

Ponderings ...

The Liturgy of the Hours

Night Prayer

and the

The Consecrated Virgin



Ponderings...

From the sphere of the Diocese with its traditions, its Saints, its values, its limits and its problems, you broaden your horizons to the universal Church, sharing above all in her liturgical prayer, which is also entrusted to you so that *"the praise of our heavenly Father be always on your lips; pray without ceasing"*, (RCV, n. 28). In this way your prayerful "I" will gradually be enlarged, until there is no longer anything except a great "we" in the prayer. This is ecclesial prayer and the true liturgy.

"That your whole life may be a faithful witness of God's love and a convincing sign of the Kingdom of heaven", (RCV n. 17). Take care always to radiate the dignity of being a bride of Christ, expressing the newness of Christian existence and the serene expectation of future life. Thus, with your own upright life you will be stars to guide the world on its journey.

The choice of virginal life, in fact, is a reference to the transient nature of earthly things and an anticipation of future rewards. Be witnesses of attentive and lively expectation, of joy and of the peace that characterizes those who abandon themselves to God's love. May you be present in the world, yet pilgrims bound for the Kingdom.

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Year of Saint Joseph
Month of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Saint Philomena
Saint Clare

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Diocese of La Crosse

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Introduction

This series of *Ponderings* comes from the example of Our Blessed Lady...

The exhortation we received in the Homily from the Mass of Consecration

“Imitate the Mother of God.

Desire to be called and be handmaids of the Lord.”

Included here for your pondering is the text from the Roman Pontifical.

Remember also the exhortation of the Holy Father from the Year of Consecrated Life, remember the past, return to our roots and appreciate the original charism of those who have gone before us.

In our vocation, Holy Mother Church herself has given us our purpose and direction.

Embrace with joy the words given to us for the salvation of souls.

We too ponder and treasure these words in our Hearts.

Year of St Joseph
Month of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Dear Reader,
With this final little book of "Ponderings" on the
Liturgy of the Hours we come to Night Prayer.

Though not required as part of our consecration, it
has some beautiful psalms, readings, antiphons for
reflection.

All time is holy.
I pray your time spend with these "ponderings"
have been a time of grace.

Remembering you in my prayer,
In the Heart of Jesus, Mary and Saint Joseph
barb



PRESENTATION OF THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

28 Then, if it seems appropriate, the Bishop gives the newly consecrated the book containing the prayer of the Church, saying these or similar words:

Receive the book of the Liturgy of the Hours,
the prayer of the Church;
may the praise of our heavenly Father
be always on your lips;
pray without ceasing
for the salvation of the whole world.

All reply together:

Amen.

The newly consecrated come before the Bishop, who gives each a copy of the liturgy of the hours. After receiving it, they return to their places and remain standing.

29 Then, if appropriate, this or some other suitable antiphon is sung.

I am espoused to him whom the angels serve;
sun and moon stand in wonder at his glory.

From the Roman Pontifical Introduction

II. PRINCIPAL DUTIES OF THOSE CONSECRATED

2 Those who consecrate their chastity under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit do so for the sake of more fervent love of Christ and of greater freedom in the service of their brothers and sisters.

They are to spend their time in works of penance and of mercy, in apostolic activity, and in prayer, according to their state in life and spiritual gifts.

To fulfill their duty of prayer, they are strongly advised to celebrate the Liturgy of Hours each day, especially Lauds or Vespers. In this way, by joining their voices to those of Christ the High Priest and of his Church, they will offer unending praise to the heavenly Father and pray for the salvation of the whole world.

V. FORM OF THE RITE

7 For the consecration of women living in the world the rite described in Chapter I of this Ritual is to be used.

The rite consists of these parts:

g) the presentation of the insignia of consecration to symbolize a spiritual dedication.

When I first think of Night Prayer the Antiphon from after Evening Prayer II on Sundays and Solemnities comes to my mind and heart.

“Night holds no terror for me sleeping under God’s wings.” What confidence God the Father gives to His children. The strength and protection of God my Father, our Father, is there for us at the end of the day beginning the night. A promise of protection.

Though not required as part of our consecration it brings comfort and strength to pray the Night Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours.

The General Norms #84-92 Chapter II part VI give the directions, the way the office is prayed.

A background of the prayer itself found in last section of Pope Paul VI Apostolic Constitution found in Volume I, beginning with the 4th paragraph after #8 has a depth of meaning. Praying the Divine Office in union with Christ humbles the heart knowing this is our gift.

This Night Prayer Office is found after the 4-week psalter and begins with the same Introduction “God come to my assistance...”

Then comes a time of silent reflection on the day, examination of conscience, and if prayed in common then one of the penitential rites from the Roman Missal is used, or an act of contrition if prayed alone.

The Hymn follows. There are eight hymns available to be used. Some practice using one for each of the days of the week.

The Psalmody is set up as with the other Hours.

The Antiphons and Psalms for each day of the week bring the comfort and solace needed at the end of a day in the Lord's vineyard.

After Evening Prayer I on Sundays (Saturday night)

Ant. 1 Have mercy, Lord, and hear my prayer.

Psalm 4

Thanksgiving

The resurrection of Christ was God's supreme and wholly marvelous work (St Augustine)

Ant. 2 In the silent hours of the night, bless the Lord.

Psalm 134

Evening Prayer in the Temple

Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great (Revelation 19:5)

**After Evening Prayer II on Sundays
and Solemnities**

Ant. Night holds no terrors for me sleeping under God's wings.

Psalm 91

Safe in God's sheltering care

I have given you the power to tread upon serpents and scorpions (Luke 10:19)

Monday

Ant. O Lord, our God, unwearied is your love for us.

Psalm 86

Poor Man's prayer in trouble

*Blessed be God who comforts us in all our trials
(2 Corinthians 1:3,4)*

Tuesday

Ant. Do not hide your face from me; in you I put my trust.

Psalm 143:1-11

Prayer in distress

*Only by faith in Jesus Christ is a man made holy in God's sight. No observance of the law can achieve this
(Galatians 2:16)*

Wednesday

Ant. 1 Lord, God be my refuge and my strength.

Psalm 31:1-6

Trustful prayer in adversity

Father, into your hands I commend my spirit (Luke 23:46)

Ant. 2 Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

Psalm 130

A cry from the depths

He will save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21)

Thursday

Ant In you, my God, my body will rest in hope.

Psalm 16

God is my portion, my inheritance

The Father raised up Jesus from the dead and broke the bonds of death (Acts 2:24)

Friday

Ant Day and night I cry to you, my God.

Psalm 88

Prayer of a very sick person

This is your hour when darkness reigns (Luke 23:53)

The Psalmody is followed by a **Reading** from either the Old or New Testament then a **Response**.

After this a beautiful antiphon is prayed before and after the Gospel Canticle of Simeon.

The perfect end of the day!

Antiphon "Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep, that awake, we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, rest in his peace."

Gospel Canticle

Luke 2:29

Christ is the light of the nations and the glory of Israel
Lord, now you let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled: my own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people: a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel.

A Closing Prayer follows a different one each day. Conclusion is the same every day.

May the all-powerful lord grant us a restful night and a peaceful death. Amen

An antiphon of the Blessed Virgin Mary for each liturgical season is provided

A grace to end the day in Mary's embrace!

*The responsibility of prayer for the
consecrated virgin is one given to her
on the day of her consecration...*

*the Liturgy of the Hours,
the Divine Office, especially
Morning and Evening Prayer.*

*The "hinges" of her day
have within them, in the words of*

Pope Benedict XVI,

"The Lord's Prayer,

the school of hope."

*May we learn from Jesus with the
grace of our Consecration.*

