

LITURGY NEWSLETTER

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A Quarterly Newsletter prepared by the Institute of Liturgy and Mission, Sarum College for the Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

THE EDITOR WRITES: An anxiety increasingly expressed by the Holy See and shared by many with a concern for the life and worship of the Church, is that Catholics are becoming less and less familiar with the text of Scripture and that their prayer, spirituality and culture are less and less biblically based.

Others might claim that, in comparison with our friends and neighbours from other Christian churches, Catholics were never much familiar with the text of Scripture: a number of bible stories heard at school and the limited portions of the New Testament heard in English at Sunday Mass before 1970. As for their ability to quote the text, it rarely extended much further than a handful of 'proof-texts' deployed in the penny catechism and the whole of psalm 129(130), "Out of the depths..."

Whatever the case, its concern has led Rome to indicate that it would prefer each country (or language group?) to employ only one version of Scripture in the liturgy so that familiarity with the text can be fostered and biblical allusions made and recognised more effectively. This perfectly understandable desire may be realisable in some countries and languages, but in the English-speaking world no single English version of the Bible is in possession. In this country, no less than six versions are authorised for liturgical use and, furthermore, such scriptural quotations as may still be familiar to congregations and embodied in folk memory and popular culture are likely to be from yet other versions (Coverdale, Authorised, Scottish psalter) which have never been authorised for use in the liturgy.

In future issues of the Newsletter we will be taking up the issue of a liturgical and biblical spirituality and addressing different aspects of the Word in worship, including the lectionary, the homily, the psalter, and the small but significant case of antiphons (this issue, pp 3, 4).

Chris Walsh

Lectionary for Mass

People often ask if any revision of the Lectionary is on the way. It is now twenty years since the second edition was published in English by Collins, Chapman and Veritas for use in these islands and Australia. As stocks dwindled and additions and alterations are needed to bring it into line with other liturgical books, the liturgy commissions of all these countries proposed several years ago that any new edition would employ not the Jerusalem Bible as at present but the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). Here, as in other English-speaking countries, this has already been approved for liturgical use. This

translation was seen to be very scholarly, faithful to the Hebrew and Greek, most easily proclaimed in public, and the text most likely to gain the support of other English-speaking countries and churches. In 1992 it had been confirmed for use in liturgical books by the Congregation for Divine Worship (CDW).

The bishops of Canada were the first to adopt the NRSV for their new Lectionary in five volumes. After the first three volumes (Sundays and weekdays) were published 1992-4, the CDW, at the instigation of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the

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Better use ten words and treat them lovingly and speak them meaningfully and savour them tenderly than ratatat a thousand. Better use one gesture and make it a real picture, make it big and broad and smooth, than try to signify anything with a hundred muscular spasms.

Robert Hovda,
Strong, Loving and Wise 1976

The Mass is the summit of the liturgy. But a summit cannot exist without a foundation. Having the Mass every day, without a foundation in other forms of community prayer, is a bit like having a Christmas dinner every day. I fear that what may happen, if we continue on our present course, is that we will "burn out" the Mass and then we will be left with nothing. We have all our eggs in one basket.

Owen O'Sullivan,
The Furrow, March 2001

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Coming Events

The next meeting of the **Southern Dioceses Liturgy Commissions** will be in Bristol, 16 May (details from P. Inwood, 01329 835521), and of the **Northern Dioceses** at Leeds, 29 May (details from P. Jakob, 0114 273 7139)

The celebrated church musician **Christopher Walker** will be conducting a singing weekend with broadcast Mass (27-29 July) at Newman College, Birmingham, preceded by a number of local workshops. For information and booking, contact Stephen Dean, 01638 716579.

The annual conference of **Universa Laus**, the international study group for liturgical music, will be held this year 20-24 August in Montreal, Canada. For information and booking details contact Patrick Lee, 01691 652720 before the end of June.

The **SSG Autumn School of Liturgy and Music** will take place at Ushaw College, Durham, 22-26 October. The theme is 'Give us this day our daily bread', and the week will include the usual lectures, workshops, excursions and liturgies, as well as events for children. For information and booking, contact 01661 871513.

Further Information

Liturgical Press:
www.litpress.org
Distribution in UK –
Columba Books:
00 353 1 294 2556
www.columba.ie

Diocese of Portsmouth
Cathedral Discovery Centre
023 9287 0348

Faith (CDF), refused the *recognitio* to any further volumes and demanded wide ranging changes in the highly respected ecumenical translation. These related mostly, but not exclusively, to issues of inclusivity. (Similar changes were demanded of the US bishops, after lengthy negotiations, before their new edition of the Lectionary (NAB translation) began to appear in 1999.)

Naturally, the conferences of these islands, Australia and New Zealand are awaiting the outcome of continuing negotiations between the Canadian bishops and the Holy See before proceeding with their own editions. It is not known whether other conferences will be invited to join these negotiations.

Meanwhile, a consultation of bishops and their advisers last year about the proposed new edition revealed overwhelming agreement on the choice of NRSV, on the use of sense-lines for better proclamation (thereby increasing the number of volumes), on the need to respect the integrity of the weekday lectionary (and not assign proper readings for every memorial and feast) and to provide additional readings for ritual Masses (e.g. weddings and funerals), and on the use of "horizontal" inclusive language (e.g. "brothers and sisters"). There were also requests to include more passages about "the women whose praises are sung in the scriptures".

It is not envisaged that any new edition will necessitate the immediate replacement of existing books

Bishops' Conference

The liturgy committees of the Conference continue work on a variety of projects: a directory on music for the liturgy (Church Music Committee), a directory on church building and reordering (Art, Architecture and Heritage Committee), and a series of documents addressing theological and practical aspects of the Word in worship (Pastoral Liturgy Committee).

Volumes 3 (Lent) and 5 (Easter) of *From the Rising of the Sun to its Setting*, supplement-

tary resources for parish celebrations of Morning and Evening Prayer, are now available from the Liturgy Office, and volumes 1 (Advent) and 2 (Christmas) are expected in September.

Roman Missal and General Instruction

The third edition of the Latin *Missale Romanum*, though officially promulgated at Easter 2000, had still not appeared by Easter 2001. We understand that, apart from the inclusion of a modest number of extra Masses and prayers (e.g. for Our Lady and for new saints in the universal calendar), the principal difference from the current missal will be the revised and somewhat expanded General Instruction. The official ICEL translation of this has now been completed and is being submitted to the twenty six bishops' conferences of the English-speaking world.

Besides approving the translation, it is for each conference to decide what clarifications, derogations or supplementary directives it might wish to have incorporated for its territory. Thus the US conference will be considering over twenty proposed adaptations at their meeting in June, and the German-speaking conferences will be discussing their proposed adaptations over the summer and voting to approve their version of the document at their spring meetings in 2002

As the bishops' conferences of these islands intend to publish any new edition of the *Roman Missal: Sacramentary* jointly, they will be considering any desired adaptations or expansions over the coming months. All translations and adaptations approved by the conferences will then

have to be submitted to Rome for *recognitio*. This process is most unlikely to be completed before the middle of next year.

Meanwhile, the revised *Roman Missal: Sacramentary* approved by all the bishops' conferences in 1997/8 still awaits its *recognitio* from the Holy See. Its texts will naturally require some adjusting in light of the Latin third edition.

Diocesan Contacts Network

The second meeting of the network of diocesan liturgy contacts with the formation committee of the Department for Christian Life and Worship took place at Leeds, 7-8 February. At a time when many dioceses are undertaking major reviews of resources and provision and developing pastoral strategies for the future, it was timely and very useful to examine the implications for the liturgy and identify the consequent needs for formation. More effective means of communication within and between dioceses and the agencies of the Conference were canvassed.

Lifelong Learning

A new vocational course is being developed jointly by agencies of the Bishops' Conference to serve as an introduction to the life and mission of the Church. It is intended as a certificated foundation course, at GNVQ level, for those preparing for involvement in various ministries in parish, school, or community, and may lead on to CCRS and other more specialised courses. It is envisaged that worship will make up one third of the core module (15 hours), and seven aspects of liturgical ministry will be available as elective modules (15 hours).

Beg, borrow... or buy

As yet, no serviceable collection of antiphon settings can be recommended for this country. P Ford's **By Flowing Waters**, Liturgical Press 1999, in an interesting attempt to fit the NRSV translation to traditional plainsong settings illustrates the problems while confirming the need.

On a different subject entirely, newly appeared and highly recommended is R Ellwood and others, **Marking the Liturgical Year: a Resource for Primary Schools**, published by the diocese of Portsmouth, 2001.

Antiphons: Whatever for?

One of the most problematic features of the 1970 Order of Mass is undoubtedly the antiphons. Many simply ignore them, others conscientiously but uncritically recite them simply because they are there, most perhaps are very content to replace them with a hymn, any hymn, rather than have to use them. While much fine music has been written for other parts of the Mass, and some excellent hymns, antiphons remain a neglected orphan. What are they for? Can they be taken seriously? How are they to be used sensibly and profitably?

In the Roman rite of Mass they are almost exclusively scripture verses, which were originally congregational refrains to the psalms which accompanied the processions at the entrance, the presentation of gifts and the communion. As these processions shortened and eventually disappeared at most Masses, so too did the psalm, leaving the refrains as forlorn stand-alone snippets, unrelated to the action, mystify-

ing in their content, and since 1970 muttered with embarrassment. Little wonder the vernacular hymn or song was so enthusiastically substituted.

But quite apart from the questionable quality or appropriateness of many such hymns, something very valuable has been lost here. On the one hand, it had been the age-old tradition of the Roman liturgy that what is sung at Mass should be drawn more or less exclusively from Scripture, and on the other hand, antiphons of their very nature require to be sung. However, the Latin texts are tied to plainsong and the current English translations do not lend themselves to singing and are not presented with an accompanying psalm. How can their purpose be respected?

The proposed revised Roman Missal: Sacramentary, approved by the bishops of the English-speaking world in 1997/8 and awaiting confirmation from the Holy See, makes an imaginative attempt to remedy this situation. As encouraged by a succession of Roman

near hysteria” of the pre-reform Easter ceremonies, laments the failure of the revised Vigil to capture the minds and hearts of the people, and calls for a radical rethink of the rite. The March issue of *The Furrow* carries an eloquent and perceptive cri de coeur from Owen O’Sullivan on the malaise of daily Mass, the dumbing down, the perfunctory celebrations on automatic pilot and against the clock, the uncritical over-provision, which are bad for the people, bad for the priest, and bad for the Mass.

We hope to take up this question in a future issue.

Tried and Tested

The psalms are the songs of Israel and the Church, and wherever possible should be sung. Even more important than the processional psalms with their antiphons, is the responsorial psalm at Mass. To enable it to be sung,

the antiphons have now been translated more flexibly to “respect the rhythmic and vocal requirements of vernacular song”. They are rendered in a way which makes it possible for them to be easily picked up and memorised by a congregation and sung several times over in response to the verses of a psalm, preferably without recourse to books or scripts, and each antiphon is assigned its own appropriate psalm. It is hoped that this revised ‘Antiphonal’ will restore antiphons to their proper place and use in the Mass, promote the recovery of the psalms, limit the use of unsuitable material, and help to provide a proper biblical basis for liturgical song.

The Church Music Committee of the Bishops’ Conference has circulated composers with several sample texts from this Antiphonal, to encourage them to create strong, accessible settings for congregations to use over a period or season. Excerpts from the proposed Sacramentary relating to the Antiphonal are provided on p. 4 of this Newsletter.

a number of collections with different musical settings for the entire Sunday cycle is now available, including:

Collections for every Sunday by a variety of composers: The Responsorial Psalter, ed. S Dean, McCrimmons 1997; *Psalms for Sunday*, ed. A Moore, Mayhew 1998.

Collections for every Sunday by single composers: With Heart and Voice 3 vols, E Monaghan IC, 1990 (01483 893196); *Cantate* 3 vols, M Daly, Veritas 1991–3; *Music for the Responsorial Psalms* 3 vols, S Wolff, Buckfast 1993.

Collections of psalms by a variety of composers: Psalms for the Church Year, 1–7 vols, GIA Publications 1987 following. *Psalm Songs* 3 vols, ed. A Smith & D Ogden, Chapman 1998

9178 sixth-formers took A-level religious studies last year, more than the 6815 who took music. The possibility of including liturgical music in the syllabus for the latter is being explored; what about liturgy and worship in the former?

The Telegraph recently reported that the Church of England is looking into placing ATMs in the naves of some of its churches. Could they be disguised as tabernacles, or perhaps placed in confessionals behind little curtains, or could churches grow more apses to accommodate the machines, or little chapels with corporate logos tastefully outlined in stained glass?

Editorial, Church Building, September 2000

Reading the Reviews

Four successive issues of *Church Building* have featured major new churches in Germany (July 2000 Wartenberg, Berlin; September 2000 Bishops’ Conference Chapel, Berlin; November 2000 Expo Church Hanover; January 2001 Herz Jesu, Munich). They demonstrate that Germany leads the field again, as it did before and after the war. They are uncompromisingly modern, at once liturgically functional yet serenely contemplative, and, as editor Edwin Heathcote remarks, are part of a dialogue with the best of contemporary culture which seems so sorely absent in this country.

Two challenging articles from the pastoral front line: In the Easter edition of *The Tablet*, (14 April 2001), Pastor Ignotus offers a charming evocation of the “self-conscious solemnity and

Further Information

Sample Antiphon texts for Composers
contact Liturgy Office

Church Building
Gabriel Communications
www.the-universe.com/cbindex.html
0161 834 8918

The Furrow
00 353 1 708 3741
furrow.office@may.ie

McCrimmons
01702 218 956
www.mccrimmons.co.uk

Kevin Mayhew
01449 737978
www.kevinmayhew.co.uk

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Buckfast Abbey Bookshop
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GIA publications
www.giamusic.com
available from Decani Music
www.decanimusic.co.uk
01638 716 579

Singing the Processions at Mass

(From the proposed *Roman Missal: Sacramentary*, Pastoral Introduction)

Perhaps the era of the English public school boy with his stiff upper lip (which makes singing impossible anyway) has gone, but there still seem to be some people about for whom singing at Mass is rather like undressing in public.

J. D. Crichton,
Praying and Singing 1980

We will not have a renewal of the liturgy as long as there remains the habit that some do the liturgy and others attend, some give and some receive, some prepare and others just get there.

Cardinal R. Mahony,
Gather Faithfully Together 1997

67 The assembly's worship begins with the **opening song** and procession, which help to create an ambience of celebration and a sense of identity and common purpose. The opening song should be such that everyone is able in some degree to join in singing it. It may consist of an antiphon and psalm or another appropriate song. When no singing is possible, the recommended antiphon may appropriately be used by incorporating it into the introductory remarks that may follow the greeting.

105 The **procession with the gifts** is a powerful expression of the assembly's participation in the Eucharist and in the social mission of the Church. It is an expression of the humble and contrite heart, the dis-possession of self that is a necessary prerequisite for making the true offering which the Lord Jesus gave his people to make with him. The procession with the gifts expresses also our eager willingness to enter into the "holy exchange" with God: "accept the offerings which you have given us, that we may in turn receive the gift of yourself".

The purpose of any music at this point is to accompany the collection, the procession and the presentation of gifts, particularly when these will occupy a considerable period of time. Sung texts need not speak of bread and wine, nor of offering. Texts expressing joy, praise, community, as well as the spirit of the season, are appropriate. Since the preparation of gifts is preparatory, instrumental music or silence may often be more effective.

137 The **communion** of priest and people is traditionally accompanied by the singing of a psalm with a simple congregational refrain. Any psalm or other song is appropriate which expresses the spiritual unity of the communicants, shows the joy of all, and makes the communion procession an act of union of brothers and sisters in Christ. In its structure and its simplicity, it should encourage the participation of the entire assembly.

The communion song begins immediately after the common recital of *Lord, I am not worthy*.

So as not to encumber the assembly with books or scripts during the procession, the song may be led by cantor or choir and include a repeated response from the assembly.

Although several communion songs may be sung in succession, depending on the length of communion, it may be preferable to interrupt one song with periods of silence or instrumental music and resume the singing after an interval.

Many traditional eucharistic hymns were composed for benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. They concentrate on adoration rather than on the action of communion and may not be appropriate as communion songs.

The Antiphonal: Introduction

1. This collection provides antiphons for the opening song and the communion song and various other songs designated for use in the *Missale Romanum*. Antiphons are sung as refrains, repeated after one or more verses of a psalm and after the *Glory to the Father*. The alternation of antiphon and psalm verses may go on as long as is necessary to accompany the entrance and communion processions.
2. The opening and communion songs may be sung alternately either by the choir and the people, or by the cantor and the people, or they may be sung entirely by the people or by the choir alone.
3. Other approved songs may always be sung if the antiphons and psalms provided here are not used. These songs should be suitable for the entrance or communion procession and should be in harmony with the day or season.

In the case where there is no singing for the entrance or communion procession, several possibilities are suggested: the antiphon may be recited by the people, or by some of them, or by a reader, or even by the priest. If by the priest, he may use the opening antiphon after the greeting, integrated into his introductory remarks. Similarly, he may incorporate the communion antiphon into the invitation to communion.

Liturgy Newsletter

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