

LITURGY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 6 No. 4

September 2006

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

Changes to Holydays of Obligation

In May the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales voted its approval to transfer to Sundays those Holydays of Obligation which are Solemnities of the Lord, namely, Epiphany, Ascension and The Body and Blood of the Lord. The importance of these days is such that the bishops were anxious that all members of the Catholic Church should be able to celebrate them. The bishops have long been concerned about the way that large numbers of the faithful are unable to take part in the celebration of Mass on days of obligation which fall during the week. Their consultation within their dioceses, and in particular the representation made by Councils of Priests, persuaded that it was now timely to approve the change.

The decision of the Bishops' Conference was advised to the Holy See and its *recognitio* was granted on 13 July. The changes take effect from the 1st Sunday of Advent, 2006. The Liturgy Office website contains full details of the changes, and confirms calendar dates for these celebrations from 2007-2010.

In a statement advising of the changes, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor wrote that they have been made to assist the Church in England and Wales to celebrate more profoundly the mysteries of the life and mission of the Lord. The Liturgy Office has prepared two sets of materials under the title *Keeping These Days Holy*. The first is discussion material to help deaneries review present practice and plan for the future; the second contains background information regarding the changes; pastoral notes regarding the worthy keeping of Sunday and other Holydays and extracts on the same theme from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and Pope John Paul II's apostolic letter, *Dies Domini*. These resources can be downloaded from the Liturgy Office website.

Bishop Roche at USCCB

As has been widely reported in the Catholic Press, Bishop Roche, Chairman of the Department for Christian Life and Worship, was invited in his capacity as Chairman of ICEL to address a recent meeting of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. Following his address the Bishops of the United States voted their approval, with amendments, of the grey book translation of the *Ordo Missae* submitted to them by ICEL.

That translation has now been approved by a number of English speaking Bishops' Conferences, including that of England and Wales. The English and Welsh Conference has submitted its approved text to the Holy See for *recognitio*. However the translation will not be introduced, until the whole of the Roman Missal has been

translated and received the *recognitio* of the Holy See. It is not possible to say yet when all this work will be completed.

The full text of Bishop Roche's address can be read on the Liturgy Office website: www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Missal/US+AR.html

Promoting Liturgy in Africa

The first congress for the promotion of the liturgy in Africa and Madagascar held on the African continent took place from July 5-9 in Ghana. The congress brought together 100 members of bishops' commissions for liturgy, from all over the sub-Saharan area and Madagascar. A special message was sent to participants by Benedict XVI, who sees signs of hope in the liturgical awakening of the continent and the profound spirituality of the African peoples.

In Africa, as everywhere in the world, the liturgy must deepen and nourish people's faith. Unless there is a passing from the historical-technical aspect of the liturgy to the experience of an encounter with the Lord, there is a danger of formalism.

A liturgy which fails to take the pastoral aspect into consideration can harm our people's faith! The difficulty lies in achieving formation which instills a sense of the liturgy technically complete but at the same time incisive from the pastoral point of view, and nourishes the faith of the people taking part, leading them to encounter the Lord.

Archbishop Albert Malcolm Ranjith
Patabendige Don,
Secretary of the Congregation
for Divine Worship
and the Sacraments

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Coming Events

Panel of Monastic Musicians

The Language of Liturgy. A conference at St Hilda's Priory, Sneaton Castle, Whitby. 25-29th September 2006

Society of St Gregory Summer School

30th July to 3rd August 2007 at Sneaton Castle, Whitby. For further details go to www.ssg.org.uk

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

Archbishop Albert Malcolm Ranjith Patabendige Don, Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, took an active part in the Congress. He spoke afterwards of its importance and the merit resulting by meeting away from Rome. 'It was an opportunity to hear the voice of Africa there on the spot, to dialogue with them and take part in their local liturgies. The latter would have been impractical for a meeting in Rome.'

The Archbishop noted that 'The Congress provided an opportunity to review the variety of practices introduced through processes of inculturation. The congress proved for stimulating a desire for more complete knowledge of all the profoundly

spiritual aspects of the liturgy: transcendence, sense of the sacred and of mystery, profound interior participation, etc.'

He advised that the Final Report is shortly to be published in English, 'the fruit of an encounter, of reciprocal exchange between the bishops and our Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.'

The Archbishop has emphasised that those serving the liturgical development of the Church in Africa need more than a technical knowledge of the liturgy and its history. It is important, he says, that formators should transform that knowledge with pastoral wisdom and must present it in such a way that those being formed 'acquire an

authentic *sensus liturgicus*, in a way which is, so to say, infectious so they become enthusiastic.

An interview with the Archbishop can be accessed in the Zenit archive for 2006.07.24: www.zenit.org/english/

Scholarship

The Mgr James Crichton scholarship provides a partial bursary for diocesan priests of England and Wales for study at San Anselmo, Rome. The bursary is available for the academic year 2006-7, and for the following years. Please apply to: The *Preside, Pontificio Istituto Liturgico*, Piazza Cavalieri di Malta 5, Roma I-00153, Italy.

Still waiting

The secretariat of the 2005 Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist continues to assist Pope

'Special Liturgies are gloriously useless!'

The quote comes from Fr. McCarthy, of SPRED (SPecial RELigious Development). He speaks of those liturgies that are often prepared 'for' people with learning disabilities. His point is not that special liturgies are frivolous but often they are not liturgies at all! They are too cerebral, too full of added 'activity'.

SPRED originated in the Archdiocese of Chicago in the 1960's, and is now used across the continents of Africa, America, Australia and Europe. Local parish SPRED groups welcome and recognise the giftedness of people with learning disabilities. Their ultimate goal is to help each disabled person to be integrated into his or her own parish.

SPRED uses a method of symbolic catechesis based within a model of friendship. Each disabled person within a SPRED group has a special friend (catechist) who accompanies them in their journey of faith — this is a two-way journey, as catechists gain just as much, if not more, from the friendship! They live their faith through SPRED. Because we are all on a continuous journey of faith, SPRED is not a time limited programme — it is a way of experiencing life-long catechesis.

Each time a SPRED group gathers, there are 3 main elements to the session:

1. A time of quiet activity for minds to slow down and people to become truly present to those around them, and ready to receive the Word of God.
2. We then move into a Celebration space where the leader catechist guides our reflection together on a common symbol. This might be a flower, a bowl of water, a photograph, in fact anything that we will all have experienced at some time in our lives. We next share our experience. For those who do not use words to express ourselves their special friend will have spoken to family

or carers beforehand to find out an experience related to the symbol and will be able to share that experience with the group. It may seem simple but authentic symbols always help us access not just our memories but a living present, which contains a hope for the future and which helps to carry us into the future. Next we interiorise this experience by listening to the Word of God and receive a message from the leader catechist as Jesus speaks to our hearts. The format is always the same - "John, Jesus says to you today...; Mary, Jesus says to you today..." Each person individually receives the same message. We are then invited to express our thanksgiving through song and gentle movement.

3. Finally we move to a space where we celebrated Agape. A meal shared together in friendship and love where we catch up with all our news and events of our lives.

Each time we meet we use the same pattern, although the symbol and the message changes! This repeated ritual enables our learning disabled friends to come to understand or know what is going to happen, they become comfortable with the ritual and it helps them to grow in confidence in their SPRED group.

This process is so similar to what is expected of the relationship between 'ordinary' liturgy, 'ordinary' catechesis in 'ordinary' life. Maybe one of the things that makes so-called 'special' liturgy so challenging for people is that although our faith tradition is rich in symbolism and ritual — so often we seem just to 'go through the motions'.

SPRED is one way of enabling people with learning disabilities to take their rightful place in our church — if you would like to know more then click on www.spred.org/

Patricia Lenihan RSC

Benedict in the preparation of the postsynodal apostolic exhortation. Pope Benedict has said: 'In "ad limina" visits bishops asked me: "But when will the postsynodal text finally come?"' And I replied: 'They are working on it. They will not take too long.'

New Publications

Consecrated for Worship

A teaching and policy document for the Catholic Church in England and Wales. It concerns the building, alteration, conservation and maintenance of the Church's places of worship. It assembles material from the liturgical books of the Roman Rite and the teaching documents and guidelines of the Holy See. In addition it applies and develops that teaching to the particular circumstances of the Church in England and Wales.

This essential resource is designed to assist those involved in building, reordering or making alterations within a church, or

dealing with statutory bodies responsible for listed buildings.

Consecrated for Worship is published by Catholic Truth Society [www.cts-online.org.uk] £9.95.

Celebrating Sunday Evening Prayer

A resource book to assist parishes and communities celebrate Sunday Evening Prayer. The volume, prepared by the Liturgy Office, includes guidance for preparation and material for celebration. Drawing on the ideas of the 'Cathedral' or 'urban' Office the book encourages parishes to celebrate Evening Prayer over a liturgical season. The use of elements repeated from week to week allows people to enter into the prayer. Above all it is intended to show to parishes that celebrating the Office is about more than words but can engage all the senses through music and use of symbol.

A CD-ROM containing materials is included as part of the publication to assist parishes prepare people's leaflets.

Celebrating Sunday Evening Prayer is published by Canterbury Press [www.scm-canterburypress.co.uk] £25.00,

Recent additions to the Website

Cycle of Prayer

New resources to support the Cycle of Prayer both for individuals and parishes have been produced by the Liturgy Office. They can be freely downloaded from www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Cycle

Holy Communion and People with Coeliac Disease

The Liturgy Office has produced this simple leaflet to explain the requirements of the Church with regard to the bread used at Mass. There is widespread confusion amongst clergy and laypeople alike. The leaflet can be downloaded from www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Documents/Coeliacs/, from where also can be downloaded still fuller details of the Church's teaching together with a list of approved suppliers.

Sacred polyphony, particularly that of the so-called "Roman School," is a legacy to preserve with care, to keep alive and to make known, not only for the benefit of experts and lovers of it but also for the entire ecclesial community, for which it constitutes a priceless spiritual, musical and cultural heritage.

The Bartolucci Foundation aims precisely to safeguard and spread the classical and contemporary tradition of this famous polyphonic school that has always been distinguished by its form, focused on singing alone without an instrumental accompaniment. An authentic renewal of sacred music can only happen in the wake of the great tradition of the past, of Gregorian chant and sacred polyphony.

For this reason, in the field of music as well as in the areas of other art forms, the ecclesial community has always encouraged and supported people in search of new forms of expression without denying the past, the history of the human spirit which is also a history of its dialogue with God.

Pope Benedict XVI, speaking after a concert sponsored by the Domenico Bartolucci Foundation and given in the Sistine Chapel on June 24, 2006,

Forming new disciples in Europe

In May 2006 I went as a delegate from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to the 10th meeting of bishops with national directors of catechesis in Europe, to listen and share on the topic: *Christian Initiation as a Process for Becoming Christian*. I was asked to go by the Department for Christian Life and Worship because of my experience in Middlesbrough Diocese, and as a member of the RCIA Network. The meeting was a joint venture between the Council of European Bishops Conferences (CCEE) and the Italian Bishops' Conference (CEI). Twenty-seven countries were represented from European Bishops Conferences and the Kazakhstan Bishops' Conference.

It was a tremendous opportunity to see the baptismal catechumenate at work across Europe, to hear the stories of life and hope, and also voice some of the concerns facing people involved in welcoming adults and children into the Church through the RCIA and RCIC. Many common threads emerged, in both the presentations and in the discussions. These include the primary importance of being welcoming communities, the variety of situations of those approaching our parishes, the different cultural backdrops in Europe, east and west, the support given by diocesan and catechetical services, where they exist.

Almost universal concern was expressed concerning the falling away of new Catholics, and the inadequacy of the discernment processes within the RCIA process. It was recognised that there was

a particular need what might be termed life-long mystagogy, continuing to support and assist the incorporation of the sacramentally initiated. This is surely an area for further study and reflection. Priests and catechists need to be open themselves to formation for RCIA, developing appropriate styles and skills for the catechumenate. It was striking to hear stories of the many seekers on the margins – from people with disability, students, immigrants, prisoners, wayfarers, to people in former communist countries where faith has survived in 'secret' communities, who find our 'western' methods of evangelisation and catechesis literally frightening! Gospel terms like 'service' and 'listening' echoed throughout the Congress, and the fact that becoming Christian goes hand in hand with becoming fully human. All this has huge impact on the way parishes approach catechesis in RCIA.

A full report on the Conference can be downloaded from the website of the RCIA Network: www.rcia.org.uk. RCIA Network is the national body offering support and coordination for all those involved in RCIA ministry in England and Wales

Have a look at approaches from countries as diverse as Hungary and Sweden, Italy and Germany, Italy and Russia, and see what we can learn from our European brothers and sisters about how to approach initiation in England and Wales.

Caroline Dollard
Executive Member of RCIA Network

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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The Mystery of the living Bread

In his homily for Body & Blood of the Lord Pope Benedict explored the aptness of the symbolism of bread used in Christ's self-gift in the Eucharist. The full text of the homily can be downloaded from [www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/homilies/2006/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20060615_corpus-christi_en.html]

Jesus, as a sign of his presence, chose bread and wine. With each one of the two signs he gives himself completely, not only in part. The Risen One is not divided. He is a person who, through signs, comes near to us and unites himself to us.

Each sign however, represents in its own way a particular aspect of his mystery and through its respective manifestation, wishes to speak to us so that we learn to understand the mystery of Jesus Christ a little better.

During the procession and in adoration we look at the consecrated Host, the simplest type of bread and nourishment, made only of a little flour and water. In this way, it appears as the food of the poor, those to whom the Lord made himself closest in the first place.

The prayer with which the Church, during the liturgy of the Mass, consigns this bread to the Lord, qualifies it as fruit of the earth and the work of humans.

It involves human labour, the daily work of those who till the soil, sow and harvest [the wheat] and, finally, prepare the bread. However, bread is not purely and simply what we produce, something made by us; it is fruit of the earth and therefore is also gift.

We cannot take credit for the fact that the earth produces fruit; the Creator alone could have made it fertile. And now we too can expand a little on this prayer of the Church, saying: The bread is fruit of heaven and earth together. It implies the synergy of the forces of earth and the gifts from above, that is, of the sun and the rain. And water too, which we need to prepare the bread, cannot be produced by us.

In a period in which desertification is spoken of and where we hear time and again the warning that man and beast risk dying of thirst in these waterless regions -- in such a period we realize once again how great is the gift of water and of how we are unable to produce it ourselves.

And so, looking closely at this little piece of white Host, this bread of the poor, appears to us as a synthesis of creation. Heaven and earth, too, like the activity and spirit of man, cooperate. The synergy of the forces that make the mystery of life and the existence of man possible on our poor planet come to meet us in all of their majestic grandeur.

In this way we begin to understand why the Lord chooses this piece of bread to represent him. Creation, with all of its gifts, aspires above and beyond itself to something even greater. Over and above the synthesis of its own forces, above and beyond the synthesis also of nature and of spirit that, in some way, we detect in the piece of bread, creation is projected toward divinization, toward the holy wedding feast, toward unification with the Creator himself.

And still, we have not yet explained in depth the message of this sign of bread. The Lord mentioned

its deepest mystery on Palm Sunday, when some Greeks asked to see him. In his answer to this question is the phrase: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24).

The mystery of the Passion is hidden in the bread made of ground grain. Flour, the ground wheat, presupposes the death and resurrection of the grain. In being ground and baked, it carries in itself once again the same mystery of the Passion. Only through death does resurrection arrive, as does the fruit and new life.

Mediterranean culture, in the centuries before Christ, had a profound intuition of this mystery. Based on the experience of this death and rising they created myths of divinity which, dying and rising, gave new life. To them, the cycle of nature seemed like a divine promise in the midst of the darkness of suffering and death that we are faced with.

In these myths, the soul of the human person, in a certain way, reached out toward that God made man, who, humiliated unto death on a cross, in this way opened the door of life to all of us. In bread and its making, man has understood it as a waiting period of nature, like a promise of nature that this would come to exist: the God that dies and in this way brings us to life.

What was awaited in myths and that in the very grain of wheat is hidden like a sign of the hope of creation -- this truly came about in Christ. Through his gratuitous suffering and death, he became bread for all of us, and with this living and certain hope. He accompanies us in all of our sufferings until death. The paths that he travels with us and through which he leads us to life are pathways of hope.

When, in adoration, we look at the consecrated Host, the sign of creation speaks to us. And so, we encounter the greatness of his gift; but we also encounter the passion, the cross of Jesus and his resurrection. Through this gaze of adoration, he draws us toward himself, within his mystery, through which he wants to transform us as he transformed the Host.

The primitive Church discovered yet another symbol in the bread. The Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles, a book written around the year 100, contains in its prayers the affirmation: "Even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and was gathered together and became one, so let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy Kingdom" (IX, 4).

Bread made of many grains contains also an event of union: The ground grain becoming bread is a process of unification. We ourselves, many as we are, must become one bread, one body, as St. Paul says (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:17). In this way the sign of bread becomes both hope and fulfillment.