantem, ex Patre procedentem, cum Patre et Filio adorandum et glorificandum, qui locutus est per prophetas. In unam catholicam atque apostolicam ecclesiam; confitemur unum baptismum in remissione peccatorum; expectamus resurrectionem mortuorum, uitam futuri saeculi. Amen (Concilium Toletanum III, 66–67¹² [Third Council of Toledo, 589]; “Likewise, the holy faith which was expounded by one hundred and fifty Fathers, consonant with the great Council of Nicaea. We believe in one God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, creator of all things

¹² The controversies related to the *Filioque* issue caused the text of the Symbol with the addition *et Filio* to appear in the acts of the Eighth Toletan Council of 653 (*Concilium Toletanum VIII*, 385–86). With other minor variations, this text became part of the Missal reformed by Cisneros (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 557]). In more detail on the question of the various textual versions of the Symbol see e.g., Schwartz 1926.

visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father, that is, homousion with the Father, by whom all things in heaven and on earth were made, who for us and for our salvation came down and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, became man, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was buried, rose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father, coming again in glory to judge the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there will be no end; and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, proceeding from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is to be adored and glorified, who spoke through the prophets. We believe in one catholic and apostolic Church; we confess one baptism for the remission of sins; we look for the resurrection of the dead, the life of the world to come. Amen” [my own translation]).

The text corresponds, in essence, to the Symbol known by the name Nicene-Constantinopolitan that appears, for the first time, in the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon of 451.

It should be noted that although in the council text the *Professio fidei* begins in the plural (Πιστεύομεν), the singular form (Πιστεύω) is often used as, e.g., in the Byzantine liturgy. This indicates that the Symbol used in the Mass in this tradition comes from the baptismal rites.¹³ Later sources (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 557]) confirm that the textual form of the Symbol that actually entered the Hispanic Mass is the one beginning in the plural, as transmitted by the Chalcedonian Council (451). This detail may be of no small importance, as we shall see later.

2.1.3. Ritual Placement

Canon 2 of the Third Council of Toledo also contains an indication about the ritual position of the Symbol, before the Our Father (*priusquam Dominica dicatur oratio*).¹⁴ Here again we are dealing with a decision of the Council Fathers, despite the fact that the *Chronicon* of John of Biclaro (died in 621) had attempted to attribute this choice to Emperor Justin II.¹⁵ As we have seen, this placement of the Symbol in the Mass is unprecedented in history.

Already Isidore of Seville (died in 636) gives testimony to the difficulties concerning the insertion of a new element, within the ritual sequence. The indications contained in the first book of his *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, compiled between 598 and 615, constitute the earliest certain testimony about the structure of the

¹³ Indeed, in the testimony of Theodore the Reader, quoted above, appears a reference to the bishop's Good Friday Catechesis. This confirms the context of preparation for baptism. I thank Prof. Stefano Parenti for this suggestion.

¹⁴ See above.

¹⁵ See above, the testimony of John of Biclaro.

Hispanic Mass.¹⁶ In chapter 15 of the first book, he speaks of an *ordo missae* divided into 7 orations, ranging from the *oratio ammonitionis* to the *oratio dominica*. This septenary has, according to the author, its origins in the “*evangelica apostolicaque doctrina*” (Isidorus Hispalensis, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, 15). The Symbol of Faith is treated by him in chapter 16, immediately after the seven prayers (of which the last is the Our Father). In this regard Isidore says:

Symbolum autem, quod tempore sacrificii a populo praedicetur, CCCXVIII sanctorum patrum conlatione apud synodum Nicenam est editum. Cuius uerae fidei regula tantis doctrinae mysteriis praecellit, ut de omni parte fidei loquatur nullaue paene sit heresis cuius per singula uerba uel sententias non respondeat; omnes enim errores impietatum perfidia eque blasphemias calcat, et ob hoc in universis ecclesiis pari confessione a populo proclamatur (Isidorus Hispalensis, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, 16 [Isidore, 598–615]; “The Creed, which is to be proclaimed by the people at the time of sacrifice, was published by the council of 318 holy fathers at the Nicene Synod. The rule of the true faith of which is so excellent in so many mysteries of doctrine that it speaks of every part of the faith, and there is hardly any heresy to which it does not respond in every single word or sentence; for it tramples on all the errors of impiety, perfidy, and blasphemies, and for this reason it is proclaimed by the people in all churches with equal confession” [my own translation]).

As we note, the only aspect that Isidore’s commentary shares with Canon 2 of the Third Council of Toledo concerns the function of the Symbol to be an expression of the true faith. Missing, however, is not only the aside about the placement before the Our Father, but also any connection with Eucharistic communion and, more generally, with Eastern provenance. This is surprising, since it is entirely improbable that Isidore was not familiar with the provisions of the aforementioned Council. His, in fact, is a deliberate omission. At this point the question arises as to why this discontinuity occurred. The answer is to be sought in the general thrust of Isidore’s work. In his commentary, in fact, he seeks the origins of the various liturgical customs, and the Symbol is the element that clearly does not fit into the original scheme. The bishop of Seville is very attached to the sequence of the 7 orations, which for him is untouchable, since it corresponds to the sequence of the Eucharistic rite itself. This is why he chooses to insert the Symbol immediately after and, therefore, must omit the insertion on the position before the *Pater*. This, however, is not enough. Within the sequence of the 7 orations, there is already one that explicitly refers to communion. It is the *oratio quarta*, of which Isidore says:

¹⁶ Isidore’s commentary had a huge circulation in the history of the liturgy. His work became the prototype for later commentaries on the liturgy, beginning with that of Amalarius of Metz (died in 859).

Quarta post haec infertur pro osculo pacis ut, caritate reconciliati omnes indice, digne sacramento corporis et sanguinis Christi consociantur, quia non recipit dissensionem cuiusquam Christi indivisibile corpus (Isidorus Hispalensis, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, 15 [Isidore, 598–615]; “The fourth after this is introduced by the kiss of peace, so that, reconciled by love, all may be worthily united in the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, because the indivisible body of Christ does not admit the dissension of any one” [my own translation]).

In his commentary, therefore, there is the older idea that it is the reconciliation ritually expressed by the kiss of peace that provides worthy access to the sacrament of Christ’s body and blood.¹⁷

An interesting intervention by Isidore is also seen in the echo of Recaredo’s words regarding the ordinariness of the presence of the Profession of Faith. While the Visigoth king’s speech speaks of “omni sacrificii tempore,”¹⁸ Isidore says only “tempore sacrificii.” Here again the omission is not accidental since, as John Norman Davidson Kelly notes (2006, 435), the Council’s ordinance on the recitation of the Symbol of Faith in the Mass would have covered the day of Sunday. While the text of Canon 2 of the Third Council of Toledo does not explicitly say whether the *Credimus* is to be recited at every Mass or only on certain days, the *recensio Iuliana* contains an interesting tidbit of the titles of the various canons of this Council. Unlike, in fact, the *recensio Vulgata* which gives the title to Canon 2: “De symbolo proferendo a populis in ecclesia” (Concilium Toletanum III, 105; “On the recitation of the Creed by the people in church” [my own translation]) that of *Iuliana* asserts, that the same canon sanctions, “Vt in omnibus ecclesiis die Dominica symbolum recitetur” (Concilium Toletanum III, 103; “That the Creed may be recited in all churches on Sunday” [my own translation]). The same is also said by the summary of this Council, found in the *Epitome Hispanica* (7th century),¹⁹ considered as one of the oldest Spanish canonical sources.

Later sources, however, testify to the extension of the use of the Symbol to other Mass formularies as well.

Indirect evidence of the presence of the Symbol before the Our Father is offered by two particular euchological texts in the Hispanic liturgy (Pinell 1991, 335). The first appears in a formula placed between the *Post pridie* and the *ad orationem dominicam* of the formulary of the feast of St. Andrew. This is a text that appears to be an introduction to the Symbol which, as Marius Férotin says, is encountered nowhere else.

¹⁷ See above, the footnote 6.

¹⁸ See above.

¹⁹ “In omnes ecclesias die dominica symbolum recitetur” (Martínez 1961, 177; “That the Creed may be recited in all churches on Sunday” [my own translation]).

Omnes qui Christi sanguinis effusione per crucem redempti sumus, ereptique a noxa originali, ab omni nos inquinamento carnis et spiritus mundemur; ut purgatis labiis mundatisque pectoribus, fidem ueram et corde firmiter teneamus, et uoce libera proferamus publice et dicamus: Credimus (Férotin 1912, 37 [*Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum*, 11th century]; “That all of us who have been redeemed by the shedding of Christ’s blood on the cross, and rescued from original sin, may be cleansed from all defilement of flesh and spirit; that with our lips cleansed and our hearts purified, we may hold the true faith firmly in our hearts, and with a clear voice we may publicly proclaim it and say: We believe” [my own translation]).

The formula is immediately followed by the prayer *ad orationem dominicam*.

The second testimony is found in the formulary of the feast of Santa Eulalia. In it the beginning of the *ad orationem dominicam* refers to the proclamation of the Symbol:

Recensito, dilectissimi fratres, symbolo nostre credulitatis, Eulalie uirginis intueamur robur fidei uel etatis (Férotin 1912, 49 [*Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum*, 11th century]; “Having reviewed, most beloved brothers, the symbol of our belief, let us ponder the strength of faith and age of the virgin Eulalia” [my own translation]).

An important detail, regarding the placement of the Symbol in the Hispanic liturgy, is contained in the episcopal *Liber Ordinum* (before 1050). In it, among the added indications, concerning the conduct of the Mass in *Cena Domini*, after the antiphon *ad confractionem*²⁰ appears the rubric “*Postea symbolum*” (Janini 1991, 174; “Afterwards the symbol” [my own translation]), followed by the rubric concerning the antiphon for communion i.e. *ad accedentes* (Janini 1991, 174). From this source it would appear, that the Symbol followed the breaking of bread.

The same situation is present in the Antiphonary of Leon, from the first half of the 10th century. Here, too, the rubric appears after the antiphon for the *fractio*²¹ of the *in Cena Domini* Mass:

Post hanc antifona symbolum nicenum et oratio dominica ab omnibus recitantur (Brou and Vives 1959, 266 [Antiphonary of Leon, 10th century]; “After this antiphon, the Nicene Creed and the Lord’s Prayer are recited by all” [my own translation]).

As noted by the editor, the rubric is *super lineas addita*. A similar arrangement is present in the Easter Vigil. After the antiphon for the fraction (*Vicit leo*) there is the rubric that reads:

²⁰ This antiphon is preceded by the rubric: “Ad Confractionem uero panis dicitur hec antiphona tribus uicibus” (Janini 1991, 174; “At the breaking of bread, this antiphon is said three times” [my own translation]).

²¹ It is preceded by the rubric: “Ad confractionem uero panis hec antifona ter repetenda est” (Brou and Vives 1959, 266; “At the breaking of bread, this antiphon is to be repeated three times” [my own translation]).

Quumque hec antiphona ter repetita fuerit, symbolum et oratione dominica ab omnibus recitatur (Brou and Vives 1959, 286 [Antiphonary of Leon, 10th century]; “And when this antiphon has been repeated three times, the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer are recited by all” [my own translation]).

These two sources testify to the presence of the Symbol of Faith as a new element, placed alongside the older one consisting of the antiphon for the fraction.

The interdependence between the *Professio fidei* and *dominica oratio*, expressed in the two rubrics, seems to harken back to the formula of the Third Council of Toledo, which called for the recitation of the Symbol “*priusquam Dominica dicatur oratio*” (Concilium Toletanum III, can. 2, 110).

Both sources also contain the case where the omission of the Profession of Faith, before the *Pater*, is explicitly mentioned. This is the Palm Sunday Mass (Janini 1991, 171; Brou and Vives 1959, 248–49), during which, after the Gospel, the rite of *Traditio symboli* took place, in which the Apostolic Symbol was used (Janini 1991, 170–171). The measure, therefore, is aimed at avoiding duplication.

From the evidence cited so far, it can be deduced that the position of the Symbol in the ritual sequence was immediately before the *Pater* (introduced with the formula *ad orationem dominicam*) and, therefore, after the breaking of bread.

The first strictly liturgical source in which the full text of the Hispanic *Professio fidei* also appears is the *Missale Mixtum* of 1500.²² In this Missal, the *Credimus* is preceded by the dialogue, “*Dominus sit semper vobiscum R\.* *Et cum spiritu tuo*” and by an introduction inspired by Rom 10:9–10 (Ivorra 2017, 301), spoken by the priest: “*Fidem quam corde credimus ore autem dicamus*” (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 117]²³; “The faith which we believe in our heart, let us now say with our mouth” [my own translation]) which, in turn, echoes the words of Recaredo, recorded in the Acts of the Third Council of Toledo.²⁴ The *Missale Mixtum* contains, however, an important provision. In it, the Symbol turns out to be an element that replaces the antiphon *ad confractionem*, so it is provided only when there is no proper antiphon for the fraction. This is explicitly stated in the rubric that follows the last part of the Eucharistic prayer.

²² The text version of the Symbol adopted in the Hispanic Mass already appears in the proceedings of the Third Council of Toledo, within King Recaredo’s solemn Profession of Faith.

²³ In the case of the *ordo* of the feast of St. James, this part also has musical notation (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 555–56]).

²⁴ “*Expedit enim nobis id ore profiteri quod corde credimus, secundum caeleste mandatum quod dicitur: Corde creditur ad iustitiam, oris autem confessio fit ad salutem*” (Concilium Toletanum III, 61; “For it is expedient for us to profess with our mouth what we believe in our heart, according to the heavenly commandment which says: ‘With the heart man believes unto righteousness, but confession of the mouth is made unto salvation’” [my own translation]). See also Janeras 1958, 221.

Et tunc Presb. accipiat corpus Domini de patena et ponat super calicem discopertum: et dicat alta voce omnibus diebus videlicet festivis et Dominicis: preter in locis in quibus erit antiphona propria ad confractionem panis. Dominus sit semper vobiscum. R/. Et cum. Dicat presb. Fidem quam corde credimus: ore autem dicamus. Et elevet Sacerdos Corpus Christi ut videatur a populo. Et dicat Chorus symbolum bini ac bini... (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 554–55; *Missale Mixtum*, 1500]; “And then let the priest take the body of the Lord from the paten and place it on the uncovered chalice: and say in a loud voice on all days, namely, feasts and Sundays: except in places where there will be a proper antiphon at the breaking of bread. The Lord be with you always. R/. And with. Let the priest say. The faith which we believe in our heart: but let us say with our mouth. And let the priest raise the Body of Christ so that it may be seen by the people. And let the choir say the symbol two by two” [my own translation]).

Confirmation of this is clearly seen by comparing, e.g., the Vigil and Easter Day formularies. While that of the Vigil contains an antiphon for the fraction *Hic est panis verus* (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 475]),²⁵ that of Easter Day, instead of it, inserts the Symbol.²⁶ Even in other cases, where the rubric concerning the *Professio fidei* appears, these are formularies that do not contain the antiphon for the fraction (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 135, 138–39]).

The substitutionary function of the *Credimus* for the antiphon for the fraction is also confirmed in John Pinius’ Treatise of 1729.²⁷ While the author speaks of the presence of the Symbol when there is no proper antiphon for the fraction (Pinius 1729, 96), he further restricts it only to the greatest feasts:

Dicitur symbolum diebus Dominicis et in festis sex vel quatuor capparum. At in festis duarum capparum vel in ferialibus dicitur una antiphona pro tempore ex sequentibus (Pinius 1729, 97 [John Pinius, 1729]; “The symbol is said on Sundays and on feasts of six or four copes. But on feasts of two copes or on ferial days, one antiphon is said for the season from the following” [my own translation]).

The provision about the use of the Profession of Faith in the Hispanic Mass, linked to formularies lacking the antiphon for the *fractio*, remained in effect practically until the promulgation of the Hispano-Mozarabic Missal in 1991.²⁸

²⁵ In the Antiphonary of Leon (10th century) the antiphon *Hic est panis verus* is scheduled for Christmas Day (Brou and Vives 1959, 95).

²⁶ In the Easter Day formulary, the antiphon *Vicit leo* that was previously linked to the fraction is moved after the *Pater* and provided for communion (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 486]).

²⁷ “In festis duplicibus, annique Dominicis sacerdos loco Antiphonae Ad confractionem panis, ait: Dominus sit semper vobiscum...” (Pinius 1729, 90; “On duplex feasts, and on Sundays, the priest, instead of the antiphon for the breaking of bread, says: ‘The Lord be with you always’” [my own translation]).

²⁸ This is confirmed by the rubric of the 1875 *ordo missae* used in Toledo Cathedral before the last reform of the rite: “Et tunc Presbyter accipiat Corpus Domini de Patena, et ponat super Calicem discopertum,

The substitutive value of the *Professio fidei vis-à-vis* the antiphon for the *fractio* is also reinforced by those indications in the *Missale mixtum*, from which it appears that, in solemn celebrations, the rite of the *fractio* took place while the choir performed the Symbol. This is explicitly stated by Alexander Lesley (died in 1758) in the note, in which he comments on this part of the rite, in the formulary of the St. James Mass.

Caeterum fractio hostiae, partium ejus distributio in patena, Memento pro vivis, et alia, a rubrica indicata, fieri debent dum chorus Symbolum canit, aut dum antiphonam ad confractionem in missa solemniter canit. In missis vero privatis post recitatam antiphonam confractionis, aut pro diei qualitate, post dictum Symbolum, haec omnia ordinum, a sacerdote fiunt (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 558; Alexander Lesley, 1755]; “But the breaking of the host, the distribution of its parts on the paten, the memorial for the living, and other things indicated by the rubric, should be done while the choir is singing the Creed, or while the antiphon for the fraction is sung in a solemn Mass. But in private Masses, after the recitation of the breaking antiphon, or, depending on the quality of the day, after the Creed has been said, all these are done by the priest, in accordance with the order [of the Mass]” [my own translation]).

Lesley’s note refers to the rubric that follows the text of the *Credimus* and which, after describing the whole unfolding of the fraction, still mentions the Symbol at the end by establishing, immediately after it, the prayer of introduction to the *Pater*:

Et coperto calice faciat [Presbyter] Memento pro vivis. Et perfecto Simbolo dicat Presb. ad orationem Dominicam equaliter (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 558; *Missale Mixtum*, 1500]; “And with the chalice covered, let [the priest] say the memorial for the living. When the Symbol has been completed, let the priest also say the *ad orationem dominicam*” [my own translation]).

This mode of the unfolding of the fraction, accompanied by the recitation of the Symbol,²⁹ is also confirmed by the fragmentary indications in the formulary for the Fifth Sunday of Advent. In it, after the *Post pridie* prayer there are prescriptions on the carrying out of the following rites.

et dicat alta voce omnibus diebus videlicet festis, et Dominicis, praeter illos in quibus erit Antiphona propria ad confractionem Panis” (Janini 1982, 574; “And then the priest shall take the Body of the Lord from the paten, and place it upon the uncovered chalice, and shall say in a loud voice on all days, namely feast days and Sundays, except those on which there will be a proper antiphon for the breaking of bread” [my own translation]).

²⁹ This ritual procedure is also witnessed in “*Missa Mozarabe D. Leandro Hispalensi Episcopo peculiariter in Hispaniis usitata*.” (Pamelius 1571, 647)

Dicat Presb. Te prestante. Et Dominus sit semper vobiscum. Et postea tenendo corpus Domini super calicem dicat alta voce. Fidem quam corde credimus. Dicat Chorus. Credimus in unum Deum totum. Et tunc faciat illas particulas: ut supra dictum est in prima Missa. Et Presb. faciat Memento pro vivis. Et perfecto simbolo dicat Presb. ad Dominicam equaliter (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 138–39³⁰; *Missale Mixtum*, 1500]; “Let the priest say *Te prestante* and the Lord be with you always. Afterwards, holding the body of the Lord over the chalice, let him say in a loud voice: The faith which we believe in our hearts. Let the Choir say: We believe in one God, entirely. And then he prepares those particles: as was said above in the first Mass and the priest says the memorial for the living and, after the Symbol, let the priest also say the *ad orationem dominicam* prayer” [my own translation]).

Concerning this aspect, however, the *Missale Mixtum* is not uniform. The *ordo* of the Mass of the First Sunday of Advent, described in a more sober manner than that of the Feast of St. James, contains a rehash of the rubric concerning the *fractio* so that, according to its indications, the *fractio* takes place after the *Credimus*.

Et deinde faciat Presbyter sic. Frangat Eucharistiam per medium: et ponat mediam partem in Patena: et de alia parte faciat quinque particulas et ponat in Patena: et accipiat aliam partem et faciat quatuor particulas et ponat in Patena similiter per ordinem facte per rotas istas que supra sunt. Et statim purget bene digitos: et coperto calice fiat memento pro vivis. Postea dicat Presbyter ad orationem Dominicam equaliter istam orationem (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 118; *Missale Mixtum*, 1500]; “And then the priest does this. Let him break the Eucharist in half: and let him place the middle part on the paten: and from the other part make five particles and place them on the paten: and let him take another part and make four particles and place them on the paten in the same order, done by these wheels which are above. Immediately after let him cleanse his fingers well: and having covered the chalice let him say the memorial for the living. Afterwards let the priest also say the *ad orationem dominicam* prayer” [my own translation]).

This mode of the fraction after the Symbol will be consolidated later. This is demonstrated by the *ordo* of the Mass, used in Toledo Cathedral before the last reform, in which the lemma “*perfecto Symbolo*” is placed at the beginning and not at the end of the rubric on the fraction.

Perfecto Symbolo, Sacerdos frangit Eucharistiam in duas partes: eam quam in sinistra manu tenet in quinque particulas dividit; ex alia autem quatuor particulas facit; quas omnes collocat in Patena juxta ordinem in Rotis praescriptum: purgat digitos, et cooperiens

³⁰ The last part of this rubric is also found in the formulary of the Sixth Sunday of Advent: “Et dicto memento pro vivis et perfecto simbolo dicat Presbyter orationem Dominicam equaliter” (*Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 135]; “And having said the memorial for the living and having completed the Symbol, let the priest also say the Lord’s Prayer” [my own translation]).

Calicem, faciat Memento pro vivis, quo finito dicit ad orationem Dominicam (Janini 1982, 575 [*Ordo missae* of Toledo Cathedral, 1875]; “Having finished the Creed, the priest breaks the Eucharist into two parts: he divides the one he holds in his left hand into five particles; from the other he makes four particles; all of which he places on the paten according to the order prescribed in the wheels: he cleanses his fingers, and covering the chalice, says the memorial for the living, after which he says the *ad orationem dominicam* prayer” [my own translation]).

2.2. Current Order

The 1991 reform of the *ordo missae* of the *Missale hispano-mozarabicum* also affected the Profession of Faith, which today constitutes the first act of the communion rites of every Eucharistic celebration. It is still preceded by the traditional monition of the priest “Fidem quam corde credimus, ore autem dicamus” (MHM I 36), but before that the dialogue (*Dominus vobiscum R\.* *Et cum*) no longer appears. It is immediately followed by the rite of the breaking of bread, accompanied by the *cantus ad confractionem* (MHM I 37).

As for the execution of the *Credimus*, the new missal states that “omnes professionem fidei proclamant” (MHM I 36; “Everyone proclaims the Profession of Faith” [my own translation]), without further specification. The text of the Symbol (MHM I 36) remained basically the same as before, with a few stylistic adjustments.

No longer being linked to either the fraction or the Lord’s Prayer, in today’s ritual sequence, the Symbol turns out to be an independent element.³¹

Despite the established idea of the ordinary presence of the Symbol in the communion rites of the Hispanic Mass since the end of the 6th century (*Prenotandos* 120), confirmed by Jordi Pinell (1998, 179), the Missal of 1991 is the first source in which the *Credimus* explicitly becomes a fixed element of every celebration eucharist. In fact, as we have seen, both the *Missale Mixtum* and the *ordo missae* of the Cathedral of Toledo before the last reform, provided for it every day “praeter illos in quibus erit Antiphona propria ad confractionem Panis” (Janini 1982, 574; “except those in which there will be a proper antiphon for the breaking of the bread” [my own translation]).

³¹ The new missal no longer mentions the elevation of the host linked to the Profession of Faith.

Conclusions

Historical investigation shows that the Creed used in the rites of Christian initiation was not simply carried into the Mass. At the origins of the issue are various doctrinal controversies. These led first to the development of a universally recognized official formula of the Symbol and, only later, to its inclusion in the Mass. As is well known in the field of comparative liturgy, the discrepancy between various liturgical traditions about the position of an element within the ritual sequence is evidence of its foreignness to the original form of the rite (Taft 1991, 27).

For the Hispanic liturgy, the inclusion of the Symbol in the Mass was of manifest Eastern inspiration although, as we have noted, in two different aspects: on the one hand, the practice of professing the faith before communion and, on the other hand, the textual form of the Symbol. As we suggested above, the first aspect would be traceable to the ancient response of the people to the acclamation *Sancta sanctis* during the elevation rite.

Regarding the second aspect, on the other hand, that is, the textual form of the Symbol, the choice to maintain, in the Hispanic Mass, the initial plural (*Credimus*) does not seem coincidental either, in accordance with the text of the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon of 451, unlike the liturgical form used in the East, which, instead, is in the singular. This could also shed light on the problem of the placement of the Symbol within the Hispanic Mass.

As noted by Enrico Mazza (2011, 15–30), in his reconstruction of the Hispanic and Gallican Eucharistic Prayer, originally, between the anaphora and the *Pater*, there were texts that referred to the rite of the fraction of bread. The scholar (18–25) has drawn attention to some *Post pridie* that begin with the word *Credimus* (Janini 1991, 300; *Missale mixtum* [PL 85, 986]; Mazza 2014, 213–14) and which, according to him, in the primitive stage had the function of *Collectio ad panis fractionem*. It is, therefore, very likely that the presence of these fraction collects (beginning with *Credimus*) determined the place of the Symbol precisely at this point in the ritual sequence (Mazza 2011, 32–33; Janeras 1958, 219).

In the oldest Hispanic *ordines*, the Symbol of Faith is preceded by the antiphon accompanying the *fractio* and followed by the *Pater*. In the *Missale mixtum*, however, the *Credimus* appears as an element that replaces the antiphon *ad confractionem panis*. This corresponds to the process described by the Eighth Law of Comparative Liturgy.³² Indeed, where the proper antiphon for the fraction (more solemn liturgical seasons) has been preserved,³³ the *Professio fidei* is not contemplated. This provision,

³² According to an arrangement, proposed by Taft (2001, 206), the Eighth Law of Comparative Liturgy “states that when the continual addition of new elements to a liturgical service eventually overloads the structure so that something has to give, it is almost always the older, more traditional elements, hitherto coexisting with the innovations, that are suppressed in favor of the latter.”

³³ The *Missale mixtum*, e.g., preserves the antiphon for the *fractio* in the Lenten season formularies.

present in the rubric until the reform of the Second Vatican Council, had remained as a sign of the adventitious character of this ritual element.

In light of the sources examined, to explain the relationship between *Credimus* and *fractio*, the scheme of the two traditions, present in the *Prenotandos* 117 and shown below in Table 1, does not seem sufficient.

Table 1. The scheme of the two traditions of the fraction

Tradition A	Tradition B
<i>Confractio</i>	<i>Credimus</i>
<i>Credimus</i>	<i>Confractio</i>
<i>Pater noster</i>	<i>Pater noster</i>

Source: developed by the author based on *Prenotandos* 117.

It, in fact, does not evaluate the relationship between the Symbol and the antiphon *ad fractionem*. Consequently, it does not consider the possibility that the Symbol, having replaced the antiphon for the fraction, was performed during the *fractio*, as in the case of the St. James Mass in the *Missale mixtum*.

The following table summarizes, in broad strokes, the changes in the position of *Credimus* within the post-Anaphoric rites as witnessed in the main Hispanic sources.

Table 2. The ritual position of the fraction in the history of the Hispanic Mass

Antiphonary of Leon (10th century)	Missale mixtum (1500)		Ordo missae of Toledo (1875)	Missale Hispano Mozarabicum (1991)
<i>In Cena domini; In Vigilia Paschae</i>	Mass of St. James	<i>I Dom. Adv.</i>	–	–
<i>Ant. ad fr.</i> + [<i>Fractio</i>]	<i>Ant. ad fr. vel Cr.</i> + [<i>Fractio</i>]	<i>Ant. ad fr. vel Cr.</i>	<i>Ant. ad fr. vel Cr.</i>	<i>Cr.</i>
<i>Cr.</i>	–	[<i>Fractio</i>]	[<i>Fractio</i>]	<i>Cant. ad fr.</i> + [<i>Fractio</i>]
<i>Pater noster</i>	<i>Pater noster</i>	<i>Pater noster</i>	<i>Pater noster</i>	<i>Pater noster</i>

Source: own elaboration.

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