



NewsLetter

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Committee Makes Two Personnel Changes; Subcommittee Members and Consultants Appointed

Several changes to the Committee on Divine Worship and its Subcommittee on Divine Worship in Spanish have taken place in the last couple of months:

Committee Changes

Auxiliary Bishop Timothy C. Senior of Philadelphia has decided to step down from the Committee due to increased obligations as Chancellor of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Bishop Steven J. Lopes, Committee Chairman, has decided not to appoint a new member, thus the Committee membership will remain at eight.

Sr. Marilú Covani, SP has retired as Vice President of the *Instituto Nacional Hispano de Liturgia* and will therefore no longer continue as an *ex officio* consultant to the Committee. Bishop Lopes invited the *Instituto* to suggest a replacement, and they selected its Treasurer, Ms. Maria Perez-Rudisill, to fill the role of Committee consultant.

Subcommittee Appointments

Bishop Mario A. Avilés, CO, Subcommittee Chairman, has appointed the following bishops to serve as members of the Subcommittee on Divine Worship in Spanish:

- Bishop Alberto Rojas of San Bernardino
- Bishop Daniel E. Garcia of Monterey
- Auxiliary Bishop Jorge H. Rodríguez of Denver
- Auxiliary Bishop Juan M. Betancourt, SEMV of Hartford
- Auxiliary Bishop Luis M. Romero, M.Id of Rockville Centre

The Chairman has reappointed two Subcommittee consultants: Rev. Heliodoro Lucatero of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and Rev. Juan J. Sosa, President of the *Instituto Nacional Hispano de Liturgia*. Two new consultants were also appointed:

- Dr. Ximena DeBroeck, Director of Pastoral Formation at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland
- Mr. Luis Espinosa, Director of Evangelization and Catechesis of the Diocese of Brownsville

Finally, with grateful thanks for their service, four consultants have concluded their terms with the Subcommittee: Rev. Jorge I. Perales, Rev. Ángel Rivera-Fals, SJ, Ms. Dolores Martinez, and Mr. Rogelio Zelada.

The Divine Office Hymnal: Hymns for Compline

The *Liturgy of the Hours, Second Edition* will follow the text and organization of the hymns found in the Latin typical edition, which will represent a significant change from what is found in the current U.S. version of the breviary. Continuing the introduction of *The Divine Office Hymnal*, this article aims to shed light on the hymns for Compline, or Night Prayer, and on the editorial decisions made concerning them in the forthcoming hymnal.

Perhaps surprisingly, the typical edition of the *Liturgy of the Hours* provides only three hymns for Compline for the entire year. During Easter Time the hymn is *Iesu, redemptor saeculi*, translated by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) as *Jesus, Redeemer of the World*. The text is believed to date to the tenth century. The Compline hymns for the rest of the year alternate between the other two texts, both of which probably date to the fifth or sixth century. One is *Te lucis ante terminum*, translated as *To You before the Close of Light*. This hymn is used in the first part of Advent, from Christmas to the Epiphany, weeks 1, 3, and 5 of Lent, and as one option during Ordinary Time. The other hymn is *Christe, qui, splendor et dies*, translated as *O Christ, Resplendent as the Day*. This hymn is assigned to the final days of Advent, Christmas Time from the Epiphany, weeks 2 and 4 of Lent, Holy Week, and as the other option during Ordinary Time. Authorship of all three hymns is generally considered to be unknown, although various attributions have been suggested over the years.

Having only three hymns for Compline for an entire year might seem quite limited, especially to those who only recite the text in private prayer. One reason for this limited selection can be deduced from the suggestion of the *General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours* (no. 88) that some will pray Compline from memory, so the limited number of texts would facilitate that choice. More importantly, however, the “mind of the Church” is that the hymns are to be sung, as a rule, and the Church’s liturgical tradition is that the melodies to be used for these hymns will vary according to season and rank of celebration. This musical variety serves not only to break up repetitiveness, but can also, through the style of music, support the “mood” or theme of a season or celebration. The Gregorian melodies of the *Liber hymnarius* and the metrical tunes chosen aim to do just that.

All three Compline hymns are in long meter (LM, or 8 8 8 8), like many of the hymns of the *Liturgy of the Hours*. The metrical version of the Easter hymn, *Jesus, Redeemer of the World*, has been set to the tune named DEUS TUORUM MILITUM. The two hymns that are used for the rest of the year, *To You before the Close of Light* and *O Christ, Resplendent as the Day*, share the same melodies, according to this pattern:

Advent:	HERR JESU CHRIST	Ordinary Time Sundays and weekdays; Solemnities:	TALLIS’ CANON
Christmas:	A LA VENUE DE NOËL	Feasts:	DUGUET
Lent:	O WALY WALY	Memorials:	ELY

The plainsong melodies of the *Liber hymnarius* follow an analogous pattern, although with even more variety since distinct melodies are provided for Ordinary Time Sundays, Ordinary Time weekdays, and Solemnities. ICEL’s musicians chose to provide a single metrical tune for those three circumstances.

Naturally, the tunes proposed in *The Divine Office Hymnal* are provided as a resource and suggestion, but there is always freedom to use some other melody that is deemed appropriate. It is also to be hoped that composers will continue to create new melodies to support the prayer of the Church.



The Transforming Power of the Liturgy: COVID-19, the Sick and Dying

Three years ago, the spread of COVID-19 reminded us of our limitations and vulnerability, and of the enduring reality of sickness and death. Many of us were already in touch with these realities, living with them daily: those with chronic and terminal illness, with weakened immune systems, with physical and mental disabilities. But the pandemic confronted all with the fact that every human being exists on a scale of sickness, or, as philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre has written, a “scale of disability.” The public health emergency led civil authorities to limit in-person gatherings and enact other requirements. Dioceses, in turn, limited the celebration of public worship.

As we emerge from this experience, how might it contribute to our understanding of the liturgy’s transforming power? How might that time reveal first, the relationship of the sick and the dying to the liturgy, and second, how the Lord makes us a people who care for the sick and the dying through the liturgy?

Theology

The full meaning of sickness and death as well as the Church’s care for the sick and dying lie in the person of Jesus Christ. He himself freely embraced suffering and death, he identified with the sick and the dying, and he had compassion on them. Healing the sick and dying are among Christ’s first miracles (Mk 1:29-31; 5:41-42). Having heard of the Lord’s healing power, people either bring the sick and dying to him or intercede with him on their behalf (Mk 1:32-34; Mk 5:22-23). This aspect of Christ’s work is so central that St. Matthew includes it alongside teaching and preaching in his summary statements of Christ’s ministry (4:23; 9:35). Christ entrusts the care of the sick and the dying to his apostles, and after his resurrection, he notes that healing the sick is a sign that will accompany those who believe in him (Mt 10:1, Mk 6:13, Lk 9:1-2; Mk 16:18). Ultimately, Christ identifies with the sick to such an extent that they become his presence in the world: “When I was sick, you visited me” (Mt 25:36). This care for the sick continues in the early Church (Acts 5:15-16; Jas 5:14-15).

Liturgy

How are the sick and dying related to the liturgy? The sick and dying are members of the celebrating Church whose person and offering are equal in dignity to those who are healthy. They are not merely recipients of the Church’s care but active members of Christ’s Mystical Body. For this reason, the Church has always been eager to visit and pray with the sick and the dying and, when they are absent from the celebration of the Eucharist, to bring them Holy Communion (cf. St. Justin the Martyr, First Apology, nos. 65, 67). Today, the Church also provides for the Eucharist to be celebrated in the homes of the sick (*Code of Canon Law*, can. 932 §1; *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America*, no. 54; *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites for Anointing and Viaticum*, no. 77). Through participation in the Eucharist, the sick not only offer a sacrifice to the Lord, but they also may receive “health of body and soul” (Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, Prayer after Communion). In the Mass “For the Sick,” the Church asks the Lord to grant health to the sick so that they may be restored to the Eucharistic celebration and “give you thanks in the midst of your Church” (*Roman Missal*, Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, no. 45, Collect).

How does the liturgy express and enact care for the sick and dying? The Eucharist is the action by which the sick and dying become one with the self-giving love of Christ and become capable of a suffering and death like his. The Church’s sacramental care for the sick and dying flows from and is directed toward the liturgy, whose heart is the Eucharist. In the Eucharistic Prayer, bread and wine become Christ’s Body and Blood, which is brought to the sick as Communion and the dying as Viaticum. At the Chrism Mass, the blessing of the Oil of the Sick traditionally takes place at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer. The unique context of this blessing underscores the fact that the Eucharist is the source of the Church’s care for the sick. Additionally, the sick and the dying should be frequently included in the petitions of the Universal Prayer (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, no. 70c). During the Solemn Intercessions on Good Friday, the Church asks the Lord to grant “health to the sick, and salvation to the dying” (intention X). Finally, from time to time the Church celebrates special Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, three of which in the *Roman Missal* concern the sick and the dying (nos. 45-47).

Action

The extraordinary time of the pandemic has led the Church to carry out her life in new ways. Unable to visit the sick in person, many parishes began to reach out by telephone. Liturgical celebrations broadcast digitally became more common. As the COVID-19 public health emergency draws to a close, it is important for communities to reflect upon these practices. There may be some which have fallen away or been scaled back but should be retained. Others may have been unduly continued and should be reevaluated.

In his Apostolic Letter on liturgical formation, *Desiderio desideravi*, Pope Francis notes that broadcasting liturgies by digital means is “not always opportune” and “needs further reflection” (no. 54). While the homebound now have greater digital access to liturgies, this access cannot replace the Church’s personal care for the sick and the dying. Live-streamed liturgies should not diminish the Church’s eagerness to visit and pray in person with the sick, to bring them Communion, to provide transportation for those who are in need, or to make places of worship accessible and welcoming spaces for those who are sick, elderly, or disabled. To outsource the care of the sick to technologies such as YouTube, Twitch, or Facebook Live would be to ignore the example and command of Christ: “When I was sick, *you visited me*” (Mt 25:36, emphasis added). Worship in a community of embodied persons is the right and duty of every member of the Christian people, whether healthy or sick (cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 14); no Christian should be deprived of gathering as two or three (Mt 18:20).

May 31 Moment of Prayer for the Synod of Bishops

In an announcement of March 15, 2023, the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops invited the Church to participate in a moment of prayer on May 31, the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in support of the upcoming first session of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

In the United States, each bishop has been entrusted with organizing a suitable moment of prayer for his diocese, with an emphasis of involving one or more Marian shrines or churches. The Synod office indicated that the prayer should include the participation of clergy, consecrated men and women, and the laity. They also stated that information and resources, to be further updated in the coming weeks, will be available on their website, www.SynodResources.org/31may2023.

Whether in solemn or simpler forms, the shape of the moment of prayer will vary from diocese to diocese. Some examples include a Eucharistic Holy Hour, recitation of the Rosary, or the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours. As May 31 also concludes the traditional month of Mary, the Synod moment of prayer could also be incorporated into previously planned Marian devotions for the day. In addition to the moment of prayer itself, the celebration of Mass in parishes that day could be enriched in one or more ways: recitation of the Prayer for the Synod beforehand, special petitions during the Universal Prayer, or the Hail Mary after the dismissal. The Prayer for the Synod in English and Spanish, and other general resources, are available at USCCB.org/synod.

Liturgical Calendars Now Available Free of Charge

Primarily as a service to publishers, the Secretariat of Divine Worship has long prepared a liturgical calendar for purchase, roughly a year and a half in advance of each new liturgical year. The calendar lists each day’s celebration, rank, liturgical color, Lectionary citations, and Psalter cycle. But beginning this year, the *Liturgical Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States of America* will be available in electronic format at no charge. The 2024 and 2025 editions are available at USCCB.org/committees/divine-worship/liturgical-calendar.

The Secretariat will endeavor to provide the newest calendar around April 1 each year in PDF format. Those who wish to receive a printed copy in 8½ × 11” paperback format may contact the Secretariat through the USCCB website or the mailing address at the front of the *Newsletter*. Due to increased costs the price is now \$20.00 per printed copy.