

LITURGY NEWSLETTER

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

Synod on the Word of God

The Synod of Bishops met in Rome in October to reflect on the *Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church*. The Synod met for 3 weeks, listened to speeches and worked in small groups. At the end of the process 55 propositions were drawn up and presented to the Holy Father. As with the previous Synod on the Eucharist Benedict XVI permitted the propositions to be made public on the Vatican website. It is customary for the Holy Father to use the propositions as the basis for an Apostolic Exhortation.

The propositions were presented in three parts: 1. The Word of God in the Faith of the Church, 2. The Word of God in the Life of the Church, 3. The Word of God in the Mission of the Church. Many of the propositions express the relationship between the Word of God and the Liturgy. What follows is a brief summary of some of the propositions.

7. The profound unity between the Word of God and the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the principal hermeneutic context for Scripture, just as Scripture illuminates and explains the Eucharistic mystery.

8. The importance of the Word of God in the sacraments of healing (penance and anointing of the sick). The Church must be the community which, reconciled by that Word which is Jesus Christ, offers a space of reconciliation, mercy and forgiveness to all.

14. The liturgy is the privileged place in which the Word of God fully expresses itself, both in the celebration of the sacraments and above all the Eucharist, as well as in the Liturgy of the Hours and in the Liturgical Year. The mystery of salvation narrated in Sacred Scripture finds in the liturgy its proper place of proclamation, hearing and realisation. From this the following is proposed:

- The book of Sacred Scriptures should have a place of honour in Churches, even outside the liturgy.
- The periods of silence, given in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, following the first and second readings and the homily should be encouraged.
- Celebrations of the Word built on the readings of the following Sunday.
- The readings should be proclaimed from worthy editions of the Lectionary and the Book of the Gospels.
- Prior to proclamation on Sundays and feasts there should be a procession of the Book of the Gospels.

- Ministers of the word, lectors and cantors should be supported and offered formation so that they can proclaim the word clearly. They should be encouraged to make the connections between what they proclaim and the witness of their lives.

- The Church community should make provision so that the deaf and the visually impaired can receive the Word of God.
- Those who preside have a responsibility to ensure that the scriptures are never replaced by other texts.

15. The homily, which makes concrete the proclaimed word, should be given at every Mass with the people. It draws people into the mystery being celebrated, inviting all to mission. Those who preach should prepare themselves through prayer so that they will preach with passion and conviction. They should respond to three questions:

- What are these readings saying?
- What are they saying to me personally?
- What must I say to the community, taking account of its concrete situation?

It was hoped that a 'Directory on the Homily' could be developed.

16. It was recommended that the Roman Lectionary be reviewed to see if it is truly adequate for the mission of the Church. This would include a review of the relationship of the Old Testament readings and the Gospel to see if either a restricted reading is implied or that important passages are omitted. This revision could be carried out in dialogue with

The beauty and harmony of the churches, destined to give praise to God, also draws us human beings, limited and sinful, to convert to form a "cosmos," a well-ordered structure, in intimate communion with Jesus, who is the true Saint of saints. This happens in a culminating way in the Eucharistic liturgy, in which the "ecclesia," that is, the community of the baptized, come together in a unified way to listen to the Word of God and nourish themselves with the Body and Blood of Christ. From these two tables the Church of living stones is built up in truth and charity and is internally formed by the Holy Spirit transforming herself into what she receives, conforming herself more and more to the Lord Jesus Christ. She herself, if she lives in sincere and fraternal unity, in this way becomes the spiritual sacrifice pleasing to God.

Dear friends, today's feast celebrates a mystery that is always relevant: God's desire to build a spiritual temple in the world, a community that worships him in spirit and truth. But this observance also reminds us of the importance of the material buildings in which the community gathers to celebrate the praises of God. Every community therefore has the duty to take special care of its own sacred buildings, which are a precious religious and historical patrimony. For this we call upon the intercession of Mary Most Holy, that she help us to become, like her, the "house of God," living temple of his love.

Pope Benedict XVI
Angelus, Dedication of the Lateran
Basilica, Sunday 9 November

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Coming Events

Mount Street Jesuit Centre

Liturgy Course

Thursday 29 January –12 March 2009
<http://www.msjc.org.uk/theoed/liturgy.php>

The liturgy is the heart of the Church. "If the Church were not to celebrate the Eucharist, she would become an obsolete institution...If the Church doesn't pray, it doesn't live. The liturgy is the respiration of the life of the Church. The Church was born to adore God, to honour and praise him. The Mass is the highest act that the Church can perform; there is nothing higher.

[Many liturgical abuses] are not due to bad intentions, but to ignorance. Some do not know, or are not aware that they do not know. They don't know, for example, that words and gestures have roots in the tradition of the Church. Thus, they think themselves more original or more creative changing them.

Faced with these things, it is necessary to reaffirm that the liturgy is sacred; it is the public prayer of the Church.

Cardinal Francis Arinze
Interview with *L'Osservatore Romano*, 22 November 2008

ecumenical partners who use this common lectionary.

17. The Synod recognised the important role of women in the transmission of the faith, particularly through the family and catechesis. Their gift in opening people to the word was acknowledged. It was hoped that the role of Lector would be open to women so that their role as announcers of the Word may be recognized in the Christian community.

18. Celebrations of the Word of God are recommended. The importance of such celebrations in communities which are unable to celebrate the Eucharist was acknowledged and it was proposed that the wider Church may learn of best practice from these communities.

19. The Liturgy of the Hours provides a privileged place for hearing the Word of God. The faithful are encouraged to participate in Morning and Evening Prayer so that it become even more the prayer of the whole Church. The preparation of simple forms of the Liturgy of the Hours are encouraged.

20. The Word lies at the heart of marriage. Parents are the first announcers of the word to their children. Domestic celebrations of the word and reading the Bible should be developed and encouraged. The scriptures can be a source of support through the difficulties of family life.

21. The Synod recommends that small Christian Communities be formed where the Word of God is heard, studied and prayed over.

22. The prayerful reading of scripture by methods such as *Lectio Divina* are encouraged for all the faithful. Among the points mentioned are the use of the Sunday and weekday readings as a foundation to

provide a better understanding of the relationship between Word and Eucharist, and the resolution of the prayer in a commitment to charity.

23. Catechesis rooted in revelation should take as its model Jesus on the road to Emmaus who opened the scriptures to the disciples. Catechumens need to be accompanied on their journey through the reading of Scripture to show them God's plan, preparing them to encounter the Lord in the sacraments of Christian initiation and to commit themselves to the community and to mission.

The pre-baptismal catechumenate should be followed by a post-baptismal mystagogy, a continual formation in which Sacred Scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* must occupy the central place.

40. The Synod noted the contribution of artists in all disciplines who have helped to make the invisible world perceptible and to translate the divine message into the language of forms and figures. It called for a rediscovery of Biblical inspiration so that art could proclaim, sing and promote contemplation on the Word of God.

Bishops should see that church buildings are adequate for the proclamation of the Word, meditation and the celebration of the Eucharist. Even outside the liturgical action churches should be eloquent, presenting the Christian mystery in relation to the Word of God.

- http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20081025_elenco-prop-finali_it.html
- An unofficial English translation: <http://ncrcafe.org/node/2228>

Roman Missal Translation

At the November meeting of the Bishops' Conference three Grey book texts were voted on and approved: *Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children*,

Masses for Various Needs and Intentions, and *Ritual Masses*. This means that six of the twelve Grey books — the final text prepared for voting by ICEL — have been approved by the Bishops' Conference. The remaining sections will be presented for voting at the Easter meeting of the Bishops' Conference: *Proper of Saints, Common of Saints, Votive Masses & Masses for the Dead, Antiphons, Introductory Documents and Appendices*.

Missale Romanum

Libreria Editrice Vaticana will be reprinting the Latin *editio typica tertia* of the Roman Missal in the New Year. It will include the Latin text of the new dismissals which were first given in the English language Order of Mass which received *recognitio* earlier in the year and will come into use in English when the whole Missal text is authorised for use. The texts were devised at the request on Benedict XVI in *Sacramentum Caritatis*.

Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

Go in peace.

- <http://www.paxbook.com>

Sign of Peace

In an interview with *L'Osservatore Romano* to mark his 50th anniversary of priesthood Cardinal Arinze referred to the consultation request by the Holy Father in *Sacramentum Caritatis* on the position of the Sign of Peace. 'Often, the significance of this gesture is not fully understood,' the Cardinal noted. 'It is thought that it is an occasion to give a high-five to friends. Rather, it is a way of saying to the person beside you that the peace of Christ, really present on the altar, is also with all men.'

The prelate said that the Church is considering moving

the sign of peace to the moment of the offertory, 'to create an atmosphere of more recollection while one is preparing for Communion.'

'The Pope has asked for a consultation of all the bishops,' the Cardinal said. 'Afterward, he will decide.'

The Name of God

At the end of June the Congregation for Divine Worship sent out to Bishops' Conferences directives on the use of Hebrew Tetragrammaton — YHWH in the liturgy. In respect to the ancient tradition of the Church the Hebrew word should be rendered as 'Lord'. These directives do not affect the current liturgical texts, including the Lectionary, used in England and Wales.

Bishop Arthur Roche presented the document to the bishops at their November meeting and afterwards issued a Statement. As directives also affect other texts used in the liturgy, such as songs and hymns, Bishop Roche has written to publishers to inform them of the document and to require that they either omit or provide alternative versions of texts. Bishop Roche's statement can be found on page 4 and a copy of the Congregation's letter can be found on the Liturgy Office website.

- <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Documents/Name.shtml>

Burial of Ashes

The Department for Christian Life and Worship has issued Guidance Notes on the Burial of Ashes. The notes acknowledge that cremation is not seen as the equivalent to burial and that the sense of laying to rest comes with the subsequent burial of the ashes. It encourages those involved in funerals and ministry to the

bereaved to alert families and relatives to the rite of burial of ashes. A form of the liturgy can be found in the *Order of Christian Funerals*. The guidance also notes some of the implications of providing a site within Church property for the burial of ashes and suggests other places that might be considered.

- <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/OCF/index.shtml#Resources>

Concelebration Guidelines

In 2006 the Department issued Guidelines for Concelebrations which could be used as the basis for diocesan norms. A second edition of the document has been issued which incorporates a couple of minor amendments.

- <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Documents/Concelebration.shtml>

The Prayer of the Faithful

The Liturgy Committee of the Department has prepared some reflections on good practice concerning the Prayer of the Faithful at Mass.

- <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Documents/Intercessions.shtml>

Ambrosian Lectionary

On 16 November Cardinal Tettamanzi, archbishop of Milan, presented a copy of the new Lectionary for use in the Ambrosian Rite to the Pope.

The new Lectionary is divided into three parts: the mystery of the Incarnation, the mystery of Easter and the mystery of Pentecost.

There was a change in criteria for selecting the Bible passages for the new lectionary. The old criterion was one of continuity: every Sunday a passage would be read from the same Gospel and each Sunday would pick up where the preceding Sunday had left off. The new criterion is a thematic one: every Sunday will highlight a particular aspect of the life and teaching of Jesus,

supported by readings from the Old Testament and the epistles of Paul. The liturgical calendar of the Ambrosian Rite has also been modified.

Cardinal Tettamanzi expressed the wish that 'the new lectionary be received and seen as a gift that helps us to profess, celebrate and live the faith beginning from the Word of God,' reinvigorating liturgical life 'like a beating heart of the community on its journey to holiness and in its missionary dynamism.'

The Holy Father responded to the gift 'May the Ambrosian Church, nourished by the wisdom and the abundance of holy Scripture, always walk in truth and charity, and give valid witness to Christ, the Word of salvation for humanity of all times.'

Holydays & Extraordinary Form

The Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* has responded to further queries from an individual about the effects on the Extraordinary Form liturgy of transferring Holydays of Obligation. The response of the Commission complemented and further clarified the dubium of Bishops' Conference which established that there is a common observance of Holydays of Obligation between both Ordinary and Extraordinary Forms of the Roman Rite. The responses affirmed that the Calendar of Extraordinary Form was integral to its celebration but noted that the Commission was continuing to study this question, that texts for these celebrations may be used on their original days but no obligation was attached, that the proper liturgical texts should be used on the transferred days.

- <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Extraordinary/Calendar/index.shtml>

I propose a fourfold reading of scripture. We are to love God with heart, soul, mind and strength.

1. The heart: *Lectio Divina*, private meditation and prayer, and above all the readings in the eucharist.
2. The mind: historical study of the text and its original contextual meaning.
3. The soul: the ongoing life of the church, its tradition and teaching office.
4. The strength: the mission of the church, the work of God's kingdom.

...H. E. Cardinal Dias gave a splendid lecture at the Lambeth Conference, in which he spoke of three moments in the life of Mary: *Fiat*, *Magnificat* and *Stabat*. To these, I add the other relevant verb, which Luke repeats: *Conservabat*. Let us apply these to our reading of scripture. First, God calls us through scripture in sovereign love and grace, and the response of the obedient mind is *Fiat*: let it be to me according to your word. Then we celebrate, with our strength, the relevance of the word to new personal and especially political situations: *Magnificat*. Then we ponder in the heart what we have seen and heard: *Conservabat*. But scripture tells us that Mary, too, had to learn hard things: she wanted to control her son, but could not. Her soul is pierced with the sword, as she stands (*Stabat*) at the foot of the cross. We too must wait patiently, letting the written Word tell us things that may be unexpected or even unwelcome, but which are yet salvific. We read humbly, trusting God and waiting to see his purposes unfold.

Rt Rev N T Wright,
Bishop of Durham,
Intervention at Synod of Bishops

Statement on the Name of God

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacrament has issued guidance to Bishops' Conferences on the translation of the 'Name of God' in texts for use in the liturgy. The directives expand on the instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam* and note that the Hebrew Tetragrammaton YHWH, Yahweh or Jehovah, has in the tradition of the Church always been translated as 'Lord'. The Bishops' Conference welcomes the attention that the Congregation has given to the due reverence we owe to the name of God. It is also worth noting that the use of Yahweh is highly offensive to the Jewish people.

These directives do not affect our current liturgical texts in use at Mass and other liturgies. Nor do they affect the forthcoming translation of Roman Missal, 3rd edition, which is being studied and voted on by the bishops, and is being translated following the guidance of the Holy See found in *Liturgiam Authenticam*.

The directive that the name Yahweh is not to be read, sung or prayed in the Liturgy or at other times of prayer affects more than the official texts of the liturgy. The name is found in some liturgical songs and

parishes are required to refrain from using these texts. Publishers of Catholic liturgical material in England and Wales are asked to either omit or amend any texts that use the term. Care should be taken when a reading is taken directly from a Bible (such as the Jerusalem Bible) to replace the word Yahweh with Lord where it occurs. The term should also be avoided in composed texts such as the Prayer of the Faithful.

It is part of our Catholic tradition that we offer reverence not just with the words on our lips but through actions such as a bow of the head. This bow is made whenever the Holy Trinity are named together, for example, in a doxology, and at the names of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the Saint in whose honour Mass is being celebrated. Though the document from the Holy See is concerned with language and translation it provides an opportunity to remind ourselves of the reverence owed to the name of God both in worship and in daily life.

Bishop Arthur Roche
Bishop of Leeds
Chairman, Department for Christian Life and Worship

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Glimpse of Heaven DVD

Following the successful publication by English Heritage, in collaboration with the Department's Patrimony Committee, of *A Glimpse of Heaven* which through Alex Ramsey's photographs and the text of Christopher Martin highlight the rich heritage of Catholic Churches in England and Wales a DVD has been produced. The DVD incorporates both film and photography in conjunction with interviews with architectural journalists, architects, conservationists and churchmen.

- http://www.catholicchurch.org.uk/ccb/catholic_church/media_centre2/press_releases/press_releases_2008/a_glimpse_of_heaven
- <http://www.gracewing.co.uk/page3.htm>

Marriage & Family life e-bulletin

The Marriage and Family Life Project Office of the Bishops' Conference provides a monthly e-bulletin which can be signed up for on the Bishops' Conference website. In the most recent issue as well as updates on various projects and resources for facing the credit crunch there were a link to family reflec-

tions on the Advent scripture and a prayer for grandparents composed by Benedict XVI.

- http://www.catholicchurch.org.uk/ccb/catholic_church/the_bishops_work/marriage_family_life
- <http://www.homeisaholyplace.org.uk/pastorals.html#grand>

Walk with Me podcasts

Many dioceses have taken the Archdiocese of Birmingham's seasonal prayer resource *Walk with Me*. CJM Music is providing a series of podcasts to support the material.

- <http://www.cjmmusic.co.uk/liturgy/walkwithme/>

Magnificat

A monthly booklet which contains Mass texts, a simple form of Morning and Evening and a Meditation for every day has been launched in the UK. It is printed in a pocket size and is suitable both for preparation for the liturgy and personal devotion. *Magnificat* originates in France and the initial English booklets will be the US edition but the publishers hope that the number of subscribers will lead to an edition using texts from the UK Lectionary.

- <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/magnificat/magnificat.html>