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GENERAL INSTRUCTION
ON
THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS
with an introduction and survey

National Conference of Catholic Bishops
Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy

Washington
1971

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SACRED CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

Prot. 165/71

Because of the magnitude of the work and the many difficulties involved, the task of editing the books of the Divine Office, or Liturgy of the Hours, continues to demand a lengthy period of time. Acting upon a special mandate from His Holiness, Pope Paul VI, this Sacred Congregation therefore decided to publish first the *General Instruction to the Liturgy of the Hours* separately; these norms will also be included in the first volume of the Breviary.

This will give priests, religious and faithful, whether singly or in groups meeting for study or prayer, the opportunity of learning the depth and forcefulness of this new book of the Church's prayer, the proper format and norms guiding the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, and also the spiritual benefits to be drawn from it by the People of God.

From the acts of the Congregation for Divine Worship,
February 2, 1971, Feast of the Presentation of the Lord.

A. Bugnini
Secretary

PREFACE

Three factors that from the earliest days have constantly nourished the Church's inner life are the Mass, the sacraments, and the prayer of the Hours.

Mass on the Lord's day has always been the heart and center of Catholic worship. It brings us into direct and life-giving contact with the paschal mystery of Christ our Lord. The other sacraments mark our encounter with Christ at particularly significant and important moments of our lives. Together with the Mass, these take Christians into the mystery of our Lord's death and resurrection and sanctify their lives.

The prayer of the Hours sanctifies the course of each day. They are a call to praise and reflection at different parts of the day, reminding us constantly of God's living presence in his Church. The terms *Divine Office* and *Breviary* reflect later developments of this prayer of the Hours.

The awareness of the Liturgy of the Hours as something belonging essentially to the whole Church, has, regrettably, hardly been in evidence for many centuries. It had come to be considered as the preserve of religious and clergy. Liturgical services however are not private functions, or reserved to groups of elites, they are celebrations of the Church which is "the sacrament of unity." They pertain to the whole body of the Church, although they concern different members of the Church in different ways according to the diversity of holy orders, functions, and degrees of participation. As can be seen from the very structure of the Hours, with their psalms, readings, hymns, responsories and prayers, they are designed for celebration in common. Individual recitation came in only when this communal celebration was not possible.

The purpose of publishing the *General Instruction on the*

Liturgy of the Hours prior to the publication of the reformed Office itself, is to offer the opportunity of reflecting upon the significance of the Liturgy of the Hours in the life of the Church today. It constitutes a very useful introduction to the reform of the Liturgy of the Hours, and I hope that it will help those who read it to come to a lively appreciation of this part of the Church's liturgy.

A. Bugnini

Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship

INTRODUCTION

At its meeting in November 1970 the National Conference of Catholic Bishops formally adopted as its own a brief statement on prayer proposed by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy:

The Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy has considered carefully whether a statement on the prayer life of the people and, in particular, of priests should be made by the NCCB. It recognizes the importance of this question today and proposes that, rather than issue such a statement at once, the NCCB ask each bishop to meet and work with his priests and people in the study of this problem, with the hope of expressing the dimensions of their common appreciation of the life of prayer. Finally, the Committee recommends that the appropriate NCCB Committees (Liaison, Priestly Formation, Pastoral Research and Practice, and Liturgy) study the findings of individual dioceses and work toward the preparation of an NCCB statement.

The background of this decision was the desire to situate all questions of the prayer life of priests in a better context than the simple issue of the canonical hours of the divine office. For one thing, the Roman breviary was neither designed nor intended as the private prayer book of individuals; even in its revised form decreed by the Second Vatican Council, the divine office is a community prayer and on this account is called the prayer of the Church.

More seriously, it is evident that there are really two crises of prayer among priests. One is the greater and greater alienation, certainly among the younger clergy, from the form of the divine office. The other is a hesitation and even frustration over prayer itself in contemporary church life and practice.

It did not seem that the graver problems of prayer could be resolved, for example, in a national pastoral letter which would run the risk of appearing facile and patronizing. For this reason the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy proposed, and the episcopal conference agreed, that each bishop should take steps to encourage study of the present problem, seeking the involvement of both clergy and laity. Only in this way, through the development of understanding in actual situations, can some kind of concerted effort be made—with the help of various committees of the episcopal conference—to address the question adequately.

Originally, in its first submissions to the episcopal conference in the fall of 1970, the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy had suggested a somewhat more direct addition to the above statement. This was a formal recommendation of alternatives to the Roman divine office—to be employed according to the judgment of the individual bishop. These alternatives or "commutations" included the substitution of periods of biblical reading and prayerful and meditative silence, the limitation of the Roman office to its principal hours of prayer, the use of unofficial interim breviaries or other kinds of prayer books.

Upon reflection, it was decided not to include so specific or formal recommendation, again lest the actual problem of prayer be bogged down in questions of different styles of prayer or texts and formularies. At the same time it is desirable that these alternatives and other avenues of development be seriously explored—especially by bishops and priests, but also by all the clergy and laity of the church.

It is expected that the Latin edition of the revised Roman Liturgy of the Hours, formerly called the Roman Breviary, will be published, volume by volume, during the next few months. It is not expected, however, that an official English translation will be ready until at least two years after the Latin volumes appear.

In the meantime, we may hope that the understanding of prayer for the Christian, prayer in the Church, and the prayer of the clergy will increase, especially through the reflection and consensus sought by the resolution of the episcopal conference which was quoted above. Already there is a broad awareness of the extent of the problem, and there is evidence of profound concern. The development of houses of prayer and

the publication of books of contemporary prayer forms are welcome signs. Appended to this booklet are examples of diocesan plans to stimulate discussion of this question, especially as it affects the life of prayer among priests. This process can also be helped by the use of alternatives to the existing Roman divine office and by study of the document published in this booklet.

The new "General Instruction" has been issued in Latin and is here presented in English in advance of the publication of the revised Liturgy of the Hours. As already noted, the latter will appear in Latin within the next few months, but will not be available in English for at least two years after publication in Latin.

This General Instruction deals in some measure with technical matters which will be of interest only in relation to the published text. Most of it, however, is written to explain the rationale of Christian prayer and the liturgy of prayer of the hours in the Church. This is especially true of Chapter I (on the significance of the Liturgy of the Hours) and Chapter III (on the elements of this prayer). The advance publication of the General Instruction should also be helpful to those who will employ one or other of the unofficial interim breviaries and to all who are concerned with the restructuring of the Roman divine office at the mandate of the Second Vatican Council (Constitution on the Liturgy, Chapter IV).

In addition, the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy now seeks the judgment and opinion of priests and others concerning the eventual adaptation of the Roman Liturgy of the Hours (as described in this General Instruction). It is not desirable or even feasible that, when definitive breviaries appear for the United States or for the other English-speaking countries, these should be mere translations of the Latin text and structure. In fact, the General Instruction constantly speaks of further adaptations.

Some of the suggested adaptations provide great flexibility in the celebration or praying of the revised Liturgy of the Hours (for example, nos. 29, 46, 161, 188, 246-252). Other adaptations, some of them substantial, are left to the episcopal conferences (for example, nos. 40, 92, 162, 178, 184). Finally, it may well be that study of the

rationale of the revision and the experience of alternatives of one kind or another will suggest more basic adaptations—all in the hope that, when it is possible to produce an English book of prayer, this will be of genuine benefit to the praying Church.

With this in mind, a brief questionnaire is appended to this edition of the General Instruction. This questionnaire seeks information about the successes and weaknesses in the revision described in the Roman document; suggestions about the form and content of the Church's book of prayer; indications of experience with various other forms of prayer. Readers are invited to send responses to their respective diocesan liturgical commissions. The commissions may in turn find such reactions helpful in their broad reflection upon contemporary prayer needs. They are asked in turn to send collated or summary reports to the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, which will also welcome individual comments.

We are grateful to the Congregation for Divine Worship for initiating this effort and providing the opportunity for this study and survey and, in particular, we acknowledge with thanks the prefatory words of Father A. Bugnini, the Secretary of the Congregation.

CHAPTER I

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS OR DIVINE OFFICE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

1. The public and common prayer of God's People is considered one of the chief duties of the Church. From the very beginning those who were baptized "devoted themselves to the apostles' instruction and the communal life, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). The Acts of the Apostles frequently shows us the Christian community praying together.¹

Testimony from the early Church informs us that some of the faithful met at appointed hours for prayer. In different areas the custom soon arose of setting aside certain hours for common prayer, such as the last hour of the day, when evening fell and lights had to be kindled, or the first hour of the day, when the rising of the morning star signalled the end of night.

In the course of time, other hours were made holy by communal prayer, especially those times which the Fathers saw as being foreshadowed in the Acts of the Apostles. There we find the disciples gathered together about nine in the morning.² The Prince of the Apostles "went up to the roof terrace to pray about noontime" (10:9); "Peter and John . . . were going up to the temple for prayer at the three o'clock hour" (3:1); "about midnight, while Paul and Silas were praying" (16:25).

2. Such prayers, said in common, were gradually arranged into a set course of hours. This Liturgy of the Hours, or Divine Office, enriched by readings, is primarily a prayer of praise and supplication, the very prayer of the Church with, and to, Christ.

I. THE PRAYER OF CHRIST

Christ Prays to the Father

3. When the Word, proceeding from the Father as the splendor of his glory, came to give God's life to men, he, "Christ Jesus, high priest of the new and eternal covenant, taking human nature, . . . introduced into this earthly exile that hymn which is sung throughout all ages in the halls of heaven."³ From that time onward, the praise of God within the heart of Christ resounds with human words of adoration, atonement and intercession; as Head of a restored humanity and the Mediator sent by God, he offers everything to the Father in the name of all men, and on behalf of all.

4. The Son of God, who is "one with the Father" (see John 10:30), said, upon entering this world: "I have come to do your will" (Hebrews 10:9; see John 6:38), and so left us an example of his own prayer. The gospels often show him at prayer: when his mission from the Father is revealed,⁴ before he calls the apostles,⁵ when he blesses God at the multiplication of loaves,⁶ when he is transfigured on the mountain,⁷ when he heals a deaf mute⁸ and raises Lazarus to life,⁹ before demanding a confession of faith from Peter,¹⁰ when he teaches his followers how to pray,¹¹ when his disciples return from their mission,¹² when he blesses the children¹³ and prays for Peter.¹⁴

His zeal is closely connected with daily prayer, as if prayer was its very source, such as when he went off to the desert or to a mountain to pray,¹⁵ rising early in the morning,¹⁶ or as evening drew on, up to the time between three and six in the morning¹⁷ spending the night in communion with God.¹⁸

As is rightly believed, he took part in those prayers offered publicly in the synagogue, which he entered in the Sabbath "as he was in the habit of doing,"¹⁹ and in the temple, which he called "a house of prayer,"²⁰ as well as in those prayers customarily recited by devout Israelites. At mealtimes he offered the traditional blessings, as is expressly mentioned at the multiplication of loaves,²¹ during the Last Supper,²² and at Emmaus;²³ he also sang a hymn with his disciples.²⁴

To the very end of his life, when the hour for his Passion drew near,²⁵ at the Last Supper,²⁶ throughout his agony²⁷ and upon the cross,²⁸ the Divine Master showed that prayer was the vital force behind his messianic ministry and paschal mystery. It is true that "in the days when he was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to God, who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence" (Hebrews 5:7), and by his perfect offering upon the altar of the cross "he has forever perfected those who are being sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14); having been raised from the dead, he lives forever to make intercession for us.²⁹

II. THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

The Command to Pray

5. Jesus commands us to pray, just as he had done; he often said "pray," "ask," "seek,"³⁰ "in my name."³¹ He handed on to us a way of praying, which we call the *Lord's Prayer*,³² and teaches that prayer is necessary,³³ and should be humble,³⁴ constant,³⁵ persistent and confident in the Father's goodness,³⁶ authentic and in keeping with the nature of God.³⁷

Throughout their writings the apostles have handed on to us their prayers, chiefly ones of praise and thanksgiving. They teach us that prayer should be offered to God³⁸ through Christ³⁹ in the Holy Spirit,⁴⁰ with perseverance and attentiveness,⁴¹ and tell us of the effectiveness of prayer for our growth in holiness⁴² as well as of prayers of praise,⁴³ thanksgiving,⁴⁴ petition,⁴⁵ and intercession for all men.⁴⁶

The Church Continues Christ's Prayer

6. Since all that man is comes from God, he must recognize and proclaim his dependence upon the creator. Good men of every age have done this by prayer.

True prayer directed toward God must be in union with Christ, the Lord of all, our sole mediator,⁴⁷ for only through him do we have access to God.⁴⁸ He forms all men into one community with himself,⁴⁹ so that there is an intimate connection between the prayer of Christ and the prayers of men. For in Christ, and in him alone, does human religious sentiment achieve its saving value and purpose.

7. A special and close relationship stands between Christ and those whom he has joined to himself, through the sacrament of rebirth, as members of his body, the Church. From him, as head, all the riches which are his as God's Son flow throughout the entire body, namely: the imparting of the Spirit, truth, life, and participation in his divine Sonship, which was manifest in every prayer of his, and which should live within us.

The priesthood of Christ is shared by the entire body of the Church, so that all who have been baptized by a new birth, and consecrated by anointing with the Holy Spirit into a spiritual house and a holy priesthood,⁵⁰ are capable of New Testament worship; this is due to no power of ours, but is a benefit and gift from Christ.

God could give no greater gift to men than to make his Word, through whom he made all things, to be their head, joining them to him as members, that he might be Son of God and Son of Man, one God with the Father, one man among men. When we pray to God, we do not separate the Son from him, and when the body of the Son prays, the head does not separate himself from it. Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ is the one Savior of his own body, who prays for us, prays within us, and is prayed to by us. He prays for us as our priest; prays within us as our head; is prayed to by us as our God. We therefore recognize our voices in him, and his voice in us.⁵¹

The Work of the Holy Spirit

8. The unity of the Church at prayer is brought about by the Holy Spirit, who is in Christ,⁵² and likewise in the entire Church and

each baptized person. "The Spirit helps us in our weakness" and "makes intercessions for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in speech" (Romans 8:26); as the Spirit of the Son, pours into us the "spirit of adoption as sons through which we cry out 'Abba!' (that is 'Father!'" (Romans 8:15; see Galatians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Ephesians 5:18; Jude 20). There can be no Christian prayer without the action of the Holy Spirit. He makes the whole Church one, and leads us to the Father through the Son.

Communal Nature of Prayer

9. The example and command of the Lord and his apostles concerning constant and earnest prayer must not be considered mere legalism. It is part of the very nature of the Church as a community, which must manifest its communal nature by prayer. In the Acts of the Apostles, our earliest instruction on the Church as a community of believers, the Church appears as a congregation at prayer "with some women in their company, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers" (1:14). "The community of believers were of one heart and one mind" (4:32), whose unity rested upon the word of God, a brotherly life, prayer and the eucharist.⁵³

Although praying in private, with the door closed,⁵⁴ is commendable and necessary,⁵⁵ and is carried out by members of the Church through Christ in his Holy Spirit, nevertheless there is an added dignity to communal prayer, for Christ has said "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst" (Matthew 18:20).

III. THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Consecration of Time

10. Since Christ has taught the "necessity of praying always and not losing heart" (Luke 18:1), the Church is faithful to this directive. She never ceases to offer prayers, and exhorts us with these words: "through him (Jesus) let us continually offer God a sacrifice of praise" (Hebrews 13:15). The Church fulfills this command not only by

celebrating the eucharist, but in other ways as well, especially in the Liturgy of the Hours. Among the other liturgical actions, this is an ancient Christian practice by which the whole course of the day and night is made holy by the praises of God.⁵⁶

11. Because the purpose of the Liturgy of the Hours is to sanctify the day and all of man's work, the traditional sequence of the hours has been restored so that as far as possible they may once again be genuinely related to the time of the day at which they are prayed.⁵⁷

For this reason, "that the day may be truly sanctified, and that the hours themselves may be recited with spiritual advantage, it is best that each of them be prayed at a time which most closely corresponds with its true canonical time."⁵⁸

Relationship of Liturgy of the Hours to the Eucharist

12. The Liturgy of the Hours spreads to the various hours of the day the praise and thanksgiving,⁵⁹ as well as the remembrance of the mysteries of salvation, the prayers and foretaste of heaven's glory which are found in the eucharistic celebration, which is "the center and culmination of the whole life of the Christian community."⁶⁰

The celebration of the eucharist is best prepared for by the Liturgy of the Hours, since those dispositions needed for a fruitful eucharistic celebration, such as faith, hope, charity, devotion and a spirit of sacrifice, are summoned forth and made stronger.

Exercise of Christ's Priestly Office in the Liturgy of the Hours

13. In the Holy Spirit, through his Church, Christ carries on his work of "the sanctification of men and the praise of God"⁶¹ not only when the eucharist is celebrated and the sacraments administered, but also, in addition to other ways, when the Liturgy of the Hours is prayed.⁶² He is present to his Church whenever it is assembled, when the Word of God is proclaimed, and when the Church "prays and sings."⁶³

The Sanctification of Man

14. The sanctification of man is achieved,⁶⁴ and the worship of God carried out, in the Liturgy of the Hours where a type of exchange, or dialogue, is instituted between God and men; "God speaks to his people . . . and the people reply to God both by song and by prayer."⁶⁵

Those participating in the Liturgy of the Hours can draw a wealth of holiness from the Liturgy of the Hours through the sacred Word of God, where it is of paramount importance. For it is from sacred scripture that the readings are read, the psalms as handed down to us in the Word of God are sung in his presence, and the other prayers, collects, and songs are scriptural in inspiration.⁶⁶

Not only when things are read which were "written for our instruction," (Romans 15:4) but also when the Church prays or sings, the faith of those taking part is nourished and their minds are raised to God, so that they may offer him the worship which reason requires and more copiously receive his grace.⁶⁷

Praise Offered to God in Union with the Heavenly Church

15. In the Liturgy of the Hours, the Church, carrying on the priestly ministry of her head, "never ceasing to pray,"⁶⁸ offers God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which acknowledge his name.⁶⁹ This prayer is the "voice of the bride addressing her bridegroom; it is the very prayer which Christ himself, together with his body, addresses to the Father."⁷⁰ "Hence all who perform this service are not only fulfilling a duty of the Church, but also are sharing in the greatest honor accorded to Christ's spouse, for by offering these praises to God they are standing before God's throne in the name of the Church their Mother."⁷¹

16. With the praise offered to God throughout the Hours, the Church joins her voice to the voices of those singing the hymn which is sung throughout all the ages in the halls of heaven;⁷² at the same time she receives a foretaste of that heavenly hymn, described by John in the Book of Revelation, which is constantly sung before the throne of God and the Lamb. Our close association with the heavenly Church is

put into effect when "with common rejoicing we celebrate together the praise of the divine Majesty. Then all those from every tribe and tongue and people and nation (see Revelations 5:9) who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and gathered together into one Church, with one song of praise magnify the one and triune God."⁷³

The prophets foresaw this heavenly liturgy in the victory of a day without night, of light without any darkness: "No longer shall the sun be your light by day, nor the brightness of the moon shine upon you at night; the Lord shall be your light forever" (Isaiah 60:19; see Revelation 21:23, 25). "There shall be one continuous day, known to the Lord, not day and night, for in the evening time there shall be light" (Zechariah 14:7). "The final age of the world has already come upon us (see 1 Corinthians 10:11). The renovation of the world has been irrevocably decreed, and in this age is already anticipated in some real way."⁷⁴ By faith we are taught the significance of our earthly life, so that we eagerly await the revelation of the sons of God with the whole created world.⁷⁵ In the Liturgy of the Hours we proclaim this faith, we express and strengthen this hope, and in a certain way we share in the joy of unending praise, and in that day which knows no evening.

Prayer and Intercession

17. In addition to praising God, the Church represents the wishes and desires of all Christians in her liturgy, and also intercedes for the welfare of all mankind to Christ, and through him to the Father.⁷⁶ It is not the Church alone that prays, but Christ as well, since prayers are offered in his name, that is, "through Christ our Lord," and so the Church continues to make the prayers and intercessions which Christ offered when he was in the flesh,⁷⁷ and for that reason they have a singular effectiveness. In this way the church community exercises a true motherhood towards souls who are to be led to Christ,⁷⁸ not only by charity, example and works of penance, but even in its prayer.

This is especially true of those who have been called by a special mandate to carry out the Liturgy of the Hours. Bishops and priests, together with other sacred ministers and religious,⁷⁹ pray for their own people and the entire People of God.⁸⁰

Culmination and Source of Pastoral Activity

18. All who participate in the Liturgy of the Hours impart a hidden, apostolic fruitfulness to God's people;⁸¹ apostolic works have as their goal "that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his Church, to take part in her sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's Supper."⁸²

In their lives the faithful express and manifest to others "the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church. It is of the essence of the Church that she be . . . visible and yet invisibly endowed, eager to act and yet devoted to contemplation, present in this world and yet not at home in it."⁸³

In turn the readings and prayers of the Liturgy of the Hours constitute the source of the Christian life. From the table of sacred scripture and by the words of the saints, that life is nourished and it grows stronger through prayer. For only the Lord, without whom we can do nothing,⁸⁴ can answer our requests and give fruitfulness and increase to our works.⁸⁵ Each day we are being built into a temple for God in the Spirit,⁸⁶ and form that perfect man who is Christ come to full stature.⁸⁷ At the same time we strengthen our power to preach Christ to outsiders.⁸⁸

Harmony of Thought and Voice

19. In order for each and every participant to call this prayer his own, and to have it be a source of holiness and many graces for nurturing personal prayer and the apostolate, it is important for them to pray with dignity, attention and devotion, and to attune their minds to their voices.⁸⁹ All who desire the grace of God should see to it that it is not received in vain. In their search for Christ, as they penetrate ever more deeply into his mystery through prayer,⁹⁰ they praise God and offer him their petitions with the same attitude which marked the prayer of their Redeemer.

IV. THOSE WHO CELEBRATE THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

a) *Communal Celebration*

20. Like all liturgical actions, the Liturgy of the Hours is not a private celebration, but pertains to the whole body of the Church, manifests it and has effects upon it.⁹¹ Its ecclesial celebration is most evident, and achieves its greatest effectiveness, when a particular church, "in which the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative,"⁹² celebrates it together with the bishop and his priests and other assistants.⁹³ Even when the bishop is not present, and the celebration is carried out by the chapter of canons or other priests, it should always take place at the proper time, and with the participation of the people whenever possible. The same holds true for collegial chapters.

21. Other groups of the faithful, especially parishes, which are the cells of a diocese, set up locally under a pastor who takes the place of a bishop, and which "in a certain way represent the visible Church as it is established throughout the world,"⁹⁴ should celebrate the principal Hours publicly in church, whenever this is possible.

22. If the faithful are summoned and come together for the Liturgy of the Hours, their union of hearts and voices manifests the entire Church in its celebration of the mystery of Christ.⁹⁵

23. The duty of those in sacred orders, or those who have been given a special "canonical mission,"⁹⁶ is to arrange for communal prayer and to guide it: "they should devote their effort to this end, that all those committed to their care may be of one mind in prayer."⁹⁷ They should see to it that the faithful are invited, and instructed by proper catechesis, to celebrate the chief Hours of the Liturgy of the Hours, especially on Sundays and feasts.⁹⁸ They should teach them how to rise to sincere prayer through their participation,⁹⁹ and provide proper instruction to guide them in understanding the Christian dimension of the psalms, so that they can eventually be led to use and appreciate the prayer of the Church.¹⁰⁰

24. Communities of canons, monks, nuns and other religious who

are bound by their rule or constitution to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours, whether in whole or in part, either in choir or privately, represent the Church at prayer in a special way. They fully manifest the example of the Church, which offers constant praise to God with one heart and voice, and carry out its mission of "cooperating," especially by prayer, "in building up and increasing the whole Mystical Body of Christ, for the good of the particular churches."¹⁰¹ This is especially true of those who lead a contemplative life.

25. Sacred ministers and all clerics who are not bound in another way to the common recitation of the Office, especially those who live together or who assemble for any purpose, should try to pray at least some part of the Liturgy of the Hours together, particularly Lauds in the morning and Vespers at night.¹⁰²

26. Religious men and women who are not bound to recitation in choir, and members of any institute of perfection, should be encouraged to come together among themselves, or with lay people, to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours, or some portion thereof.

27. Groups of laity, wherever they meet, are invited to pray the Office of the Church,¹⁰³ and celebrate part of the Liturgy of the Hours whenever they come together, whether it be for prayer, apostolic work, or any reason whatsoever. They should first learn how to worship the Father in spirit and in truth¹⁰⁴ in a liturgical action, and keep in mind that they can reach out to all men through prayer and public worship, thereby advancing the welfare of the whole world.¹⁰⁵

Lastly, it is important that the family, as a "domestic sanctuary of the Church," should not only pray together to God, but even pray the Liturgy of the Hours when possible, thereby associating itself more closely with the Church.¹⁰⁶

b) The Obligation of Celebrating the Liturgy of the Hours

28. The Liturgy of the Hours is entrusted to sacred ministers in a special way, and should be performed by each one, even when the people are not present, using the adaptations called for by this situation. The

Church appoints them to the Liturgy of the Hours so that the duty of the whole Church is in fact constantly performed, at least through them, and the prayer of Christ perseveres within his Church.¹⁰⁷

The bishop takes the place of Christ in an eminent and visible way, as the great high priest of his flock, and it is from him that the faithful who are under his care derive and maintain their life in Christ.¹⁰⁸ Among the members of the Church, he should be the first to pray, and his prayer in the recitation of the Divine Office should always be made in the name of the Church, and for the Church entrusted to his care.¹⁰⁹

Priests, in union with their bishop and the whole presbyterate, represent the person of Christ in a special way.¹¹⁰ They share the same task of praying to God on behalf of the whole people entrusted to them, and indeed for the whole world.¹¹¹

Each of these persons carries on the ministry of the Good Shepherd, who prays for his own that they might have life, and be completely one.¹¹² In the Liturgy of the Hours proposed by the Church, they will not only find the "source of piety and nourishment for personal prayer,"¹¹³ but will draw upon this wealth of meditation for increasing their pastoral and missionary work to the delight of the whole Church of God.¹¹⁴

29. Bishops and priests, as well as other sacred ministers, who have accepted the obligation of celebrating the Liturgy of the Hours from the Church (see no. 17) observe the entire Office each day, and at the proper times whenever possible.

They place the greatest importance to those Hours which are the hinges on which the daily Office turns, namely Lauds and Vespers; they should be careful not to omit these Hours without a serious reason.

They pray the Office of Readings, which is essentially a liturgical celebration of the Word of God; in this way they daily fulfill their duty of receiving God's Word in order to become perfect disciples of the Lord and win a deeper understanding of the unfathomable riches of Christ.¹¹⁵

To make the entire day holy, they will treasure the recitation of

the Middle Hours and Compline, by which they complete the "Work of God" and commend themselves to God before retiring.

30. It is most appropriate for permanent deacons to recite at least part of the Liturgy of the Hours each day, as determined by the Conference of Bishops.¹¹⁶

31. a) Cathedral and collegiate chapters must celebrate those parts of the Liturgy of the Hours in choir which are imposed upon them by the common law or by particular law.

Individual members of these chapters, in addition to the hours which all clerics in major orders are bound to celebrate, must recite individually those hours which are celebrated by their chapter.¹¹⁷

b) Religious communities bound to the Liturgy of the Hours, and their individual members, should celebrate the Hours according to the norms of their own particular law, with the exception of the requirements of no. 29 concerning those in major orders.

32. Other religious communities, and their individual members, are encouraged to pray some portions of the Liturgy of the Hours in addition to the other tasks which they perform, for it is the Church's prayer, and can provide their members with a unity of mind and heart at all times and in all places.¹¹⁸

This exhortation is also addressed to the laity.¹¹⁹

c) Structure of the Celebration

33. The Liturgy of the Hours is governed by its own laws, which arrange the elements found in other Christian celebrations for its own purposes. It is so structured that after the opening hymn, there is always psalmody, a long or short reading from holy scripture, and finally prayers.

Whether in a communal or private celebration, the essential structure of this liturgy remains the same, namely a dialogue between

God and man. Nevertheless the communal celebration manifests the ecclesial nature of the Liturgy of the Hours more clearly, encourages the active participation of all the people, each in his own measure, by acclamations, responses, antiphonal psalmody and other means, and affords a better respect for the expression of different attitudes.¹²⁰

Whenever a provision is made for communal celebration involving the presence and active participation of the faithful, this method is to be preferred to a celebration that is individual and quasi-private.¹²¹ Moreover it is best to sing the Office, both in choir and in common, when this is possible, depending on the nature of each part and the roles assigned to each.

In this way the exhortation of the apostle can be fulfilled: "Let the word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. In wisdom made perfect, instruct and admonish one another. Sing gratefully to God from your hearts in psalms, hymns and inspired songs" (Colossians 3:16; see Ephesians 5:19-20).

CHAPTER II

THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE DAY OR THE VARIOUS LITURGICAL HOURS

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICE

34. The entire Office is customarily introduced by the Invitatory. This consists of the verse "Lord, open my lips: And my mouth shall proclaim your praise," and Psalm 95, which invites Christians each day to sing God's praises and hear his voice, and leads them to wait for "God's rest."¹

Nevertheless Psalms 100, 67 or 24 can be used in place of Psalm 95 when suitable.

The invitatorial psalm is preferably recited as it appears, in a responsorial way, with its antiphon recited first, repeated, and used after every verse.

35. The Invitatory is used at the beginning of the entire Office whether it is used before Lauds or the Office of Readings, depending on which Hour is used to begin the day. Nevertheless the psalm, together with its antiphon, can be omitted when it is used before Lauds, if this seems preferable.

36. The method for varying the Invitatory antiphon according to the various liturgical seasons is indicated in its proper place.

II. LAUDS AND VESPERS

37. "By the venerable tradition of the universal Church, Lauds as

morning prayer and Vespers as evening prayer are the two hinges on which the daily Office turns; hence they are to be considered as the chief hours and are to be celebrated as such."²

38. Lauds is arranged as the sanctification of morning, as is clear from its components. This quality is best described by St. Basil the Great:

Early in the morning let the first stirrings of our mind and soul be consecrated to God, and let no other concern come first, for we were gladdened by the thought of God, as the Scripture says: "I was mindful of you and was glad" (Psalm 76:4); nor should our body undertake any work before we first fulfill what was written: "I will pray to you, Lord, and at dawn you hear my voice, at dawn I stand before you expectantly" (Psalm 5:4-5).³

Furthermore, since this Hour is performed at the break of each new day, it calls to mind the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, the true light that enlightens all men (see John 1:9), and "Sun of Justice" (Malachi 4:2) and "Dayspring" (Luke 1:78). In this way we can well understand why St. Cyprian wrote: "We should pray in the morning, that the resurrection of the Lord can be celebrated by our morning prayer."⁴

39. Vespers are celebrated in the evening and day is almost over, so that "we might return thanks for all that was given us, or rightly done by us, that day."⁵ We recall the redemption by this prayer, which we direct "like incense before God," and in which "the lifting up of our hands" becomes "an evening sacrifice."⁶ This refers to "that evening sacrifice which can be understood as being handed down by the Lord and Savior, when he dined with his apostles in the evening and inaugurated the holy mysteries of the Church, or that evening sacrifice be offered up on the next day, that is the end of the ages, to his Father, by lifting up his arms for the world's salvation."⁷ In order to direct our hope to that light which never ends, "we ask and pray that light comes upon us at last, we pray for the coming of Christ who will bring us the grace of unending light."⁸ Finally it is at this hour that we join our voice with that of the eastern Churches

and pray: "Joyful light of the blessed glory of the deathless Father of heaven, blessed Christ Jesus; we come to the setting of the sun, and as we see the evening lights we praise God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit . . ."

40. It is of the utmost importance that Lauds and Vespers be the prayer of the Christian community: their public or common celebration should be especially encouraged among those who live in community, and is recommended to individual members of the faithful who cannot take part in a communal celebration.

41. Lauds and Vespers begin with the introductory verse "O God, come to my assistance: Lord, make haste to help me," which is followed by "Glory be to the Father, etc." and the *Alleluia* (omitted during Lent). All this is omitted at Lauds when the Invitatory immediately precedes.

42. Next, an appropriate hymn is said. The hymn is chosen to provide its own color to each Hour or feast and, particularly for celebrations with the people, to make the start of this prayer easier and more joyful.

43. After the hymn there occurs the psalmody, according to the norms of nos. 121-125. The psalmody at Lauds consists of one psalm suitable for morning, then a canticle from the Old Testament, and another psalm of praise, according to the Church's tradition.

44. After the psalmody there comes a short or longer reading.

45. The short reading is chosen to suit the nature of the day, the season or the feast; it is to be read and heard as a true proclamation of the word of God which presents a powerful expression of sacred thinking, and which should help certain brief thoughts which might be overlooked in a continuous reading of the scriptures.

The short lessons vary with the psalmody for each day.

46. For particular use in a celebration with the people, there is a longer scriptural reading which can be used, taken from the Office of Readings, or from those used at Mass, especially those texts which

could not be used for some reason. Nothing would prevent the use of even another more appropriate reading, following the norms set down in nos. 248-249 and 251.

47. In a celebration with the people, there can also be added a brief homily explaining the lesson just read.

48. After the reading or homily, a period of silence can also be observed.

49. In order to respond to God's word, there is a responsorial chant, or brief response, which can be omitted if need be.

Other chants of the same type and purpose can be substituted in its place, provided they have been approved by the Conference of Bishops.

50. Next a gospel canticle, with its antiphon, is solemnly recited; at Lauds, the canticle of Zachary, or *Benedictus*, is used, and at Vespers the *Magnificat*, the canticle of the blessed virgin Mary. These canticles have been popular throughout their time-honored usage by the Roman Church, and express praise and thanksgiving for the redemption. The *Benedictus* and *Magnificat* antiphons are chosen to suit the nature of the day, the season or the feast.

51. After the canticle at Lauds, there are prayers to consecrate the day and its work to the Lord; at Vespers there are intercessory prayers (see nos. 179-193).

52. After the above mentioned prayers or intercessions, the Our Father is recited by all.

53. When the *Our Father* is finished, the concluding prayer immediately follows; on ordinary weekdays this is found in the Psalter, and on other days in the Proper.

54. Lastly, if a priest or deacon presides, he dismisses the people with the greeting "The Lord be with you" and the blessing, as in the Mass; this is followed by "Go in peace," with its response, "Thanks be to God." Otherwise the celebration is concluded by "May the Lord bless us, etc."

III. THE OFFICE OF READINGS

55. The Office of Readings provides a richer meditation on sacred scripture, and the outstanding writings of spiritual authors are provided God's People, especially those writers known for their dedication to the Lord. Even though a fuller course of scriptural readings is provided at daily Mass, the treasury of revelation and tradition contained in the Office of Readings offers great growth in the Spirit. Priests should be the first to seek these riches so that they can dispense to all the word of God they have received, and to make its teaching "food for the People of God."⁹

56. Since prayer should accompany the reading of sacred scripture, so that God and man may talk together, for "we speak to him when we pray, and hear him when we read the divine sayings,"¹⁰ the Office of Readings consists of psalms, a hymn, prayer and other formulas, and of itself constitutes true prayer.

57. According to the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the Office of Readings "should retain the character of nocturnal praise in choir, but should be adapted so that it may be recited at any hour of the day; it is to be made up of fewer psalms and longer readings."¹¹

58. Therefore those who are bound to observe the nocturnal character of this Office, and those who freely observe this praiseworthy custom, whether they recite it at night, before Lauds or early in the morning, choose a hymn for the season of the year from the series provided for this purpose. Otherwise, for Sundays, solemnities and certain feasts, what is stated in nos. 70-73 concerning vigils should be consulted.

59. Maintaining the above mentioned structure, the Office of Readings can be recited at any time of day, even at night on the day before, after Vespers.

60. If the Office of Readings takes place before Lauds, the Invitatory precedes it, as above (nos. 34-36). Otherwise it begins with the verse "O God, come to my assistance" with the doxology and, outside of Lent, the *Alleluia*.

61. The hymn is then recited; in the season of the year, this is chosen from the series for nighttime hours (see no. 58), or from the series for daytime, depending on when it is said.

62. There follows the psalmody, consisting of three psalms (or three divisions of psalms, if the occurring psalms are long). During the Paschal Triduum, the days within the octaves of Easter and Christmas, as well as on solemnities and feasts, the psalms are proper with proper antiphons.

On Sundays and weekdays, the antiphons and psalms are taken from the current Psalter; this is also true on memorials of the saints, unless there are proper psalms or antiphons for these days (see nos. 218 and following).

63. A verse is customarily recited between the psalmody and the readings, as a prayerful transition between psalmody and hearing the lessons.

64. Two readings are used. The first is biblical, and the second is taken from the works of the Fathers or Church writers, or from the lives of the saints.

65. A response is used after each and every reading (see nos. 169-172).

66. The scriptural reading is usually taken from the Proper for the Season, following the norms of nos. 140-155; on solemnities and feasts, the scriptural lesson is taken from the Proper or Common.

67. The second reading, with its responsory, is taken from either the Liturgy of the Hours or from the Lectionary, as described below in no. 161. It is ordinarily the reading which occurs in the Proper for the Season (Seasonal Proper).

On solemnities and feasts of the saints, there is a proper reading from the lives of the saints; if this is lacking, an alternate reading is taken from the appropriate Common of Saints. On memorials of saints not otherwise impeded, the hagiographic reading takes the place of the second occurring lesson (see nos. 166 and 235).

68. On Sundays outside of Lent, on the days within the octaves of Easter and Christmas, on solemnities and feasts, after the second reading and its responsory, the *Te Deum* is said; it is omitted on memorials and weekdays. The last part of this hymn, from the verse "Save your people, Lord" to the end, may be omitted.

69. The Office of Readings is concluded with the oration of the day and, at least in common recitation, with the acclamation "Let us bless the Lord. *℟.* Thanks be to God."

IV. VIGILS

70. The Easter Vigil is celebrated by the entire Church as it appears in the respective liturgical books. "So great is the vigil of this night," writes St. Augustine, "that it has appropriated to itself as a proper title the common name given to all others;"¹² "by keeping vigil, we observe that night when the Lord arose, and by his own flesh began in us that life which knows neither sleep nor death . . .; then, as we sing together to the risen Lord a little while longer by keeping vigil, he will grant us to reign with him by living forever."¹³

71. As in the Easter Vigil, the custom soon arose in different churches to begin various solemn feasts by keeping vigil, notably the Birth of the Lord and Pentecost. This custom was observed and fostered according to the usage proper to each church. If elsewhere a vigil was used in connection with other solemnities or pilgrimages, the general norms guiding celebrations of the word of God would be observed.

72. The Fathers and spiritual writers frequently urged the faithful, especially those who live a contemplative life, to nocturnal prayer, which expresses and fosters our waiting for the Lord's return: "At midnight someone shouted, 'The groom is here! Come out and greet him!'" (Matthew 25:6): "Keep watch! You do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether at dusk, at midnight, when the cock crows, or at early dawn. Do not let him come suddenly and catch you asleep" (Mark 13:35-36). It is therefore praiseworthy to observe the nightly character of the Office of Readings.

73. Moreover, since the Office of Readings in the Roman Rite is always somewhat brief, as an aid to those involved in apostolic work, those who wish to extend the celebration of the vigil for Sundays, solemnities and feasts, as is traditional, proceed as follows:

First, the Office of Readings is celebrated as it appears in the book of the Liturgy of the Hours, up to the readings inclusive. After both readings, and before the *Te Deum*, those canticles are added which appear in the Appendix of the book for this purpose; then the Gospel is read, and there can be a brief homily, after which the *Te Deum* is sung, and the collect is said.

On solemnities and feasts the gospel is taken from the Lectionary for Mass; on Sundays, it is taken from the series on the paschal mystery, as described in the Appendix of the book of the Liturgy of the Hours.

V. TERCE, SEXT AND NONE, OR THE MIDDLE HOURS

74. According to an ancient tradition, Christians were accustomed to pray privately at different times throughout the day, in the midst of their work, following the example of the apostolic Church; this tradition was included into liturgical celebrations in many ways during the course of time.

75. The liturgical tradition of both East and West has retained Terce, Sext and None as the hours which are most closely associated with the events of the Lord's Passion and the first efforts at spreading the gospel.

76. The Second Vatican Council decreed that the minor hours of Terce, Sext and None are to be maintained in choir.¹⁴

77. Outside of choir, and apart from a particular law, it is permissible to select only one of the three Hours suitable to a particular time of day.

Those who do not recite all three Hours are to celebrate at least one, in order to retain the tradition of praying during the day in the midst of work.

78. Therefore the order of celebration for Terce, Sext and None is so arranged that it can be used by those reciting only one Hour, or a "Middle Hour," and by those who wish to recite, or are bound to celebrate, all three Hours.

79. The Middle Hours, or Terce, Sext and None, are introduced by the verse "O God, come to my assistance," with the doxology and *Alleluia* (omitted during Lent). Then a hymn suitable to the Hour is said. Afterwards there is psalmody, then a short lesson, followed by a verse. The Hour is concluded by prayer, and at least in common recitation, by the acclamation "Let us bless the Lord. *R.* Thanks be to God."

80. Different hymns and prayers are provided for each of these Hours to agree with the appropriate hour, as is traditional, and to bring out the sanctification of these times more clearly; accordingly whoever recites only one Hour should select those elements appropriate to that Hour.

In addition, the short lessons and prayers vary to suit the nature of the day, the season or the feast.

81. Two forms of psalmody are provided, current and complementary. Those reciting only one Hour use the current psalmody; those reciting more than one use the current psalmody for the first, and the complementary psalmody for the others.

82. The current psalmody consists of three psalms (or three divisions of psalms, if they are long) taken from the Psalter, which have their own antiphons unless otherwise indicated.

On solemnities, the Paschal Triduum, and days within the octave of Easter, proper antiphons are said, with the three psalms taken from the complementary psalmody, unless special psalms are to be used, or the celebration of a solemnity occurs on Sundays; in this case the psalms are taken from those found in Week I for Sundays.

83. The complementary psalmody consists of three psalms from among those which are known as "gradual psalms."

VI. COMPLINE

84. Compline is the last prayer of the day said before retiring or even after midnight, whichever is the case.
85. Like the other Hours, Compline begins with the verse "O God, come to my assistance," with the doxology, and *Alleluia* (omitted during Lent).
86. This is followed by an examination of conscience, or a period of silence in a communal celebration; the penance rite, as drawn from the Roman Missal, may also be used here.
87. An appropriate hymn is then said.
88. On Sundays, after I Vespers, the psalmody consists of psalms 4 and 134; after II Vespers, psalm 91.
- On other days the psalms used convey the notion of trust in God; nevertheless the psalms for Sunday may be used for convenience, especially by those who wish to recite Compline by memory.
89. After the psalmody there follows a short lesson with its responsory "Into your hands"; then the gospel canticle "Now dismiss," with its antiphon, is recited, which is the focal point of the entire Hour.
90. The concluding prayer from the Psalter is said.
91. After the collect the blessing "May the Lord, etc." is said, even in private recitation.
92. Lastly, there is one of the antiphons to the blessed virgin Mary. The "Queen of Heaven" is always used during the Easter Season. In addition to the antiphons found in the book of the Liturgy of the Hours, other antiphons can be approved by the Conference of Bishops.¹⁵

VII. METHOD OF COUPLING THE HOURS
WITH MASS OR OTHER HOURS

93. In particular cases, as the situation demands, there can be a

closer connection between the Mass and an Hour of the Office in a public or common celebration, following the norms described below, provided the Mass and the Hour are taken from the same Office. Nevertheless care must be taken to avoid any pastoral disadvantage, especially on Sundays.

94. When Lauds, either in choir or in common, immediately precede Mass, the celebration can begin with the introductory verse and hymn from Lauds, especially on weekdays, or by an entrance chant and procession, with the greeting by the celebrant, especially on feasts; only one of the two introductory rites is actually used.

The customary psalmody of Lauds then follows, up to the short lesson exclusively. After the psalmody, the penitential rite is omitted, and the *Lord have Mercy* or *Glory to God* is recited, according to the rubrics, and the celebrant prays the collect of the Mass. The liturgy of the word follows as usual.

The general intercessions of the Mass take place at the time, and in the manner prescribed. On weekdays, at a morning Mass, the morning prayers from Lauds may be used in place of the prayer of the faithful.

After communion, which has its own chant, the *Benedictus* of Lauds is recited, together with its antiphon; this is followed by the prayer after communion, in the usual way, and in the remainder of the Mass texts.

95. If the Middle Hours (Terce, Sext, None) are publicly celebrated at their proper time, and precede Mass, the action can begin in the same way, with the introductory verse and the hymn for that Hour, especially on weekdays; it can begin with an entrance chant and procession, and with the greeting by the celebrant, especially on feasts: only one of the introductory rites is actually used.

The customary psalmody of the day then follows, up to the short lesson exclusively. After the psalmody, the penitential rite is omitted, and the *Lord have Mercy*, or *Glory to God*, is recited, according to the rubrics, and the celebrant prays the collect of the Mass.

96. When Vespers are joined to Mass, the same method is used as for Lauds. First Vespers of solemnities, Sundays, or feasts of the

Lord occurring on Sundays, cannot be celebrated unless the Mass of the preceding day, or Saturday, has been celebrated.

97. When the Middle Hours (Terce, Sext, None) or Vespers follow the Mass, then Mass is celebrated in the usual way up to the prayer after communion.

After this prayer, the psalmody for the Hour begins immediately. For the Middle Hours, when the psalmody is finished the short lesson is omitted, and the dismissal takes place at once, as at Mass. For Vespers, when the psalmody is finished the short lesson is omitted, and the *Magnificat* and its antiphon is added next; the collects and *Lord's Prayer* are omitted, and the concluding collect and blessing of the people take place.

98. With the exception of Christmas Eve, the Office of readings is customarily not joined to the Mass, since the Mass has its own readings which must be kept distinct. Nevertheless, when it seems appropriate to do this, then immediately after the second reading of the Office, with its responsory, all else is omitted, and Mass continues with the hymn *Glory to God*, when said, otherwise with the collect.

99. If the Office of readings is said immediately before another Hour of the Office, then the appropriate hymn for this Hour can begin the Office of readings; in this case, the prayer and concluding rite for the Office of readings is omitted, and in the Hour that follows, the introductory verse and its doxology are omitted.

CHAPTER III

VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF PSALMS IN CHRISTIAN PRAYER

100. In its Liturgy of the Hours, the Church makes extensive use of those outstanding songs composed by the sacred authors of the Old Testament under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Since he is their source, they have the power to raise men's minds to God, to stir up thoughts of devotion and holiness, to help them obtain God's grace for their needs, and to provide encouragement and strength in the face of trouble.

101. The psalms foreshadowed that fulness of time in which Christ the Lord appeared, and from which the Church's prayer draws its effectiveness. Although all Christians consider the psalms with the greatest possible esteem, there is no doubt that they present some difficulty to anyone using these sacred songs as prayer.

102. But just as the Holy Spirit inspired the psalmist who first sang them, so he is present with his grace to believers who, with the best of intentions, make them their song as well. Above all it is necessary "to improve their understanding of the Bible, especially the psalms,"¹ not only for their own personal knowledge, but to understand how their proper recitation of the psalms can become real prayer.

103. The psalms are not readings, nor prayers to be used as collects, but poems of praise. Even if they are occasionally used as readings, their literary genre tells us they are rightly called "songs to be sung to the sound of a many-stringed instrument" (*Tehillim*, in Hebrew; *Psalmoi*, in Greek). There is a musical quality to all the psalms which determines how they are to be sung. Even if a psalm is recited privately, or in silence, without any music, it still bears this musical

quality; its words may influence our thoughts, but it is more effective in moving the hearts of those who listen to it, sing it, or even accompany it "with the harp and an instrument of many strings."

104. Whoever prays the psalms wisely, stopping to meditate upon the different verses, always opens his heart to respond to the Holy Spirit, who first inspired the psalmist, and who will be present to devout hearts prepared to receive his grace. Although psalmody demands a reverence befitting God's majesty, it should be carried out in a spirit of joy and love which is more in keeping with sacred song and poetry and with our freedom as sons of God.

105. We are often able to pray the words of the psalms with ease and devotion, whether we are giving thanks to God or praising him with joy, or whether we are speaking from a heart burdened with troubles. Even then difficulties may arise, especially with those psalms that do not address God directly. The psalmist, precisely because he is a poet, often speaks to the people, recalling Israel's history; sometimes he interrupts to speak to creatures who do not have the gift of reason. Sometimes he presents God as speaking to men and even to his enemies, as in the second psalm. This makes it clear that the psalms do not have the same approach to prayer as a collect or oration composed by the Church. Furthermore, because the psalms have this poetic and musical quality, it is not necessary to speak to God so much as to sing in his presence, as St. Benedict observed: "Let us consider that, just as we must be in the presence of God and his holy angels, and so we stand while singing the psalms, so should our mind be attuned to our voice."²

106. Whoever sings the psalms opens his heart to those emotions which they inspire, according to the literary style of each one, whether it be a song of lament, of trust or thanksgiving, or any other literary type which exegetes point out.

107. An understanding of the literal meaning of the psalms helps to relate the text to the believer's daily life.

Each of the psalms was composed with notations, and the titles appearing in the Hebrew psalter provide a sketch of the psalm. Whatever its historical origin may be, each psalm has a literal meaning which

cannot be overlooked in modern times. Even if those songs were composed over several centuries and reflect an Oriental philosophy, they properly reflect the joys and hopes, the trust and anxieties of men from every age and country, and sing of faith in God who revealed himself and redeemed us.

108. The person who prays the psalms in the Liturgy of the Hours does not do so only in his own name, but in the name of the entire Body of Christ, and, in fact, in the place of Christ. If this is kept in mind, then the difficulties encountered disappear, such as when someone measures the sentiments of his own heart against those expressed in the psalms; for example, when someone who is sad and burdened by grief prays a psalm of joy, or when someone is happy, and the psalm is actually a lament. This can be avoided in private prayer, where one has the option of selecting a psalm that fits his mood. But the Divine Office is not a private matter, and the public structure of the psalms therein is observed in the name of the whole Church, even when used by one who celebrates an Hour privately, by himself. But one who prays the psalms in the name of the Church can always find a reason for joy or sadness, because this way of thinking fulfills the command of the Apostle: "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep" (Romans 12:15). And so, instead of being burdened by self-pity, human weakness can be healed by that degree of charity with which the one praying the psalms "attunes his heart to his voice."³

109. Whoever sings the psalms in the name of the Church should consider the full meaning of the psalms, especially the messianic interpretation, for which reason the Church made use of the Psalter. This messianic sense is quite apparent in the New Testament, and is even employed by Christ in speaking to his apostles: "everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and psalms had to be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44). The most notable example is the dialogue recorded by Matthew concerning the Messiah as David's son and Lord,⁴ in which Psalm 110 is understood as referring to the Messiah.

Following this line of thought, the Fathers of the Church accepted the entire Psalter as a prophecy about Christ and his Church, and presented it as such; the psalms were used by the liturgy for the same reason. Even if at times certain artificial or contrived interpretations

won acceptance, nevertheless both the Fathers and the liturgy generally heard the true voice of Christ speaking to the Father within the psalms, or heard the Father addressing the Son; they were also able to hear the voice of the Church, her apostles and martyrs. This method of interpretation was most common during the Middle Ages. In many medieval manuscripts of the Psalter a christological interpretation was provided to the reader in the title appearing before each psalm. This christological interpretation not only referred to the psalms that were considered "messianic," but also to many others, in which there are doubtless mere appropriations, but with the Church's approval.

On feastdays in particular the psalmody uses those psalms which have christological significance; to point this out many of the antiphons are drawn from the psalms themselves.

II. ANTIPHONS AND OTHER HELPS IN PRAYING THE PSALMS

110. There are three items in the Latin tradition which help us to understand the psalms or to make them Christian prayers: the titles, psalmic orations and, most of all, antiphons.

111. In the Psalter for the Liturgy of the Hours each psalm is preceded by a title concerning its meaning and importance for the daily life of the faithful. They appear in the books for the Liturgy of the Hours only for the use of the reader. To foster a spirit of prayer in the light of new revelation, a statement from the New Testament or the Fathers is added to assist in the christological meaning of praying the psalms.

112. Psalmic prayers for the individual psalms are provided in the Supplement of the books of the Liturgy of the Hours. These should help those who recite the Office in the Christian interpretation of the psalms, and can be used optionally according to an ancient traditional practice; that is, after the psalm is finished and a brief period of silence observed, the prayer "collects" and concludes the sentiments of the psalms.

113. Even when the Liturgy of the Hours is not sung, each psalm has its own antiphon, which is said even in private recitation. The antiphons help us to understand the literary style of the psalm; they place those

noble sentiments in a better light which might otherwise go unnoticed; they add a special quality to a given psalm depending upon circumstances; indeed, with the exclusion of arbitrary accommodations, they greatly help in providing typological or festive interpretation; and they can add variety and joy to the recitation of the psalms.

114. The antiphons in the Psalter have been so arranged that they can be translated into vernacular languages, and repeated after every verse in accordance with the norms of no. 125. In the Office for the season of the year that is not sung, the notations preceding the psalms (see no. 111) may be used in place of these antiphons.

115. When, because of its length, a psalm has been divided into several parts within the same Hour, a proper antiphon has been given to each division. This will provide a variety, especially in sung celebrations, and a better understanding of the wealth of meaning within the psalm. It is permissible to use the entire psalm without interruption, using only the first antiphon.

116. Each of the psalms at Lauds and Vespers has proper antiphons during the Paschal Triduum, the days within the octaves of Christmas and Easter, the Sundays of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, and the weekdays of Holy Week, the Easter Season and between December 17 and 24.

117. At the Office of Readings, Lauds, Terce, Sext, None and Vespers on solemnities, proper antiphons are provided; when these are lacking, they are taken from the Common. On feasts, only the Office of Readings, Lauds and Vespers have proper antiphons.

118. Whenever memorials of the saints provide proper antiphons, these have been retained (see no. 235).

119. In the Seasonal Office, the *Benedictus* and *Magnificat* antiphons are taken from the Seasonal Proper, otherwise from the current Psalter; on solemnities and feasts, they are taken from the Proper, when available, otherwise from the Common; on memorials that do not have a proper antiphon, the antiphon may be taken either from the Common or from the occurring weekday.

120. During the Easter season, *Alleluia* is added to all the antiphons, unless it would be at variance with its meaning.

III. METHOD OF SINGING THE PSALMS

121. Depending upon the literary character or length of a given psalm, whether it is recited in Latin or the vernacular, and whether it is used by only one person or by several, or in a celebration with the people, several methods of reciting the psalms can be used to help the participants understand the literary and spiritual quality of the psalms more easily. The psalms are not to be considered quantitatively, but with consideration for their variety and for the proper nature of each and every one.

122. The psalms are said or sung in one movement (or "directly"), with alternate verses or strophes recited by two choirs or two parts of the group, or responsorially, according to different traditions or practices.

123. At the beginning of each psalm its own antiphon is recited, as mentioned above in nos. 113-120; at the end of the entire psalm, the custom is maintained of concluding with the doxology, for this traditional ending offers an appropriate laudatory, christological and trinitarian meaning to the prayers of the Old Testament. After the psalm the antiphon may be repeated.

124. When longer psalms are used, their divisions are signified in the Psalter; these portions of the psalmody are divided to provide a threefold structure to the Hour, with proper consideration for the literal meaning of the psalm.

It is proper to observe this division, especially within a choral celebration using Latin, with the doxology concluding each part.

It is permissible to retain this traditional method, to observe a brief delay between the different parts of the psalm, or to recite the entire psalm together with its own antiphon.

125. Moreover, when the literary style of the psalm so suggests, divisions into strophes will be indicated; in this way, especially when

the psalms are sung in the vernacular, the intervening antiphons can be used after each strophe, and it will be sufficient to place the doxology at the end of the entire psalm.

IV. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PSALMS IN THE OFFICE

126. The psalms are distributed in a cycle of four weeks, so that very few psalms are omitted, other traditionally well-known psalms are repeated, and Lauds, Vespers and Compline have psalms that suit the character of the respective Hours.⁵

127. At Lauds and Vespers, which are more suitable for celebration with the people, psalms have been chosen which are more appropriate for this purpose.

128. At Compline the norms found in no. 88 are observed.

129. On Sundays, even in the Office of Readings and the Middle Hours, those psalms have been chosen which have been traditionally used to express the paschal mystery. On Fridays the penitential or *Passion* psalms are used.

130. Psalms 78, 105 and 106 are reserved for the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, since they more clearly express the history of salvation, wherein the Old Testament foreshadowed the events of the New.

131. Three imprecatory psalms (58, 83 and 109) are omitted in the current Psalter. Likewise several verses from other psalms are omitted, as indicated at the beginning of these psalms. They are left out because they offer difficulty psychologically; even though these imprecatory psalms are used in the New Testament (e.g., Revelation 6:10) they are not used to cast abuse.

132. Longer psalms contained in a single Hour of the Office are distributed over different days for that Hour, so it can be recited in its entirety by those who do not customarily recite another Hour. Thus Psalm 119, traditionally assigned to the daytime hours, is arranged for the Middle Hour, using its own natural divisions, over a period of twenty days.

133. The cycle of four weeks for the Psalter is fitted into the liturgical year, so that from the first week, with some possible omissions, it is resumed on the First Sunday of Advent, the first week of the year, the First Sunday of Lent and the First Sunday of Easter.

After Pentecost, since the cycle of the Psalter during the season of the year follows this series of weeks, it is resumed with that week of the Psalter indicated in the Seasonal Proper at the beginning of each respective week of the year.

134. On solemnities and feasts, during the Paschal Triduum, and on the days within the octaves of Easter and Christmas, proper psalms have been assigned to the Office of Readings from among those traditionally used, and the suitability of most of them is further indicated by their antiphon. This is true even at the Middle Hours in certain solemnities of the Lord and during the octave of Easter. At Lauds the psalms and canticle used are from the first Sunday in the Psalter. At First Vespers for solemnities, the psalms used are from the *Laudate* series, as has been traditional. Second Vespers of solemnities and Vespers of feasts have proper psalms and canticles. At the Middle Hours on solemnities, with the exception of what has been noted above, and when they do not occur on Sundays, the psalms used are from the *gradual* psalms; at the Middle Hour on feasts, the psalms are from the current day.

135. In all other cases, the psalms said are from the current Psalter, unless there are proper antiphons or proper psalms.

V. THE CANTICLES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

136. At Lauds, a canticle from the Old Testament is customarily placed between the two psalms. Apart from the series approved by the ancient Roman tradition, and that inserted into the Breviary by St. Pius X, several canticles have been added to the Psalter, drawn from various books of the Old Testament. Thus the individual week-days of the four week cycle have their own proper canticle, and on Sundays two portions of the *Canticle of the Three Young Men* are used alternatively.

137. After the two psalms of Vespers, there appears a canticle from the New Testament, taken from the epistles or Book of Revelation. Seven such canticles are provided for each day of the week. On the Sundays of Lent, in place of the *Alleluia* canticle from the Book of Revelation, the canticle from I Peter is used. Finally, on the solemnity of Epiphany and the feast of the Transfiguration, a canticle from the first letter to Timothy is provided at the proper place.

138. The gospel canticles, the *Benedictus*, *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis*, should be given the same solemnity and dignity with which the gospel is customarily heard.

139. Both the psalmody and the readings follow the firm tradition whereby the Old Testament is placed first, followed by the apostolic writings, and lastly the gospel.

VI. THE READING OF SACRED SCRIPTURE

1) *The Reading of Sacred Scripture in General*

140. The reading of sacred scripture has been traditionally performed in public during the liturgy, not only at eucharistic celebrations, but in the Divine Office as well. It should be held in esteem by all Christians. The Church proposes it not to suit the choice or inclination of individuals, but to enable the Bride of Christ to unfold the whole mystery of Christ "within the cycle of a year, . . . not only from his incarnation and birth until his ascension, but also as reflected on the day of Pentecost and the expectation of a blessed, hoped-for return of the Lord."⁶ Moreover, in liturgical celebrations, the reading of sacred scripture is always joined to prayer so that the reading may prove more fruitful, and that prayer (especially the psalms) be more fully understood and become a greater aid to devotion because of the reading.

141. In the Liturgy of the Hours, long and short readings from sacred scripture are provided.

142. The longer reading is optional at Lauds and Vespers, as noted above in no. 46.

b) Readings from Sacred Scripture in the Office of Readings

143. In arranging the readings of sacred scripture in the Office of Readings, consideration was given to those liturgical seasons in which certain books were traditionally read, and also to the course of readings in the Lectionary for Mass. The Liturgy of the Hours is in close harmony with the Mass, so that the reading of scripture in the Office completes the reading at Mass, thereby giving a complete view of the history of salvation.

144. With the exception noted above in no. 73, the gospel is not read in the Liturgy of the Hours, since it is read in its entirety at Mass during the year.

145. There is a twofold scheme of biblical readings: the first, which appears in the book of the Liturgy of the Hours, embraces only one year; the second, which is optional, appears in the supplement, for use every other year, like the course of readings for weekday Masses throughout the year.

146. This biennial format of readings has been so arranged that almost all the books of scripture are read each year, and the longer and more difficult texts which can hardly be used at Mass are assigned to the Liturgy of the Hours. While the New Testament is read in its entirety each year, partly at Mass and partly in the Liturgy of the Hours, those portions of the Old Testament have been selected which are more important for understanding salvation history and for increasing devotion.

The close harmony between the readings of the Liturgy of the Hours and the readings for Mass, to say nothing of using the same texts on the same day, or of distributing the same books here and there throughout the same season, might leave selections of lesser importance to the Liturgy of the Hours and disturb the series of texts. It is therefore necessary that the same book recur in alternate years at Mass and in the Liturgy of the Hours, or at least, if it is read in the same year, that some period of time intervene.

147. According to ancient tradition, the readings during Advent are taken from the book of Isaiah, in a semi-continuous reading, and with alternate portions read each year. The book of Ruth and certain prophecies from the book of Micah have been added. Since there are special readings assigned to the days between December 17 and 24, those readings for the third week of Advent are omitted which fall within these days.

148. From December 29 to January 5 the Letter to the Colossians is read in Year I, since it considers the incarnation of the Lord within the context of the entire history of salvation. In Year II the Song of Songs is read, for it foreshadows the union of God and man in Christ: "God the Father arranged the marriage of God, his Son, at the time when he joined him to human nature within the Virgin's womb, when before all ages God willed to become man at the end of the ages."⁷

149. From January 7 to the Saturday after Epiphany the eschatological texts from chapters 60-66 of Isaiah, and from Baruch are read; those readings which cannot be used that year are omitted.

150. In Year I, during Lent, excerpts are taken from the book of Deuteronomy and the Letter to the Hebrews; in Year II a survey of salvation history is provided from the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. The Letter to the Hebrews interprets the old covenant in the light of the paschal mystery of Christ. Excerpts from the same letter treat the Passion of the Lord on Good Friday (9:11-28), and the rest of the Lord on Holy Saturday (4:1-16). On the other days of Holy Week, in Year I, the Third and Fourth Servant Songs from Isaiah and texts from the book of Lamentations are used; in Year II the prophecy of Jeremiah is read as a type of the suffering Christ.

151. During the Easter Season, with the exceptions of the First and Second Sundays of Easter and the solemnities of Ascension and Pentecost, the First Letter of Peter, the book of Revelation, and the Letters of John are read in Year I, and the Acts of the Apostles in Year II, following traditional practices.

152. From Monday after the Sunday of the Lord's baptism until Lent, and from Monday after Pentecost until Advent, there occurs a continuous series of thirty-four weeks of the year.

This series is interrupted from Ash Wednesday until Pentecost. On Monday after Pentecost the reading for the season of the year resumes with that week which follows the week interrupted by the beginning of Lent, omitting the reading assigned to Sunday.

In years having only thirty-three weeks in the season of the year, the week immediately following Pentecost Sunday is omitted, so that the readings of the last weeks may be read, since these are eschatological in nature.

The books of the Old Testament are arranged according to the history of salvation: God reveals himself in the course of the life of his people, which is considered and illustrated in successive stages. Thus the prophets are read in connection with the historical books for the time in which they lived and taught. For this reason, in Year I, the series of readings from the Old Testament proposes, together with the oracles of the prophets, the historical books from the book of Joshua to the time of the exile inclusively. In Year II, after the readings from Genesis to be used before Lent, the history of salvation is resumed at the time after the exile until the period of the Maccabees. There is inserted into this year the more recent prophecies, the sapiential books and the narratives from the books of Esther, Tobit and Judith.

Those apostolic writings not read during special seasons have been arranged in consideration of the readings used at Mass and the chronological order in which they were written.

153. The course of one year has been shortened in such a way that each year those parts of sacred scripture are read which have been chosen to compliment either course of the Mass readings.

154. A proper reading is assigned to solemnities and feasts; otherwise it is taken from the Common of Saints.

155. Whenever possible, individual pericopes maintain a certain unity; because readings will vary in length according to the literary style of each book, some verses will occasionally be omitted to insure equal length, and this will always be indicated. They can certainly be read in their entirety, using an approved text.

c) *The Short Readings*

156. The short lessons, or "chapters," whose importance in the Liturgy of the Hours was discussed in no. 45, have been chosen to express a teaching or exhortation briefly, yet precisely. Many varieties are provided.

157. In the season of the year, there are four weekly series of short lessons included within the Psalter, so that on each day of the four weeks the reading is different. There are also weekly series for the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter. Proper short lessons are given for solemnities and feasts, and for certain memorials, and there is also a series for Compline covering the period of one week.

158. The choice of short lessons is governed by these norms:

- a) gospel readings are traditionally excluded;
- b) whenever possible, the characteristics proper to Sundays, Fridays and the Hours themselves are considered;
- c) since the lessons at Vespers follow the New Testament canticle, only New Testament passages are used.

VII. READINGS FROM THE FATHERS AND CHURCH WRITERS

159. According to the traditions of the Roman Church, after the scriptural reading the Office of Readings has a reading from the Fathers or writers of the Church, together with its own responsory, unless there is a hagiographic reading (see nos. 228-239).

160. This reading uses texts from the writings of the Fathers, Doctors and Church writers, both Eastern and Western, so that the foremost selections are from those Fathers who have been given a special prominence in the Church.

161. In addition to the readings assigned to each and every day in the Liturgy of the Hours, there is also an optional Lectionary, offering

a wider selection of readings, and opening up the wealth of the Church's tradition more fully to those participating in the Divine Office. Each person may use another reading from the book of the Liturgy of the Hours or from the optional Lectionary.

162. Moreover, episcopal conferences can prepare additional texts, in keeping with tradition and the outlook of their own countries, which may be placed in a supplement to the optional Lectionary. These texts should be taken from the writings which express Catholic teaching and morals in an outstanding way.⁸

163. The purpose of this reading is to provide a meditation on the Word of God as traditionally understood by the Church. For the Church always finds it essential to declare the Word of God to the faithful in all its authenticity, so that "the line of thought in interpreting the prophets and apostles is directed by the Catholic Church's understanding of them."⁹

164. From a constant and frequent use of those writings which constitute the universal tradition of the Church, the reader is led to a deeper understanding of holy scripture and its power to affect our lives. The writings of the Fathers of the Church are notable examples of that reflection upon God's word, brought forth in every age, whereby the Church, the Bride of the incarnate Word, "enjoys the spirit and understanding of her Bridegroom and her God."¹⁰ Each day she strives to acquire a deeper understanding of the holy scriptures.

165. The patristic readings help the Christian to appreciate the meaning of the liturgical feasts and seasons. They open up to them the great spiritual wealth which constitutes the patrimony of the Church, and which provides the basis for a truly spiritual life and a deeper sense of devotion. These proclamations of God's word are outstanding examples of preaching which are available for daily use.

VIII. THE HAGIOGRAPHICAL READINGS

166. The term *hagiographical readings* refers to those writings of the Fathers or authors of the Church which discuss the saint being celebrated,

or which are rightly applied to him, whether an excerpt from the saint's own writings or a narrative of his life.

167. In drawing up the Proper of Saints for particular calendars, the facts of history¹¹ must be taken into account, as well as the spiritual progress of those who read or hear the reading; care must be taken not to appeal only to the miraculous; attention must be given to the special qualities of the saint's spirituality, considering not only their relevance to modern times, but also to their importance in the spiritual life of the Church.

168. A small biographical note is placed before this reading, providing historical notations and a short sketch of his life. Its only purpose is informative, and is not to be used in the actual celebration.

IX. THE RESPONSORIES

169. In the Office of Readings the scriptural reading is followed by its own responsory, either drawn from the traditional texts or composed anew, in order to throw new light upon our understanding of the reading just finished. It may place the reading within the context of salvation history, relate the Old Testament to the New, use the reading to form a prayer or meditation, or offer a new insight in a beautiful, poetic way.

170. An appropriate responsory occurs after the second reading, but without the same close connection with the text of the reading, so that a wider scope of meditation is allowed.

171. The method of reciting the responsory by repeating its phrases is retained, even when said privately. That part of the responsory which is customarily repeated can be omitted in celebrations that are not sung, unless repetition is necessary to complete the meaning.

172. There is a similar, but simpler, short response at Lauds, Vespers and Compline (see above, nos. 49 and 89), and the verses at Terce, Sext and None used to respond to the short lesson are actually an acclamation which enables the word of God to penetrate more deeply into the minds of those who read or hear it.

X. THE HYMNS AND OTHER NON-SCRIPTURAL SONGS

173. Hymns have traditionally been used by the Divine Office, and their use has been retained.¹² They are used not only as hymns of praise to God, but also for the needs of the people, since they almost always bring out the individual characteristics of the Hours or feasts more than the other portions of the Office, and are an aid to real celebration. Their literary beauty gives them a greater effectiveness, and in the Office hymns are the foremost poetic element used by the Church.

174. In accord with traditional usage, hymns are ordinarily concluded with a doxology which is usually directed to the divine person addressed in the hymn itself.

175. In the Office for the season throughout the year, in order to provide variety, there is a double course of hymns to be used in alternate weeks at all Hours:

176. In the Office of Readings a double course of hymns is provided for the season of the year, for use in either the nighttime or daytime hours.

177. New hymns will be able to use traditional melodies having the same length and metre.

178. For vernacular celebrations, the conferences of bishops will be able to adapt the Latin hymns to suit their own language, and even to introduce new compositions, provided they are appropriate to the spirit of the Hour, the season or the feast;¹³ care must be taken not to use popular songs which have little artistic merit or are not suitable for liturgical use.

XI. THE PRAYERS, *OUR FATHER*, AND CONCLUDING ORATION

a) *Prayers or Intercessions at Lauds and Vespers*

179. The Liturgy of the Hours celebrates God's praises. Both the Jewish and Christian traditions do not separate the praise of God from

intercessory prayer, and very often one leads to the others. The apostle Paul asks that there be "petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings offered for all men, especially for kings and those in authority, that we may be able to lead undisturbed and tranquil lives in perfect piety and dignity. Prayer of this kind is good, and God our savior is pleased with it, for he wants all men to be saved and come to know the truth" (1 Timothy 2:1-4). The Fathers often interpreted this exhortation as demanding intercessions in the morning and at night."¹⁴

180. The general intercessions which have been restored to the Mass of the Roman rite, can be used at Vespers in a different way, as described below.

181. Since the tradition has been to consecrate the entire day to God at morning prayer, Lauds has invocations which are used to consecrate or commend the day to God.

182. The term *prayers* is used to refer to the intercessions occurring at Vespers as well as to the invocations dedicating the day to God occurring at Lauds.

183. For many reasons, but especially to better express the different needs of the Church and mankind according to the various states of life, groups, individuals, situations and seasons, various formulas for the prayers are provided for each day in the Psalter and each season of the liturgical year, as well as for certain celebrations and feasts.

184. In addition to these, the conferences of bishops may adapt the existing forms in the Liturgy of the Hours, or may approve entirely new formulas,¹⁵ observing the following norms.

185. As on Sundays, the petitions should be joined to the praise of God, the acknowledgement of his name, or the remembrance of salvation history.

186. In the prayers at Vespers, the last intention is always for the dead.

187. Since the Liturgy of the Hours is in a special way the prayer of the whole Church on behalf of the whole Church, and on behalf of the welfare of all mankind,¹⁶ it is important universal intentions be considered first of all, whether for the needs of the Church and all in Holy Orders, for those in authority in government, for the poor, the sick and those who mourn, for the needs of the whole world, and for peace and other needs.

188. It is permissible at Lauds and Vespers to add particular intentions.

189. This format should be followed in the prayers of the Office, so that it can be adapted to celebrations with the people, or within small communities, and even in private recitation.

190. The prayers in celebrations with the people, or in common, should be introduced by a brief invitation to prayer said by the priest or minister and indicating the response to be made by the congregation after each petition.

191. The intentions should take the form of addressing God directly, so they can be suitable for communal celebrations and private recitation.

192. Each series of petitions consists of two parts, one of which can be used as a variable response.

193. Various methods can be used, such as, for example, when the priest or minister recites both parts and the congregation makes a uniform response, or pauses in silence, or when the priest or minister says only the first part, and the congregation the second.

b) The Lord's Prayer

194. At Lauds and Vespers, as the more popular Hours, after the prayers the *Lord's Prayer* is said, the place of honor traditionally accorded it.

195. The *Lord's Prayer* is thus solemnly recited three times in the course of a day, at Mass, Lauds and Vespers.

196. The *Our Father* is said by all, following a brief invitation to prayer when this is done.

c) The Concluding Oration

197. To complete the entire Hour, a concluding oration is used at the end, which is traditionally recited by a priest or deacon at public and common recitations.¹⁷

198. In the Office of Readings, the prayer is the same as that used during Mass; at Compline, the prayer found in the Psalter is used.

199. At Lauds and Vespers, the concluding prayer is taken from the Proper on Sundays, the weekdays of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, and on solemnities, feasts and memorials. On weekdays throughout the year, the oration indicated in the course of the Psalter is said in order to express the proper nature of these Hours.

200. At the Middle Hour (Terce, Sext, None) the oration is taken from the Proper on Sundays, the weekdays of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, and on solemnities and feasts. On other days those orations are recited which express the nature of the individual Hours, and which are found within the Psalter.

XII. SACRED SILENCE

201. Since liturgical actions generally provide that "all should observe a reverent silence,"¹⁸ an opportunity for silence is also provided in the Liturgy of the Hours.

202. In order to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit sounding in our hearts, and to join one's personal prayer more intimately with the Word of God and the public prayer of the Church, a period of silence should be suitably placed after each psalm, when its antiphon is finished, especially if a psalmic prayer is to be added after the silence (see no. 112); it may be placed after the readings, both long and short, and appear either before or after the responsory.

Care must be taken not to have the silence disrupt the structure of the Office, or cause annoyance or weariness to the participants.

203. In private recitation there is a wider opportunity for observing a period of silence to meditate upon any formula, since this is an aid to spirituality, and in no way lessens the public character of the Office.

CHAPTER IV

THE VARIOUS CELEBRATIONS OF THE YEAR

I. CELEBRATION OF THE MYSTERIES OF THE LORD

a) *Sunday*

204. The Sunday Office begins with First Vespers, with everything taken from the Psalter, unless proper parts are assigned.

205. A feast of the Lord occurring on Sunday has First Vespers.

206. The manner for celebrating Sunday vigils, when this seems fitting, is described above in no. 73.

207. It is most appropriate, whenever possible, to celebrate at least Vespers with the people following a time-honored custom.¹

b) *The Paschal Triduum*

208. During the Paschal Triduum, the Office is celebrated as described in the Seasonal Proper.

209. Those who participate in the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, or the celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday, do not say Vespers on the respective days.

210. Whenever possible, the public celebration of the Office of Readings, with the people present, is observed before Lauds on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

211. Compline of Holy Saturday is only recited by those who are not present for the Easter Vigil.

212. The Easter Vigil takes the place of the Office of Readings: those who do not take part in the solemn Vigil may use at least four of its readings, together with their chants and collects. It is preferable to use the readings from Exodus, Ezechiel, the Apostle and the Gospel. These are followed by the *Te Deum* and the collect of the day.

213. Lauds for Easter Sunday are said by all; Vespers should be celebrated in a more solemn fashion to celebrate the end of this most sacred day, and to make remembrance of the appearances of the Lord to his disciples. Most of all, where such is the custom, the traditional practice of celebrating *baptismal* Vespers on Easter, with a procession to the font during the singing of the psalms, should be maintained.

c) *The Easter Season*

214. The Liturgy of the Hours expresses its paschal nature by using *Alleluia* at the conclusion of most antiphons (see no. 120), and by the use of special hymns, antiphons and prayers, and by proper readings assigned to the different Hours.

d) *The Christmas Season*

215. On Christmas night, it is appropriate to celebrate the Office of Readings as a solemn vigil before the Midnight Mass. Compline is not said by those taking part in this vigil.

216. Lauds for Christmas day is customarily recited before the Mass at Dawn.

e) *Other Solemnities and Feasts of the Lord*

217. The principles outlined below, in nos. 225-233, are to be used in arranging the Office on solemnities and feasts of the Lord, making whatever changes are necessary.

II. THE CELEBRATION OF THE SAINTS

218. The celebrations of saints are so arranged that they do not take precedence over feasts or seasons which commemorate the mysteries of salvation.² Nor do they suppress the course of the psalmody or sacred readings, or introduce unnecessary repetitions, so that the legitimate devotion of each saint is properly encouraged. These principles guided the reform of the Calendar carried out in obedience to the decree of Vatican Council II, as well as the method of celebrating the saints in the Liturgy of the Hours, as described in the norms that follow.

219. Celebrations of the saints are either solemnities, feasts or memorials.

220. Memorials are either obligatory, or, when no other indication is given, optional. In deciding whether a particular optional memorial should be celebrated in common, or with the people, the common good or the true devotion of the group must be taken into account, and not merely that of the celebrant.

221. If several optional memorials occur on the same day, only one is celebrated; the others are omitted.

222. Only solemnities are transferred in accordance with the rubrics.

223. The following norms hold true for saints inscribed in the general Roman Calendar and for those listed in particular calendars.

224. Proper parts, where lacking, are supplied by the respective Common of the Saints.

1. *Arrangement of Office on Solemnities*

225. Solemnities begin with First Vespers of the preceding day.

226. In both First and Second Vespers, the hymn, antiphons, short lessons and responsory, and concluding prayer are proper; when lacking, these are taken from the Common.

At First Vespers both psalms are ordinarily taken from the *Laudate* series (psalms 113, 117, 135, 146, 147, 148) following the ancient tradition; the New Testament canticle is indicated in its proper place. At Second Vespers the psalms and canticle are proper; the prayers are from the Proper or Common.

227. At Lauds, the hymn, antiphons, short reading and responsory, and concluding prayer are proper; when lacking, these are taken from the Common. The psalms are those used for Sunday I in the Psalter; the prayers are from the Proper or Common.

228. In the Office of Readings, everything is proper, including the hymn, antiphons and psalms, and readings with their responsories. In the case of a saint honored only locally, without special parts in the local Proper, everything is taken from the Common.

At the end of the Office of readings, there is said the *Te Deum* and the proper collect.

229. At the Middle Hours (Terce, Sext, None) the hymn for that day is said, unless otherwise indicated; the psalms are from the gradual with proper antiphons; on Sundays, however, the psalms are taken from the Psalter for Sunday I, and the short lesson and concluding prayer are proper. Nevertheless, on certain solemnities of the Lord, special psalms are used.

230. At Compline, after First and Second Vespers respectively, everything is said as on Sundays.

2. *Arrangement of Office on Feasts*

231. Feasts do not have First Vespers, with the exception of feasts of the Lord which fall on Sundays. At the Office of Readings, Lauds and Vespers, everything is as on solemnities.

232. At the Middle Hours (Terce, Sext, None) the hymn for that day is said; the psalms with their antiphons are said as on weekdays unless some special reason or tradition requires proper antiphons for the Middle Hour, which will be indicated in the proper place. The short lesson and concluding prayer are proper.

233. Compline is said as on ordinary days.

3. *Arrangement of Office on Memorials of Saints*

234. In the actual celebration of either obligatory or optional memorials, there is no difference in the method of celebrating the Office, with the exception of optional memorials which occur during a privileged season.

a) *Memorials Occurring on Ordinary Days*

235. At the Office of Readings, Lauds and Vespers:

a) The psalms with their antiphons are taken from the current weekday, unless there are proper antiphons or psalms, which are indicated in their proper places;

b) the antiphon at the invitatory, the hymn, short lesson, *Benedictus* and *Magnificat* antiphons, and the prayers, if they are proper, are said from the Office for that saint; otherwise they are said from the Common or occurring weekday.

c) the concluding oration is of the saint;

d) in the Office of Readings, the scriptural reading and its responsory are from the occurring scripture. The second reading is hagiographical, with a proper responsory from the common; if there is no proper reading, the reading from the Fathers for the current day is used.

The *Te Deum* is not said.

236. At the Middle Hours (Terce, Sext, None) and at Compline, nothing is mentioned about the saint, but everything is from the weekday.

b) *Memorials Occurring in Privileged Seasons*

237. On Sundays, solemnities and feasts, and also on Ash Wednesday and the days of Holy Week and within the octave of Easter, there is no mention of occurring memorials.

238. On weekdays from December 17 to 24, within the Octave of Christmas and Lenten weekdays, no obligatory memorial is celebrated, not even those listed in particular calendars. Should any happen to fall during Lent, they are considered as optional memorials that year.

239. During these times, if anyone wishes to celebrate a saint who is listed as a memorial that day:

a) in the Office of Readings, after the reading from the Fathers from the Seasonal Proper, with its responsory, there is added the proper hagiographic reading with its responsory, concluding with the oration for the saint;

b) moreover, at Lauds and Vespers, after the concluding prayer, there can be added the antiphon (from Proper or Common) and collect of the saint.

c) *Memorial of Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday*

240. On Saturdays throughout the year on which optional memorials are permitted, there can be celebrated the optional memorial of the virgin Mary in the same way and with its own proper reading.

III. ON THE CALENDAR TO BE FOLLOWED AND THE FACULTY OF CHOOSING ANOTHER OFFICE OR ONE OF ITS PARTS

a) *The Calendar to be Followed*

241. The Office in choir or in common must be performed in accordance with the proper calendar, namely diocesan, or those proper to religious families or particular churches.³ Members of religious communities should join with the community of the local church in celebrating the dedication of the cathedral and the principal patrons

of the place and of the larger territory where they live.⁴

242. Any cleric or religious, bound to the recitation of the Office by any title whatever, who participates in the Office in common following a calendar or rite other than his own, thereby satisfies his obligation for that portion of the Office.

243. In private recitation, the calendar of the place or one's own calendar can be used, except for proper solemnities and feasts.⁵

b) Faculty of Selecting Another Office

244. On weekdays that allow the celebration of an optional memorial, and for a good reason, there can be celebrated in the same manner (see nos. 234-239) the Office of any saint inscribed in the Roman Martyrology for that day or rightly approved in its Appendix.

245. Outside of solemnities, the Sundays of Advent, Lent and Easter, Ash Wednesday, the days of Holy Week and within the octave of Easter, and November 2, for any public reason or for the sake of devotion, another votive Office can be celebrated, whether in whole or in part; for example, during a pilgrimage, a local feast, or the external solemnity of some saint.

c) Faculty of Selecting Other Formularies

246. In certain particular cases, formularies other than those in the occurring Office may be chosen, provided that the general structure of each Hour remains the same, and the following rules are observed.

247. In the Office on Sundays, solemnities, and feasts of the Lord inscribed in the general calendar, as well as on Lenten weekdays, the days of Holy Week and within the octave of Easter, and the weekdays between December 17-24 inclusively, it is never permissible to change those formularies which are proper or appropriate to the celebration, such as the antiphons, hymns, lessons, responsories, prayers, and even (as is most often the case) the psalms themselves.

In place of the psalms for Sunday of the current week, there can be substituted the psalms for Sunday of another week; in fact, if the Office is to be celebrated with the people, other psalms should be selected so that the people can be better enabled to understand their meaning.

248. In the Office of Readings, the current scriptural reading should always be given importance. The Office must fulfill the desire of the Church that "a more representative portion of the holy scriptures be read to the people over a set cycle of years."⁶

With this in mind, during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, the course of scriptural readings set forth in the Office of Readings is not to be abandoned; during the season of the year, for a good reason, on a given day or for several successive days, readings may be chosen from those provided for other days, or even from among other biblical lessons; for example, on retreats, pastoral meetings, prayers for the unity of the Church, and other such circumstances.

249. When a continuous reading is interrupted because a solemnity, feast or special observance intervenes, it is permissible that week (keeping in mind the arrangement of the entire week) to add texts that will be omitted to other readings, or to decide which texts should be omitted.

250. In the Office of Readings, in place of the second lesson assigned to such a day, and for a good reason, another reading from the same season can be chosen, whether taken from the Liturgy of the Hours or from the Lectionary (no. 161). Moreover, on weekdays throughout the year, and if it seems appropriate, even during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, there can be a quasi-continuous reading from the works of any of the Fathers, which is in harmony with a proper biblical and liturgical attitude.

251. The readings at Lauds, Vespers and the other Hours, together with the prayer, chants and collects, provided for the weekdays of any special season, can be used on other weekdays of the same season, except for the cases indicated in no. 247.

252. Even though each person should respect the arrangement of the entire course of the Psalter as it is distributed throughout the weeks,⁷ nevertheless, when circumstances dictate, for a pastoral or spiritual reason, in place of the psalms assigned to a given day, there can be said the psalms assigned to the same Hour for another day. There are certain circumstances that occasionally happen which make it permissible to use appropriate psalms and other portions in place of the votive Office.

CHAPTER V

RITE FOR COMMUNAL RECITATION

I. ASSIGNMENT OF DIFFERENT ROLES

253. In the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, as in other liturgical actions, "whether as a minister or as one of the faithful, each person should perform his role by doing solely and totally what the nature of things and liturgical norms require of him."¹

254. When a bishop presides, especially in his cathedral church, he should be assisted by his presbyterate and other ministers, with the full and active participation of the people. In other celebrations with the people, the priest or deacon presides, even if other ministers take part.

255. The priest or deacon presiding over the celebration can wear the stole over the alb or surplice, and priests may wear the cope. On major solemnities, several priests may wear copes, and deacons wear their dalmatics.

256. The presiding priest or deacon takes his place at his seat; he begins the Office with the introductory verse, starts the recitation of the *Lord's Prayer*, offers the concluding oration, greets the people and blesses and dismisses them.

257. The priest, deacon or other minister offers the prayers.

258. When there is no priest or deacon, the one who presides over the Office is considered as one among equals; he does not enter the sanctuary, nor does he bless or greet the people.

259. Those who serve as lectors stand in the proper place for the readings, whether long or short.

260. The cantor or cantors begin the antiphons, psalms or other chants. The psalmody is carried out according to the instructions listed above in nos. 121-125.

261. At Lauds and Vespers, the altar, and then both priest and people, can be incensed during the singing of the gospel canticle.

262. The choral obligation affects only the community, and not the place of celebration, which is not necessarily the church (chapel), especially as regards those Hours which are performed without any solemnity.

263. All the participants stand:

a) for the introduction to the Office and the introductory verses before each Hour;

b) during the singing of the hymn;

c) during the singing of the gospel canticle;

d) while the prayers, the *Lord's Prayer* and collects are being recited.

264. Apart from the gospel, all remain seated to hear the readings.

265. The congregation may sit or stand, according to custom, as the psalms and other canticles, with their antiphons, are being sung.

266. All make the sign of the cross (from forehead to breast, and from left shoulder to right):

a) at the beginning of the Hours, when the verse "O God, come to my assistance" is recited;

b) at the beginning of the gospel canticles (*Benedictus*, *Magnificat*, and *Nunc Dimittis*).

The sign of the cross is made upon the lips at the start of the Invitatory, at the words "Lord, open my lips."

II. MUSIC IN THE OFFICE

267. In the rubrics and norms of this instruction, the words *say* or *offer* can be understood to refer to singing or recitation, according to the principles that appear below.

268. "The sung celebration of the Divine Office is the form which best accords with the nature of this prayer. It expresses its solemnity in a fuller way and expresses a deeper union of hearts in performing the praises of God. That is why this sung form is strongly recommended to those who celebrate the Office in choir or in common."²

269. All that the Second Vatican Council declared concerning music for the different liturgical actions is especially true for the Liturgy of the Hours.³ Although each and every part has been revised to allow fruitful participation even when said privately, several portions are poetic in nature, notably the psalms, canticles, hymns and responsories, and their fullest meaning is expressed only in song.

270. In the Liturgy of the Hours, music must not be considered as merely decorative, or as being extrinsic to prayer, but rather as flowing from the depths of the soul as it prays and praises God, and as more fully manifesting the communal nature of christian worship.

Those groups of Christians, whatever their nature, are to be commended who are willing to use the sung form of prayer as often as possible; clerics and religious should receive training and encouragement, and the faithful also be given instruction, so that on the more important feasts the Hours can be joyfully celebrated together. Because it is difficult to sing the entire Office, and because neither in its origins, nor in its proper nature, can the Church's prayer of praise be considered the sole domain of clerics or religious, but rather belongs to the entire Christian community, the principles must be kept in mind which state that the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours can be performed properly with music, and therein achieves its greatest forcefulness and beauty.

271. First of all, at least on Sundays and feasts, music should be used, and by its use several grades of solemnity can be distinguished.

272. Likewise not all Hours have the same importance; but music can highlight the principal Hours, namely Lauds and Vespers, which are the hinges on which the Office turns.

273. Furthermore, even though a celebration in which everything is sung is more commendable, provided its spirit and performance are excellent, nevertheless the principle of "progressive" solemnity can be put to good use, not only because it is practical, but also because the various elements of liturgical celebration should not be considered as having the same importance, and because each person can only work within the limits of his own talents and appreciation. In this way the Liturgy of the Hours will not be seen as a beautiful monument to the past, demanding that it be preserved intact to provide aesthetic appreciation; on the contrary, it can come to life in a new way, accept the changes as growth, and become a fresh declaration of the vitality of any community.

The principle of "progressive" solemnity allows for several intermediate grades between simple recitation of the Office and the use of song for all of its parts. This understanding offers a great and welcome variety which is measured by the character of the day or Office being celebrated, by the nature of the individual elements comprising the Office, by the number and type of celebrating community, as well as by the number of songs which correspond to the various parts of the Office.

With such a great variety at hand, the public praise of the Church will be able to be performed more frequently than ever and accommodated to different situations in many ways. It offers the hope that new ways and new forms will be discovered in our ages, just as has always been the case throughout the history of the Church.

274. For liturgical actions celebrated in Latin, Gregorian Chant is acknowledged as proper to the Roman liturgy, and to be preferred to other methods.⁴ When the Office is sung, where there is no music for the suggested antiphons, other antiphons found in the available repertory may be used, provided they are suitable as described in the norms of nos. 113, and 121-125. "No kind of sacred music is prohibited from liturgical actions by the Church as long as it corresponds to the spirit of liturgical celebration itself and the nature of its individual parts, and does not hinder the active participation of the people."⁵

275. When the Liturgy of the Hours is celebrated in the vernacular, "due care should be taken that melodies are prepared which may be used in the singing of the Divine Office in the vernacular."⁶

276. There is nothing to prevent different parts in one and the same celebration being sung in different languages.⁷

277. As is evident from the natural arrangement of liturgical celebrations, certain elements in particular should be chosen to be sung, which demands that the meaning and proper nature of each part and of each song should be carefully observed; they are parts which by their very nature are required to be sung.⁸ They should first of all include acclamations, responses to the greetings of the priest and ministers and to the prayers in litany form, and also antiphons and psalms, refrains or repeated responses, hymns and canticles.⁹

278. The psalms are intimately connected with song (see nos. 103-120), as is evident in both the Jewish and Christian cultures. To understand many of the psalms it is almost necessary to sing them, or at least to consider them in the light of their poetic and musical qualities. Whenever possible, this form is to be preferred, at least for the major hours and on major feasts, and according to the very nature of the psalms.

279. Various methods of performing the psalmody are described in nos. 121-123, which do not depend so much on extrinsic matters as on the fact that various types of psalms may occur in one and the same celebration. Thus, perhaps, it would be better to listen to the sapiential or historical psalms, while hymns and thanksgivings demand communal singing by their very nature. This consideration is very important so that the celebration may not be too rigid, nor artificially contrived or concerned only with observing mere formalities, but may actually reflect the very nature of things. Great care must be taken so that hearts be formed by a study of the very prayer of the Church and that the praise of God be celebrated with joy (see psalm 147).

280. Hymns can foster prayer even when the Hours are recited, if they express sound teaching in an excellent way; by their very nature they require to be sung, and whenever possible, this form is encouraged for communal celebrations.

281. The brief responsory after the reading at Lauds and Vespers (see no. 49) requires singing suitable for the people.

282. Even the responsories following the readings in the Office of Readings require singing by their very nature. They have been so arranged, however, that they retain their effectiveness even when recited in private. They should be sung with music that is simple and easy to learn, rather than in ways that do not spring from a spirit of the liturgy.

283. The readings, whether long or short, do not require to be sung; when they are read care should be taken that they be proclaimed with dignity, clarity and distinction so as to be heard and understood by all. Only that method of singing should be used for them which will insure that the words be clearly heard and understood.

284. Texts performed by individual celebrants, such as the prayer, can be sung properly and with beauty, especially in Latin. This will prove more difficult with certain vernacular languages unless the texts can be sung with enough clarity to be understood by all.

NOTES

Abbreviations—Documents of II Vatican Council

- AA = *Apostolicam actuositatem*, decree on the apostolate of the laity
- AG = *Ad gentes*, decree on the missionary activity of the Church
- CD = *Christus Dominus*, decree on the pastoral office of bishops in the Church
- DV = *Dei verbum*, dogmatic constitution on divine revelation
- GE = *Gravissimum educationis*, declaration on Christian education
- LG = *Lumen gentium*, dogmatic constitution on the Church
- OT = *Optatam totius*, decree on priestly formation
- PC = *Perfectae caritatis*, decree on the renewal of religious life
- PO = *Presbyterorum ordinis*, decree on the ministry and life of priests
- SC = *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, constitution on the sacred liturgy

CHAPTER I

¹Cf. Acts 1:14;4:24;12:5,12;

³SC, 83

⁵Lk. 6:12

⁷Lk. 9:28-29

⁹Jn. 11:41ff

¹¹Lk. 11:1

¹³Mt. 19:13

²Cf. Acts 2:1-15

⁴Lk. 3:21-22

⁶Mt. 14:19; 15:36; Mk. 6:41;
8:7; Lk. 9:16; Jn. 6:11

⁸Mk. 7:34

¹⁰Lk. 9:18

¹²Mt. 11:25ff; Lk. 10:21ff

¹⁴Lk. 22:32

- ¹⁵Mk. 1:35; 6:46; Lk. 5:16;
cf. Mt. 4:1 (para.); Mt. 14:23
- ¹⁷Mt. 14:23, 25? Mk. 6:46, 48
- ¹⁹Lk. 4:16
- ²¹Mt. 14:19 (para.); Mt. 15:36 (para.)
- ²³Lk. 24:30
- ²⁵Jn. 12:27ff
- ²⁷Mt. 26:35-44 (para.)
- ²⁹Cf. Heb. 7:25
- ³¹Jn. 14:13ff; 15:16; 16:23ff, 26
- ³³Lk. 18:1
- ³⁵Lk. 21:36; Mk. 13:33
- ³⁷Mt. 6:5-8; 23:14; Lk. 20:47;
Jn. 4:23
- ³⁹2 Cor. 1:20; Col. 3:17
- ⁴¹Rom. 12:12; 1 Cor. 7:5; Eph. 6:18;
Col. 4:2; 1 Th. 5:17; 1 Tim. 5:5;
1 Pt. 4:7
- ⁴³Eph. 5:19ff; Heb. 13:15; Rev. 19:5
- ⁴⁵Rom. 8:26; Phil. 4:6
- ⁴⁷1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 8:6;
9:15; 12:24
- ⁴⁹Cf. *SC*, 83
- ⁵¹St. Aug., *Enarrat in psalm*, 85:1;
CCL, 39, 1176
- ⁵³Cf. Acts 2:42
- ¹⁶Mk. 1:35
- ¹⁸Lk. 6:12
- ²⁰Mt. 21:13 (para.)
- ²²Mt. 26:26 (para.)
- ²⁴Mt. 26:30 (para.)
- ²⁶Jn. 17:1-26
- ²⁸Lk. 23:34, 46; Mt. 27:46;
Mk. 15:34
- ³⁰Mt. 5:44; 7:7; 26:41;
Mk. 13:33; 14:38; Lk. 6:28;
10:2; 11:9; 22:40, 46
- ³²Mt. 6:9-13; Lk. 11:24
- ³⁴Lk. 18:9-14
- ³⁶Lk. 11:5-13; 18:1-8;
Jn. 14:13; 16:23
- ³⁸Heb. 13:15
- ⁴⁰Rom. 8:15, 26; 1 Cor. 12:3;
Gal. 4:6; Jud. 20
- ⁴²1 Tim. 4:5; Jas. 5:15ff;
1 Jn. 3:22; 5:14
- ⁴⁴Col. 3:17; Phil. 4:6;
1 Th. 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:1
- ⁴⁶Rom. 15:30; 1 Tim. 2:1ff;
Eph. 6:18; 1 Th. 5:25;
Jas. 5:14, 16
- ⁴⁸Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; 3:12
- ⁵⁰*LG*, 10
- ⁵²Cf. Lk. 10:21, when Jesus
"rejoiced in the Holy Spirit" and
said: "I offer you praise,
Father..."
- ⁵⁴Cf. Mt. 6:6

- 55Cf. *SC*, 12
 57*Ibid.*, 88
 59*PO*, 5
 61*SC*, 5
 63*Ibid.*, 7
 65*Ibid.*, 33
 67Cf. *SC*, 33
 69Cf. Heb. 13:15
 71*Ibid.*, 85
 73*LG*, 50; cf. *SC*, 8 & 104.
 75Cf. Rom. 8:19
 77Cf. Heb. 5:7
 79*LG*, 24
 81Cf. *PC*, 7
 83*Ibid.*, 2
 85Cf. *SC*, 86
 87Cf. Eph. 4:13
 89Cf. *Ibid.*, 90; Rule of St. Benedict, 19
 91Cf. *SC*, 26
 93*SC*, 41
 95Cf. *SC*, 26 & 84
 97*CD*, 15
 99Cf. *PO*, 5
 101*CD*, 33; *PC*, 6 & 7; *AG*, 15
 103Cf. *Ibid.*, 100
 105Cf. *GE*, 2; *AA*, 16
 107Cf. *PO*, 13
 109Cf. *LG*, 26; *CD*, 15
 111Cf. *Ibid.*, 5
 113Cf. *SC*, 90
 115Cf. *DV*, 25; *PO*, 13
 56Cf. *SC*, 83-84
 58*Ibid.*, 94
 60*CD*, 30
 62*Ibid.*, 83 & 98
 64Cf. *Ibid.*, 10
 66Cf. *Ibid.*, 24
 68¹ Th. 5:17
 70Cf. *SC*, 84
 72Cf. *Ibid.*, 83
 74*LG*, 48
 76Cf. *SC*, 83
 78Cf. *PO*, 6
 80Cf. below, 41
 82*SC*, 10
 84Cf. Jn. 15:5
 86Cf. Eph. 2:21-22
 88Cf. *SC*, 2
 90Cf. *PO*, 14; *OT*, 8
 92*CD*, 11
 94*Ibid.*, 42; cf. *AA*, 10
 96Cf. *AG*, 17
 98Cf. *SC*, 100
 100Cf. below, 100-109
 102Cf. *SC*, 99
 104Cf. Jn. 4:23
 106Cf. *AA*, 11
 108Cf. *SC*, 41; *LG*, 21
 110Cf. *PO*, 13
 112Cf. Jn. 10:11; 17:20, 23
 114Cf. *LG*, 41
 116Paul VI, *Motu Proprio Sacrum Diaconatus ordinem*, June 18, 1967, 27; *AAS* 59 (1967), p. 703

¹¹⁷Cf. SCR instruction *Inter Œcumenici*, Sept. 26, 1964, 78-b: AAA 56 (1964), p. 895

¹¹⁹Cf. *SC*, 100

¹²¹Cf. *Ibid.*, 27

¹¹⁸Cf. Acts 4:32

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, 26 & 28-30

CHAPTER II

¹Cf. Heb. 3:7-4:16

³St. Basil the Great, *Regulae fusius tractatae*, Resp. 37, 3: PG 31, 1014

⁵St. Basil the Great, *op. cit.*: PG 31, 1015

⁷Cassian, *De institutione coenob.*, book 3, c. 3: PL 49, 124-5

⁹Roman Pontifical, *Ordination of Priests*, 14

¹¹*SC*, 89-c

¹³*Ibid.*, PLS 2, 552

¹⁵*SC*, 38

²*SC*, 89a; Cf. *Ibid.*, 100

⁴St. Cyprian, *De oratione dominica*, *On the Lord's Prayer*, 35: PL 4, 561

⁶Cf. Ps. 141:2

⁸St. Cyprian, *op. cit.*, 35: PL 4, 560.

¹⁰St. Ambrose, *De officiis ministrorum* I, 20, 88: PL 16, 50; *DV*, 25

¹²*Sermo Guelferbytanus* 5: PLS 2, 550

¹⁴Cf. *SC*, 89-e

CHAPTER III

¹*SC*, 90

³Cf. Rule of St. Benedict, *ibid.*

⁵Cf. *SC*, 91

⁷St. Gregory the Great, *Homilia 34 in Evangelia*: PL 76, 1282

⁹St. Vincent of Lerins, *Commonitorium*, 2: PL 50, 640

¹¹Cf. *SC*, 92-c

¹³*Ibid.*, 38

²Rule of St. Benedict, rule 19 Mt. 22:44ff.

⁶*Ibid.*, 102

⁸*SC*, 38

¹⁰St. Bernard, *Sermo 3 in vigilia Nativitatis 1*: PL 183, 94 (1879 ed.)

¹²*Ibid.*, 93

¹⁴Cf. ex. gr., St. John Chrysostom, *In Epist. ad Tim. I*, Homily 6: PG 62, 530

¹⁵Cf. *SC*, 38

¹⁷Cf. below, 256

¹⁶Cf. *Ibid.*, 83 & 89

¹⁸*SC*, 30

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¹Cf. *SC*, 100

³Cf. General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, 52

⁵Cf. *Table of Liturgical Days*, 4 & 8

⁷Cf. above, 100-109

²*Ibid.*, 111

⁴Cf. *Ibid.*, 52-c

⁶*SC*, 51

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¹*SC*, 28

³Cf. *SC*, 113

⁵*SCR*, *op. cit.*, no. 9: p. 303;
cf. *SC*, 116

⁷Cf. *ibid.*, no. 51: p. 315

⁹Cf. *ibid.*, nos. 161, 38: pp. 305,
311

²*SCR*, *Inst. Musicam Sacram*,
Mar. 5, 1967, 37: AAS 59,
(1967), p. 310; *SC*, 99

⁴*Ibid.*, 116

⁶Cf. *SCR*, *op. cit.*, no. 41:
cf. nos. 54-61: pp. 312, 316-317

⁸Cf. *ibid.*, no. 6: 302

APPENDIX I

Diocesan Study of the Life of Prayer

Programs in the archdioceses of New York and Chicago form the basis of the following suggestions. They are intended to facilitate the reflection on the life of prayer desired by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (see above, Introduction) with a view to a pastoral statement on the subject.

Areas of Concern and Inquiry

1. Present state of public devotions, especially:
 - a) eucharistic devotions (effects of 1967 instruction; annual solemn expiation; First Friday devotions)
 - b) Marian devotions
2. Present use of the Roman and/or interim breviary
3. Changing patterns of spiritual formation in
 - a) seminaries
 - b) novitiates
 - c) associations of laity
4. Evaluation of corporate roles in promotion of the life of prayer, e.g.:
 - a) senates of priests
 - b) liturgical commissions
 - c) parish groups

Projects

1. Development of houses of prayer (for priests, for religious, for laity, for all)
2. Experimental programs in the formation of seminaries and religious
3. Evenings of recollection, weekend retreats for laity
4. Surveys (see Appendix II)

5. Discussion or study days on problems of prayer

Proposed format

- a) presentation on prayer today—in the church and in the life of priests (laity, religious)
- b) silent reflection on basic questions: what is my prayer life like right now? what were the two greatest influences in my past prayer life? what would I like my prayer life to be?
- c) small group discussions
- d) general reports from small groups
- e) comments by speaker

This is followed by collation of materials from reports and the like at various meetings of this kind.

6. Formulation of statement, pastoral letter, etc.

APPENDIX II

National Survey on the Life of Prayer

The following inquiry is addressed to priests, religious, and laity who study the "General Instruction" on the forthcoming Liturgy of the Hours in relation to questions of the Church's life of prayer.

Responses should be typed on separate paper and numbered to correspond to the numbers below. Responses may be sent to the diocesan liturgical commission, which will be asked to collate and summarize them.

PART ONE – THE NEW OFFICE

1. Please give your judgment of the theology of the Church's prayer in nos. 1-27, its contemporary effectiveness and motivation.
2. Is the new definition of obligation (nos. 28-32) satisfactory in the present day situation?
3. Is the arrangement of morning and evening prayer – Lauds and Vespers – in nos. 37-54 sufficiently simple and clear?
4. Are the variations in beginning the office (nos. 34-36) necessary?
5. Is the arrangement of the hour of readings (nos. 55-69) satisfactory?
6. What improvements can you suggest for the hour of readings?
7. Is the plan for the "middle hours" (nos. 74-83) a useful form of prayer?
8. Is the plan for compline (nos. 84-92) suitable for a prayer before retiring?

9. Will the simple form of coupling a part of the Hours with Mass (nos. 93-99, especially 95) be suitable for congregations?

10. It has been suggested that some parts of the Liturgy of the Hours are superfluous in a contemporary praying of celebration of the Church's prayer. Please list the parts which seem superfluous or less suitable.

<u>Lauds/ Vespers</u>	<u>Middle Hour</u>	<u>Compline</u>	<u>Office of Readings</u>
verse	verse		verse
hymn	hymn		hymn
2 psalms	3 psalms		3 psalms
OT canticle			Ψ - R̄
NT canticle			Scripture reading
short reading	short reading	short reading	response
response	Ψ - R̄	response	Patristic reading
antiphons		antiphons	response
Benedictus		Nuncdimittis	
Magnificat			
prayers (versicles)			
Lord's Prayer			Te Deum
closing prayer (collect)	closing prayer	closing prayer BVM antiphon	closing prayer

11. Should other gospel canticles be substituted for the *Benedictus* or *Magnificat*?

12. Should Compline be integrated into Vespers?

13. Should the office of readings be suppressed as a formal part of the Liturgy of the Hours?

14. Should some form of the office of readings be integrated into Lauds and/or Vespers?

15. Should any of the hours be replaced by some other type of prayer?

PART TWO – ELEMENTS OF THE OFFICE

1. Do you think that the psalms (nos. 100-135) help you to pray?
2. Should other forms, such as contemporary poetry, be substituted in whole or in part for the psalms?
3. Is the pattern of readings from scripture (nos. 140-158) helpful to prayer?
4. Is the plan of other readings (nos. 159-168) sufficiently diversified and flexible?
5. Should the gospels be used in the Liturgy of the Hours other than for the vigils (cf. no. 144)?
6. Are responsories after readings (nos. 169-172) helpful to meditative prayer?
7. Should hymns and other kinds of song (nos. 173-178) be included in a book of prayer?
8. Do you agree that "intercessions" (nos. 179-193) similar to the prayer of the faithful or invocations (such as the Third form of the penitential rite at Mass) should be included in Lauds and Vespers?
9. Should more attention be given to "thematic" offices not directly related to feasts or seasons?
10. Should other formats of the Liturgy of the Hours be included?
11. In general, do you feel that the structure of the office has been adequately revised for individual and/or communal use?

PART THREE – GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Should a definitive book of prayer ("Liturgy of the Hours") be published officially on a national basis?
2. Should such a prayer book be limited, for example, to morning and evening prayer (Lauds and Vespers)?

3. Is a distinct book (or books) of readings helpful to prayer?
4. Should the "official" Liturgy of the Hours be related to the experience of bible services and vigils?
5. Please indicate your judgment of any interim breviary with which you have had experience. (Indicate Chapman or American breviary.)
6. Please indicate your experience of personal or general problems of prayer—of praise, of petition, of reflection.
7. Are there other prayer forms (either styles of prayer or formularies, collections, etc.) which you feel should be employed in the Liturgy of the Hours?
8. In your personal experience or experiences with others, do you judge that forms and formats of prayer are a help or an obstacle to genuine prayfulness?
9. Indicate any other adaptations of the Liturgy of the Hours which you would suggest.
10. Should a period of experiment precede the publication of a definitive national book of prayer (i.e., beyond the two or three years needed for the translation of the Latin version)?

Please indicate:

Age _____

Priest _____

Deacon _____

Seminarian _____

Woman Religious _____

Man Religious _____

Lay woman _____

Layman _____



