

The Liturgy of the Hours

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1. Preamble: our need for prayer

We live in a time of deep spiritual hunger. Many people, including many Catholics, are searching for ways to enrich their spiritual lives **C** they are thirsting for a deeper relationship with God. This is in keeping with the universal call to holiness emphasized by the Second Vatican Council. At the same time, many are searching for a deeper life in Christian community. When the two come together, one sees the need for continued growth in corporate prayer and worship. On the one hand, this implies a great emphasis on full, conscious and active participation in the celebration of the Eucharist. On the other hand, the Christian tradition offers us additional and complementary riches of ecclesial worship, one of them being the Liturgy of the Hours.

Here we find much untapped potential in contributing to the spiritual needs of Christians. Here we find a new window on the Book of Psalms, the great prayer book, or hymn book, of the Bible, expressing a whole range of faith experience of the People of God. Here we find a new window on the prayers of the faithful, found in varying styles, by which the priestly Christian people offer intercession for all. Here we find a new sort of "Liturgy of the Word," in some ways resembling that of the Mass, yet in some ways unique.

2. Some History

Some of the roots of the Liturgy of the Hours can be found in the patterns of daily prayer carried on by the Jews and taken up by the Christians:¹ Jewish prayer followed two rhythms. The first was the reciting of the "Shema" in the morning and evening as found in Deut. 6:4ff., 11: 19. This reflected the rhythm of human life **C** that of rising and retiring **BB** and that of nature **BB** nightfall and dawn. A second pattern emerged, probably among the Pharisees, of praying three times

¹ Cf. **A**General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours® (henceforth GILH) in *The Liturgy of the Hours According to the Roman Rite*. New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1975, 21-98, #1; A.G. Martimort, *The Church at Prayer*, vol. IV, *The Liturgy and Time*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1986, pp. 157-160.

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a day. These may have corresponded to the morning and evening sacrifice, as well as the closing of the temple gates at night. The synagogues developed daily prayer rituals that corresponded to some degree with the temple rhythms. With the temple destroyed in 70 AD, the idea of a sacrifice of the prayer of praise at morning and evening "replaced" the sacrifice of animals in the temple. In contrast to the temple rituals, these synagogue rituals were more dependent on the "laity" rather than priests.²

We see the example of the prayer of Jesus:³ Jesus was faithful to the religious practices of the Jewish tradition (Luke 4:16, Mark 1:21, Mat 26:18,26,30). Yet his prayer life went beyond that: the Gospels portray Jesus as frequently going apart from the crowds to pray. This is a favorite theme of Luke (e.g. 5: 16,9: 18). Jesus also exhorts his disciples to be constant in prayer (Luke 18: 1, 21:36).

The ideal of the apostolic community was ceaseless prayer:⁴ the first followers of Jesus probably maintained all of the Jewish observances of prayer, adding their own special gathering for the Eucharist ("the breaking of bread") and other informal prayer gatherings in their homes. Several places in the New Testament speak of "praying constantly" (Acts 1:14,2:42,1 Thess 5:17, Eph 6:18, etc). One finds references to prayer at particular hours of the day, somewhat in keeping with the traditional Jewish outlook, although they may not have been as fixed and universal as they later came to be: the 3rd hour, or 9 a.m. (Acts 2:15), the 6th hour, or noon (Acts 10:9) and the 9th hour, or 3 p.m. (Acts 3:1-2). One also finds references to night-time prayer (Acts 12:5-12, 16:25).

Towards the end of the first century, when the Jewish temple had been destroyed, and the early Christian community was separating more sharply from the Jewish community, the Christian community continued to emphasize praying at regular hours, and the prayer took on a more Jesus-centered flavour, since he himself was the new temple.⁵

The *Didache*, a document from Syria around the year 100 AD, speaks of praying the Lord's Prayer three times a day (something that has carried into our own time **BB** at Eucharist, morning prayer and evening prayer). Tertullian (155-220 AD) speaks of morning and evening prayer, while he also mentions the custom of prayer at the 3rd, 6th and 9th hours, probably the normal divisions of the Roman day. Hippolytus, at Rome around 215 AD, says that the faithful were encouraged to gather together for prayer each morning before work. He also encourages personal prayer at home or abroad at the 3rd, 6th, and 9th hours, and others.

² Cf. Dominic F. Scotto, *The Liturgy of the Hours: Its History and Its Importance as the Communal Prayer of the Church after the Liturgical Reform of Vatican II*. Petersham: St. Bede's Publications, 1987, p.12.

³ Cf. GILH #3-4, Martimort, IV, p. 160f.

⁴ Cf. GILH #5, Martimort, IV, p. 162f.

⁵ Cf. Scotto, p. 17.

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Next came the era of Constantine and of monasticism.⁶ When Christianity went from being a persecuted minority to the official religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, great numbers of people became Christian, services were now held in huge churches, and the ceremonies became more solemn and elaborate.

Whereas the Eucharist was the great celebration of the Sunday (though it was also celebrated on certain other special days and occasions), the people gathered daily around their bishop and clergy for morning and evening prayer. These latter two liturgies were the standard ways in which the people gathered for corporate worship on a daily basis.

The main elements in this prayer form were the psalms and the prayers of intercession, with other elements filling out the ritual. It was highly structured and largely invariable. For example, specific psalms corresponding with the time of day and themes that went with it were repeated at each gathering. This original "Office" or official prayer has been called the parish or "cathedral" office since it was prayed by the people together with the bishop. Recalling the rising sun as a symbol for the rising Son of God, morning prayer focused on the Resurrection, while evening prayer, at the fading of the daylight, recalled Jesus' passion and death, while always praying that the eternal light-Christ, "the true Sun, the real Day"⁷ **C** would nevertheless come and be manifested to us. So it was that with the dawn and the dusk, the Paschal Mystery of the Lord was celebrated on a daily basis.

At the same time, monastic communities were emerging, at first often coming to the church for prayer since the early monasteries were often near the parish or cathedral church. In addition to morning and evening prayer, they prayed the additional "daytime" hours of the third, sixth and ninth hours, as well as two hours that may have begun as private devotions:⁸ an early morning hour (prime-recently abolished) and a bed-time hour (compline **BB** now called night prayer). Eventually over the centuries the "cathedral" and "monastic" practices would mingle and fuse.⁹

Then came the Middle Ages and the era after the Council of Trent: Unlike the rather fixed and highly ceremonial character of the cathedral office, "the monastic office was constructed around the principle of a continuous reading of the scriptures in a given period, and the continuous reading of the psalter in a given period..., together with the suppression or reduction of other elements of public worship."¹⁰

⁶ Cf. Martimort, IV, pp. 170ff.

⁷ St. Cyprian, *De dominica oratione* 35, as quoted in Martimort, IV, p. 169.

⁸ Cf. W. Jardine Grisbrooke, **AA** Contemporary Liturgical Problem: The Divine Office and Public Worship, *Studia Liturgica* 8: 129-168, 1971/1972, p. 144.

⁹ Cf. Martimort, IV, p. 174.

¹⁰ Grisbrooke, p. 144.

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The "monastic" version was becoming long and complicated (having to pray the entire Book of Psalms in as little as a week); it was less "ceremonial", and more "meditative." The more ceremonial "cathedral" form as such was disappearing. Further, fewer and fewer of the people could manage the huge monastic office and it gradually stopped being practiced as the prayer of the whole community. It became more and more the exclusive domain of those with the time and training: the monks, and in a rather hurried and harried way the diocesan priests.

Several attempts to reform and simplify the office were carried out. The Franciscans popularized one of these "briefer" Roman books (hence "breviary") and helped spread the Roman "curial" liturgy of the hours in Western Europe with varying degrees of success. However, overall, attempts to simplify the breviary were less than successful. After the Council of Trent, a commission set up by Pius V revised the books of the Liturgy of the Hours, and the revised "Roman Breviary" became the standard, with a few exceptions. It was mainly, again with some exceptions, prayed by the clergy and religious. The twentieth century "has borne witness to two trends evolving in Catholic thought concerning the Liturgy of the Hours. The first and by far the most prevalent trend has been that which has sought to improve this prayer, making it a more accessible and rewarding experience for the clergy, many of whom had great difficulties with the obligation of its private recitation. The second trend, seeks to reestablish the Liturgy of the Hours as the public communal prayer for all the People of God."¹¹

After a few attempts at reform, the most significant being those of Pius X in 1911 and ongoing work under Pius XII and John XXIII.¹² The Second Vatican Council directed that the office be reformed yet again. The subsequent work gave us the present Liturgy of the Hours. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy directed that the traditional sequence of the hours, prayed at their proper times, be restored, that morning prayer and evening prayer be considered as and celebrated as the chief hours, that liturgical celebrations, especially of Vespers (evening prayer), be encouraged in church, that the laity pray the office, and that translations in the vernacular be prepared. (#83-100)

Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Constitution of 1970, promulgating the revised Liturgy of the Hours, reasserted that it was "the prayer of the whole people of God" and expressed the hope that "the Liturgy of the Hours may pervade and penetrate the whole of Christian prayer, giving it life, direction and expression and effectively nourishing the spiritual life of the people of God." He continued, "The very celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, especially when a community is assembled for this purpose, expresses the genuine nature of the praying Church and is seen as a wonderful sign of that praying Church."

¹¹ Scotto, p. 43.

¹² Cf. Joseph T. Campbell, **A**Structural Reform of the Roman Office, 1964-1971", (Dissertation), Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1987, pp. 37-64.

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The model was still largely the monastic model, though elements of the cathedral model were increased. This revised Liturgy of the Hours is what we find in the multi-volume set, currently in use by priests, religious and some interested lay persons, and in a condensed version, which contains the full cycle of morning and evening and night prayer.

Recently, efforts have been made to reconstruct versions of the "parish" or "cathedral" form of the Liturgy of the Hours, in order that the parishes might celebrate in a way more in keeping with their particular needs and with their historical heritage. For the most part, we will focus on these forms later in this work.

3. Theology

The purpose of the liturgy of the hours is to sanctify the day. (GILH #10, 11) "This does not mean to make holy what is evil or profane, nor does it mean to make God present where God otherwise would not be. Rather it is to recognize the day as God's creation, as the place and time in which we carry out the ministry of Jesus Christ today, the environment in which the Spirit moves. It is to celebrate and proclaim that God is with us, that God's love motivates our daily lives. It is to recognize the challenge and privilege of working each day to prepare for the coming of God's reign."¹³ As in any liturgical prayer the obedient self-giving of Christ that characterizes the Paschal Mystery is presented to us again so that we can again be moved to faithfulness to God's will and reach out in service to others. Thus the General Instruction directs that as far as is reasonably possible, the praying of the hours should be related to the corresponding time of day.

Given the ancient and traditional practice of daily prayer at the various hours, and particularly morning and evening prayer, it has been said that the Eucharist plus morning and evening prayer "constitute the core of the prayer of the Church."¹⁴ For us as Catholics, the most important and familiar act of worship is the celebration of the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Hours in a sense prepares for and then extends the supreme act of worship that is the Eucharist. (GILH 10, 15)

There are several parallels or common characteristics between the Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharist.

The Liturgy of the Hours is a genuine ecclesial act of liturgical worship: it is an event of proclamation in which Christ is present (cf. GILH # 13) in his word as well as in the assembly. It is a celebration of the Paschal Mystery of the Lord. It is thus the Church's natural liturgical compliment to the celebration of the Eucharist. The Church "is continually praising the Lord and interceding for the salvation of the whole world, not only by celebrating the eucharist, but also in other ways, above

¹³ National Bulletin on Liturgy, (Henceforth NBL) Vol. 21 (#114): 129-174, September 1988, p 141.

¹⁴ NBL 21 (#114): p. 136.

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all by carrying out the divine office."¹⁵ Even private celebration, while not the ideal, remains linked to celebration in common.¹⁶ All the People of God should consider it as their prayer.

It is prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving: (cf. GILH #15) It is principally composed of psalms, which are hymns of thanksgiving and praise. Even in psalms which center on lamentation, the end result is generally a treatment of deliverance by God and thus thanksgiving.¹⁷ Of course, the Eucharist is the great prayer of thanksgiving, so there is thus harmony of themes: the Liturgy of the Hours in some way prepares for the Eucharist and continues it.

This prayer has a role in the economy of salvation: first, it continues the saving proclamation of the Word; second, it follows the seasons and feasts of the liturgical year, thus recalling the mysteries of the history of salvation and helping them to penetrate more deeply into human history. (Cf. GILH #12) "Those then who take part in the Liturgy of the Hours bring growth to God's people in a hidden but fruitful apostolate" (GILH #18) In the Eucharist, the saving mysteries of the Lord are made present in a most perfect way.

¹⁵ Second Vatican Council, **A**Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, @ #83, in Norman P. Tanner, Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils: Volume Two: Trent to Vatican II, Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1990, p. 835.

¹⁶ A.M. Roguet, *The Liturgy of the Hours: The General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours with a Commentary*. Collegeville: Liturgical Abbey Press, 1971, p. 87.

¹⁷ Cf. Roguet, p. 81-83.

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This prayer is also intercessory **C** one finds petitions couched in the psalms, which often pray for God's aid to the afflicted, in the Lord's Prayer itself, and most explicitly in the intercessions themselves. Petition also is important in the celebration of the Eucharist, as we see in the prayers of the faithful, the intercessions in the eucharistic prayer, etc.

*This prayer has the character of "sacrifice".*¹⁸ It is a means by which Christians, in the words of St. Paul, present themselves to God as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship... i.e. offering the whole of our daily lives. (Cf. Rom 12:1) (This we do most vividly in union with the Lord's perfect self offering at Mass.) In another sense, we might say that it is a sacrifice in the traditional sense of offering something that is tangible, which is completely given to God and lost to the giver, but in the process is transformed into something sacred. In this case the thing "sacrificed" and "consecrated" is time. "It is the regular, ordered, and rhythmical consecration of the course of the day."¹⁹ By time here, we do not mean an abstract measurement of mathematics or philosophy, but rather concrete, living and personal time ... in a word, ourselves and our lives. It is a regular offering of something most precious to us **C** time **C** in a way that seems pure loss **C** and yet in the offering what is lost is transformed and given back.

Like the Mass, the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours is dialogical **C** it is a conversation between God and humanity. (GILH #33)

4. Morning and evening prayer: the "hinges"

These are the two most important parts of the Hours, since they envelop the whole day. They most clearly express and reflect the rhythms of our lives: in the shifts between day and night we become most conscious of creation (with the changes of light, temperature, sky, weather, etc.), as well as of our own status as creatures and children of God (entering and emerging from sleep, our consciousness of our bodies in changing, bathing, grooming, etc.). Further, they are the hours which most clearly express and reflect the rhythm of the Paschal Mystery of the Lord. It is a celebration in which we bring our own living out of, and participation in, the Paschal Mystery of the Lord **C** that is, we bring our own many experiences of "dying" (to self) and "rising" (in Christ) **C** and join ourselves in prayer to the Lord's saving Passover from death to life.²⁰ These two liturgies are very similar in structure, though with slight variations. Further, the theological emphasis of each is somewhat

¹⁸ Cf. Roguet, pp. 98ff.

¹⁹ Cf. Roguet, p. 101.

²⁰ NBL #114, p. 138. **A**Our liturgical rituals challenge us to live the paschal mystery, to open our lives to that rhythm of dying to self and rising in Christ. It is impossible to grasp the depth of that mystery in a single celebration, liturgical season or cycle. The transformation we long for is accomplished gradually, through the daily, weekly and yearly rhythm of celebrations that draw us every deeper into the Mystery of all mysteries. **@** (Joyce Ann Zimmerman, *Morning and Evening: A Parish Celebration*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1996, p.3.)

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different. (GILH #38) The following offers a summary of some of the purposes and themes of each hour, along with some of the elements of their structure.

Morning Prayer

- \$ consecrate the day
- \$ sanctify the morning
- \$ recall the resurrection - the true Light rising
- \$ hence an orientation to praise
- \$ thus a triumphant hour - looks to future kingdom
- \$ thus missionary overtones - e.g., the Benedictus

In many parish forms of Morning Prayer, the assembly begins with an introduction which constitutes an invitation to prayer. Then there is an opening hymn, which may focus on the theme of morning praise or on the particular feast or season.

Then follow one, two, or three psalms, "the inspired poetic outpourings in which all the themes of the Hebrew Scriptures converge. In them God's saving deeds and the whole of creation are hymned."²¹ The psalms form one of the two prime elements in the Liturgy of the Hours (the other being the intercessions). In them we hear not only the voices of the first People of God, but also the voice of Christ who used the psalms to pray to his Father, and the voice of the Church through the ages. We, in turn, make these great expressions of praise and petition our own. Often the first psalm is a fixed psalm with a theme of Morning Prayer, such as Psalm 63. Psalms or other biblical canticles which follow will often vary. The singing (or reciting if necessary) of the Psalm is often followed by a "psalm-prayer", that is, a "collect" prayer which sums up what has been prayed through the psalm. It is also fitting to use brief pauses for reflection between the psalms.²²

²¹ Janet Baxendale, *ASpiritual Potential of the Liturgy of the Hours*®, *Origins* 23 (#22): 385-394, November 11, 1993, p. 387.

²² In the standard Liturgy of the Hours, Morning Prayer contains an introduction, a hymn, a psalm (a morning psalm), an Old Testament Cantic (GILH #136), and another psalm (a psalm of praise). The psalms are placed side by side with canticles from elsewhere in the Old Testament because the psalms were composed throughout the history of the Old Testament, and poetically express a great deal of its theology (GILH #100-109). There are also titles for the psalm, New Testament verse, antiphons and short *ASpsalm-prayers*® to keep draw out the meanings of the psalms (GILH #110-120).

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There is then a "short reading" of the word of God. These are taken from a wide variety of the books of the Bible, excluding the Gospels. Their relative brevity may throw light on a single theme or phrase that might otherwise go unnoticed in the midst of a longer passage.²³ A brief period of silence following the reading is helpful (or, in more solemn celebration, a brief homily or reflection). In situations where Morning Prayer is used in place of the celebration of weekday Eucharist, an excerpt (or the whole reading if it is fairly brief) from the first reading of the day of the lectionary might be employed, in order to maintain some sort of continuity with the daily readings at Mass. The reason for the desired brevity and simplicity of this part of the liturgy is in order that the primary elements of the Liturgy of the Hours **C** the psalms and intercessions - might not be overshadowed.

Then comes the "Benedictus", that is the prophecy of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, found in Luke 1:68-79. This is the fixed "Gospel Reading" of Morning Prayer **C** thus in formal communal celebration we stand, affording it a similar respect as the proclamation of the Gospel in the Liturgy of the Word at Mass (GILH #138). As the psalms have something of the prophetic about them, the Gospel Canticles express the realization of the Old Covenant in Christ. The Benedictus is rather missionary in flavour, and in keeping with the sense of Morning Prayer, looks forward to the future.

Further, Morning Prayer has "petitions" or "invocations" **C** these too are primary elements of the Liturgy of the Hours. Although their form is different from the intercessions at the celebration of the Eucharist, these petitions pray for the consecration of the day and its work to God. This affords some variety of form in the intercessions for the various liturgies of the day. (Cf. GILH #18lf.)

The Lord's Prayer contains many themes of praise and petition, and in combination with the Mass and Evening Prayer, continues the ancient practice testified to by Tertullian, of Christians praying the Lord's Prayer three times a day.

The concluding prayer is often (but not necessarily) the opening collect of the Mass of that day, again expressing the connection between this liturgy and the Eucharist.

Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer often close with a blessing and the Sign of Peace **C** from there the assembly can disperse informally.

²³ Cf. Roguet, p. 119. It has also been noted that the prayer and praise of God, rather than a celebration of the Word or spiritual reading, are the primary dimensions of morning and evening prayer. (cf. Campbell, p. 311) There are, of course, other settings where readings occupy a very prominent place, such as the Office of Readings.

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Evening Prayer

- \$ to give thanks for the blessings of the day
- \$ a look back (as MP looked forward).
- \$ a note of repentance
- \$ a remembrance of the Lord's sacrifice and our redemption (let our prayer rise like incense - an evening sacrifice.)
- \$ also a prayer for Christ's light as daylight fades - Christ the light in the darkness.
- \$ a note of hope - looking forward to the presence of the "Light".

Evening Prayer follows the same basic structure as Morning Prayer. After the introduction and hymn, there are psalms (and canticles - often the canticle of Evening Prayer is from the New Testament, thus showing the order and unfolding of salvation history.)²⁴ Again, the first psalm is often a fixed evening psalm, such as Psalm 141.²⁵ Psalm prayers and pauses are also used as in Morning Prayer.

Following the reading, the "Magnificat", or "Canticle of Mary" (Luke 1:46-55) is the fixed Gospel reading of Evening Prayer. It is more in keeping with the theme of evening prayer in that it gives thanks for divine promises already brought about.²⁶

Evening Prayer carries what might be more fully called "intercessions" - that is, prayers for various people and intentions. What has been said of the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass can be said of the intercessions at the Liturgy of the Hours: **A**... the people, exercising their priestly function, intercede for all humanity.²⁷ Then comes the Our Father, prayer, blessing, and often the sign of peace.

²⁴ The New Testament Canticle can serve a twofold function: being of similar literary genre, it can help us to read the psalms in a Christian light; and secondly, it can lead us towards the Gospel Canticle, somewhat as a New Testament first reading moves us towards the reading of the Gospel during the Liturgy of the Word at the celebration of the Eucharist. (Cf. Campbell, p. 314)

²⁵ The psalms and canticles are variable in the standard Liturgy of the Hours)i.e., the **AB**reviary@).

²⁶ Roguet, p. 104.

²⁷ "General Instruction of the Roman Missal", #45, in International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal and Curial Texts*, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1982, DOL 208, #1435, p.479.

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Again, various forms of evening prayer are available. The fully developed "Cathedral form" begins with a beautiful service of light (rather like the light service which opens the Easter Vigil) called the "lucenarium", as well as the burning of incense to accompany Psalm 141. There are also more simplified forms for smaller contexts.

Other hours can be prayed,²⁸ but morning and evening prayer will be the most important in parish practice.

5. The importance of music (GILH #267ff.)

The act of singing is a primary means of participation in liturgical prayer. The hymns, psalms and canticles are of their nature songs. It is therefore fitting that whenever possible, these elements should be sung. The intercessions and the Lord's Prayer are other parts that can be sung, should the community be prepared to do so. The action of singing helps those praying to be attentive to the Spirit of God at work within themselves and the community, thus enhancing the unity of the assembly.

6. Parish possibilities

First, it must be said that any introduction of the Liturgy of the Hours in whatever format presupposes good catechesis and preparation. This will fall mainly to those well versed in the theology and celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours. The Diocesan Liturgical Commission can be of assistance in this regard as well.

²⁸ *The Office of Readings* (GILH #55ff.) can be prayed at any time of day. It is distinguished not by its time but by its content. It contains large readings. It has psalms before, and a responsory after, the readings. These readings form a sort of lectionary of their own, with a one-year cycle. While the first reading is scriptural, the second is from a patristic or other ecclesiastical source. "The purpose of the second reading is principally to provide a meditation on the Word of God as received by the Church in its tradition." (GILH #163) Such readings give a witness to the contemplation of Scripture over the centuries, as well as shedding light on the various feasts and seasons. (GILH #156, 7) Finally, on Sundays and Solemnities, the ancient hymn of praise called the *Te Deum* is sung (recited).

The Daytime Hours sanctify the various hours of the day itself as it proceeds, thus providing spiritual "breathers" in the day's work. The ancient third, sixth and ninth hours are now called mid-morning, midday, and mid-afternoon prayer.

Night Prayer is intended as a last prayerful act of the day before retiring. Unlike the other hours, it includes an examination of conscience. Similarly to morning and evening prayer, there is a Gospel Cantic: that of Simeon (Luke 2:29-32), which corresponds very well to the closing of the day.

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1) Solemn Parish Celebration **C** A major celebration of one of the hours, such as Evening Prayer on a Sunday, can show the full beauty and richness of this prayer-form and spark interest in the practice as a whole. Some sort of "cathedral" / "parish" format, centering on Morning and/or Evening Prayer, is generally best suited to solemn parish celebration... this would bring about "the restoration of the principle of the fixed psalm and of discrete readings. In the cathedral tradition there are morning psalms and evening psalms, morning canticles and evening canticles, morning hymns and evening hymns. A return to a liturgy of time, i.e. properly speaking to a Liturgy of the Hours, would be the most important single contribution we could make to an accurate sense of Office as significant prayer for the whole People of God..."²⁹ The repetition of a few fixed psalms can make it easier to learn musical settings, become familiar with this liturgy in general, and establish a comfort which leads to a deeply interiorized "prayer of the heart". Further, the enhanced use of symbol and ritual in the cathedral form can invite deeper participation generally. Full use must be made of the options and adaptations available: involvement of the people in the various liturgical roles the Liturgy of the Hours affords, such as the use of music, ceremonial (processions, candles, incense, etc.), the good use of bodily postures, prayerful silences, preaching, etc. All this presupposes a careful catechesis. It also presupposes lots of encouragement, publicizing, and making the first experiences good ones! (Perhaps start with a special occasion, such as one of the hours during the Lent, Advent or Easter season or a major solemnity.)

It will also be helpful when we get back in touch with the fact that among the basic liturgical symbols in morning and evening prayer are the morning and evening themselves. The shifts of natural light in the day should be taken into consideration whenever possible. An obvious application would be the service of light at evening prayer.

²⁹ William Storey, **A**The Liturgy of the Hours: Cathedral Versus Monastery®, John Gallen, ed., *Christians at Prayer*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1977, 61-82, p. 75.

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One can find a version of the cathedral office in the Catholic Book of Worship IT, #61 to 79, and the Catholic Book of Worship III, # 13 and 14. Also contained are a great many selections and musical settings for the hymn, the psalmody and the canticles.³⁰

2) Some new efforts have also been made to combine elements of the more meditative format of the monastic tradition (using this sort of format largely for the weekdays) with a more festive and ritualized format akin to the cathedral form for Sundays and solemnities. This helps to set off the Sunday (and sometimes the cluster of Friday-Saturday-Sunday as a sort of "little Triduum" each week) as primary, and to create a sort of "build-up" towards it as the weekdays progress.³¹

3) Several resources are available which offer simplified versions of the Liturgy of the Hours, and which concentrate on morning and evening prayer. Such formats may lend themselves better to weekday parish celebration and celebration in small groups, such as at meetings, etc. These generally require less preparation than the more solemn parish celebrations such as those found in CBW III (although the latter can also be utilized in creative ways). Thus the traditional principle of celebrating the Liturgy of the Hours on a daily basis, as well as weekday use on particular occasions, are made more feasible from a practical and pastoral point of view. Along with facilitating our use of CBW III, the Liturgy Office of the diocese is offering resources to facilitate celebrations for weekdays and other smaller-scale settings.

³⁰ Cf. The section **ALiturgy of the Hours** in the **ALiturgical and Topical Indices**, #702 of the choir edition of CBW III.

³¹ An example of this sort of arrangement can be found in *Pray without Ceasing: Prayer for Morning and Evening*, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993.
