

LITURGY NEWSLETTER

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A Quarterly Newsletter prepared by the Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

News from the Bishops' Conference

At its Easter meeting the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales gave further consideration to the draft translation of the Roman Missal prepared by ICEL. Three sections of the Missal have now been submitted to the Conference. The bishops have considered the 'grey book' (ICEL's own final version) of a portion of the *Ordo Missae*, and the 'green book' of the Proper of Seasons. Shortly to be circulated to the bishops is the green book for the remainder of the *Ordo Missae* (notably the Prefaces, and the Eucharistic Prayers for Reconciliation and for Various Needs and Occasions). The process of consultation and deliberation is extensive, and has been valued by the Bishops' Conference as providing opportunities for exercising control over the development of the translation. The Bishops have been pleased with the way that ICEL has taken on board the comments they have made and with the progress of the work.

The Department for Christian Life and Worship considered a wide-range of issues during its own Easter meeting. High on the list were the proposals for a syllabus of formation for lay liturgical ministers. The need for such formation has been recognised by the Bishops' Conference and detailed proposals have been discussed by members of liturgy commissions from across England and Wales. They have now been approved by the Department, and will be worked up into a syllabus and formation materials by the Department's Formation subcommittee.

ICPEL

The first meeting of the new International Commission for the Preparation of an English Language Lectionary took place at Roehampton in April. Bishop Mark Coleridge, Auxiliary Bishop in Melbourne was confirmed as Chairman of the Commission. At the close of the meeting the members of the Commission met with Cardinal Arinze, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship, who was in London for a lecture at Westminster Cathedral.

The expectation is that the new translation will be based on the NRSV translation, but revised to conform with the requirements of the Lectionary, established in the *Introduction* to the Lectionary and in *Liturgiam Authenticam*.

After the Synod

The Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the November 2005 Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist met in January to assist Benedict XVI in his preparation of a post-synodal document. The council is made up of 12 members chosen by the synod (including Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor) and three others appointed by the Pope. It plans to meet again in June.

Responding to unbelief

The Pontifical Council for Culture has published: *The Christian Faith at the Dawn of the New Millennium and the Challenge of Unbelief and Religious Indifference*. It presents the conclusions of an assembly held in March 2004. Key priorities identified include:

- Witnessing to the beauty of God's love for each person
- Renewing Christian apologetics to give an account with gentleness and respect of the hope that animates us (1 Peter 3:15).
- Maintaining a public presence in the debates of society and put the Gospel in contact with the forces that shape culture.
- Learning to think and to have the courage to react, faced with the tacit acceptance of a dominant culture often marked by unbelief and religious indifference, by a new and joyous proposal of Christian culture.
- Showing non-believers, indifferent to the question of God but open to human values, that to be truly human, is to be religious, that we learn what humanity most fully is, in Christ, true God and true man, and that Christianity is a good news for all men and women in all cultures.

Christ's resurrection is not just some miracle from the past, the occurrence of which could be ultimately a matter of indifference to us. It is a qualitative leap in the history of "evolution" and of life in general towards a new future life, towards a new world which, starting from Christ, already continuously permeates this world of ours, transforms it and draws it to itself. But how does this happen? How can this event effectively reach me and draw my life upwards towards itself? The answer, perhaps surprising at first but totally real, is: this event comes to me through faith and Baptism. For this reason Baptism is part of the Easter Vigil...

Baptism means precisely this, that we are not dealing with an event in the past, but that a qualitative leap in world history comes to me, seizing hold of me in order to draw me on. Baptism is something quite different from an act of ecclesial socialization, from a slightly old-fashioned and complicated rite for receiving people into the Church. It is also more than a simple washing, more than a kind of purification and beautification of the soul. It is truly death and resurrection, rebirth, transformation to a new life.

Pope Benedict XVI
Homily for Easter Vigil
15th April 2006

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Coming Events

Rock or Sand? Giving voice to the Word in an age of uncertainty.

College of Preachers conference at Swanwick, 5th to 8th June. Details from www.collegeofpreachers.org.uk-8

NNPM Conference

21st to 23rd July 2006 (please note change of date). To be held at Worth Abbey. For further details go to www.nnpm.org

Society of St Gregory Summer School

This too is being held at Worth Abbey, but from 31st July to 4th August 2006. For further details go to www.ssg.org.uk

Society of Liturgical Study

The 2006 Conference will be held from 22nd to 24th August. The location is still to be confirmed, but is likely to be Mirfield

Catholic Theological Association

Conference on The Eucharist, to be held at Ushaw College, Durham from 30th August – 2nd September 2006.

<http://cta.heythrop.ac.uk>
Email: j.sweeney@heythrop.ac.uk

CIEL Conference.

Merton College, Oxford, England, on 13th - 16th September 2006. Full details are available at www.ciel2006.org

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

21st to 29th October 2006. Led by Fr. Allen Morris, Secretary of the Liturgy Office, for Society of St Gregory (but open to others also) Martin Foster, Asst. Secretary of the Liturgy Office will direct the music. Details from Special Pilgrimages: 01702 394000

News of coming events can also be found at: www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Newsletter/News.html

A garden of praise

At the general audience of February 15th 2006 Benedict XVI completed the series of catecheses begun by John Paul II, covering the full sequence of Psalms and Canticles that constitute the basic fabric of the Liturgy of the Hours. He described what had been achieved as a textual pilgrimage – a journey through a flower garden of praise, invocation, prayer and contemplation.

The final catechesis was on the Magnificat, sung at Vespers. The Pope described this as ‘a canticle that reveals the spirituality of those faithful who recognized themselves as ‘poor,’ not only in detaching themselves from all forms of idolatry of wealth and power, but also in profound humility of heart, free from the temptation to pride and open to the irruption of divine saving grace.’ The earlier catecheses of John Paul II were published by CTS under the title *Meditations & Catechesis on the Psalms & Canticles of Morning Prayer*.

We confess...

The former custom of a public celebration of penance in Holy Week was revived at St Peter’s this year. The second form of the

Rite of Penance was used, which provides for communitarian reconciliation, with confession and individual absolution.

Introducing the restoration of this style of liturgy Archbishop Piero Marini, master of pontifical liturgical celebrations, noted that the rite had been a tradition in Rome on Holy Thursday until the Renaissance.

The liturgy began with a procession in silence and prayer before a crucifix, before the Liturgy of the Word, and the homily preached by Cardinal Stafford. The Rite of Reconciliation then took place, beginning with a general confession of sinfulness, followed by invocations for pardon and the Our Father. 60 confessors, ministering in 26 languages, then heard confessions and ministered absolution to individual penitents.

Making contact?

Fr Clem Hill, speaking at the Australian National Conference of Deacons emphasised the importance of communication skills. The direct and personal ambience fostered by broadcasters in their work should not be neglected by ministers in the liturgy.

He contrasted the quality of care taken about communication in the media with common parish practice. He suggested that often the priest, or reader or deacon, does not expect any feedback from people, even of the silent type. ‘But, to my mind, that’s exactly what should happen in the liturgy of the word and the communication of the readings, the gospel, the homily. Things must be said in a way that helps the person be involved. The person should be able to take on the information, identify with it, make it their own, see personal connections with it. The deacon or priest really has to savour the richness of the word. He must emphasise the right words. He must put the information right on the threshold of the person’s imagination, in a way that will help the person to receive the information. He must do more than read words from a page. He must take a text and bring it to life.’ His presentation can be downloaded from the NCD website: www.deacons.asn.au

Lost for words?

HymnQuest is a unique software program developed by The Pratt Green Trust, a charity devoted to the advancement of hymn-

Faithful time...

Liturgical calendars and websites —many readers may not make it to the end of the first sentence let to the end of the article! For many of us there are some similarities in our attitudes to both. We expect them to work but are happy that there are other people who might understand how they work and have done the slog of putting them together. Our expectation that the Ordo will tell us what to do, where the level of detail is an indication of importance or complication perhaps can dull us to the implications of unfolding the entire mystery of Christ through the yearly cycle.

The revision of the Calendar was the foundation of the renewal of the liturgy after the Second Vatican Council. It was the task of the first working group and the revision of much else, Missal, Lectionary and Hours, was dependent on it. Central to the revision was the special importance given to Sunday and the liturgical seasons.

Over the last number of years much encouragement has, rightly, be given to those who prepare the liturgy to think about the liturgical seasons and how they shape our experience of the year. Through the senses we should be aware of the differences between Ordinary Time and Lent, Lent and Easter. Attention also needs to be given to the dynamic of each season and its highpoints. How do we develop a sense of Lent leading to the celebration of the Triduum? In Ordinary Time is there a sense of continuity across the Sundays shaped by the Gospel Narrative? In terms of highpoints how do we distinguish when a Holyday of Obligation falls on a Sunday of Ordinary Time? If Holydays are keypoints in the mystery of Christ and his Church, our focus, on obligation can obscure this, how are these different to ‘ordinary’ Sundays? The principle of ‘progressive solemnity’, outlined in *Celebrating the Mass* 130–2 needs to be used so that our celebrations can have some shape, Sunday by Sunday, some warp and weft.

And the website? The Liturgy Office website contains a wealth of information and documentation supporting the liturgical year [www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar]. At present it aims to provide a good skeleton – good and accurate information about what is celebrated when and why. What it does not provide is the flesh, the local engagement of how to celebrate this Sunday in this place. So no sample intercessions or homily ideas I’m afraid.

Calendars can be complicated so to help people find what they are looking for there is a new FAQ page that aims to help people. If you have a question that you can’t find the answer for why not send it in.

Martin Foster

nody and music in worship. It is the most comprehensive ever published in its field, containing over 31,369 first lines and choruses, the full text of 18,611 hymns and songs from some 350 hymn books and publications. The opening bars of over 13,300 melodies can be both viewed and heard, and the indexes list tune names and metres; biblical, lectionary, thematic, liturgical and seasonal references, as well as information and pictures of authors, composers and translators. It is even possible to search for tunes by playing the opening notes on a Virtual Keyboard.

The software will assist those who can recall only an odd phrase of a hymn, those seeking hymns or songs mentioning a particular word or name, those seeking songs using a particular biblical text or theme or by a particular author, or who can remember a tune but not the words that go with it (or vice versa) – these and other requirements.

[www.hymnquest.com]

Latin in London

A Latin summer school for beginners and intermediate students is being held at the Benedictine Study and Arts Centre, London from 4–8 September 2006 Further details are available from: centre@bsac.ac.uk. Tel: 020 8862 2156

Fulfilled still?

Fulfilled in Your Hearing, a practical guide for preaching within the context of the Sunday Eucharist, has been widely used and much appreciated. Published in 1982 by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops it is now to be revised. The revision will take into account the revised edition of *The General Instruction on the Roman Missal*; a more developed understanding of the place of the Sunday homily within the Sunday Eucharist; shifting pastoral realities; the promulgation of *The Code of Canon Law* and complimentary norms for preaching; the increase in the number of deacons; the publication of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* and *The National Directory for Catechesis*.

The plan is for a handy, user-friendly document aimed at the practitioners of the craft of

preaching at the Sunday Eucharist, specifically, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. It will address the theology of the liturgical homily, the spirituality of the preacher, the context for preaching today, special issues related to preaching today, and practical helps and resources for more effective preaching, including a bibliography. A draft text is likely to be prepared for the US Conference by November 2006.

Lottery win for Belmont

Belmont Abbey has received a £704,000 grant from The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the project *Discovering Belmont Abbey*

The project centres on making the Pugin-designed Grade II* listed Abbey Church more accessible to a wide range of people, enlarging the Abbey's educational activities, displaying some of the Abbey's historic artefacts and restoring its fabric.

Father Paul Stonham, Abbot of Belmont, said 'We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund have awarded us this grant. It will ensure that the Abbey is preserved for future generations and that the resources we have here are made more widely available. The Community are very grateful to the HLF and excited, if somewhat daunted, by the work which will be required by our band of volunteers, small staff and the Community itself by this project'.

Open for Who?

Many non-Catholics visit our church buildings, either privately or to attend a service, but we are not making the most of the opportunities this gives us of sharing the gospel with them. CASE (the Catholic Agency for Evangelisation) now offers clergy and lay people a workshop on how to evangelise through our church buildings. Topics covered include: *Who comes into our buildings and why?*, *How to keep the Church open and make it attractive to non-Catholics*, *How to help seekers pray in our buildings*, and *Using local events as a platform for evangelisation*. Details from Mgr Keith Bartrop, 020 8458 3316; Keith.Bartrop@caseresources.org.uk

Inspired!

This English Heritage led campaign seeks to secure a future for church buildings launched this spring. It comprises a mixture of research, pilot projects, training and capacity building to identify how best to keep parish churches alive and thriving and to make a cast-iron case for greater Government support.

Government funding is sought for redrafting the list descriptions for all Grade I churches; to help fund training posts to support faith communities as they review how best to organise and resource their responsibilities for heritage; provide a new fund to assist with remedial work on small projects which presently do not attract government funding; a grant scheme for maintenance work (regular maintenance programmes are highly effective ways of avoiding major restoration expenses).

A virtual funeral

Webcams are being installed at a crematorium in Hull so people who are unable to travel to a funeral can watch online.

Mike Anderson from the council's bereavement services said: 'There will be web-cams installed at each of the chapels and the people who actually want to watch will be issued with a code to access the service, obviously ensuring privacy and security. In the past we have had people who have used camcorders to record the service for members of the family who have emigrated or are ill. The beauty of this system will be that it's in real time.'

Mgr Kevin Nichols RIP

A priest of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, Mgr Nichols died on 15th January 2006. He was widely known as a poet and a writer of hymns, of which probably the most widely known is *In Bread We Bring You Lord*. Mgr Nichols served as National Advisor for religious education in England and Wales from 1973 to 1980. He served with the *International Commission for English in the Liturgy* (ICEL). He also contributed to the writing of 'Life in Christ', Part III of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

T rue love does not eliminate legitimate differences, but harmonizes them in a superior unity that is not ordered from the outside but gives form from within, so to speak, to the whole.

As the mystery of communion unites man and woman in that community of love and life known as matrimony, it too forms the Church into a community of love, uniting a multiform wealth of gifts and traditions. The Church of Rome is placed at the service of that unity of love which, according to a saying by St. Ignatius of Antioch, 'presides in charity' (Ad Romanos 1:1).

Pope Benedict XVI
Homily at vespers on the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul,
(Conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity)
25th January 2006

Magazine subscriptions

Since 2003 the Liturgy Office has offered readers in the United Kingdom a one-stop subscription service for overseas English language liturgical publications. This facility helps subscribers avoid the difficulties and expense of paying the subscriptions in foreign currency.

The subscription list for 2006 is now closed. If you would like to register an interest in subscribing for 2007 please email the Liturgy Office. We will then email you back when details of costs for 2007 are available.

Book reviews

Brief reviews of recent liturgical publications have previously been carried in *Liturgy Newsletter*. Because of pressure of space it has been decided that all further reviews, and details of books received, will be put directly on the Liturgy Office website. This has the advantage of allowing more substantial reviews of a broader selection of materials.

www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Newsletter

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Editorial

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Reflections on liturgy and faith

Pope Benedict recently met with priests of the diocese of Rome. The meeting included a time of questions and answers, from which the following is excerpted:

The Blessed Sacrament is exposed for adoration 24 hours a day in St. Anastasia [Parish] on the Palatine. The faithful take turns in making perpetual adoration. My suggestion is that there should be perpetual adoration of the Eucharist in each one of the five sectors of the Diocese of Rome.

Benedict XVI: Perhaps I can say in parentheses that the Church of St. Anastasia was already dear to me even before I saw it because it was the titular church of our Cardinal de Faulhaber. He always let us know that he had a church in Rome, St. Anastasia's. Historians say that it was at St. Anastasia's that the Pope had to visit the Byzantine governor and that it was there that he had his seat. The church also reminds us of the saint, and hence, of the *Anastasis*. At Christmas we also think of the Resurrection.

I did not know and I am glad to have been told about it, that the church is now a place of 'perpetual adoration'; thus, it is a focal point in Rome of the life of faith. I confidently place in the hands of the cardinal vicar the proposal to create five places of perpetual adoration in the five sectors of the Diocese.

I only want to say: Thanks be to God that after the Council, after a period in which the sense of Eucharistic adoration was somewhat lacking, the joy of this adoration was reborn everywhere in the Church, as we saw and heard at the Synod on the Eucharist. Of course, the conciliar constitution on the liturgy enabled us to discover to the full the riches of the Eucharist in which the Lord's testament is accomplished: He gives himself to us and we respond by giving ourselves to him.

We have now rediscovered, however, that without adoration as an act consequent to Communion received, this centre which the Lord gave to us, that is, the possibility of celebrating his sacrifice and thus of entering into a sacramental, almost corporeal, communion with him, loses its depth as well as its human richness.

Adoration means entering the depths of our hearts in communion with the Lord, who makes himself bodily present in the Eucharist. In the monstrance, he always entrusts himself to us and asks us to be united with his Presence, with his risen Body.

You are a "teacher" who guides thought in a "fully human" faith. We never fail to be moved by your words, by the harmony in which each point finds its mark, in lively synthesis, especially in a time as fragmented as ours. How can we help lay people grasp this synthesis of harmony, this catholicity of faith?

How do we acquire a living faith, a truly Catholic faith, a faith that is practical, lively and effective? Faith, ultimately, is a gift. Consequently, the first condition is to let ourselves be given something, not to be self-sufficient or do everything by ourselves — because we cannot — but to open ourselves in the awareness that the Lord truly gives.

This gesture of openness is also the first gesture of prayer: being open to the Lord's presence and to his gift. This is also the first step in receiving something that we do not have, that we cannot have with the intention of acquiring it all on our own.

We must make this gesture of openness, of prayer — give me faith, Lord! — with our whole being. We must enter into this willingness to accept the gift and let ourselves, our thoughts, our affections and our will, be completely immersed in this gift.

Here, I think it is very important to stress one essential point: No one believes purely on his own. We always believe in and with the Church. The Creed is always a shared act, it means letting ourselves be incorporated into a communion of progress, life, words and thought. We do not 'have' faith, in the sense that it is primarily God who gives it to us. Nor do we 'have' it either, in the sense that it must not be invented by us. We must let ourselves fall, so to speak, into the communion of faith, of the Church. Believing is in itself a Catholic act. It is participation in this great certainty, which is present in the Church as a living subject.

Only in this way can we also understand sacred Scripture in the diversity of an interpretation that develops for thousands of years. It is a Scripture because it is an element, an expression of the unique subject — the People of God — which on its pilgrimage is always the same subject. Of course, it is a subject that does not speak of itself, but is created by God — the classical expression is 'inspired' — a subject that receives, then translates and communicates this word. This synergy is very important.

We know that the *Koran*, according to the Islamic faith, is a word given verbally by God without human mediation. The Prophet is not involved. He only wrote it down and passed it on. It is the pure Word of God. Whereas for us, God enters into communion with us, he allows us to cooperate, he creates this subject and in this subject his word grows and develops. This human part is essential and also gives us the possibility of seeing how the individual words really become God's Word only in the unity of Scripture as a whole in the living subject of the People of God.

Therefore, the first element is the gift of God; the second is the sharing in faith of the pilgrim people, the communication in the holy Church, which for her part receives the Word of God which is the Body of Christ, brought to life by the living Word, the divine Logos.

Day after day, we must deepen our communion with the holy Church and thus, with the Word of God. They are not two opposite things, so that I can say: I am pro-Church or I am pro-God's Word. Only when we are united in the Church, do we belong to the Church, do we become members of the Church, do we live by the Word of God which is the life-giving force of the Church. And those who live by the Word of God can only live it because it is alive and vital in the living Church.