

Ponderings ...

The Liturgy of the Hours

Office of Readings

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 Precious Blood

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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
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July 27, 2021

Dear Reader,

This little book of "Ponderings" opens the day for some of us who pray the Office of Readings as the first prayer of the day.

All time is holy and our use of it is a grace for us and the whole Church, the whole world when we live mindfully.

For those of us who use the four-volume set of the Divine Office, the Office of Readings is truly a liturgical walk throughout the year from Advent, Christmas on through Ordinary Time into Lent, then the grace-filled Paschal Mystery to the Glory of Easter, Pentecost back again to Ordinary Time and the cycle continues.

It is the selected readings that enrich one's day.

The first reading from either the Old or New Testament and the second from the treasures of the Church – the writings of the various Fathers of the Church, the Councils, and Saints.

May this reflection help enrich your time.

God's choicest Blessings,
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.

I find the beauty of the Office of Readings is the depth of spiritual readings that are provided each day. The selection of the Sacred Scripture passages and the 'non-Biblical readings' that have been selected by Holy Mother Church provide for a rich spiritual reading each day.

The Liturgical year is lived out through these 4 volumes. The anticipating of waiting for the Messiah, the struggles of the people of God, the faith of those who have gone before us and the lives of those who knew Jesus encountering him face to face and those who knew him then and know him now in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the Sacred Scriptures.

All this in the Divine Office. The Liturgy of the Hours.

Although we received the directive to pray mainly Morning and Evening Prayer to spend the time with the Office of Readings on a Sunday, weekend, a day off, retreat time, or days of retirement to incorporate this time of prayer will be most rewarding.

It could be prayed any time throughout the day, that is another blessing to its format and the psalms and prayers selected by the Council Fathers.

If you are looking for a particular topic for your prayer or meditation look in the Index for Non-Biblical readings found in the back of each volume. Arranged alphabetically by each author, their contribution is listed with the page number. You will find some of the writing as the same in each of the books. That is because the readings are found in the particular "common" found in section entitled COMMONS found after the section on the saints for that particular time of the Liturgical calendar.

The format for praying the Office of Readings is the same. If prayed during the day the regular "God, come to my assistance. Lord make haste to help me. Glory be to the Father... "

The Hymn, the Psalms and antiphons are three each having the subtitles for the Psalm and a Scripture quotation or one from the life of a saint that could be prayed instead of the antiphon. If you choose to use the optional "red printed" passage remember to pray it after the psalm as you would the antiphon.

After each reading there is a responsory that is appropriate from the Scriptures reflection the theme of the passages.

In the "Appendix" section of the Office Books are "extended vigils" extra readings that could be used to enrich your prayer time.

As you may notice this simple book, each volume, has between the covers, many "spiritual surprises." Take time to discover this gift.

Another "feature" of the Office of Readings is the "Te Deum."

Designated as a Hymn that is prayed after the second reading and its responsory it bursts with excitement! One can sense the joy of all creation all of heaven rejoicing with this hymn of praise and

Usually prayed on Sundays, solemnities, feast days.

It is a beautiful hymn of praise!

"You are God we praise you...

The hymn continues to include the angels, powers of heaven the saints listed by interesting titles...

The glorious company of apostles

The noble fellowship of prophets

The white-robed army of martyrs

Continuing with the praise of the Holy Trinity each person is acclaimed and praised.

One may even 'hear the hum' of a profession of faith. What a glorious way to celebrate a special day of prayer in the Church.

One could even use it on its own as a time of thanksgiving for special graces of an anniversary, birthday, good confession, grace-filled spiritual direction time, answer to a particular prayer intention. All reasons to acclaim Him as Lord.

Following the Te Deum are a series of Verses and responses. They could be omitted if you are praying on your own.

They are rich in the requests made by the people of God at the end of this time of prayer. One is reminded of the Mystical Body when using these in prayer.

The concluding prayer from the day or the proper celebration of the saint's day is used at this time.

And then the classic ending....

"Let us praise the Lord.

And give Him thanks!"

*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.*

