

Newsletter

Issue 10, March 2021

IN THIS ISSUE:

Liturgy spotlight:
The Church's public prayer – Eucharist and Hours

Sharing good practice:
The Church's best kept secret

News and recent events

Resources for celebration

RECENT STAFF PUBLICATIONS:

Sharon P. Boyd. "All Souls Day – a time to remember." *Catholic Voice*. Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn (30 October 2020).

_____. "Candles and wreaths: It must be Advent!" *Catholic Outlook*. Diocese of Parramatta (22 December 2020).

_____. "Honouring Mary on Saturdays in the Liturgy." *Catholic Voice*. Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn (8 October 2020).

_____. "In the company of the Saints." *Melbourne Catholic* (31 October 2020).

_____. "The O antiphons." *Melbourne Catholic* (15 December 2020).

Please email us for more information, or to register to hear about upcoming events.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

"...you never cease to gather a people to yourself, so that from the rising of the sun to its setting a pure sacrifice may be offered to your name..."

The preface of Eucharistic Prayer III reminds us that it is God who gathers us to pray and that opportunities to pray in God's presence are available throughout all our waking hours. The Church explicitly and formally links time and prayer through our daily, weekly and yearly celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours (LOH). This rich pattern of prayer presents a wide variety of themes explored through carefully chosen scripture readings, excerpts from the writings of early Christians, prayers, hymns and psalmody. LOH focuses on the two major temporal poles of the natural day (sunrise and sunset), which numerous cultures have long considered to be most appropriate times to stop and offer worship and praise to God. LOH supplements these two major hours with additional minor hours spread throughout the day. This rich resource deserves greater attention in our prayer lives today.

FROM OUR BOARD OF ADVISORS

Every Advent I take the time to reread both Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Constitution *Laudis Canticum*, which promulgated the reformed Liturgy of the Hours after the Second Vatican Council, and the *General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours*, which guides our celebration of the Hours. Both are to be found at the beginning of Volume I of the Liturgy of the Hours. It is something that helps reorient me into the good celebration of the Hours, but more importantly it helps me to be able to enter more deeply into the spirit of the prayer.

Last year I dwelt on St Paul VI's hope in *Laudis Canticum* that it is "to be hoped above all that the Liturgy of the Hours may pervade and penetrate the whole of Christian prayer, giving it life, direction,

In this newsletter, Andrew D. Ciferni, OPraem offers a beautiful reflection on how celebrating LOH can enable Christians consciously to mark time in and through this special prayer of the Church, and Sharon Boyd presents helpful practical advice for those new to praying LOH. As COVID-19 uncertainty continues to impact unpredictably upon our daily lives, prayer routines and communal experience of God, recalling the breadth of available liturgical prayer options can present rich opportunities to expand our prayer lives for the better. Let us continue to rely on God's certainty in these uncertain times.



Professor Clare V. Johnson
 Director, ACU Centre for Liturgy
 Professor of Liturgical Studies & Sacramental Theology, Faculty of Theology & Philosophy

and expression and effectively nourishing the spiritual life of the people of God."

I find myself coming up a little short at times on some of these matters. Yet this short statement is a helpful summary of where we ought to aim to be, and the articles in this issue of the ACU Centre for Liturgy's Newsletter can help us to get there.



The Most Rev. Patrick O'Regan, STL (Institut Supérieur de Liturgie, Institut Catholique de Paris) is the Archbishop of Adelaide.



Endorsed by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

NEWS AND RECENT EVENTS

Centre staff member named to National Liturgical Council

Dr Jason J. McFarland, Assistant Director of the ACU Centre for Liturgy, was recently appointed to the National Liturgical Council. Dr Paul Taylor, Executive Secretary of the BCL noted, “This appointment is an acknowledgement of [Jason’s] widely recognised contribution as a liturgical

scholar, musician and educator both in the United States of America and Australia.”

The National Liturgical Council is an advisory body established by the Australian Catholic Bishops for the purpose of advising the Bishops Commission for Liturgy on matters pertaining to Catholic liturgical worship. Members of the National



Liturgical Council are appointed for 3 year terms.

LITURGY SPOTLIGHT

The Church’s public prayer – Eucharist and Hours

The present situation in the church throughout the world is a *kairos* moment for the Liturgy of the Hours (LOH) in the life of Christians. Whether due to the paucity of ordained clergy to lead in the celebration of the Eucharist and/or the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, the celebration of the renewed LOH offers the faithful another mode of celebrating the church’s public prayer.

The movement of our solar system has presented to human beings from time immemorial a natural symbol to which the word of God comes to create a sacramental vehicle of praise and petition which in its seasonal, weekly and daily celebration, deepens and strengthens our identity with the Body of Christ cosmically and in the history of salvation.

The LOH is not a substitute for the Eucharist but its complement. The poetry of hymnody, antiphons, and petitionary prayer which frames psalmody, canticles and readings enriches the prayer life of those who pray the LOH whether in its normative communal form and/or in its recitation alone.

Psalmody. Christians’ exposure to the church’s traditional prayer book, the psalms, has been partially renewed in our times by the performance in the Eucharist of sections of various psalms often set to new and effective musical settings as the responsorial psalm. The LOH expands the potential of the psalms to be nourishment for the spiritual life by the inclusion of entire psalms at Morning Prayer (Lauds), Evening Prayer (Vespers), and Night Prayer (Compline). These psalms were selected for their appropriateness to the time of day. Once again, time and word become sacramental.

Euchology is a technical word for the non-scriptural language of the liturgy composed by the church’s creative



Attribution: Monks of Saint John’s Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., U.S.A.

poets. This body of literature emerges principally in the wide range of hymns that mark the liturgical seasons and that honour feasts of the Lord, Mary, and the saints. In every age, musicians have crafted for this ecclesial poetry, melodies proper to their culture and age. Some endure for centuries; some inspire us anew in text and melody. Moreover, the poetic composition of antiphons that frame the psalms – one thinks immediately of the Great O Antiphons of Advent II – enrich the Christian imagination. Other elements of euchology are the prayers of intercession and the orations.

Petition. Before it seemed to become the exclusive prayer form of consecrated religious and the ordained (often known as the Office and/or the Breviary), the LOH was the prayer of the regular folks, and when the folks pray, they bring to God their needs and those of their loved ones, of others in need, and prayers for

the life of the world. Even our petitionary prayer is keyed to time: praise at the beginning of the promise of a new day; reflective consideration of the day now past; and pleading for protection as we end the night in rest. Surely, in our day we have perhaps more reason than ever to plead before God as one mind, heart, and voice.

A word about performance or ‘how to.’ This little ‘spotlight’ has focused to a large extent on the beauty of the LOH – cosmic, sacramental, aesthetic, spiritual. The LOH in its Jewish and Christian roots is sung prayer and this is a matter of ecclesial communion which has its own deep dimension of beauty in the Body of Christ. How the LOH is celebrated communally and musically is deeply affected by place and frequency. Daily chanted celebration allows for a more complex formed and rehearsed repertoire. Occasional celebrations to mark special events, e.g., the solemnity of St Joseph

in this Year of St Joseph, call for more responsorial forms whose repetition frees the assembly from focusing on learning texts and melodies but leaves the more complex verses to assigned cantors. Daily celebration alone calls for a more meditative setting, if not in a sacred space. Moreover, as the full public prayer of the church, the LOH is ritual prayer. Gesture, posture, movement, material elements such as vesture, lights, incense – these are as much proper to the LOH as to Sunday Eucharist. As in Sunday Eucharist, preaching is appropriate and praiseworthy.

This 'spotlight' is no more than an invitation for Christian assemblies new to the LOH to advance in exploring this timely (in its sacramental nature and in the time in which we find ourselves) form of worship that is a rich gift of the church in its ministry to seek the truth of beauty as we pursue the beauty of truth.

Rev. Dr Andrew D. Ciferni, O.Praem., STL (Gregorian), PhD (Notre Dame-USA) is a priest of Daylesford Abbey in Paoli, PA. Fr Ciferni has worked as a professor at both The Catholic University of America and Washington Theological Union. He is a founding member of the



North American Academy of Liturgy, a member of the Norbertine International Commission on Liturgy, and at St Norbert College (De Pere, WI, USA) is former Director

of the Centre for Norbertine Studies and current Chair of its Board of Trustees. The history and spirituality of the Liturgy of the Hours are special interests.

SHARING GOOD PRACTICE

The Church's best kept secret



Attribution: Sydney Catholic Schools courtesy of Kitty Beale

The Liturgy of the Hours is one of the Church's best kept secrets. It would be wonderful if more parish, school and other Catholic groups (such as those in aged-care facilities), embraced this daily prayer of the Church, which is another of its names. LOH is a liturgical prayer that can be prayed in a church or in many other locations such as staff rooms or meeting rooms.

Focussing on the Psalms, LOH runs across several volumes that follow the liturgical year. The principal Hours of the day are morning, evening and night prayer. Ribbons in the books of the Hours allow you to navigate the various volumes as needed depending on the feast days/seasons you encounter.

Initially the prayer format of LOH can be confusing, so at the outset it is best to seek guidance from a book or a person familiar with this prayer form. Once you commit to and become familiar with the prayer structure it won't take long before you can relax into it and allow the prayer

to carry you along. The key to introducing the Liturgy of the Hours is to follow the structure carefully and start with just Morning or Evening Prayer. Once you gain confidence, you can try more Hours within the daily cycle.

There are pared-back versions of LOH which can be helpful for those seeking an easy starting-point. There are apps and online versions of LOH that simplify access to this prayer form, but holding a prayer-book can provide a reprieve from too much screen-time. Good liturgy planning websites can aid your preparation of LOH celebrations.

Ideally psalms are meant to be sung, however, chanting psalms takes practice and the leadership of confident singers. For beginners, using the spoken form to introduce the Hours might be wise until your group feels confident enough with the basics to try chanting the psalms. It is important to sing at least one of the hymns of LOH, for without chant and song LOH is not fully realised. The

Office is a beautiful way to punctuate the beginning and end the day with prayer, enriching the daily, weekly and yearly cycles of the liturgical year.



Ms Sharon P. Boyd, BTheol, DipEd, MA (Pastoral Care & Counselling), MA (Liturgy, Notre Dame-USA), GCHE, is the Professional

Specialist – Liturgy Education at the ACU Centre for Liturgy. She has been active in liturgy education for many years and at many levels. Sharon is passionate about the Church's critical need for ongoing liturgical education and formation.

Resources for celebration

In Australia, there are numerous versions of LOH available: the full three-volume edition: *The Divine Office*; an edition called *Daily Prayer* (which does not include the Office of Readings); and an edition containing just Morning and Evening Prayer, titled: *Shorter Morning & Evening Prayer*. All are available at harpercollins.com.au. Online liturgy preparation websites like liturgia.com.au and liturgyhelp.com can help you prepare LOH celebrations. Print periodicals like *Give Us This Day* (giveusthisday.org) and *Magnificat* (uk.magnificat.net) allow you to pray LOH without having to navigate the three-volume edition. For personal recitation, the website and app at universalis.com provide handy ways to pray LOH.

Engage our expertise

Improve liturgical celebration in your parish

The ACU Centre for Liturgy provides specialised training and formation workshops for parish ministers and liturgical musicians on a variety of topics.

Help your teachers and religious education leaders to deepen their understanding of the liturgy

We tailor workshops and professional development sessions to the specific needs of schools and Catholic education offices.

Develop your skills as a presider at liturgy

Clergy can engage in our specialised professional development sessions on a range of topics from presidential singing to the art of presiding at worship, and the craft of preaching.

Bring our experts to you

Our academics and specialists are available to deliver keynote addresses, public lectures, and conference workshops tailored to meet the needs of your organisation or event.

Study liturgy and sacramental theology

You can study academic courses or undertake higher degree research in liturgical studies and sacramental theology through ACU's Faculty of Theology and Philosophy. Contact us for further information.

Support our work in rural and low-income parishes

You can support the crucial work of the ACU Centre for Liturgy by making a donation through the **Give Now** portal on our website. ACU is a not-for-profit institution, and all gifts of \$2 or more to the ACU Centre for Liturgy are tax deductible. 100 per cent of your gift will be utilised to provide essential formative education in liturgy and sacraments in areas of need. Endowments, pledges, bequests and gifts in kind are welcome.

Contact us

ACU Centre for Liturgy
25A Barker Rd, Strathfield, NSW 2135

Phone: +61 2 9701 4751

Website: acu.edu.au/centreforliturgy

Email: CentreforLiturgy@acu.edu.au

Centre for Liturgy Staff:

Professor Clare V. Johnson, Director

Dr Jason J. McFarland, Assistant Director

Ms Sharon Boyd, Professional Specialist – Liturgy Education

Ms Maryanne Hemsley, Administrative Officer



The Liturgy Nexus and Liturgy Nexus for Schools

Are you a postgraduate qualified liturgist or do you work in a liturgy-related profession (e.g., liturgical architecture, art or music)? Consider joining the Liturgy Nexus, an online subscription-based closed network for conversation on liturgical issues, resource sharing and problem solving.

Does your work in Catholic schools involve preparing liturgies? The Liturgy Nexus for Schools is where you can ask questions and develop your expertise in preparing engaging and prayerful liturgical celebrations for school communities.

To join the Liturgy Nexus or Liturgy Nexus for Schools, apply on the ACU Centre for Liturgy website. Membership is granted to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria. The membership fee is \$30 per year (not pro-rated), renewable on or before 1 March each year.

Board of Advisors:

Archbishop Patrick O'Regan, Archbishop of Adelaide

Bishop Paul Bird CSsR, Bishop of Ballarat

Rev Prof John F Baldwin SJ, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, USA

Fr Anthony Casamento csma, Vice President, ACU

Br Prof David Hall fms, Dean, LaSalle Academy for Religious Education and Faith Formation, ACU

Prof Clare Johnson, Director, ACU Centre for Liturgy (ex officio)

Ms Josie Ryan, Liturgy Coordinator, Loreto Kirribili

Dr Paul Taylor, Executive Secretary, Bishops' Commission for Liturgy

Sr Prof Julia A Upton rsm, St John's University, New York

Very Rev Peter Williams, Vicar General, Diocese of Parramatta

ACU CENTRE FOR LITURGY

CRICOS registered provider: 00004G

Disclaimer (March 2021): Information correct at time of printing. The university reserves the right to amend, cancel or otherwise modify the content without notice.