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| ✥ |  | *The Liturgy* |
| *of the* |
| *Hours* |
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Introduction 1](#_Toc502801919)

[Natural Religion 2](#_Toc502801920)

[Pre-Christian Judaism 3](#_Toc502801921)

[Ancient Period 8](#_Toc502801922)

[The Early Church 9](#_Toc502801923)

[The Seven Canonical Hours, c. ad 450 24](#_Toc502801924)

[Middle Ages 25](#_Toc502801925)

[Early Middle Ages 26](#_Toc502801926)

[Later Middle Ages 33](#_Toc502801927)

[Modern Period 36](#_Toc502801928)

[The Modern Period, 1500-1900 37](#_Toc502801929)

[1900-1962: Modern Liturgical Movement to Vatican Council II 40](#_Toc502801930)

[Vatican II, 1962-1965 45](#_Toc502801931)

[Post-Conciliar Documents 51](#_Toc502801932)

[Objections to the Reformed Liturgy 58](#_Toc502801933)

[Implementing the Liturgy of the Hours in the Parish 61](#_Toc502801934)

[Contents of the Present-Day Liturgy of the Hours 65](#_Toc502801935)

[Bibliography 68](#_Toc502801936)

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the New Revised Standard Version, unless indicated otherwise.

# Introduction

## Natural Religion

Scotto, Dominic F. *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Its History and Its Importance as the Communal Prayer of the Church after the Liturgical Reform of Vatican II*. Petersham MA: St. Bede’s, 1987.

1. **natural religion**
   1. Praying at set times of the day, especially morning and evening, is a natural religious instinct. (Scotto 4)
   2. “. . . spontaneity and right intention are essential to an expression of true prayer, [but] we can also affirm the necessity of some type of ordered expression in worship . . .” (Scotto 4)

## Pre-Christian Judaism

Scotto, Dominic F. *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Its History and Its Importance as the Communal Prayer of the Church after the Liturgical Reform of Vatican II*. Petersham MA: St. Bede’s, 1987.

1. **daily burnt offerings**
   1. “holocaust”: completely burnt offering (Hebr `*ōlâ*, “to go up”)
      1. also called *tamid* (“always”), “perpetual (i.e. daily) sacrifice”
      2. A “holocaust was wholly destroyed by fire and none of it was eaten . . .” (Scotto 5)
   2. Every morning and evening, a holocaust sacrifice of a year-old unblemished male lamb occurred in the temple, God’s chosen dwelling.
      1. Exod 29:38-42; Num 28:1-8; Lev 1 details the ceremonies
      2. with flour and olive oil (and incense, Exod 30:7-8)
      3. temple as God’s dwelling: Deut 12:11, “you shall bring everything that I command you to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and your donations . . .”
   3. morning holocaust (Scotto 5)
      1. “between dawn and sunrise”
      2. “signaling a reawakening of life and activity”
   4. evening sacrifice (Scotto 5)
      1. “between sunset and dark”
      2. “signaling the close of one day and the beginning of another”
   5. accompanied by prayer
      1. “. . . prayer formulas [are] found in every religious ritual throughout the world.” (Castelot 2: 725)
      2. “. . . sacrifices in Judaism were . . . accompanied by prayer.” (Scotto 6)
      3. Biblical “accounts do not provide [the] prayer formulas [during] the sacrifices.” (Scotto 6)
   6. accompanied by song
      1. chanters
         1. “There were official chanters in Solomon’s Temple from the beginning . . .” (Castelot 2: 725) Amos 5:23 (c 750 bc) refers to singing hymns to instrumental accompaniment: “Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps.”
         2. “. . . the importance of [the chanters] grew steadily until, in the post-exilic Temple, [they] enjoyed great prestige.” 2 Chr 5:11-13, “all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without regard to their divisions, 12and all the levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and kindred, arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, stood east of the altar with one hundred twenty priests who were trumpeters . . . 13It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, [and] the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the Lord . . .”
      2. Psalms was “The official hymnbook of the new Temple . . .” (Castelot 2: 725)
         1. “Internal evidence strongly points to [the] cultic origin and use of most of the psalms. The frequent allusions to Jerusalem, to the Temple, to the sanctuary, to God’s mountain, to his abode, to his footstool and to the holy feasts indicate that, in one way or another, a great number of psalms originated in relationship with the Temple.” (Scotto 11)
            1. Some psalms were sung to accompany a sacrificial service (20:3, 26:5, 27:6, 66:13-15, 81:1-2, 107:22, 116:17). (Scotto 6)
            2. Others indicate less definitely that they were sung in the temple (48:9, 65:1,4, 95:1-2,6, 96:8, 118:19-27, 134, 135). (Scotto 6)
         2. “Biblical prayer was therefore intimately bound up with cult . . .” (Scotto 6)
2. **pre-Christian synagogue service**
   1. 587 bc: Babylonians destroy the temple and separate exiles from Jerusalem.
      1. But prophets assure the people that God can be approached, aside from the temple. (Scotto 6-7)
      2. Jer 29:12-14, “when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. 13When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, 14I will let you find me . . .”
      3. Ezek 11:16, “though I scattered them among the countries, yet I have been a sanctuary to them for a little while in the countries where they have gone.”
   2. 587-539 bc: synagogues probably begin
      1. Synagogues are “small groups [to] receive instruction in their scriptural traditions and to pray together . . .” (Scotto 7)
      2. Bernard Anderson (378): “There is no evidence, however, that there were any organized local assemblies [in Babylon]. All that can be safely said is that the later synagogues which came to be scattered throughout the countries of the dispersion, arose in response to a need that was first experienced during the Exile, when Jews were separated from their land and their Temple.” (Scotto 7)
   3. Probably elements of temple service were used in synagogue services. (Scotto 170 n. 42)
   4. The daily synagogue service was scripture readings, a homily, and prayers. (Scotto 8)
      1. readings from the torah and the prophets
         1. Ezra is credited with “establishment of the practice of reading the Torah publicly before the people . . .” (Scotto 168 n. 19) Neh 8:18, “day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the book of the law of God.”
         2. Readings in synagogues of Torah and prophets excerpts was “on Sabbaths and other holy days, but at other prescribed times as well.” (Scotto 8)
      2. homily
         1. After the readings came “an explanatory exposition . . . to promote the absorption of the Law into the very heart and soul of the attending [8] community . . .” (Scotto 8-9)
         2. The attending community was “passive throughout the service.” (Scotto 8-9)
      3. prayers
         1. “Eventually, prayers were added to the service . . . composed of two principal parts . . .” (Scotto 9)
         2. *shemah* (“Listen!”)
            1. The *shemah* is Deut 6:4-5 (or Deut 6:4-9). The word means “Listen!” and is the first word of the passage.

Deut 6:4-5, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. 5You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.”

Deut 6:6-9, “Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. 7Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. 8Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, 9and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

* + - * 1. “. . . the *shema* was in reality more of a creed than a prayer . . .” (Scotto 9)
        2. The *shema* “was probably the traditional summons . . . which in the old days [opened] the assembly for worship of the tribes, the *Qahal* . . .” (Scotto 9)
        3. In its full form (Deut 6:4-9), “it was . . . part of the Temple liturgy,” rabbinic literature shows. (Scotto 9)
        4. It “was adopted from the Temple into the Synagogue liturgy,” rabbinic literature shows. (Scotto 9)
        5. morning and evening recitation

Jews prayed the *shemah* twice a day. (Scotto 9)

Probably Deut 6:7b (“when you lie down and when you rise”) “gave rise to the custom of beginning and ending each day with the confession of the one God. It became a general Jewish practice in pre-Christian times, wherein all men and boys beginning with their twelfth birthday, were required to recite it regularly.” (Scotto 168 n. 22)

* + - 1. *tefillah* (or *amidah* or *Shemoneh Esreh*)
         1. This was “the prayer *par excellence* of the Synagogue liturgy.” (Scotto 10)
         2. The *tefillah* “was always known as the *amidah* (standing) since the congregation always stood for its recitation.” (Scotto 169 n. 25)
         3. It was mostly rabbinic blessings (hence the name *Shemoneh Esreh*, “Eighteen Benedictions”). (Scotto 10)
         4. The benedictions “seem to belong to different periods,” but most are pre-Christian. (Scotto 10)
         5. The *Shemoneh Esreh* was “composed essentially of three separate groups of prayers or benedictions (*berakoth*) . . .” (Scotto 10)

“The first and last groups respectively, were oriented to the offering of praise and thanksgiving to Yahweh, lauding and thanking him for his majesty, for his justice, for his mighty works of creation, and for his special benevolence and protection toward his Chosen People throughout the course of salvation history as exemplified in their deliverance from bondage in Egypt. The doxology which ended each prayer further emphasized the element of praise. Both of these groups of prayers were invariable and were recited daily . . .” (Scotto 10)

“. . . the intermediate group of blessings . . . consisted of petitionary prayers originally not of a fixed character, but were left to be formed spontaneously by the individual leader . . . Eventually even these variable prayers became themselves fixed in form.” (Scotto 10)

A less prominent element of the *Shemoneh Esreh* “was a corporate sense of sinfulness expressed through a liturgical confession and a plea for forgiveness.” (Scotto 10)

* + - 1. *kaddish*
         1. Scotto later refers to a third prayer: “the three daily Jewish prayers composed of the *shema*, the *Shemone Esreh* or Eighteen Benedictions, and the *Kaddish*, the ancient Aramaic doxology . . .” (Scotto 17)
         2. “Kaddish (קדיש Aramaic: “holy”) is a prayer found in the Jewish prayer service. The central theme of the Kaddish is the magnification and sanctification of God’s name.” (“Kaddish”)

“In the liturgy different versions of the Kaddish are used functionally as separators between sections of the service.” (“Kaddish”)

“The term “Kaddish” is often used to refer specifically to "The Mourners' Kaddish", said as part of the mourning rituals in Judaism in all prayer services as well as at funerals and memorials.” (“Kaddish”)

* + - 1. times: morning and evening; or morning, afternoon, and evening
         1. “The *shema* and the [*tefillah*] have always formed the two chief elements of Jewish daily morning and evening prayer.” (Scotto 168 n. 20)
         2. “These [Jewish] prayers comprised a fusion of the recitation of the *shema* twice a day, both in the morning and evening, with the praying of the *tefillah*, or Eighteen Benedictions, three times a day, in the morning, afternoon, and evening.” (Scotto 16)
      2. psalms
         1. “Accompanying these prayers was the singing of various psalms and canticles at least most likely at the Sabbath Assembly.” (Scotto 10)
         2. “That the psalms . . . became part of the pre-Christian Synagogue service while Temple and synagogue coexisted [is] well accepted . . .” (Scotto 11)

“It is fairly certain that the *Hallel* [Pss 104-106, 111-118, 135, 146-150], consisting of psalms of thanksgiving [169] sung on certain festivals, was an ancient element of the synagogue service.” (Scotto 169-170 n. 37)

* 1. personnel
     1. president
        1. “The leader of the local community usually assumed the role of the president of the synagogue, and presided at all the meetings.” (Scotto 11)
        2. He “opened the services and . . . pronounced the formulas of benediction.” (Scotto 11)
        3. “He was also the first to read the Sacred Scriptures although one of the Scribes usually [11] offered an explanation of the sacred texts.” (Scotto 11-12)
        4. The leader closed each service “with his concluding prayers.” (Scotto 12)
     2. “The other ministers or officers of worship were selected from among the other male members of the community.” (Scotto 12)
     3. homilist: “The prerogative of preaching on the Sacred Scriptures eventually was opened to any male person present in the assembly who wished to offer a few words of exhortation.” (Scotto 170 n. 40)
        1. Matt 4:23, “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom . . .”
        2. Luke 4:16-22, “When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: 18“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. . . .” 20And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” 22All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?””
        3. Acts 13:5, “When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.”
  2. conclusion
     1. “With the development of Synagogue prayer services a new cult comes to light in the Judaic religion, a cult in which the sacrifice of blood and burnt offerings was replaced by a sacrifice of praise in prayer. “The liturgy was more democratic, more independent of the priesthood and the laity played an important part in it. The synagogue plunged Jewish life deep in prayer.” (Hamman, *Prayer* 70) (Scotto 12)
     2. “. . . the seeds of [the liturgy of the hours] were [in] communal prayer [in] Synagogue services.” (Scotto 4)

1. **539-1 bc**: **post-exilic set times of prayer**
   1. Ps 4 has traditionally been seen as an evening prayer. (Scotto 167 n. 4) Ps 4:4, 8, “When you are disturbed, do not sin; ponder it on your beds, and be silent. . . . 8I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety.”
   2. Ps 5 has traditionally been seen as a morning prayer. (Scotto 167 n. 4) Ps 5:3, 7, “O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch. . . . 7I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house, I will bow down toward your holy temple in awe of you.”
   3. Judith prayed at the time of the evening sacrifice of incense in the temple. (Scotto 167 n. 4) Jdt 9:1b, “At the very time when the evening incense was being offered in the house of God in Jerusalem, Judith cried out to the Lord . . .”
   4. Daniel prayed three times a day. (Scotto 167 n. 4) Dan 6:10, “he continued to go to his house, which had windows in its upper room open toward Jerusalem, and to get down on his knees three times a day to pray to his God and praise him . . .”
   5. Ps 55:17 shows that Jews prayed in the evening, in the morning, and at noon. (Scotto 167 n. 4) Ps 55:17, “Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan, and he will hear my voice.”
   6. Dead Sea Scrolls: the “Hymn Book of the Qumran community (first century b.c. [Gaster, Hymn 11:182]) . . . mentions the daily exercise of prayer in the morning, about noon, and in the evening. In addition, [it] speaks of three additional prayer times during the night.” (Weiser 19)
2. **ad 1-125** (**NT period**): **morning and evening synagogue services**
   1. In Jesus’ day “only two services were held each day in the Temple, in the morning and in the evening.” (Scotto 170 n. 44)
   2. Synagogue services throughout Palestine “were closely linked to . . . the daily services offered in the [12] Temple . . .” (Scotto 12-13)
   3. C.W. Dugmore (*The Influence of the Synagogue upon the Divine Office*)
      1. “Daily services of prayer, morning and evening, would almost certainly be held in the synagogues at Jerusalem, Caesarea, Antioch and Rome.” (Dugmore 44; qtd. in Scotto 14)
      2. “. . . the great centers of the infant Church [were] among the larger towns . . .” (Dugmore 43; qtd. in Scotto 14)

# Ancient Period

## The Early Church

Scotto, Dominic F. *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Its History and Its Importance as the Communal Prayer of the Church after the Liturgical Reform of Vatican II*. Petersham MA: St. Bede’s, 1987.

1. **ad 30-100**
   1. Jesus
      1. Jesus had love and respect for temple. (Scotto 14)
         1. Matt 8:4, Jesus to leper, “go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”
         2. Matt 12:6, “I tell you, something greater than the temple is here.”
         3. Matt 23:17-21, “which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that has made the gold sacred? . . . which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? 20So whoever swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it; 21and whoever swears by the sanctuary, swears by it and by the one who dwells in it . . .”
         4. Mark 11:15-17, “And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves; 16and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. 17He was teaching and saying, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.”“
      2. He frequently attended synagogue services. (Scotto 14)
         1. Matt 4:23, “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom . . .”
         2. Matt 9:35, “Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom . . .”
         3. Matt 12:9, “He left that place and entered their synagogue . . .”
         4. Matt 13:54, “He came to his hometown and began to teach the people in their synagogue . . .”
         5. Mark 1:21-22, “They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught.”
         6. Mark 1:39, “And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues . . .”
         7. Mark 3:1, “Again he entered the synagogue . . .”
         8. Mark 6:2, “On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue . . .”
         9. Luke 4:15-27, “He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. 16When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him.”
         10. Luke 4:44, “So he continued proclaiming the message in the synagogues of Judea.”
         11. Luke 6:6, “On another sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught . . .”
         12. Luke 13:10, “Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.”
         13. John 6:59, “He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.”
         14. John 18:20, Jesus to the high priest, “I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple . . .”
      3. Prayer was “present in every element of his teaching.” (See Jeremias, *Prayers of Jesus* 72-78.) (Scotto 14)
         1. Mark 1:35, “In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.”
         2. Mark 6:46, “After saying farewell to them, he went up on the mountain to pray.”
         3. Mark 14:32-42, “They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” 33He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. . . . 35And going a little farther, he . . . prayed . . .”
         4. Luke 5:16, “But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray.”
         5. Luke 6:12, “Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God.”
         6. Luke 9:18, “. . . Jesus was praying alone, with only the disciples near him . . .”
         7. Luke 9:28, “Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray.”
   2. public prayer after Jesus
      1. Early “Christians prayed continuously both privately and communally after the example and teaching of Jesus Christ.” (Scotto 15)
         1. Matt 18:19, “if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.”
         2. Luke 18:1, “Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart.”
         3. Acts 1:14, “All these [the eleven] were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.”
         4. Acts 2:42-47, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. . . . 46Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, 47praising God . . .”
         5. Acts 12:5, “While Peter was kept in prison, the church prayed fervently to God for him.”
         6. Acts 12:12, “As soon as he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many had gathered and were praying.”
         7. Eph 6:18-20, “Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. 19Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, 20for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.”
      2. They continued Jewish prayer customs.
         1. temple
            1. “. . . the Temple continued to play a prominent role in the religious lives of these first Christians.” (Scotto 15)
            2. Luke 24:52-53, “And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; 53and they were continually in the temple blessing God.”
            3. Acts 2:46, “Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts . . .”
            4. Acts 3:1, “One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o’clock in the afternoon.”
            5. Acts 21:26-27, “Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having purified himself, he entered the temple with them, making public the completion of the days of purification when the sacrifice would be made for each of them.”
            6. Acts 22:17, ““After I had returned to Jerusalem and while I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance . . .”
         2. synagogue
            1. “. . . the synagogue most certainly remained an important religious institution in their lives . . .” (Scotto 15)
            2. Acts 6:9-10, “Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen.”
            3. Acts 9:20, “immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues . . .”
            4. Acts 13:5, “When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.”
            5. Acts 13:14-15, “And on the sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. 15After the reading of the law and the prophets, the officials of the synagogue sent them a message, saying, “Brothers, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, give it.”“
            6. Acts 15:21, James to Council of Jerusalem, “in every city, for generations past, Moses has had those who proclaim him, for he has been read aloud every sabbath in the synagogues.”
            7. Acts 17:2, “And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three sabbath days argued with them from the scriptures . . .”
            8. Acts 17:10, “when they arrived, they went to the Jewish synagogue.”
            9. Acts 17:17, “So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons . . .”
            10. Acts 18:4, “Every sabbath he would argue in the synagogue and would try to convince Jews and Greeks.”
            11. Acts 18:19, Paul “went into the synagogue and had a discussion with the Jews.”
            12. Acts 18:26, “He [Apollos] began to speak boldly in the synagogue . . .”
            13. Acts 19:8, “He [Paul] entered the synagogue and for three months spoke out boldly, and argued persuasively about the kingdom of God.”
         3. daily prayers
            1. Early Christians “seem to have observed the traditional hours of Jewish prayer which they [Jews] customarily prayed thrice daily at the prescribed times. These [Jewish] prayers comprised a fusion of the recitation of the *shema* twice a day [and the Eighteen Benedictions] morning, afternoon, and evening.” (Scotto 16)
            2. Acts 3:1, 10:3, 30 attest to “prayer at three in the afternoon . . .” (Scotto 171 n. 56)

Acts 3:1, “One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o’clock in the afternoon.”

Acts 10:3, “One afternoon at about three o’clock he had a vision in which he clearly saw an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius.”“

Acts 10:30, “Cornelius replied, “Four days ago at this very hour, at three o’clock, I was praying in my house when suddenly a man in dazzling clothes stood before me.”

* + - * 1. But there are also references to noon and midnight.

noon

Acts 10:9, “About noon the next day, . . . Peter went up on the roof to pray.”

midnight

Acts 16:25, “About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.”

* + 1. But a uniquely Christian cult also existed.
       1. It principally revolved around the Eucharist. (Scotto 16)
          1. Acts 2:42, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”
          2. Acts 2:46, “Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts . . .”
          3. Acts 20:7-11, “On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them . . . 11after he had broken bread and eaten, he continued to converse with them until dawn . . .”
          4. 1 Cor 11:17-34, “when you come together as a church, . . . 20it is not really to eat the Lord’s supper. 21For when the time comes to eat, each of you goes ahead with your own supper, and one goes hungry and another becomes drunk. . . . 23For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, 24and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 25In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. 27Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. 28Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves. . . . 33So then, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. 34If you are hungry, eat at home, so that when you come together, it will not be for your condemnation.”
          5. 1 Cor 14:26-40, “What should be done then, my friends? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. 27If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn; and let one interpret. 28But if there is no one to interpret, let them be silent in church and speak to themselves and to God. 29Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. 30If a revelation is made to someone else sitting nearby, let the first person be silent. 31For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged. 32And the spirits of prophets are subject to the prophets, 33for God is a God not of disorder but of peace. (As in all the churches of the saints, 34women should be silent in the churches.)”
       2. “But it also involved other periods dedicated to . . . prayer which differed from the traditional Jewish patterns of prayer, not only in form but also in time and place.” (Scotto 16)
          1. Early Christian communities held “informal, communal prayer services at various times in private homes . . .” (Scotto 16)

Acts 1:12-14, “All these [the eleven] were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.”

Acts 1:24-25, “Then they prayed and said, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen 25to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”“

Acts 4:23-24, “After they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God . . .”

Acts 12:12, “he [Peter] went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many had gathered and were praying.”

Acts 13:2-3, “While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.”

* + - * 1. Like synagogue services, Christian prayer services included

“the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual canticles”

Acts 2:47; 4:24-25; Eph 5:19; Col 3:16; 1 Cor 14:26

“teaching and preaching”

Acts 20:7-8; 28-23; 31; 1 Cor 14:26-27

“See also John 4:23; Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35; Rom 8:26; 1 Cor 14:26-33.” (Scotto 16)

* + 1. c. ad 90: exclusion of Jewish Christians from the synagogues
       1. “. . . the abuses of the Judaizing party forced the Christians to separate more distinctly from the Jews and their practices and worship.” (Cabrol)
       2. “Christ now becomes the new Temple . . .” (Scotto 17)
          1. John 2:15-22, “Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple . . . 18The Jews then said to him, “What sign can you show us for doing this?” 19Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” . . . 21he was speaking of the temple of his body.”
          2. Heb 6:19-20, “We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, 20where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”
          3. Heb 7:18-19, “There is, on the one hand, the abrogation of an earlier commandment because it was weak and ineffectual 19(for the law made nothing perfect); there is, on the other hand, the introduction of a better hope, through which we approach God.”
       3. “. . . Christian prayer begins to take on a stronger Christocentric orientation.” (Scotto 17)
       4. The *Didache* 8.2 (c ad 70-100) told Christians “to recite the Lord’s Prayer three times a day.” Perhaps the Lord’s Prayer was “a substitute for the three daily Jewish prayers composed of the *shema*, the *Shemone Esreh* or Eighteen Benedictions, and the *Kaddish*, the ancient Aramaic doxology . . .” (Thus Jeremias, *Prayers* 78-81.) (Scotto 17)

1. **200s**
   1. c. ad 195-203: Tertullian (155-222; conversion c. 190-95; Montanist c. 202-03)
      1. *De oratione* (c. 195-203): “With regard to the time, the outward observance of certain hours will not be without profit. I refer to those hours of community prayer which mark the main divisions of the day, namely, the third, sixth, and ninth, which you may find were in established use in the Scriptures. . . . Although these incidents simply happen without any precept for observing these hours, it would be good to establish some precedent which would make the admonition to pray a binding force to wrest us violently at times from our business, as by a law, to such an obligation, just as we read it was certainly also observed by Daniel according to the discipline of Israel [Dan 6:11], that we pray no less than three times a day, as debtors to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Of course, we are expecting the appropriate prayers, which are due without any admonition at the approach of dawn and evening.” (Scotto 18)
         1. This passage refers to “the third, sixth, and ninth” hours, commonly known as terce, sext, and none. It refers to “incidents” in scripture which “established” their use. Perhaps Tertullian means these:
            1. terce (the third hour, 9 a.m.): Acts 2:15, “these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning.”
            2. sext (the sixth hour, noon): Acts 10:9, “About noon the next day, as they [three men from Cornelius] were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray.”
            3. none (the ninth hour, 3 p.m.): Acts 3:1, “One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o’clock in the afternoon.”
         2. Terce, sext, and none were probably not “based on any corresponding times of prayer in Judaism. . . . [Probably they] simply formed the normal divisions of the day in the Roman world.” [21] (Scotto 21, 173 n. 89)
            1. “. . . the hours for prayer in the synagogue were three . . .” (Scotto 173 n. 89)

Dan 6:10, “he [got] down on his knees three times a day to pray . . .”

Ps 55:17, “Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan, and he will hear my voice.”

* + - * 1. But “there is no way to verify that they corresponded to the Christian hours of Terce, Sext, and None.” (Scotto 173 n. 89)
      1. Tertullian says “the principal prayer hours of morning and evening [are] obligatory for all Christians (*legitimae orationes*), while he considered the outward observance of the lesser hours of Terce, Sext, and None as profitable and consequently almost obligatory as well (*quasi lege*).” (Scotto 18)
    1. c. ad 198-203: *Ad Uxorem*
       1. In addition to the five hours of *Ad oratione* (morning, terce, sext, none, and evening), “. . . Tertullian mentions a sixth hour within the context of a question put to Christian women concerning their pagan husbands. “Will not your rising in the night to pray be [18] interpreted to be some act of magic?” This would, therefore, seem to constitute a midnight hour of prayer.” (Scotto 18-19)
  1. c. ad 215: Hippolytus’ *Apostolic Tradition*
     1. Hippolytus “indicates the observance of seven hours of prayer . . .” (Scotto 19)
        1. Ps 119:164, “Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous ordinances.”
     2. morning prayer (*not* Eucharist, which is discussed in *Apostolic Tradition* ch. 36)
        1. *Apostolic Tradition* 41: “let every faithful man and woman when they rise from sleep at dawn, before they undertake any work, wash their hands and pray to God, and so let them go to their work.
           1. “But if there should be an instruction in the word, let each one prefer to go there, considering that it is God whom he hears speaking by the mouth of him who instructs. For he who prays with the Church will be able to avoid all the evils of that day. The God-fearing man should consider it a great loss if he does not go to the place in which they give instruction, and especially if he knows how to read. . . .
           2. “And if there is a day on which there is no instruction let each one at home take a holy book and read in it sufficiently what seems profitable.” (Qtd. in Scotto 19)
        2. *Apostolic Tradition* 39: “let the deacons and presbyters assemble daily . . . unless sickness prevents them. When all have assembled, they shall instruct those who are in the church, and after having also prayed, let each one go about his own business.” (Scotto 19)
     3. terce (*Apostolic Tradition* 41): “If you are in your own home, pray at the third hour and praise God. If you are elsewhere at that moment, pray in your own heart. Because at this hour Christ was seen nailed upon the tree.” (Mark 15:25) (Scotto 20)
     4. sext (*Apostolic Tradition* 41): “Pray as well on the sixth hour. Because when Christ was nailed to the wood of the cross, the daylight was suspended and a great darkness came upon the land.” (Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44; Matt 27:45) (Scotto 20)
     5. none (*Apostolic Tradition* 41): “Let there also be full prayer and praise at the ninth hour. . . . At that hour, therefore, Christ was pierced in his side and shed forth both water and blood.” (John 19:34) (Scotto 20)
     6. 2 nighttime prayers: the *Apostolic Tradition* “recommends prayer before retiring, and thereafter two times during the night, once at midnight and again at cockcrow . . .” (Scotto 20)
        1. *Apostolic Tradition* 41: “Pray also before retiring for the night. But at about midnight rise and wash your hands with water and pray. And if you have a wife, both of you pray together; but if she is not yet baptized, go apart into another room and pray and return again to your bed. And be not slothful to pray. . . . It is necessary for the following reason to pray at this hour. . . . Because the ancients who handed on the tradition to us have taught us that in this hour all creation pauses for a brief moment to praise the Lord. And at cockcrow, likewise rise (and pray). Because at that hour of cockcrow, the children of Israel denied Christ, who we have known by faith.” (Scotto 20)
        2. “While prayer in the evening before retiring is enjoined, nothing is said about any public assembly at that hour outside of the reference [in *Apostolic Tradition* 25] to the *lucenarium* [*sic*]. Hippolytus gives evidence that the common liturgical evening meal (agape) was introduced by [172] the blessing of light [*luchnikon*, *lucernarium*], and responsorial psalmody; the people sang Alleluia in response. The introductory *lucernarium* has all but disappeared from the Roman rite, remaining most prominently in the Easter Vigil service. In the East it has survived . . .” (Scotto 172-173 n. 86)
  2. Origen, *Homilia in Genesim* (d. ad 254): “. . . Origen affirms that daily prayer services were held in the Church of Alexandria characterized by the reading of Sacred Scripture, instruction and prayer.” (Scotto 21)
  3. Cyprian, *De oratione Dominica* (d. ad 258)
     1. Christians must pray early in the morning so that, he says, “the Lord’s resurrection may be celebrated by morning prayer.” (Scotto 19)
     2. He also says “that the third, sixth, and ninth hours are hours which should be designated for prayer by all Christians.” (Scotto 19)
     3. Likewise, he says, “at the sunsetting and at the decline of day of necessity we must pray again.” (Scotto 19)
  4. compline
     1. “Very early Completorium was separated from Vespers and served as a form of evening prayer.” (Bihlmeyer 1: 337)
     2. “Complin appears as a repetition of Vespers, first in the fourth century . . .” (Cabrol, “Divine Office”)
  5. prime
     1. “Finally, another period of prayer, Prime, was inserted between Laudes and Tierce, thus completing the seven Canonical Hours of the later breviary.” (Bihlmeyer 1: 337)
     2. “. . . a short prayer on rising and lying down—Prime and Compline.” (Scotto 28)
     3. Weiser dates the introduction of prime and compline much later: “About the year 500 there appeared in the monasteries two additional prayer hours: the Prime (first hour, six o’clock in the morning) and the Compline (*completa*: finished, before retiring at midnight).” (Weiser 20)
     4. “Prime is the only hour the precise origin and date of which are known—at the end of the fourth century . . .” (Cabrol, “Divine Office”)
  6. Were these prayers, in the 200s, public or private?
     1. Bihlmeyer seems to assume they were *private* until the 500s. Speaking of the 400s, he says, “Not only the clergy and monks took part in this form of prayer [the divine office], but from the sixth century, the laity, too, attended, at least for Matins and Vespers, since in many churches the Eucharistic service was not held on week days . . .” (Bihlmeyer 1.337)

(Scotto sees the establishment of morning and evening prayer as being *before* the development of the other hours; Bihlmeyer sees the predominance of morning and evening prayer as emerging *after* the development of most of the hours. Crichton agrees with Bihlmeyer: “By the end of the fifth century, morning and evening prayer emerged as the two focal points of this daily church Office in which both clergy and laity actively participated.” [J. D. Crichton, *Christian Celebration—The Prayer of the Church* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1976) 40] [Scotto 30])

* + 1. Weiser seems to assume they were *private* in the 200s. He says that they were “hours of daily private prayer” and that only in the 300s were “two of these exercises [lauds and vespers] . . . held in church.” But then he adds (citing Tertullian, *On Prayer* 28), “The faithful were not strictly obliged to attend, but from ancient reports we know that they thronged the churches in good numbers . . .” This suggests that the prayer services were public already in the 200s. (Weiser 19)
    2. Scotto assumes morning and evening prayer were *public* in the 200s, while terce, sext, and none became public in the 300s. Morning and evening prayer “were the two Hours in which the people participated freely in varying numbers while the other Hours, such as Terce, Sext, and None played little part in public worship at least until the fourth century.” (Scotto 174 n. 110)
    3. It is “the stronger assumption that most likely by [c. ad 200] there were daily prayer services in both North Africa and Rome which the faithful were expected to attend.” (Scotto 21)
       1. Though Tertullian “recommends the observance of the lesser hours, and simply takes for granted morning and evening prayer as an established part of every Christian’s daily prayer life, he does not reveal to us whether he is speaking about private or public prayer.” (Scotto 21)
       2. Hippolytus refers to public morning prayer, though his references to terce, sext, none, and evening prayer are ambiguous. (Scotto 21)
       3. Origen refers to public prayer services, but does not elaborate. (Scotto 21)
       4. “. . . while recommending [lauds, terce, sext, none, and vespers], Cyprian asserts that prayer is public and common.” (Scotto 21)

1. **300s**
   1. introduction
      1. before and after ad 313
         1. Before Christianity was legalized in ad 313, “Christians had gathered publicly in their own homes and churches [but] had been considerably restricted both socially and culturally . . .” (Scotto 22)
         2. In 313 “Constantine issued the so-called Edict of Toleration which granted Christians full freedom of religion and worship.” (Scotto 22)
         3. “Now with the official patronage of the Emperor Constantine, coupled with the endowment of numerous basilicas throughout the empire, the Church’s life and worship experienced a new period of growth and development.” (Scotto 22)
      2. From “the cathedral or parochial “Office” [there evolved] present day Lauds and Vespers . . .” (Scotto 24)
      3. “These liturgies were, under the new circumstances, appropriately solemn and impressive liturgies . . .” (Scotto 23)
   2. cathedral office (morning and evening prayers, with laity present)
      1. general references
         1. Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 263-339): “in God’s churches throughout the world hymns, praises, and truly divine delights are arranged in his honor at the morning sunrise and in the evening . . .” (Scotto 22)
         2. Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis (c. 315-403): “morning praises and prayers are continuously celebrated in the universal Church as well as evening psalms and prayers.” (Scotto 23)
         3. John Chrysostom (c. 347-407): “every day there are prayers both in the evening and the morning . . .” (Scotto 23)
      2. the *Apostolic Constitutions* (c. ad 380)
         1. This was “an ancient Church Order . . . a manual of disciplinary and liturgical regulations . . .” (Scotto 23)
         2. It purports to have been compiled by Clement of Rome, but is from c. ad 380.
         3. *Apostolic Constitutions*: “When you instruct the people, O Bishop, command and exhort them to make it a practice to come daily to the church in the morning and in the evening, and on no account to cease doing so, but to assemble together continually . . . [Do not] give preference to the necessities of this life [23] over the word of God; but assemble yourselves every day, morning and evening, singing psalms and praying in the Lord’s house, in the morning saying the sixty-second psalm, and in the evening the one-hundred and fortieth psalm. Hasten to the church, therefore, with great desire and alacrity on the day of the Sabbath, and also on the day of the resurrection of the Lord, that is Sunday . . .” (Qtd. in Scotto 23-24)
         4. So: daily? or weekends?
      3. Egeria, *Diary of a Journey* (*Peregrinatio Sylviae*, *Peregrinatio Ætheriae*, c. 381-84)
         1. A.k.a. “Etheria,” “Echeria.” (Bechtrel) “Egeria,” the usual English form, Weiser 20), “is probably the correct form of the name . . .” (Bechtel)
         2. She was “A noble Roman lady from southern Gaul,” (Weiser 20), “a native of Galicia, Spain . . .” (Bechtel)
         3. She “made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land . . .” (Weiser 20)
            1. “. . . over three years, she visited Western and Eastern Palestine, Idumea, Sinai, Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria, and Mesopotamia . . .” (Bechtel)
            2. She was “a nun” (Weiser 20, Bechtel) who kept a diary of her travels “for the sisters of her community . . .” (Bechtel)
         4. Weiser (20) dates the work to c. 395; most (e.g., Scotto 24, Bechtel), to c. 381-84.
         5. 1884: the work is discovered in the library of Arezzo. (Bechtel)
         6. She describes the morning and evening services “as they were held in Jerusalem . . . in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Anastasis) . . .” (Weiser 20)
         7. Egeria, *Diary of a Journey*: “All the doors of the Anastasis are opened before cock-crow each day, and the “monazontes and parthenae” as they call them here [“most likely ascetics or *ferventes*,” perhaps religious, 175 n. 111], come in, and also some lay men and women, at least those who are willing to wake at such an early hour. From then until daybreak they join in singing the refrains to the hymns, psalms, and antiphons. There is a prayer between each of the [24] hymns, since there are two or three presbyters and deacons each day by rota, who are there with the monazontes and say the prayers between all the hymns and antiphons.” (Qtd. in Scotto 24-25) This is “nocturnal prayer . . .” (Scotto 27)
         8. Egeria, *Diary of a Journey*: “As soon as dawn comes, they start the Morning Hymns, and the Bishop with his clergy comes [in procession] and joins them. He goes straight into the cave . . .” (Qtd. in Scotto 25)
         9. Egeria, *Diary of a Journey*: “Again at midday everyone comes into the Anastasis and says psalms and antiphons until a message is sent to the Bishop. Again he enters.” (Qtd. in Scotto 25)
         10. Egeria, *Diary of a Journey*: “At three o’clock they do once more what they did at midday . . .” (Qtd. in Scotto 25)
         11. Egeria, *Diary of a Journey*: “but at four o’clock they have Lychnicon [λύνχικον?], as they call it, or in our language, Lucernare.” (Qtd. in Scotto 25)
             1. These prayers continued from “four o’clock . . . till dusk.” (Scotto 24)
         12. Egeria tells also “how the many children present spontaneously cried “Kyrie eleison” [“Lord have mercy”] in answer to the deacon’s reading of commemorations.” (Weiser 20)
         13. “As to exactly who the *monazontes* and *parthenai* may be, we have no clear evidence. However, since Egeria does distinguish them from ordinary lay people, whom she refers to as secular men and women, it seems that they [174] were most likely ascetics or *ferventes*. While Egeria uses different words to describe people who have set themselves apart from the world for religious motives, her vocabulary is too confused to make it possible for us to distinguish with any great precision the exact meaning attached to the various technical terms she employs.” (Scotto 174-175 n. 111)
         14. Egeria describes “a well organized local liturgy of prayer wherein the faithful gathered daily for an established program of prayer together with their bishop and clergy. . . . Most conspicuous in these daily offices were the morning and evening prayers since they were celebrated with greater solemnity and since more people were accustomed to participate, namely, the bishop, his clergy and the community of the faithful.” (Scotto 24)
         15. “principal elements of this “cathedral” Office” (Scotto 25)
             1. “The Christians gathered together in a public place to celebrate morning and evening prayers.” (Scotto 25)
             2. “While the bishop and his clergy did not initially participate in the service, they did enter in procession sometime during the liturgy to perform a specific function, namely, to officiate at the prayers and blessings.” (Scotto 25)
             3. “During the morning prayer service the people gathered to offer praise and thanksgiving to God for his mercy, while in the evening prayer service they assumed a penitential spirit asking God’s forgiveness for the failings of the day.” (Scotto 25)
             4. “For morning prayer the community usually recited Psalm 62 (63) and Psalms 148-150, and in the evening service Psalms 116 (117), 129 (130) and 141 (142).” (Scotto 25)
             5. “. . . other antiphons and hymns were chanted but unfortunately we have no record of these.” (Scotto 25)
             6. “Both hours were then concluded with a litany of the catechumens, other prayers and a dismissal.” (Scotto 25)
      4. conclusions
         1. The cathedral or ecclesial office “was the principal means used by the early Church to assemble publicly in order to give communal praise and thanksgiving to God especially at these principal hours of morning and evening.” (Scotto 25)
         2. C.W. Dugmore (*Influence* 51): “The special importance attached to these times of prayer is best explained on the hypothesis that they represent the tradition of the primitive Church at Jerusalem, derived directly from synagogue practice and [25] continued . . . until they became incorporated in the monastic Hours of Prayer sometime in the fourth century.” (Scotto 25-26)
         3. “Both the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* [*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 100, 1963] and the *General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours* [§ 37, 1971] place great emphasis upon the fact that Morning and Evening Prayer are the two most important Offices of the day. In effect, this is a reaffirmation [139] of the ancient cathedral Office, when aside from the Eucharist itself, these two Hours represented the principal daily and communal public prayer of the ancient Church.” (Scotto 139-40)
   3. monastic office (monks alone)
      1. development of monasticism
         1. “More and more disillusioned people fled the world in order to live lives of greater isolation and of almost exclusive dedication to prayer. Throughout the fourth century this movement grew steadily and eventually gave rise to the formation of communities of like-minded individuals. Thus through their renunciation of the world, family and possessions, these communities could then devote their entire lives to the pursuit of spiritual perfection and to prayer in a way which was impossible for Christians still living in the world, including the clergy.”
         2. A. Schememann (*Introduction to Liturgical Theology* [London: Faith Press, 1966] 107): “prayer itself now became the sole undertaking replacing all other tasks.” (Qtd. in Scotto 27)
         3. c. 271: Anthony (c. 250-356 [106 years]) in Egypt founds the eremetical (hermit) tradition. He withdraws to the Egyptian desert to pray, memorize scriptures, do penance, and practice self-denial (e.g., fasting). (Holmes 42)
         4. c. 320: Pachomius (290-346) in Egypt founds the cenobitical tradition (monks living in community under an abbot). (Holmes 42)
            1. Penance and self-denial were not as ascetical; far greater numbers joined. They prayed in common, chanted psalms, read the scriptures, and, “when a visiting priest was present,” celebrated the Eucharist. (Holmes 43)
            2. “His disciples became so numerous that before his death he governed eight houses [“thirty or forty monks under a rector”], besides the convents for women . . .” (Eberhardt)
         5. Eastern monasticism spread thanks to: (Holmes 44)
            1. Hilarion of Gaza (291-371)
            2. Ephraem of Syria (306-73)
            3. and Basil the Great of Caesarea in Cappadocia (329-79)

He is “father of Eastern monasticism” because he “regulated the monks’ day [with] set time to liturgical prayer, meditative reading and manual labour.” (Holmes 43)

* + - 1. Western monasticism spread thanks to: (Holmes 44)
         1. Athanasius of Alexandria (293-373), through his biography of his master Anthony of Egypt
         2. Martin of Tours, who c. 360 founds the first monastery in Gaul, Ligugé Abbey (W central France)
         3. Jerome, c. 380-85 popularizes monasticism in Rome; he later founds a monastery at Bethlehem
         4. Augustine, who c. 400 makes the church in Hippo semi-monastic
         5. and John Cassian, who in 415 establishes monasteries at Marseilles and Lérins
         6. So before Benedict (the “father of Western monasticism”) “there were many examples of monastic life in the West . . . although numbers were smaller than in the East . . .” (Holmes 44)
    1. Egeria, *Diary of a Journey* (c. 381-84)
       1. Egeria “makes us aware of the presence of the *monazontes* and *parthenae* at the daily liturgical offices conducted at the Anastasis. While these “monks” and “virgins” or “nuns” were most likely ascetics or *ferventes*, . . . their constant presence at the daily prayer services, as well as her description of the well organized, ample and fairly formal liturgical celebrations conducted daily throughout the week is very significant. [She alerts us to] a new “monastic” type current of prayer and spirituality . . .” (Scotto 26)
          1. “. . . the weekday nighttime vigils [were] attended by the *monazontes* alone, outside of the solemn Sunday vigil which was attended by the entire Christian community . . .” (Scotto 26)
          2. Egeria, *Diary of a Journey*: “All the doors of the Anastasis are opened before cock-crow each day, and the “monazontes and parthenae” . . . come in, and also some lay men and women . . . From then until daybreak they join in singing the refrains to the hymns, psalms, and antiphons. There is a prayer between each of the [24] hymns . . . As soon as dawn comes, they start the Morning Hymns . . .” (Qtd. in Scotto 24-25)
          3. “. . . daily, public prayer services in the early morning . . . at cock-crow, [were] attended by the ascetics and *ferventes* with some dedicated secular lay men and women . . .” (Scotto 26)
          4. And there were “services at the third, sixth, and ninth hours . . .” (Scotto 26)
       2. “. . . the relatively simple pattern of worship previously celebrated by the ordinary clergy and laity was now being strongly influenced into a more expansive and formalized structure due to the particular needs of the growing number of ascetics and *ferventes* who apparently used the same parochial church edifices for their own daily worship.” (Scotto 26)
       3. “Generally characteristic of these early “monastic” communities was the praying of the entire psalter “in course” over a prescribed period of time . . .” (Scotto 27)
          1. “. . . the first generations of monks had either privately or together, recited the Psalms, and occasionally large numbers participated . . .” (Leclerq 288)
       4. “From the beginnings of monastic life, the daily hours were kept by the monks in common, the psalms and many other prayers being chanted or recited in alternating groups (choir).” (Weiser 20)
  1. co-existing cathedral and monastic offices
     1. “Concurrent with the emergence and spread of monasticism, there [28] occurred a gradual, almost universal growth within the Church of a twofold rhythm of liturgical prayer”: the cathedral office and the monastic office. (Scotto 27-28)
     2. H. Dalmais (*Introduction to the Liturgy*. Trans. R. Capel [Baltimore: Helicon, 1961] 144): “The whole Christian community was called together for the morning and evening offices, for the vigils of great feasts and sometimes for the Sunday vigil. The monasteries kept a daily vigil and in the course of the day performed liturgical prayer at Terce, Sext, and None, adding almost everywhere a short prayer on rising and lying down—Prime and Compline.” (Qtd. in Scotto 28)
     3. There were “The gatherings of bishops with their clergy and the faithful throughout the fourth and fifth centuries in both the East and West [175] . . . [And there were] “monastic” communities, in both East and West, . . . celebrating in common, with far greater frequency and regularity, a full cursus of liturgical prayer.” (Cassian, *De Coenobiorum Institutis* 2.3) (Scotto 175-176 n. 124)
  2. merger of cathedral and monastic offices
     1. “Throughout the fourth and fifth centuries, these two rhythms of prayer began to come together and intermingle. [This led] to the merger of the cathedral and monastic rites into a twofold rite of public prayer within the Church.” (Scotto 28)
     2. “. . . the privileged site of Jerusalem seems to have been an ideal milieu for the introduction of the early monastic influence into the life of the local church . . .” (Scotto 28)
     3. The *monazontes* of Jerusalem, the monks serving Roman basilicas, and “the *ferventes* or *devoti* [of] monasteries of the Frankish kingdom [31] . . . should not be thought of as . . . the fully formed monastic communities [of] later ages.” [177 n. 143] (Scotto 31, 177 n. 143)
     4. “This type of monk . . . made liturgical prayer rather than asceticism the basis of their particular devotion and consequently exerted a strong influence upon the formation of the Divine Office in the parish churches. It is to these monks, and more particularly to those of the Roman basilicas, that we can credit the establishment of the complete framework of the daily Hours and the [31] assignment of particular psalms to certain Offices. This, however, does not affirm the existence of a general uniformity in the celebration of the Hours. In fact, in the West, there was no such uniformity at least down to the ninth century.” (Scotto 31-32)
     5. “Within this period the people continued to come to church to pray the morning and evening Offices as often as they could with their bishops and clergy [Chrysostom (d. 407), *Homilia IV de Anna*], but because of practical limitations on their time and in the face of a general liturgical decline, the continuous and more comprehensive recitation of the Office was ensured in the cathedrals and greater churches by these various groups of monks [Jungmann, *Pastoral Liturgy* 151-57]. However, while the stability and content of prayer was undoubtedly improved in many regards, a certain trend began to develop which would eventually cause a decided shift from the parishes to the monasteries as the centers of liturgical celebration.” (Scotto 32)
     6. Around 1000, “there would eventually rise in the West a single, mixed tradition which would come to be known as the urban-monastic tradition.” See “900-1200” below. (Scotto 28)

1. **400s**
   1. development of parishes
      1. In the 400s, “clerics belonged to the clergy of a definite church presided over by a resident bishop.” (Scotto 28)
      2. By c ad 400, “In the greater city centers of Christendom the Hours were distributed among the principal churches while in smaller towns they were not celebrated at all. At the same time not all clerics participated in the entire Office but took turns according to episcopal directions.” (Scotto 176 n. 127)
      3. “. . . the office was then [ad 400-800] the prayer of each local church, celebrated by the clerics who were in its service.” (Salmon 108)
   2. lay participation in the office
      1. In Egeria’s description of the Jerusalem liturgy c. 381-84, “participation of the clergy and at least the devout laity, in both morning and evening prayer, was a customary practice.” (Scotto 29)
      2. Ambrose, bishop of Milan (c. 339-97)
         1. Ambrose (*Expositio in Psalmum 118*): “early in the morning hasten to church offering your first pious prayers, and afterwards if material necessities call you, do not forget to say: “Early in the morning my eyes reminded me to meditate upon your words,” and then you can start your work. How joyful it is to start the day with hymns and songs from the beatitudes which you read in the Gospel!”“ (Qtd. in Scotto 30)
         2. “This testifies clearly to the use of readings as well as psalms . . . in the Office at Milan in the time of Ambrose.” (Scotto 30)
         3. Ambrose “exhorts his people to faithfully attend these liturgical celebrations since they have been apparently negligent in doing so.” (Jungmann, *Pastoral Liturgy* 122-57) (Scotto 30)
      3. Augustine (354-430)
         1. In the *Confessions* 5.9 he described his mother, Monica, “going to church daily both in the morning and in the evening that she might hear God in his word and he might hear her in her prayers.” (Scotto 30)
         2. In *De civitate Dei* “He also refers to the devotion of the entire community as daily they recite prayers and sing hymns and psalms in common . . .” (Scotto 30)
         3. In *Enarratio in Psalmum 66* he says of the zealous Christian that, like an ant, he “runs daily to the church of God, to pray, to listen to the lesson, to sing the hymn and to ruminate on what he had heard.” “This testifies clearly to the use of readings as well as psalms as was also evident in the Office at Milan in the time of Ambrose.” (Scotto 30)
      4. While these morning and evening prayers “seemed to assume the presence of the clergy they were, nevertheless, geared primarily for the people’s participation and were consequently comparatively short consisting of psalms, reading (homily), hymns, intercessions, and concluding prayers.” (Scotto 30)
   3. recitation of the seven canonical hours in the basilicas
      1. by c. 450: “In Rome . . . “monasticism” was already exerting a powerful influence upon local worship through the building of basilica convents, the duty of whose resident “monks” was to sing the Office in its full monastic cycle in the neighboring basilica.” (Jungmann, *Pastoral Liturgy* 154) (Scotto 28)
      2. by c. 450: “long before Benedict . . . there were already existing in Rome convents staffed by “monks” whose principal duty was to sing the Office in its full monastic cycle within the basilicas to which they were attached, thereby ensuring the celebration of a full monastic Office within these churches.” (Scotto 34)
      3. “. . . praying all the hours, from Vigils to evening [33] Compline, within the course of a single day” became common in the 400s. (Scotto 33-34)
2. **the seven canonical hours**
   1. *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (3rd ed.) defines “lauds” as “The service of prayers following the matins and constituting with them the first of the seven canonical hours.”
   2. So the seven canonical hours were: matins and lauds (counted as one), prime, terce, sext, none, vespers, and compline.
   3. by 800: the “canonical offices consisted of eight daily prayer events and three (or four) nightly divisions (called “nocturns”, “watches,” or “vigils”).” (“Canonical Hours”)

## The Seven Canonical Hours, c. ad 450

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| current name | latin name | latin etymology | later name | roman time | (our time:) |
| office of readings | *vigilia* | *vigilia* (wakefulness, a watch) | matins (ad 1300s) | night watch | midnight |
| morning prayer | *matutinum* | *matutina* (morning) | lauds (*laudare*, praise) (1300s) | cockcrow | dawn, first light |
| prime | *prime* | *prime* (first) | prime (1000s) | first hour | sunrise, 6-8 am |
| terce | *tertia* | *tertia* (third) | terce (1300s) | third hour | 9 am |
| sext | *sexta* | *sexta* (sixth) | sext (1400s) | sixth hour | 12 pm |
| none | *nona* | *nona* (ninth) | none (1845) | ninth hour | 3 pm |
| evening prayer | *lucerisarium*, *lucernarium* | *lucerna* (lamp) (prayer when lamps are lit) | vespers (*vesper*, evening) (1300s) | twelfth hour | dusk, 6-8 pm |
| compline | *completorium* | *complere* (fill out, complete) | compline (1200s) |  | bedtime, 8 pm |

“. . . the twelve hours of the day were necessarily divided by the gnomon [sundial top] between the rising and the setting of the sun, while the hours of the night were conversely divided between sunset and sunrise; in proportion as the day hours were longer at one season, the night hours were, of course, shorter, and vice versa. The day hours and night hours were equal only twice a year: at the vernal and autumnal equinoxes. They lengthened and shortened in inverse ratio till the summer and winter solstices, when the discrepancy between them reached its maximum. At the winter solstice (December 22), when the day had only 8 hours, 54 minutes of sunlight against a night of 15 hours, 6 minutes, the day hour shrank to 44 minutes while in compensation the night hour lengthened to 1 hour, 15 minutes. At the summer solstice the position was exactly reversed; the night hour shrank to its minimum while the day hour reached its maximum.” (Carcopino, Jérôme. *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*: *The People and the City at the Height of the Empire*. Ed. Henry T Rowell. Trans. Emily Overend Lorimer. New Haven: Yale UP, 1940.)

“*Twilight* is that evening period of waning light from the time of sunset to dark, often termed *dusk*. Morning twilight, a time of increasing light, is called *dawn*. The source of this light is the Sun shining on the atmosphere above the observer. Twilight is a time of very slowly changing sky illumination with no abrupt variations. Nevertheless, there are 3 commonly accepted divisions in this smooth continuum defined by the distance the Sun lies below the astronomical horizon: civil twilight, nautical twilight, and astronomical twilight. The *astronomical horizon* is that great circle lying 90° from the zenith, the point directly over the observer’s head. Twilight ends in the evening or begins in the morning at a particular time. Nominally, evening events are repeated in reverse order in the morning. *Civil twilight* is the time from the moment of sunset, when the Sun’s apparent upper edge is just at the horizon, until the center of the Sun is 6° directly below the horizon. In many states, this is the time in the evening when automobile headlights must be turned on, not to see better, but to be seen by other drivers. After this time, a newspaper becomes increasingly difficult to read in the absence of artificial light. *Nautical twilight* ends when the Sun’s center is 12° below the horizon. By this time in the evening, the bright stars used by navigators have appeared, and the horizon may still be seen. After this time, the horizon is more difficult to perceive, preventing navigators from sighting stars. *Astronomical twilight* ends in the evening when the Sun is 18° below the horizon and the sky is dark enough, at least away from the Sun’s location, to allow astronomical work to proceed. Sunlight, however, is still shining on the higher levels of the atmosphere from the observer’s zenith to the horizon toward the Sun. Although not named as a period of twilight, when the Sun is 24° below the horizon, no part of the observer’s atmosphere, even toward the Sun, receives any sunlight. In the tropics, the Sun moves nearly vertically, accomplishing its 6°, 12°, or 18° depression very quickly. In the polar regions, the Sun’s diurnal motion may actually be nearly along the horizon, prolonging the twilight period or even not permitting darkness to fall at all. In mid-latitudes, civil twilight may last about a half hour; nautical, an hour; and astronomers can go to work in about 90 minutes.” (*The World Almanac and Book of Facts 1997*, emphasis added)

# Middle Ages

## Early Middle Ages

Scotto, Dominic F. *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Its History and Its Importance as the Communal Prayer of the Church after the Liturgical Reform of Vatican II*. Petersham MA: St. Bede’s, 1987.

1. **500s**
   1. In the 500s, “secondary churches began to spring up around the cathedral church in order to meet the pastoral needs of a growing Christian community. This development initially took place only in a relatively few city centers, principal among which was Rome, since at this time Christianity remained essentially urban with only a very gradual spreading into the countryside.” (Scotto 29) “The spread of Christianity [brought] about the establishment of urban parishes around the *ecclesia senior*, afterwards the creation of rural parishes, and the construction of basilicas over the tombs of martyrs . . .” (Salmon 107)
   2. St. Benedict of Nursia (c. 480-c. 547)
      1. c. 500: a hermit at Subiaco
      2. c. 504: abbot of 12 monasteries, each with a superior and 12 men
      3. c. 529: founds Monte Cassino
      4. The *Rule of St*. *Benedict* was “written for laymen, not for clerics.” (Ford)
         1. “. . . by ordering the public recitation and singing of the Psalter, St. Benedict was not putting upon his monks a distinctly clerical obligation. The Psalter was the common form of prayer of all Christians . . .” (Ford)
         2. “Later, the Church imposed the clerical state upon Benedictines, and with the state came a preponderance of clerical and sacerdotal duties . . .” (Ford)
      5. “Benedict assigns the Psalms and Canticles, with readings from the Scriptures and Fathers. He devotes eleven chapters out of the seventy-three of his Rule to regulating this public prayer, and it is characteristic of the freedom of his Rule and of the “moderation” of the saint, that he concludes his very careful directions by saying that if any superior does not like his arrangement he is free to make another; this only he says he will insist on, that the whole Psalter will be said in the course of a week. The practice of the holy Fathers, he adds, was resolutely “to say in a single day what I pray we tepid monks may get through in a whole week” (ibid., 18). On the other hand, he checks indiscreet zeal by laying down the general rule “that prayer made in common must always be short” (ibid., 20).” (Ford)
         1. Public prayer is to be short and said “at night and at seven distinct hours during the day . . .” (Ford)
         2. The *Rule*’s regimen includes “reading and studying at least four hours a day . . .” (Ford)
      6. The Benedictine divine office adopted from the monks attached to basilicas the practice of praying all the hours, matins to compline, each day. [33] But “the Benedictine Office [introduced] several new monastic elements into the Office such as the opening versicles, responses and hymns.” (Scotto 34)
      7. Benedict “stood for moderation: twelve Psalms a night, and the whole Psalter each week. [150 psalms ÷ 7 days = 22½ psalms / day.] He had enriched the monastic office with non-biblical texts which some churches were using in the celebration of the cult, like the hymns he called “Ambrosian.” He had emphasized the great value of this common prayer, the details of which were almost entirely determined by St. Benedict in his *Rule*. Yet in his *Rule*, the divine office is not among the occupations requiring the most time.” (Leclerq 288)
      8. “The monk’s chief duty was the *opus Dei*, chanting of the liturgical offices . . . The order of the day was arranged around these services. Dom Cuthbert Butler would reconstruct this order as follows . . .” (*Benedictine Monasticism*. New York: Longmans, Green, 1924. 275-290.) (Eberhardt 1:297)
         1. “seven to eight hours of unbroken sleep” (except “in summer when a siesta compensated”)
         2. c. 1:45-2:30: Matins begins; it lasts 1-1½ hours
         3. “an interval [of] reflection and chant practice”
         4. c. 5:00-5:45: Lauds begins
         5. spiritual reading
         6. 6:30-7:30 “according to the season”): Prime
         7. “the “little hours” of Terce, Sext, and None”
         8. evening: Vespers
         9. “public reading of a conference”
         10. “Compline for night prayers”
         11. “On Sundays, the offices and readings were prolonged in place of manual work . . .” (Eberhardt 1: 297)
         12. “On Sundays . . . Mass was sung. Soon, if not from the beginning, the full ceremonial of solemn Mass was observed daily.” (Eberhardt 1: 297)
      9. “The hours varied according to season.” (Frend 882)
         1. mid-March
            1. 2 am: Vigils (night office)
            2. “An hour’s meditation or reading of Scripture”
            3. first light: Lauds
            4. sunrise (c. 6 am): Prime
            5. “more meditation and reading until” Terce
            6. 9 am: Terce
            7. 9:15 am-12 pm: “work in the fields”
            8. 12 pm (noon): Sext
            9. 12:15 pm-4 pm: “work in the fields”
            10. 4:30: Vespers
            11. 5: “the single (meatless) meal of the day
            12. 5:45: Compline
            13. “The monks then would retire for rest
            14. “The Eucharist would be celebrated on Sundays and holy days.” (Frend 882)
         2. “In the shorter days of winter the monks would have more rest, but in the summer less.” (Frend 882)
         3. “It was a severe but not impossible regime and . . . on a material level it corresponded to the standard of life of an Italian peasant of the day, to which was added a considerable degree of security and a sense of ordered purpose. There was to be nothing harsh or severe [882] (*nihil asperum*, *nihil grave*), but a balance between prayer, reading, and manual work . . .” (Frend 882-883)
   3. Gregory the Great (pope 590-604; Benedictine)
      1. chant before Gregory
         1. “Chant originated from the early custom of singing psalms and hymns during divine service . . . Naturally in the early Church all singing in connection with religious worship was homophonic.” (Bihlmeyer 1: 336)
         2. “In the Eastern Church the cantores (ψάλται) constituted one of the minor orders . . .” (Bihlmeyer 1: 336)
         3. c. 330: Silvester I (314-35) establishes “a special school for chanters . . .” (Bihlmeyer 1: 336)
         4. “. . . in the west, the verses of the psalms were chanted straight through in monotone without any break or inflexion, receiving only a slight melodic cadence at the end of each verse.” (Little 56)
         5. Ambrose of Milan († 397) “wrote many beautiful hymns . . . [and] created a special liturgical chant, based on ancient Greek music (cantus Ambrosianus), which combined melody with rhythmic accent.” (Bihlmeyer 1: 336)
         6. “During the liturgical reforms singing was further developed and encouraged.” [336] “Liturgical reforms in the West are ascribed to popes”:
            1. Ambrose of Milan († 397)
            2. Pope Damasus (366-84)
            3. Pope Gelasius (492-96)
            4. Pope Gregory I (590-604) (Bihlmeyer 1: 336, 1: 330 n. 1, emphasis deleted)
      2. Gregorian chant
         1. “Gregory was well equipped for this work: he had received an excellent education in science, philosophy and music. As papal legate he had spent seven years at Constantinople at the time when the famous *schola cantorum* founded by the Emperor Justinian was at the height of its splendour. He had thus ample opportunities to study the theory and practice of a more ancient Eastern type of music.” (Little 56 n. 1)
         2. “The schola cantorum which *Gregory* the Great founded became the model for all other such institutions.” (Bihlmeyer 1: 336)
            1. He “is said to have composed many new melodies.” (Bihlmeyer 1: 337)
            2. “In order to preserve these melodies, a method of writing music in numbers was employed.” (Bihlmeyer 1: 337)
            3. He “introduced (and possibly, though not certainly, composed) what we now know as the Gregorian [56] Psalm Tones.” (In Gregorian chant, a psalm tone is the principal note on which a musical phrase is sung.) (Little 56-57)
         3. Gregory’s “sole aim was to bring the poetical and musical inspiration of the original Hebrew into harmony with the rhythm of the Latin text . . . Choral psalmody as practised in the public worship of the Church since the time of St Gregory the Great—alternate verses, each consisting of two responsive clauses separated by an interval of silence—is designed to make evident even to untrained ears the fundamental principle of Hebrew poetry now known as parallelism.” (Little 52)
      3. Gregory and the spread of the Roman office
         1. Gregory spread the Roman form of the office. “As an ardent promoter of Benedictine monasticism, he employed the Benedictine monks as his principal emissaries in the evangelization of the rest of Europe, and thereby helped to spread the Roman liturgy throughout the Western world.” (Scotto 34)
         2. 596: for example, he “sent Augustine (of Canterbury) along with forty monks to evangelize England. . . . [Thus] the Roman liturgy, and the Office in particular, became firmly established in England.” (Scotto 34)
2. **700s-800s**
   1. uniformity of the office
      1. “. . . in the West, there was no [uniformity in the divine office] at least down to the ninth century. Initially, each monastery basilica or group of monks continued to celebrate their own particular cursus of prayer. Eventually, however, . . . there would evolve a greater uniformity of observance, as for instance in the Roman basilica monasteries. . . . [Till about the 700s] there still was no uniform Office celebrated throughout the Church of the West, for the great church centers in Italy, Gaul, and Spain continued to retain their own essential traditions, [32] books, and ordering of the Office.” (Scotto 32-33)
      2. But “the essential elements . . . of the divine office had been settled before the monastic revival of the Carolingian period [under Benedict of Aniane, c. 815 (lived 751-821)] . . .” (Leclerq 294)
   2. “monasticisation” of the office (Scotto 33)
      1. c. 400-800: the office in the great basilicas (Rome, etc.) became “more shaped by the monastic tradition.” (Scotto 33)
         1. Initially monks participated “with the clergy and laity in the celebration of the morning and evening Hours in the parish church . . . [They recited] their expanded monastic cursus of prayer within their own oratories.” (Scotto 33)
         2. “As the monastic presence grew with the increased number of monasteries and monks, in and around Rome for instance, their influence upon the parish Office became more and more pronounced.” (Scotto 33)
         3. For example: “inclusion of the Hours of Terce, Sext, and None each day in the Cathedral Office.” (Scotto 33)
         4. The cathedral office “approached the more elaborate and fully developed monastic cursus. . . . the fervor and magnificence of the monastic Offices contributed much toward attracting the faithful and causing the clergy to imitate the monks . . .” (Scotto 33)
         5. “. . . as an increasing number of monks were elected bishops, they tended to introduce monastic usages into their dioceses . . .” (Scotto 33)
         6. “. . . this process did not take place without protest. The clerics of Rome, for instance, resisted the imposition of the obligation to celebrate Vigils.” (Scotto 33)
      2. “The Benedictines in particular exerted a singular influence toward this monasticisation of the Office.” (Scotto 33)
      3. “Although well-known from the sixth century there is no conclusive evidence to affirm that all the monasteries of Rome exclusively adopted the Benedictine rule, at least not before the influence of Cluny [founded 910] in the tenth century.” (Salmon 105)
      4. “Initially affected by the liturgical practice of the Roman church, their own prayer order now found its way back into the monasteries of Rome and in turn effected its own unique influence. Eventually this new order of prayer was adopted by the Roman basilicas and even the Vatican basilica itself, and through the testimony of the many pilgrims and monks who came through Rome, it gradually spread itself throughout the West.” [33] “This process was a very slow one . . . in Italy and Gaul . . . for a long time it continued to compete with Columban usages which it [177] eventually ousted.” (Scotto 33, 177-178 n. 157)
      5. After Gregory the Great sent Augustine of Canterbury with forty monks to evangelize England in 594, “the Roman liturgy, and the Office in particular, became firmly established in England.” (Scotto 34)
      6. “In the late seventh and early eighth centuries a similar mission sent back to the continent from England proved to be equally influential in establishing the same Roman Office throughout the continent. St. Boniface (680-754), an English Benedictine monk, known as the Apostle of Germany, was especially effective in helping to spread the Roman liturgy and Office in all the countries north of the Alps. This movement, known on the continent as the “reform” [34] of St. Boniface, served as a prelude to the Carolingian “renaissance.”“ (Scotto 34)
      7. But up to the early 800s, “the complete Office was celebrated solely in the basilicas of Rome, in those churches which had “monasteries” attached to them, and in those abbeys following the rules of Saint Columban, Saint Benedict or others who possessed a full cursus of prayer.” (Scotto 178 n. 165)
      8. “. . . the decisive influence the Benedictine reform had upon the Office was in eventually effecting the imposition of the solemn and daily celebration of the full monastic Office upon the resident clergy of all churches and parishes.” (Scotto 34)
      9. “For some centuries the *Opus Divinum* (Divine Work), as the Office used to be called, remained almost exclusively a task of monks, while the secular clergy continued to perform the two traditional public services (*Matutinum* and *Lucernarium*) together with their congregations in church. From the eighth century, however, the recital of the whole Divine Office in common was also introduced among the secular clergy, who had started to live a community life in most places and were called *Canonici* (canons), from the canonical rules they followed.” (Weiser 20)
   3. demise of the cathedral office
      1. 500-800 (Scotto): “the local clergy attached to the cathedrals and other prominent churches, continued the traditional practice of the daily recitation of morning and evening prayers together with the people, and on certain occasions the observance of the nocturnal Vigils. These Hours were very much part of the public prayer services of the church and not private devotions.” (Scotto 32)
      2. 600-800 (Weiser): but “the *Matutinum* and *Lucernarium* gradually disappeared.” (Weiser 21)
         1. “The *Matutinum* was replaced by the introduction of daily Mass in the morning . . .” (Weiser 21)
         2. “. . . the *Lucernarium* was dropped because the faithful, especially in the northern countries, did not know Latin and were unable to take part.” (Weiser 21)
   4. clerical obligation to say the office
      1. Church “leaders began to consider the celebration of the Office as an obligation incumbent upon themselves and their clergy.” (Scotto 31)
      2. 528: “the Emperor Justinian issued a decree in which he commanded the local clergy to participate in the Vigils as well as in Lauds and Vespers under pain of expulsion from the clerical ranks.” (Scotto 31)
      3. c. 600: *Liber diurnus III* says that suburbicarian bishops in Rome take an oath “on the occasion of their consecration promising the Pope that together with their clergy they would be faithful to the celebration of the daily vigil. The necessity for such an oath seems to indicate the presence of some problems with the constancy of the Roman clergy in the celebration of the Vigils.” (Scotto 31)
      4. 500s: “Apparently the same problem existed in Spain and Gaul . . .” Church authorities issued canons (Council of Agde [506], of Tarragone [516], of Braga II [563]) that “insisted that the clergy participate in the recitation of the Office as in the past.” (Scotto 31)
      5. Nevertheless, “negligence of the bishops and the clergy toward the liturgical life of their churches gradually became more prevalent as the bishops became increasingly involved in politics and the administration of their extensive domains.” (Scotto 31)
3. **800-1100**
   1. the Carolingian renaissance (751-987)
      1. Pepin III (Pepin the Short), king of the Franks 751-768, “most likely under the influence of the Anglo-Saxon monks, sought to effectively establish the Roman rite in all of Gaul.” (Scotto 35)
      2. “This same goal was shared and carried to fulfillment by his son, the Emperor Charlemagne.” (Scotto 35)
      3. Pepin and Charlemagne obliged “all monks to the choral recitation of the entire Office . . .” (Scotto 35)
      4. “. . . the same obligation became gradually imposed upon the secular clergy as well.” (Scotto 35)
      5. Charlemagne “was responsible for the issuance of many decrees which sought to ensure its [the Roman Office’s] daily celebration in all the churches of the empire. Throughout this period of liturgical reform, therefore, thanks to the Benedictine influence, it became the general practice to celebrate daily the Roman Office in all the collegiate churches and chapels of the empire, just as it was celebrated in the imperial chapel at Aix-la-Chapelle.” (Scotto 35)
      6. 816: the Council of Aix-la-Chapelle makes “formal and explicit” the obligation of celebrating the daily office. (Scotto 178 n. 171)
   2. increasing complexity
      1. In Benedict’s *Rule* “the divine office is not among the occupations requiring the most time.” (Leclerq 288)
      2. But Benedict himself “was an innovator since he had introduced into monastic liturgy the “Ambrosian hymns,” amongst others.” (Leclerq 291)
      3. “The tendency to embellish the divine service with new texts, and especially poetic texts, continued . . .” (Leclerq 291)
      4. 816-17: Benedict of Aniane (c. 750-821) reforms monastic discipline at the Synods of Aachen (816 and 817). (Kirsch)
      5. 10 July 817: prescriptions for restored monastic discipline (Kirsch)
      6. “From then on, the monks’ life, in this respect, bore a great resemblance to that of canons who performed the services of the cult in the cathedral churches.” (Leclerq 288)
      7. 800-1200: “the great monastic centuries” (Leclerq 288)
         1. The “monastic liturgy continued to grow richer and developed to the point where, in certain localities, it accounted for almost the entire day.” (Leclerq 288)
         2. “. . . the minor texts were established, such as the formulas for the benedictions of the lessons, the absolutions, and all the accessory pieces which enriched the primary texts of the liturgy.” (Leclerq 294)
      8. 900-1200: influence of Cluny (founded 910)
         1. “. . . development through the many accretions . . . into an elaborate and complicated prayer of excessive length [continued.] . . . Under the definitive influence of Cluny, not only did the Office grow to excessive length, but the splendor and solemnity of its celebration was greatly increased . . .” (Scotto 36)
         2. “. . . Romanization of the liturgy and Benedictine reform arrived at their logical climax with the high standard of monastic observance exemplified in the congregation at Cluny, whose decisive influence upon the liturgical worship of the Church would be felt throughout the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries.” (Scotto 35)
   3. variations
      1. 800s: the Roman liturgy “soon became encumbered with supplemental practices and local customs eventually representing a heterogeneous mixture with little conformity to the original liturgy of Rome.” (Scotto 35)
         1. “The work of Amalar of Metz (c. 780-850/1) is especially indicative of this trend.” (Scotto 35)
         2. “It is this “Gallicanized” liturgy with its reshaped, mixed Frankish-Roman Office which in the tenth century makes its way back to Rome and influences the liturgical practices of the Eternal City itself.” (Scotto 35)
         3. 1000s: yet “the Office celebrated by the Pope and his court in the Papal Chapel remained substantially the old, Roman monastic Office.” (Scotto 178 n. 176)
      2. beginning c. 950: “a difference in practice grew up and was maintained between the two regions whose predominating points of view are symbolized by the names of Gorze and Cluny. In the beginning, less time was allotted to the office [at Cluny]. But monastic life everywhere remained marked by its great esteem for public worship. The monks’ entire life was led under the sign of the liturgy, in rhythm with its hours, its seasons and its feasts . . .” (Leclerq 288)
      3. c. 1100: “At this time the Church at Rome was experiencing a general liturgical decline which adversely affected the celebration of the Divine Office as it continued to grow in volume and complexity becoming more and more of a burden to the secular clergy.” (See Abelard [1079-1142], “Epistle 10.”) (Scotto 35)

## Later Middle Ages

Scotto, Dominic F. *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Its History and Its Importance as the Communal Prayer of the Church after the Liturgical Reform of Vatican II*. Petersham MA: St. Bede’s, 1987.

1. **1000s**
   1. 1000s-1100s: increasing complexity; new offices are added
      1. Office of the Dead
      2. Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary
      3. seven penitential psalms (Pss 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 145)
      4. fifteen gradual psalms (120-34)
      5. Litany of the Saints
      6. “a host of other prayers and rubrical elements” (Scotto 36)
   2. c. 1075: Gregory VII (1073-1085) initiated reforms, but his “efforts did little to rectify the situation . . .” (Scotto 36)
2. **1100s**
   1. “The Cistercians [founded ad 1098] inaugurated a reaction, almost a revolution, when they reinstated the pure and simple liturgy in which biblical texts play the predominant part. Still, not a few of their number prefer solemn masses to austere psalmody.” (Leclerq 294)
   2. “. . . the sad condition of the Roman liturgy persisted . . .” (Scotto 36)
   3. the urban-monastic office
      1. “. . . the distinction between the ecclesial and monastic Offices now was no longer apparent. . . . there continued to exist certain divergences [but] they were relatively peripheral . . .” (Scotto 36)
      2. “With the advent of the urban-monastic Office, and with the imposed obligation not only upon monks but upon the secular clergy as well, the choral recitation of the Office becomes essentially a matter for monks and clerics with the laity becoming less and less involved.” (Scotto 36)
      3. “. . . all too often the Hours would be entirely recited in a block, at a particularly convenient time of the day . . .” (Scotto 83)
      4. In their fully developed forms (i.e., in monasteries after about 1200), matins took the longest to recite: “from an hour to an hour and a half.” (Eberhardt 1: 297) Lauds and vespers took about a half hour (Frend 882); prime and compline were briefer; and the “little” hours (terce, sext, and none) took “about six minutes . . .” (Little 128)
   4. clericalization
      1. Monasticisation of the office and increasing complexity were major reasons for “growing separation . . . between the official liturgical activities of the Church and the worshiping community of the faithful.” (Scotto 36)
3. **1200s**
   1. “. . . secular clergy for the greater part had ceased to live in community . . .” (Weiser 20)
   2. divine office and rosary
      1. “People who could not read, and among them especially the lay brothers in the monasteries, substituted for the written texts a certain number of familiar prayer formulas which they knew by heart. Thus, for instance, one hundred and fifty Ave Marias were substituted for the one hundred and fifty psalms, and the mysteries of Christ’s life (taken from ancient responsories) were inserted in the Hail Marys. It was in this way that the rosary gradually developed during the High Middle Ages.” (Weiser 21)
      2. “Saint Dominic (1221) is credited with the spreading of this particular exercise among the lay population of Italy.” (Weiser 21)
   3. breviary (*breviarium*, “abridgment”)
      1. Scotto (38) says “the advent of the Breviary [was] in the twelfth century . . .” Yet he links it with the Office of the Papal Curia of the early 1200s.
      2. Office of the Papal Curia
         1. Innocent III (1198-1216) initiated “a new period of liturgical renaissance, witnessed in part by the compilation of the Office of the Papal Curia.” (Scotto 37)
         2. “Substantially retaining the characteristics of the old Roman monastic Office, this “new” Office was marked by a much greater simplicity and austerity of style than the Romano-Frankish Office now firmly established in the Roman basilicas . . .” (Scotto 37)
         3. This Office was compiled as a “liturgical book, or breviary, which was in use at the papal court . . .” (Scotto 37)
         4. Franciscans
            1. Probably the Office of the Papal Curia became “part of the liturgy of the cathedral of Assisi . . .” (Scotto 37)
            2. The Franciscans “adopted this convenient and relatively easy-to-carry liturgical book” “also because of very practical considerations . . .” (Scotto 37)
            3. “Carrying their breviaries with them wherever they traveled, these itinerant preachers were instrumental in spreading this Office . . .” (Scotto 37)
      3. The liturgy of the hours “became commonly known as the breviary, or priest’s daily prayer book, in effect the exclusive, and principally private prerogative of the clergy and religious.” (Scotto vii)
      4. present *Code of Canon Law*
         1. “Its daily celebration is required as a sacred obligation by men in holy orders and by men and women religious who have professed solemn vows.” (Foy 210)
         2. “. . . *private* recitation of the Divine Office was enjoined as a daily duty on each clergyman, starting with the order of the subdeaconate. This law is still in force [*Code of Canon Law* 135]. The private recital is not necessarily bound to the official hours, but the whole Office must be performed every day.” (Weiser 20)
         3. “In the monasteries the Office is still chanted in common, as of old, and at appointed hours [*Code of Canon Law* 610].” (Weiser 20)
   4. books of hours (prayerbooks)
      1. Between 600 and 800 “the *Matutinum* and *Lucernarium* gradually disappeared. . . . There was, however, a great desire on the part of the people to keep the official prayer hours with appropriate private devotions of their own. This desire, encouraged by the authorities of the Church, gave rise to a wealth of *horaria* (hour books, “prymers,” *Stundenbücher*), which were in use all through the Middle Ages.” (Weiser 21)
      2. “. . . in the thirteenth century, there was a strong desire on the part of lay people to imitate the devotional practices of monks and nuns. The breviary was far too complex for use by lay people, however. A simpler book was therefore developed which, though resembling a breviary, was far less variable, and therefore easier to use. This new type of book was the “Book of Hours.”“
      3. “Originating in the fourteenth century and continuing to proliferate until the mid-twentieth century were a variety of Books of Hours for the laity and for lay religious.” (Scotto 40)
      4. A “Book of Hours [was a] small prayer book for private devotions, produced chiefly in the 14th and 15th centuries in France and the Low Countries. [Sometimes] Lavishly illuminated . . .” (*The Encarta 98 Desk Encyclopedia,* “Book of Hours”)
      5. “A typical book of hours contains:
         1. A Calendar of Church feasts
         2. An excerpt from each of the four gospels
         3. The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary
         4. The fifteen Psalms of Degrees [Gradual Psalms]
         5. The seven Penitential Psalms
         6. A Litany of Saints
         7. An Office for the Dead
         8. The Hours of the Cross
         9. Various other prayers” (“Book of Hours”)
      6. “All Books of Hours begin with a liturgical calendar listing the feast days of the Church year. The calendar is followed by short extracts from each of the Four Gospels, and then by the text that defines the Book of Hours—the Hours of the Virgin. These are made up of eight sets of devotional prayers to Mary, modelled on the “Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary” in the breviary. The Hours of the Virgin are followed by other sequences of hours, usually including the Hours of the Cross and the Hours of the Holy Spirit, and sometimes also the Hours of the Passion, or a set of hours devoted to a particular saint. A standard Book of Hours also includes an Office for the Dead, which would be said through the night before a burial, or on the anniversary of a loved-one’s death. The Book of Hours is completed by the Seven Penitential Psalms, litanies, and prayers to the Virgin and various saints.” (Peel)
      7. “As the original “hours” in the ancient Church had usually been connected with particular commemorations of the mysteries of Christ’s life and especially of His Passion, these medieval hour books also devoted each part of their daily reading to a certain event of the Saviour’s life and Passion. Great indulgences were granted by the popes for this pious exercise of daily hours in honor of the redemptive suffering of Christ.” (Weiser 21)
      8. Prayers in books of hours “were not really the canonical Office . . . [But] since the laity were being more and more effectively cut off from active and communal participation in the official prayer of the Church, these devotions did serve to bridge the gap which had developed between the prayer life of the faithful and the official prayer life of the Church.” (Scotto 40)
      9. Moreover, “the books could serve only people who mastered the art of reading, and they were a minority in those days.” (Weiser 21)

# Modern Period

## The Modern Period, 1500-1900

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1. **1500**
   1. “. . . the Divine Office had grown into so elaborate a prayer that from [1500] to the Council of Trent (1545-1563), it became the object of almost continual reform.” (Scotto 38)
      1. Clement VII (1523-34) commissioned Spanish Cardinal Francisco de Quinoñez (d. 1540) “to restore the Office as far as possible to its ancient form . . . [Quinoñez’s] principal intention . . . was to revise the Hours so that they could more easily be recited privately by those clerics who were very involved in the pastoral ministry.” (Scotto 38)
      2. Lechner and Eisenhofer (*Liturgy of the Roman Rite* 445): this revision “treated the Office, at least in practice, as a private prayer; in contrast to the Catholic idea of worship, it stressed the doctrinal end of the Office at the expense of that of divine praise . . .” (Qtd. in Scotto 38)
      3. “. . . initially the breviary of Cardinal Quinonez enjoyed great success . . .” (Scotto 38)
      4. But “eventually the radical nature of this reform began to attract increasing opposition from the clergy.” (Scotto 38)
   2. Trent’s *Breviarium Romanum* (1568)
      1. Paul IV (1555-65) appointed a special commission. (Scotto 38)
         1. Its object was not “to compose a new breviary . . .” (Scotto 38)
         2. It was to answer “the growing criticism among churchmen over the structure of [Quinoñez’s] revised breviary . . . [It was] to restore the old breviary of the Roman Curia, which was then still in use, to its original [38] form . . .” (Scotto 38-39)
      2. 1568: Pius V (1566-72) promulgates the *Breviarium Romanum*.
         1. “. . . the fact that the breviary is a public prayer is heavily stressed, and the difference between public (choral) and private recitation almost entirely eliminated.” (Lechner and Eisenhofer 446) (Scotto 39)
      3. Latin
         1. “. . . the Council Fathers outrightly rejected the petition of certain reformers requesting that for doctrinal reasons the Church abandon further use of the Latin language in public worship and resort to the vernacular languages. Therefore, . . . the common Christian worshiper was still to be denied his rightful role of full, active participation . . .” (Scotto 39)
         2. To a large extent “this attitude on the part of the council fathers could be accounted for by the very complex and perilous times in which the Church found herself due to the Protestant Reformation.” (Scotto 180 n. 203)
   3. Latin after Trent
      1. Latin “proved to be a most formidable obstacle to . . . participation by the laity, a large portion of whom were uneducated. [40] . . . the liturgy had become . . . almost completely incomprehensible to the Christian communities in general. . . . the East had essentially undergone a like process of alienation albeit to a lesser degree.” (Scotto 40-41)
      2. 1713 (8 Sept.): Clement XI (1700-21) in the papal bull *Unigenitus* rejects “the eighty-sixth proposition of Quesnel” [which said]: “To deprive the common people of the consolation of combining their own prayers with those of the whole Church is a usage repugnant to the practice of the Apostles and to the designs of God.” (Scotto 41)
      3. 1794 (28 Aug.): Pius VI (1775-99) “condemned article sixty-six of the Synod of Pistoia . . .” Pius said: “The use of the vernacular in liturgical prayers is false and foolhardy . . .” (Scotto 41)
   4. Yet “parochial celebration of the Office managed to survive in varying degrees . . . services were generally well attended, especially
      1. “for Matins sung before Mass
      2. “and for Vespers on Sundays and Holy Days.” (Scotto 39)
   5. Ignatius Loyola (1491/5-1556)
      1. Loyola “recommended the Office highly as a very special form of prayer.” (Scotto 39)
      2. Ignatius Loyola (*The Spiritual Exercises*): “We ought to praise the frequent hearing of Mass, the singing of hymns, psalmody, the long prayers whether in the church or outside; likewise, the Hours arranged at fixed times for the whole Divine Office, for every kind of prayer, and for the canonical Hours.” (Qtd. in Scotto 39)
      3. “Yet when founded in 1540 the Society of Jesus did not have the obligation of communal recitation of the Divine Office . . .” (Scotto 39)
      4. That “would have been unthinkable at an earlier period of time such as at the [39] foundation of the Franciscans or Dominicans.” (Franciscans: 1209. Dominicans: 1216.) (Scotto 39-40)
2. **1600-1800**
   1. 1609: Francis de Sales (1567-1622) (*The Introduction to the Devout Life* [1609, final ed. 1619]): “Besides this [i.e., meditation and Mass,] Philothea, you should assist at the Office of the Hours and of Vespers on feast days and Sundays, as far as it is convenient for you to do so; because these days are dedicated to God, there is ever more good and consolation in the public offices of the Church than in what is done individually, God having so ordained that what is done in common should be preferred to every kind of individual action.” (Qtd. in Scotto 40)
   2. From the *Breviarium Romanum* of 1568 “to the time of Pope Pius X (1903-1914) no significant change was effected in the breviary . . .” (Scotto 41)
      1. Inconsequential reforms of the *Roman Breviary* occurred under
      2. Clement VIII (1592-1605)
      3. Urban VIII (1623-44)
      4. Clement X (1669-76) (Scotto 40)
   3. books of hours
      1. “Protestant congregations kept the use of traditional hour books (with ancient liturgical texts) alive for quite some time.” (Weiser 22)
      2. 1600s-1700s: “both among Catholics and Protestants, a new kind of prayer book, containing instruction, meditation, litanies, prayers for “special occasions” like confession, communion, morning, and evening, gradually supplanted the psalters and hour books; thus the ancient devotion of daily hours became lost and forgotten in the minds of most modern Christians.” (Weiser 22)

## 1900-1962: Modern Liturgical Movement to Vatican Council II

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1. **introduction**
   1. “It was only with the advent of the modern liturgical movement, and the first initiatives of Pope Pius X . . . that truly significant reform” began. (Scotto 41)
   2. “The present century has borne witness to two trends evolving in Catholic thought concerning the Liturgy of the Hours.” (Scotto 43)
      1. “The first and by far the most prevalent trend has been that which has sought to [make the office] a more accessible and rewarding experience for the clergy, many of whom had great difficulties with the obligation of its private recitation.” (Scotto 43)
      2. “The second trend . . . seeks to reestablish the Liturgy of the Hours as the public, communal prayer for all the People of God.” (Scotto 43)
2. **modern liturgical movement**
   1. liturgical reforms of Pope St. Pius X (1903-14)
      1. Pius X had “an astute and sensitive pastoral judgment . . .” (Scotto 44)
      2. 1903: Pius X’s motu proprio, *The Restoration of Church Music* (*Tra le solecitudini*) (*ASS* 36:329-39)
         1. “. . . he firmly delineated the rules for the use of chant and sacred music . . .” (Scotto 44)
         2. But he also “pleaded for the restoration of the true role of the faithful in the liturgical worship of the Church.” (Scotto 44)
      3. 1905: the Sacred Conciliar Congregation’s decree, *Sacra Tridentina Synodus* urged daily reception of the Eucharist. (*ASS* 38:400-406) (Scotto 44-45)
      4. July 1911: “the Pope established a commission for the purpose of attempting to restore some order once again to the Breviary.” (Scotto 45)
         1. J.H. Miller (*Fundamentals of the Liturgy* 325): “The two major disorders caused by the many feasts with special Offices were that the Psalter was seldom recited in its entirety and the Scriptural readings, too, were often excluded. And so the same old problem of reconciling the rights of temporal and sanctoral cycles had to be faced. The commission set two objectives before itself: (a) to make the ferial [weekday] Office once again functional, and (b) to maintain the feasts of the saints.” (Scotto 45)
         2. The resulting office mixed the two cycles by redistributing the psalms throughout the hours and by increasing the dignity of the scriptures and of Sunday. (Scotto 45)
         3. “. . . there seemed to be no awareness on the part of the commission concerning the question of the active participation of the laity . . .” (Scotto 45)
         4. Also, “the rubrics still remained too numerous and complicated. They continued the heavy rubrical tradition and the mentality that all ought to be meticulously predisposed and everything tacitly fixed. There was no indication at all of the atmosphere of freedom and variety which marked the ancient liturgy.” (Scotto 45)
      5. November 1911: Pius X’s apostolic constitution *The New Arrangement of the Psalter in the Roman Breviary* (*Divino afflatu*) (AAS 3:633-38) (Scotto 45)
         1. This officially promulgated the reformed breviary. (Scotto 45)
         2. It “announced future plans for a more ample revision of the Office.” [45] This never occurred, since the pope died in 1914. (Scotto 45-46)
      6. conclusions
         1. Pius X’s reform efforts had little immediate effect. (Scotto 46)
         2. But they “helped to lead the way toward an eventual rediscovery of the liturgy as true prayer.” (Scotto 46)
   2. the Belgian liturgical movement
      1. Dom Lambert Beauduin, a Benedictine, was “inspired by the liturgical incentives of Pope Pius X . . .” (Scotto 46)
      2. 1909: Beauduin proposes a liturgical renewal. “The central idea of this program was to have all the faithful live a common spiritual life nourished by the official worship of Holy Mother Church.” (Scotto 47)
         1. “This was to be effected through a translation of the Roman Missal and its promotion among the faithful as their principal prayer book . . .” (Scotto 47)
         2. There would also be a “promotion of Gregorian chant, with an attendant spiritual and liturgical formation of choirs, through retreats in liturgical centers such as Benedictine monasteries.” (Scotto 47)
         3. For the divine office, he wanted “to reestablish the [47] Vespers and Compline of Sunday, and to give to these services a place second only to that of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. . . . through the recitation of Compline as evening prayer, and through attendance at the parochial recitation of Vespers the piety of the faithful could be more fully and actively integrated into the Christian mysteries. Toward this end he very strongly advocated the restoration of earlier liturgical traditions in Christian homes.” (Scotto 48)
         4. “. . . he very wisely realized that unless the clergy was first convinced of the spiritual power of the liturgy, any hopes of applying these principles to the lives of the faithful would inevitably end in failure.” (Scotto 48)
      3. “. . . these ideas became disseminated principally through the publication of a small people’s missal published in fascicles, followed by a review entitled *La Vie liturgique*, published at [Beauduin’s monastery,] Mont-Cesar, Louvain in 1910. . . . These [publications were] supported by the establishment at Mont-Cesar of the conferences of the *Semaines liturgiques*.” (Scotto 48)
   3. the German-Austrian liturgical movement
      1. In Germany after World War I, “the liturgical movement at first centered upon the monasteries of Beuron and Maria-Laach. . . . Under the inspired leadership and profound historical insights of such outstanding men as Abbot Ildephonse Herwegen (1874-1946), Dom Odo Casel (1886-1948), and Romano Guardini (1885-1968), to mention but a few, the movement was given great substance and impetus.” (Scotto 49)
      2. “Eventually, complemented by the predominantly pastoral characteristics of the school of Klosterneuberg in Austria, under the very able direction of Pius Parsch (1884-1954), the German movement tended to more closely identify with that of Belgium.” (Scotto 49)
   4. Liturgical renewal “soon spread from Belgium and Germany and throughout the rest of Europe. [49] . . . That this movement had awakened popular interest in the newly rediscovered view of the liturgy was clearly attested to by the increased demand on the part of the faithful for greater knowledge and involvement in liturgical matters.” (Scotto 49-50)
3. **Pius XI** (1922-39)
   1. 1928: Pius XI’s apostolic constitution, *The Liturgy and Gregorian Chant* (*Divini Cultus*)
      1. This “reaffirmed the true role of the faithful in the liturgical worship of the Church.” (Scotto 50)
      2. Pius XI (*Divini Cultus*): “It is most important that when the faithful assist at the sacred ceremonies, or when pious sodalities take part with the clergy in a procession, they should not be merely detached and silent spectators, but, filled with a deep sense of the beauty of the liturgy, should sing alternately with the clergy or the choir, as it is prescribed. Let the clergy . . . [instruct] the people in the liturgy and in music, as being matters closely associated with Christian doctrine.” (*AAS* 21 [1929] 39-40) (Scotto 50)
4. **Pius XII** (1939-58)
   1. The liturgical movement “began to attract the official recognition and support of the Holy See itself. Aware and wary of the many diversified aspects of this movement, Pope Pius XII sought to give it a more unified and positive direction.” (Scotto 51)
   2. 1943: encyclical letter, *The Mystical Body of Christ* (*Mystici Corporis*) (*AAS* 35:193-248). Though using broad terms, the pope did “affirm that the liturgy was both expressive and constitutive of the Church itself.” (Scotto 51)
   3. 1945: motu proprio, *The Use of the New Latin Version of the Psalms in the Divine Office* (*In cotidianis precibus*) (*AAS* 37:65-67)
      1. Pius XII (*In cotidianis precibus*): “we trust that henceforth all may derive from the performance of the Divine Office ever greater light, grace and consolation . . .” (*AAS* 37:67) (Qtd. in Scotto 51)
      2. Pius XII (*In cotidianis precibus*): “examples of sanctity . . . appear so resplendently in the psalms . . .” (*AAS* 37:67) (Qtd. in Scotto 51)
      3. Pius XII (*In cotidianis precibus*): in reading the psalms, the Holy Spirit invites us to “sentiments of divine love, strenuous courage and loving contrition . . .” (*AAS* 37:67) (Qtd. in Scotto 51)
   4. “. . . the terrible destruction, pain, and sorrow left in the wake of [World War II] caused the [50] Church to meditatively reexamine and reevaluate its role in the world. [It was] Convinced of the need to renew itself . . .” (Scotto 50-51)
   5. 1947: encyclical on the liturgy, *Mediator Dei* (*AAS* 39:521-595)
      1. Pius XII wanted “to transform the liturgical movement into an officially recognized movement of the Church . . .” (Scotto 52)
      2. “Generally positive in tone, it does, however, contain many negative elements as well, no doubt reflecting some of the unrest caused by the liturgical movement in various areas of the Church’s life.” (Scotto 52)
      3. “Being the first encyclical completely devoted to the liturgy, it provided the liturgical movement with a new and decisive impetus . . .” (Scotto 52)
      4. Bernard Neunheuser: *Mediator Dei* is “the first official recognition of the value of the liturgical movement on the level of the universal Church, becoming in fact, in this way, the ‘magna carta’ of the renewal which it intended to effect.” (Qtd. in Scotto 52)
      5. *Mediator Dei* “provides us with an excellent working definition of the liturgy . . .” (Scotto 53)
         1. Pius XII (*Mediator Dei*): “In every liturgical action, therefore, the Church has her divine Founder present with her: Christ is present in the august Sacrifice of the altar both in the person of His minister and above all under the Eucharistic species. He is present in the Sacraments, infusing into them the power which makes them ready instruments of sanctification. He is present finally in the prayer of praise and petition we direct to God, as it is written: “Where there are two or three gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them” [Matt 18:20]. The sacred liturgy is consequently the public worship which our Redeemer as Head of the Church renders to the Father as well as the worship which the community of the faithful renders to its Founder, and through Him to the Heavenly Father. It is, in short, the integral public worship rendered by the Mystical Body of Christ in the entirety of its Head and members.” (*AAS* 39:528-29) (Qtd. in Scotto 53)
      6. “. . . the Pope speaks specifically about the Divine Office as the prayer of the Mystical Body of Christ but seemingly only when recited by the official ministers of the Church on behalf of all the faithful . . .” *Mediator Dei* ch. 3: “The Divine Office is the prayer of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, offered to God in the name and on behalf of all Christians, when recited by priests and other ministers of the Church and by religious who are deputed by the Church for this.” (Scotto 54)
      7. “Further along, however, the Holy Father does address himself to the question of the active participation of the faithful at least in Vespers sung on feast-days.” (Scotto 54)
         1. Pius XII (*Mediator Dei*): “In an earlier age, these canonical prayers were attended by many of the faithful: but this gradually ceased, and, as we have already said, their recitation at present is the duty only of the clergy and of religious. The laity have no obligation in this matter. Still, it is greatly to be desired that they participate in reciting or chanting Vespers sung in their own parish on feast days. We earnestly exhort you, Venerable Brethren, to see that this pious practice is kept up, and that wherever it has ceased you restore it if possible. . . . Sundays and Holydays, then, must be made holy by divine worship, which gives homage to God and heavenly food to the soul. Although the Church only commands the faithful to abstain from servile work and attend Mass and does not make it obligatory to attend evening devotions, still she desires this . . .” (*AAS* 39:575-76) (Qtd. in Scotto 54)
      8. “. . . permission for the use of the vernacular was extended to certain areas of the liturgy which were left unspecified [*AAS* 39:545].” (Scotto 78)
         1. The office continued to be prayed in Latin, “which would effectively prevent any widespread and meaningful participation on the part of the faithful.” (Scotto 54)
   6. 1953: Pius XII’s apostolic constitution, *The New Discipline for the Eucharistic Feast* (*AAS* 45 [1953]: 15-24)
   7. March 1955: the Sacred Congregation of Rites’s decree, *The Reduction of the Rubrics to a Simpler Form* (*AAS* 47 [1955]: 218-19) The purpose was to simplify “recitation of the Divine Office for the priest overly burdened” with parish duties. (Scotto 55)
   8. November 1955: the Sacred Congregation of Rites’s decree and instruction, *The Restoration of the Holy Week Order* (AAS 47 [1955]: 838-47)
   9. 1956: Pius XII’s *Allocution to the First international Congress of Pastoral Liturgy at Assisi-Rome*
      1. “With the convocation of this significant congress the modern liturgical movement seemed to have achieved its greatest degree of official recognition and approbation within the Church.” (Scotto 56)
      2. Pius XII (*Allocution*): “Everything which is offered to them [the laity], the graces of the sacrifice of the altar, the sacraments and sacramentals, they receive not in a passive manner in allowing them simply to flow into them, but in collaborating in them with their whole will and all their powers, and especially in participating in the liturgical offices or at least in following their unfolding with fervor. [55] . . . The contributions which the hierarchy and the faithful bring to the liturgy are not added as two separate entities, but represent the collaboration of members of the same organism which acts as a single living unit. The pastors and the flock, the teaching Church and the Church which is taught, form but one and the same Body of Christ. . . . It is in this unity that the Church prays, offers sacrifice, sanctifies itself, so that it can be asserted with good reason that the liturgy is the work of the whole Church.” (*AAS* 48 [1956] 713-14) (Scotto 55-56)
   10. 1958: the Sacred Congregation of Rites’s instruction, *Sacred Music and the Sacred Liturgy* (*De musica sacra*). This “emphasized (p. 646) that the singing of Vespers on Sundays and feast days was not to fall into disuse because of the newly introduced evening Masses.” (*AAS* 50:630-63) (Scotto 181 n. 30)
5. **conclusions**
   1. “The modern liturgical movement pointed to the liturgy as the principal means by which these needs [spiritual renewal and adaptation to a radically changing world] could be effectively met. Urged on by this irrepressible need for reform, the Church, nevertheless, demonstrated great reluctance in actually implementing many of these important theological and pastoral initiatives.” (Scotto 56)
   2. “As far as the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours was concerned, little was actually accomplished in promoting the idea of once again restoring this prayer to the faithful. Despite the pastoral principles so beautifully and consistently promoted by the popes most closely identified with the modern liturgical movement, Pope Pius X and Pope Pius XII, the communal recitation of the Divine Office on the parish level became more and more a very rare exception rather than the rule.” (Scotto 56)

## Vatican II, 1962-1965

Flannery, Austin, ed. *Vatican II*: *The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*. 1975. Dublin: Dominican, 1986.

Scotto, Dominic F. *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Its History and Its Importance as the Communal Prayer of the Church after the Liturgical Reform of Vatican II*. Petersham MA: St. Bede’s, 1987.

1. **preparation**
   1. 1959 (Jan. 25): Pope John XXIII announces the convocation of the Second Vatican Council. “. . . this council was to clarify and renew the mission of the Church in the modern world and was to be predominantly pastoral in character.” (*AAS* 51 [1959]: 68) (Scotto 57)
   2. 1960 (June 5): John XXIII appoints “among others a new Pontifical Liturgical Commission to prepare the ground for the coming council.” (Scotto 57)
2. ***Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*** (***Sacrosanctum concilium***)
   1. 1963 Dec. 4: Paul VI promulgates *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*.
   2. “In contrast to the other commissions established by the Pope, the Liturgical Commission dealt with questions which had already been much discussed and clearly formulated . . . Consequently, it was not surprising that the liturgical schema became the first document to be discussed . . .” (Scotto 57) It was “the first [document] issued by the Council . . .” (Foy 210) Never before had an ecumenical council published a liturgical document first. (Scotto 57)
   3. *SC* 1 says that “The professed goals of the Council [are] to strive to impart an ever-increasing vigor to the Christian life, to adapt changeable institutions more suitably to contemporary human needs, to foster unity among all Christians and to work tirelessly for the spread of the Gospel . . .” (Scotto 70)
   4. “reforms actually effected” included:
      1. “permission for the reception of communion under both species”
      2. “concelebration”
      3. “liturgical use of the vernacular” (Scotto 58)
   5. The document “had as its principal purpose the reformation and promotion of the Roman liturgy. . . . Upon examination it becomes abundantly clear that the Council Fathers’ chief concern was the prayer of the People of God.” (Scotto 70)
   6. Vatican II (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 26): “they are the celebrations of all the holy People, reunited and organized under the authority of the bishops, not only in a juridical fashion but in a sacramental manner.” (Qtd. in Scotto 86)
      1. “. . . liturgical actions are not merely the [85] private actions of persons duly delegated by the Church, nor are they actions which pertain to the clergy alone . . . in principle, all liturgical celebrations are seen as essentially celebrations of all the People of God.” (Scotto 85-86)
   7. “. . . in the liturgy the praise and adoration rendered to God the Father by the People of God in, with, and through Christ, as a community of faith, becomes the most sacred action which the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church, can possibly perform [*SC* 7].” (Scotto 71)
   8. Vatican II (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 10): “From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, as from a fountain, grace is channeled into us; and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their goal, are most powerfully achieved . . .” (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* 10) (Qtd. in Foy 210)
   9. Vatican II (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 10): the liturgy is “the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; and the fount from which all her power flows.” (Qtd. in Scotto 71)
   10. Vatican II (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 14): “Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people . . . have a right and obligation by reason of their baptism. In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy the full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else, for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.” (Qtd. in Scotto 72)
       1. “The reference to the full participation of the faithful in the liturgy as the primary and indispensable source from which they are to derive the true Christian spirit is a phrase which the Council has borrowed directly from Pope Pius X’s famous motu proprio *Tra le sollecitudini* which Dom Lambert Beauduin had adopted as the watchword of the Belgian liturgical movement.” (Scotto 73)
       2. Louis Bouyer (*Revised Liturgy* 91-92): “he [Beauduin] had been repeatedly accused of inflating and perverting the meaning of that sentence, [but now] the Council makes his interpretation its own in the most uncompromising way.” (Qtd. in Scotto 73)
   11. Vatican II (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 21): “the liturgy is made up of unchangeable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change. These latter not only may be changed but ought to be changed with the passage of time, if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become less suitable. In this restoration both texts and rites should be drawn up so as to express more clearly the holy things which they signify. The Christian people, as far as is possible, should be able to understand them with ease and take part in them fully, actively, and as a community.” (Qtd. in Scotto 74)
   12. The constitution (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 27) recommends “community oriented services in preference over those that are performed privately and individually when the very nature of the service does not preclude communal participation.” (Scotto 75)
   13. “. . . the laity discharge a genuine liturgical function when participating in the divine liturgy. Whether they act as servers, lectors, commentators or members of the choir, they are exercising a real liturgical ministry to which they are entitled through the Church’s commission.” (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 29) (Scotto 76)
   14. The liturgy “possesses a didactic and pastoral role as well. Being primarily dedicated to the Church’s worship of the Divine Majesty, the liturgy is also a school of faith for the People of God wherein God speaks to his people and they respond to him in word and prayer. Together with these visible elements the Church through signs also seeks to convey the teaching of the invisible things of God.” (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 33) (Scotto 77)
   15. “. . . rites should be characterized by their brevity, clarity, and simplicity so that they may be more readily understood, and in order that the faithful may participate in them as easily and as fully as possible.” (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 34) (Scotto 77)
   16. use of Latin
       1. Vatican II (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 36.1): “the use of the Latin language, with due respect to particular law, is to be preserved in the Latin rites . . .” (Scotto 77) See Little (90): “the delicate and ethereal character of the liturgical Latin rhythm can never be exactly rendered into English.”
       2. Vatican II (*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 36.2): “But since the use of the vernacular, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments or in other parts of the liturgy, may frequently be of great advantage to the people, a wider use may be made of it, especially in readings, directives and in some prayers and chants.” (Qtd. in Scotto 78)
       3. Here is “implicit admittance by the Constitution of the principle that in reality the vernacular is not excluded from any part of the liturgy.” (Scotto 78)
   17. “. . . in contrast to rigid uniformity the liturgy will always [admit] cultural elements which prove to “harmonize with its true and authentic spirit.” [*Sacrosanctum concilium* § 37] [79] . . . Throughout Chapter III the Constitution calls for an adaptation of [80] sacraments and sacramentals to the unique pastoral needs of the faithful.” (Scotto 79-81)
   18. Chapter 4 “deals specifically with the Divine Office . . .” (Scotto 81)
       1. excerpts (*Sacrosanctum concilium*, *Vatican*.*va*, 10 Mar. 2010)
          1. [ch. 4 §] 89. . . . when the office is revised, these norms are to be observed:
             1. By the venerable tradition of the universal Church, Lauds as morning prayer and Vespers as evening prayer are the two hinges on which the daily office turns; hence they are to be considered as the chief hours and are to be celebrated as such.
             2. Compline is to be drawn up so that it will be a suitable prayer for the end of the day.
             3. The hour known as Matins, although it should retain the character of nocturnal praise when celebrated in choir, shall be adapted so that it may be recited at any hour of the day; it shall be made up of fewer psalms and longer readings.
             4. The hour of Prime is to be suppressed.
             5. In choir the hours of Terce, Sext, and None are to be observed. But outside choir it will be lawful to select any one of these three, according to the respective time of the day. . . .
          2. 91. So that it may really be possible in practice to observe the course of the hours . . ., the psalms are no longer to be distributed throughout one week, but through some longer period of time. . . .
          3. 92. . . . a) Readings from sacred scripture shall be arranged so that the riches of God’s word may be easily accessible in more abundant measure.
          4. b) Readings excerpted from the works of the fathers, doctors, and ecclesiastical writers shall be better selected.
          5. c) The accounts of martyrdom or the lives of the saints are to accord with the facts of history.
          6. 93. To whatever extent may seem desirable, the hymns are to be restored to their original form, and whatever smacks of mythology or ill accords with Christian piety is to be removed or changed. Also, as occasion may arise, let other selections from the treasury of hymns be incorporated.
          7. 94. That the day may be truly sanctified, and that the hours themselves may be recited with spiritual advantage, it is best that each of them be prayed at a time which most closely corresponds with its true canonical time.
          8. 97. . . . a liturgical service may be substituted for the divine office.
          9. 99. Since the divine office is the voice of the Church, that is of the whole mystical body publicly praising God, those clerics who are not obliged to office in choir, especially priests who live together . . ., are urged to pray at least some part of the divine office in common. . . . It is, moreover, fitting that the office, both in choir and in common, be sung when possible.
          10. 100. Pastors of souls should see to it that the chief hours, especially Vespers, are celebrated in common in church on Sundays and the more solemn feasts. And the laity, too, are encouraged to recite the divine office, either with the priests, or among themselves, or even individually.
          11. 101. 1. . . . the Latin language is to be retained by clerics in the divine office. But in individual cases the ordinary has the power of granting the use of a vernacular translation to those clerics for whom the use of Latin constitutes a grave obstacle to their praying the office properly. . . .
          12. . . . The version, however, must be one that is approved.
   19. conclusions
       1. *summary of* SC’*s general reform recommendations:* “the Constitution on the whole has provided the opening and the incentive by which the Church could once again rediscover and recover the essential role of the laity in the celebration of the Divine Office. The revisions called for in the structure of the Office, helping to make it more understandable, more spiritually rewarding and easier for participation [*SC* 88, 94]; the new, though cautious openings given to the use of the vernacular in the Divine Office [*SC* 36, 101]; the recommendation that parish priests join with the entire parish community for the common recitation of [Vespers] on Sundays and more solemn feasts [*SC* 100]; the overall insistence upon the need for the full, active and conscious participation of the faithful in all liturgical celebrations; the adaptation of rites and texts to the faithful as far as is possible [*SC* 21]; and finally the encouragement given to the development of a true sense of community within the local Church [*SC* 26, 42]; all of these initiatives have been very positive steps taken toward the achievement of a fuller and more meaningful integration of the laity into the public prayer life of the Church.” (Scotto 87)
       2. Nevertheless, in chapter 4, “while the clergy had obviously benefitted greatly, the laity had not fared as well. The principal preoccupation of this Chapter seems to be with the celebration of the Office by clergy, religious, and other canonical groups.” (Scotto 84)
       3. *summary of* SC’*s practical reform recommendations:* “The entire reform embraced a restoration of the traditional hours of prayer as a sanctification of the entire day [*SC* 88]; with Lauds and Vespers celebrated as the principal Hours around which the entire Office revolves [*SC* 89a]. Maintaining Compline as an ideal prayer to mark the close of the day [*SC* 89b], the Council proposed that the Hour of Matins be composed of fewer psalms, longer readings and be so adapted that it may be celebrated at any hour of the day [*SC* 89c]. While suppressing the Hour of Prime [*SC* 89d], the Hours of Terce, Sext, and None [89] were adapted more equitably to the pastoral needs of the day [*SC* 89e].” The reform also spread the psalms over four weeks [*SC* 91] and proposed an enriched lectionary of biblical and nonbiblical readings [*SC* 92].” (Scotto 89-90)
       4. *a remaining inconsistency in SC:* “Although there is a recommendation that the laity be encouraged to recite the Divine Office not only with the clergy, but also among themselves, or even individually [*SC* 100], it would seem [86] . . . that without sacerdotal leadership, the authentic participation of the laity in the official prayer of the Church would at best be questionable. . . . presumably, the prayer of a group of lay people who decide to recite some part of the Office . . . without the benefit of sacerdotal leadership, would seem to be considered as not being an authentic part of the official prayer of the Church. This seems to be foreign . . . to much of what the Constitution itself has declared so forcefully.” (Scotto 86-87)
3. ***Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*** (***Lumen Gentium***)
   1. 1964: Paul VI promulgates *Lumen Gentium*.
   2. In *Mediator Dei* Pius XII had underscored the relationship between the Church and liturgy “by basing his definition of the liturgy upon the concept of the Church as developed in his earlier encyclical, *Mystici Corporis.* . . . the liturgy provided the means by which the true nature of this new vision of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ would be given vital, concrete expression . . . in the action of the worshiping community of faith.” (Scotto 59)
   3. “Being very pastorally oriented, the Constitution begins with the notion of the Church, not in juridical terms of structure and government, but as a community of believers to whom God gratuitously communicates himself in love. . . . The entire document highlights in very strong terms the innate dignity and responsibility of the lay-Christian in the modern day Church as he shares with all clergy and religious in the overall task of witness, ministry, and fellowship.” (Scotto 59)
   4. “It is significant that the chapter entitled *The People of God* (Chapter II) precedes the chapter on *The Hierarchical Structure of the Church* (Chapter III) since it reflects a particular understanding of the Church by the council fathers. [This was] Couched in strong biblical terms, the concept of the Church as the People of God . . .” (Scotto 59) 1 Pet 2:9, “you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”
   5. *LG* 10: “Though they differ essentially and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless ordered one to another; each in its own proper way shares in the one priesthood of Christ.” (Scotto 61)
   6. “Christ’s office as High-Priest is to offer sacrifice, worship, and praise to the Father. Through their regeneration in baptism and through their anointing in the Holy Spirit the People of God are consecrated into the messianic mission of Christ, therefore into his [60] priesthood [*LG* 10]. As such, they consequently share, to a degree, in Christ’s mission as High-Priest and also must offer, in their own way, praise, worship, and adoration to the Father. Thus the laity . . . offer up this priestly work most clearly and efficaciously in liturgy . . .” (Scotto 60-61)
4. ***Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*** (***Apostolicam Actuositatem***)
   1. 1965 November: Paul VI promulgates *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.
   2. This “marked the very first time in the history of the Church that a theme expressly dealing with the laity became the subject of conciliar deliberations.” (Scotto 64)
   3. “. . . most of its principles are already contained in [64] one way or another in these other documents and, more importantly, it is essentially based upon the theology of the Church as developed in *The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, primarily in Chapter II on the People of God and Chapter IV on the laity.” (Scotto 64-65)
   4. *AA* 3: “If they are consecrated a kingly priesthood and holy nation (1 Pt. 2:4-10), it is in order that they may in their actions offer spiritual sacrifices and bear witness to Christ all the world over.” (Scotto 65)
   5. “Drawing strength from their active participation in the liturgical life of the Church they will be better able to contribute to the building up of the Body of Christ in the world [*AA* 10].” (Scotto 66)
5. ***Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*** (***Gaudium et Spes***)
   1. 1965 December: Pope Paul VI promulgates *Gaudium et Spes*.
   2. “. . . this lengthy document seems to consist essentially of a synthesis of Catholic thought on social teaching, especially as reflected [66] in the social encyclicals promulgated from the pontificates of Pope Leo XIII (*Rerum Novarum*, 1891), to that of Pope Paul VI (*Populorum Progressio*, 1967) . . .” (Scotto 66-67)
   3. “There is great stress placed upon the promotion of the common good [*GS* 26], the dignity of man [*GS* 27, 28, 29], and the need for corporate action in order to truly promote the fellowship of service and to restore all things in Christ [*GS* 31, 32].” (Scotto 68)
   4. “. . . while the liturgy may not exhaust all the Church’s activity, nevertheless, it is the fountain from which all the Church’s life draws its power and nourishment [*SC* 9, 10].” (Scotto 68)

## Post-Conciliar Documents

Scotto, Dominic F. *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Its History and Its Importance as the Communal Prayer of the Church after the Liturgical Reform of Vatican II*. Petersham MA: St. Bede’s, 1987.

1. **preparatory work**
   1. 1964: Paul VI’s motu proprio, *Sacram Liturgiam*, creates a commission called the *Consilium ad exsequendam Constitutionem de Sacra Liturgia*. The *Consilium* entrusted reform of the divine office “to a special group of international liturgical experts under the title of *Coestus IX*.” (Scotto 90)
   2. 1969: the *Congregatio pro cultu divino* replaces the *Consilium* and *Coestus IX*. [90] “Thus the former Congregation of Rites was now divided into two separate congregations: the Congregation for Divine Worship—*Congregatio Cultu Divino*, and the Congregation for Saintly Causes—*Congregatio Causis Sanctorum*.” (Scotto 90, 188 n. 15)
2. 1970: ***Apostolic Constitution on the Breviary*** (*Laudis Canticum*) (*AAS* 63 (1971) 527-535)
   1. *AAS* 63: 529: “Since the Office is the prayer of the whole People of God, it has been drawn up and prepared in such a way that not only ecclesiastics but also religious and even lay-people can take part in it. By introducing various forms of celebration, the attempt has been made to meet the specific requirements of persons of different order and degree. The prayer can be adapted to the different communities that celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours, according to their condition and vocation.” (Qtd. in Scotto 99)
   2. “Having abolished the former weekly cycle, the psalter is now to be distributed over a longer period of time, namely four weeks, excluding those few psalms and verses which are rather difficult to understand and to adapt to celebration in the vernacular. Moreover, in order to further enhance the spiritual richness of the two principal Hours, certain new canticles from the Old Testament have been introduced into Lauds, while other canticles from the New Testament have been introduced into Vespers [*AAS* 63: 530; see *SC* 91]. Obviously these changes will not only prove to be a help to the clergy but will prove to be even more beneficial to the participation of the laity who, in general, are relatively uneducated in the theological and historical meanings of the psalms, and who would most certainly be praying the Office in the vernacular.” (Scotto 100)
3. 1971: ***General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours*** (*Institutio Generalis de Liturgia Horarum*)
   1. “There is no mention made here to the effect that the validity or full efficacy of this prayer as the official prayer of the Church, is contingent upon sacerdotal presence. On the contrary, it states quite clearly that whenever the faithful come together, and this could constitute the laity alone, to pray the Liturgy of the Hours together with one heart and mind in word and song, then it is the Church of Christ that is made manifest in this local community of believers and worshipers and their celebration is fully and authentically liturgical with everything that this implies [*IGLH* 22].” (Scotto 108)
   2. *IGLH* 23: “Pastors of souls should see to it that the faithful are invited and helped by requisite instruction to celebrate the chief Hours in common, especially on Sundays and feasts. They should teach them to draw sincere prayer from their participation and so help them to understand the psalms in a Christian way that they may gradually come to use and appreciate the prayer of the Church more fully.” (Qtd. in Scotto 108)
   3. *IGLH* 27: “Whenever groups of laity are gathered and whatever the reason which has brought them together, such as prayer or the apostolate, they are encouraged to recite the Church’s Office, by celebrating part of the Liturgy of the Hours. For they should learn to adore God the Father in spirit and in truth especially through liturgical worship; they must remember that by public worship and prayer they can have an impact on all men and contribute to the salvation of the whole world.” (Qtd. in Scotto 109)
   4. *IGLH* 27: “Finally, it is fitting that the family, as the domestic sanctuary of the [109] Church, should not only offer common prayer to God but also say certain parts of the Liturgy of the Hours, in this way uniting themselves more closely to the Church.” (Qtd. in Scotto 109-110)
   5. “. . . in the prayer life of the entire Christian community, outside of the Eucharist itself, these two Hours [lauds and vespers] are to be given the highest priority, with a special recommendation for their celebration among those living a common life.” (Scotto 111)
   6. Chapter 2 part 3 changes the name of “matins” to “the Office of Readings, formerly known as Matins . . .” (Scotto 112)
   7. “Commenting upon the Hour of Compline the General Instruction views it as the ideal prayer for the Christian to recite before retiring for a night’s rest.’ This would seem to be most appropriate as a concluding bedtime prayer not only for the various groups of clergy, religious, or other sacred ministers but for the laity as well, especially as a family unit [*IGLH* 27]. The option of being able to substitute the Sunday psalms for the other psalms on weekdays is a further incentive facilitating the use of this prayer, perhaps when traveling or whenever books may not be available, since it would permit the possibility of celebrating Compline by memory [*IGLH* 88].” (Scotto 113)
   8. the *General Instruction* on Psalms
      1. *IGLH* 43 discusses “the disposition of the psalms . . .” (Scotto 111)
      2. “At the beginning of Chapter III, the General Instruction treats of the psalms and their close relationship to Christian prayer. There is no doubt that the psalms have always maintained a very prominent place within Christian prayer and this is most assuredly true of the Liturgy of the Hours, both in the past, and in the present reform as well. The Church has always viewed these inspired songs as especially conducive to fruitful prayer [*IGLH* 100]. [See Louis Bouyer, *The Meaning of Sacred Scripture* 224-41] However, despite their obvious beauty and power, they are not easy for modern man to understand and translate into personal prayer [*IGLH* 101]. [Weakland 214-18] This is most especially true for the average [113] lay-person who has not had the benefit of theological training. Therefore, despite the undeniable presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who choose to use these inspired songs sincerely as personal prayer, it would be extremely presumptuous to expect these psalms to truly become effective and fruitful means for personal prayer without at least the benefit of a thorough catechesis. Hence the Instruction recommends “more intensive biblical instruction” in the meaning and use of the psalms as personal prayer [*IGLH* 102]. Since the psalms were originally composed as poetic songs of praise, they retain that essential quality despite their translation through the ages into various languages. This fundamental musical quality inherent in the psalms should continue to determine the way in which they may be prayed properly, whether in choir or privately.” (Scotto 113-114)
      3. “Although the text of a psalm may be praiseworthy in itself, certainly when sung it is far more inspirational and effective in moving the participants to a greater degree of contact with the original spirit of the composer as well as facilitating a fuller, more prayerful response to the movements of the Holy Spirit. Modern man certainly needs this type of assistance to foster a greater degree of devotion in his prayer life [*IGLH* 108, 104].” (Scotto 114)
      4. “There are times when, despite the best of intentions, the psalms will still present difficulties to those who seek to use them as prayer. Much will depend upon the degree of understanding which the reader possesses concerning the literary genre of the psalm, his awareness of the intentions of the sacred author and the meaning which he wished to impart to the psalm, as well as the circumstances under which the psalm was composed [*IGLH* 105, 106]. Obviously this presents a very real problem for the average layperson and reemphasizes the absolute need for a good, thorough catechesis on the psalms being made available to all the faithful.” (Scotto 114)
      5. “The participant must learn to enter into the literal spirit of the psalm being prayed, joining his own sentiments to those of the psalmist, finding therein a bridge from the past to the present. Although divided by time and culture, there are certain invariables which proceed from the very nature of man and which therefore remain essentially unchanged down through the ages [*IGLH* 107]. We must [114] remember that when praying the psalms in the Liturgy of the Hours, we do not do so in a selfish, individualistic manner, even though we may be praying the Office privately, but we do so as a member of the entire praying Church, the Body of Christ and in the name of Christ himself. Therefore, in the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours our own personal feelings and preferences should be sublimated to the particular emotion expressed by the psalmist, and which the Church wishes to convey at this particular time [*IGLH* 108].” (Scotto 114-115)
      6. “Ultimately, we must learn to Christianize the psalms, to find Christ in them, and through them to pray with him, in him and to him [*IGLH* 109].” (Scotto 115)
         1. “To help the faithful accomplish this particular purpose, the Church offers three specific aids, “namely the headings, the short quotations from the New Testament or the Fathers, and especially the antiphons [*IGLH* 110].”” (Scotto 115)
            1. “While the headings are not actually recited as part of the Office, they do afford the reader with further assistance in arriving at an intelligent understanding of the importance and meaning of a particular psalm in the Christian life.” (Scotto 115)
            2. “. . . even more valuable in this regard are the short quotations from the New Testament or the Fathers found before each psalm which help to “promote prayer in the light of the new revelation [*IGLH* 111].” . . . at certain times, these short quotations or phrases may even be used in place of the antiphon itself [*IGLH* 114].” (Scotto 115)
            3. “As the General Instruction explains, the antiphons are meant to underline the particular sense of the psalm, to help turn the psalm into personal prayer, and to give a special emphasis to a psalm under changing circumstances, especially for the great seasons and feasts [*IGLH* 113-120].” (Scotto 115)
      7. distribution of the psalms
         1. The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* recommended redistribution of the psalms [*SC* 91]. (Scotto 116)
         2. In response, “the General Instruction has specified that the psalms will now be distributed over a four week cycle with the more important psalms being repeated more frequently [*IGLH* 126].” (Tarruel, J. “La nouvelle destribution du Psautier dans *La Liturgia Horarum*.” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 87 (1973): 325-82.) (Scotto 116)
         3. “In turn, the Hours of Lauds, Vespers, and Compline will have psalms which will reflect more faithfully the spirit and tone of their respective hours [*IGLH* 126]. Since both Lauds and Vespers have been designed for public celebration with the people, the psalms used for these Hours have been carefully selected because of their marked suitability for such a purpose [*IGLH* 127]. Throughout the Hours, there has been an effort to have the psalms correspond as faithfully as possible with the spirit of the Office of the day, as well as with the particular liturgical season which they reflect [*IGLH* 129-130, 134].” (Scotto 116)
      8. omission of psalms
         1. “. . . certain psalm verses have been passed over in silence . . .” [116] “The particular psalm verses omitted have been indicated at the begin-fling of the psalm, for example: The Office of Readings, Friday, First Week of Ordinary Time, Psalm 34, verses 4-9 have been omitted.” (Scotto 116, 193 n. 160)
         2. “. . . three entire psalms have been omitted from the psalter [*IGLH* 131].” (Scotto 116)
            1. “The three psalms omitted from the psalter are: Ps. 57, 82, 108.” (Scotto 193 n. 160)
            2. “This was done because of their violent and deprecatory character [*IGLH* 131]. . . . While the present reform of the Office has attempted to remain as far as possible in harmony with tradition, it realizes that it must adapt itself to the needs of our own day and age, being always conscious to allow for the full, active participation of the faithful. Certainly this action becomes all the more valid when we consider the practical difficulties involved in the use of these psalms in the vernacular. Having come to praise God in the Hours, such verses and psalms proclaimed aloud during the communal celebration could prove to be offensive to many causing the possible alienation of the faithful from the Liturgy of the Hours [*IGLH* 131].” (Roguet, A.M. In *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *The General Instruction on the Reform of the Breviary*. Trans. P. Coughlan and P. Purdue. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1974. 116-17.) (Scotto 116)
         3. “Rather than prolong the reading of the Divine Office unnecessarily, psalms of greater length have been divided and allocated to the same [116] Hour to be read over several days. In this manner, they may be recited in their entirety by those people, most likely lay people, who do not usually celebrate other Hours [*IGLH* 132].” (Scotto 116-117)
         4. “. . . throughout this entire section not only are we made aware of the many real and formidable obstacles to the use of the psalms as fruitful personal prayer, but we are also made aware of the Church’s constant belief in their validity as prayer and her concern that every effort be undertaken to make them as pastorally effective as possible. Therefore, the Church continues to use them as the inspired nucleus of her official prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours [*IGLH* 100-102].” (Scotto 117)
         5. Thomas Merton (*Praying the Psalms* [Collegeville: Liturgical, 1955] 5): “She recommends the psalms to her priests, her monks, her nuns, and even to her lay people, in order that they may have the mind of Christ, in order that they may develop an interior life which is truly the life of their Mother, the Church. It is by singing the psalms, by meditating on them, loving them, using them in all the incidents of our spiritual life, that we enable ourselves to enter more deeply into that active participation of the liturgy which is the key to the deepest and truest interior life. If we really come to know and love the psalms, we will enter into the Church’s own experience in divine things. We will begin to know God as we ought. And that is why the Church believes the psalms are the best possible way of praising God.” (Scotto 117)
   9. OT and NT songs
      1. “The addition of a great number of canticles both from the Old and New Testaments into the sequence of the psalms in the reformed Office should prove to be helpful as well in rendering the Office more pastorally effective. This is especially true concerning the New Testament Canticles included in the Hour of Vespers, for this should help the people to see more clearly the Christian message and spirit of the Hour, and also should facilitate transforming the Office into personal prayer. However, all of the canticles, both from the Old Testament, with their applied Christian understanding, and from the New Testament, are poems of spiritual value traditionally revered by the Church, and, consequently, should never be considered as merely supplementary to the course of the psalms, but complementary to their appreciation and understanding [*IGLH* 136-139].” (Scotto 117)
4. **publication of the revised Liturgy of the Hours**
   1. “. . . an approved experimental version made its appearance on the scene. Originating in France [*Prière du Temps*, *Présent*, *Nouvel Office* (Mame: Desclée, 1969)], it was soon translated into English [Great Britain: *The Prayer of the Church* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1970; America: *The Prayer of Christians* (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1971)] and enjoyed instant success . . .” (Scotto 91)
   2. “The master Latin text [of the revised Liturgy of the Hours] was published in 1971 . . .” (Foy 210) “. . . the four-volume Latin edition of the Liturgy of the Hours, 1970-1971.” [91] “*Liturgia Horarum Iuxta Ritum Romanum* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanus, 1971).” (Scotto 91, 188 n. 22)
   3. English translations were:
      1. in Great Britain: *The Divine Office*: *The Liturgy of the Hours According to the Roman Rite*. 4 vols. London: William Collins, 1973-74. (Scotto 188 n. 23)
      2. in America: *The Liturgy of the Hours According to the Roman Rite*. 4 vols. New York: Catholic Book, 1975-76. (Scotto 188 n. 23, 198 n. 61)
   4. “In the United States there have been [five] individual versions of the one volume official edition of the Liturgy of the Hours published with the contents of each volume varying according to the choice of the individual publisher. They are as follows . . .” (Scotto 198 n. 62)
      1. *The Prayer of Christians* (*American Interim Breviary*). New York: Catholic Book, 1971. (Experimental version.)
         1. Rotelle, John E. *Christian Readings*: *Additional Biblical and Non-Biblical Readings to Be Used with the* Prayer of Christians (American Interim Breviary). 4 vols. New York: Catholic Book, 1972.
      2. *Christian Prayer*: *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Morning Prayer*, *Daytime Prayer* (*Selections*), *Evening Prayer*, *Night Prayer*, *Office of Readings* (*Selections*). Trans. International Commission on English in the Liturgy. New York: Catholic Book, 1976. Rpt. 1985.
         1. “An abridgment of *The Liturgy of the Hours*, an English version, adapted by additions, of *Liturgia horarum*.” (*WorldCat*.*org*)
         2. “An abridgment” of 2079 pp! (Music: 1502-1784, “English-language hymns sanctioned for liturgical use” (*WorldCat*.*org*)
         3. (Psalm translations are from: *The Psalms*: *A New Translation*. London: William Collins, Sons; New York: Collins World; Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1963. Other scripture translations are *NAB*.)
      3. *Shorter Christian Prayer*: *The Four-Week Psalter of the Liturgy of the Hours Containing Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer with Selections for the Entire Year*. Trans. International Commission on English in the Liturgy. New York: Catholic Book, 1988. (670 pp.)
      4. *Christian Prayer*: *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Morning Prayer*, *Daytime Prayer*, *Evening Prayer*, *Night Prayer*, *Office of Readings* (*Selections*). Trans. International Commission on English in the Liturgy. **Boston**: **Daughters of St. Paul**, 1976. (“Abridgment edited and copyrighted by Daughters of St. Paul.” 1758 pp. Illustrated.)
      5. *Christian Prayer*: *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Morning Prayer*, *Daytime Prayer* (*Selections*), *Evening Prayer*, *Night Prayer*. **New York**: **Catholic Book**, 1976. 1599 pp.
      6. *Christian Prayer*: *The Liturgy of the Hours*. Trans. International Commission on English in the Liturgy. **Baltimore**: **Helicon**, 1976.
      7. *Christian Prayer*: *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Morning Prayer*, *Evening Prayer*, *Night Prayer*. Ed. Ralph A. Keifer et al. Trans. International Commission on English in the Liturgy. Collegeville: Liturgical; **Westminster**: **Christian Classics**, 1976. (Includes musical scores. 1877 pp.) (Scotto 198 n. 62)
      8. Also note:
         1. *Christian Prayer*: *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Organ Accompaniment*. Washington: International Commission on English in the Liturgy, 1978.
         2. Johnson, Maxwell E., and the Monks of St. John’s Abbey. *Benedictine Daily Prayer*: *A Short Breviary*. Collegeville: Liturgical, 2005. (“A Benedictine liturgy of the hours for Christian daily prayer.”) 2266 pp.
   5. “Nov. 27, 1977, was set by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops as the effective date for exclusive use in liturgical worship of the translation of the Latin text of the Liturgy of the Hours approved by the International Committee on English in the Liturgy.” (Foy 221)
   6. “The revised Liturgy of the Hours consists of:
      1. “Office of Readings, for reflection on the word of God. The principal parts are three psalms, biblical and non-biblical readings.
      2. “Morning and Evening Prayer, called the “hinges” of the Liturgy of the Hours. The principal parts are a hymn, two psalms, an Old or New Testament canticle, a brief biblical reading, Zechariah’s canticle (the *Benedictus*, morning) or Mary’s canticle (the *Magnificat*, evening), responsories, intercessions and a concluding prayer.
      3. “Daytime Prayer. The principal parts are a hymn, three psalms, a brief biblical reading and one of three concluding prayers corresponding to the time at which the prayer is offered (midmorning, midday, midafternoon).
      4. “Night Prayer. The principal parts are one or two psalms, a brief biblical reading, Simeon’s canticle (*Nunc Dimittis*), a concluding prayer and an antiphon in honor of Mary.” (Foy 210)
   7. “In the revised Liturgy of the Hours, the hours are shorter than they had been, with greater textual variety, meditation aids, and provision for intervals of silence and meditation. The psalms are distributed over a four-week period instead of a week; some psalms, entirely or in part, are not included. Additional canticles from the Old and New Testaments are assigned for Morning and Evening Prayer. Additional scriptural texts have been added and variously arranged for greater internal unity, correspondence to readings at Mass, and relevance to events and themes of salvation history. Readings include some of the best material from the Fathers of the Church and other authors, and improved selections on the lives of the saints.” (Foy 210-211)

## Objections to the Reformed Liturgy

Flannery, Austin, ed. *Vatican II*: *The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*. 1975. Dublin: Dominican, 1986.

Scotto, Dominic F. *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Its History and Its Importance as the Communal Prayer of the Church after the Liturgical Reform of Vatican II*. Petersham MA: St. Bede’s, 1987.

1. **first objection**
   1. “All too often we hear the standard objections voiced repeatedly that although this reformed prayer may be ideal for use in religious communities, to attempt to reestablish the praying of the Hours on the parish level and to have it become something acceptable and valuable to the faithful would not only be impractical but futile as well.” (Scotto 131)
      1. “Many pastors claim that they have enough problems trying to get their people to come to Mass each Sunday and that expecting them to come to morning and evening prayer as well is unreal.” (Scotto 131)
      2. “. . . while many pastors have indeed taken the initiative in this matter by introducing the Liturgy of the Hours to their people as effectively as possible, the vast majority have not.” (Scotto 138)
      3. “Over the past three years we have had the opportunity to question many pastors and parish priests on this matter and . . . the negative responses at this point of the study were by far the most prevalent.” (Scotto 197 n. 23)
      4. “However, while the new Liturgy of the Hours is certainly a most precious liturgical treasure, it remains extremely difficult to envision how this exceedingly rich and complicated prayer can ever be totally employed in the worship of the parish community on a regular basis except by a select minority.” (Scotto 139)
   2. “Such objections not only display an obvious disregard of the historical reality, but they also tend to ignore the signs of the times as the Church interprets them for her people. . . . it was precisely in the parishes that the Liturgy of the Hours originated and flourished for centuries; [and] it was particularly in the cathedral parishes where both clergy and laity actively participated in the communal celebration of the Daily Office consisting of morning and evening prayer. . . . And despite the eventual clericalisation and monasticisation of the cathedral Office, the faithful continued to participate, . . . principally Matins before Mass and afternoon Vespers, down through the ages until relatively recent times.” (Scotto 131)
   3. “Both the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* [1963] and the *General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours* [1971] place great emphasis upon the fact that Morning and Evening Prayer are the two most important Offices of the day [*SC* 100; *IGLH* 37]. In effect, this is a reaffirmation [139] of the ancient cathedral Office, when aside from the Eucharist itself, these two Hours represented the principal daily and communal public prayer of the ancient Church. . . . therefore, it seems that Morning and Evening Prayer should be restored once again to their original roles as ecclesiastical offices and consequently adapted as much as possible toward meaningful communal celebration with the laity. The entire cursus of seven Hours, while not totally excluded from the daily public participation of the laity, should be considered as the exception and certainly not the rule. There are those particular occasions when these prayers can be effectively employed within the Christian community . . . But for the present, we are convinced that for Christians of today, with all the complexities of modern life, it would hardly be realistic to ask any more of them than that they once again reaffirm the practice of the cathedral Office in their lives by praying regularly, publicly, and communally, in the morning and in the evening.” (Scotto 139-140)
2. **second objection**
   1. “Others “have expressed skepticism that the Liturgy of the Hours, in its presently revised form, can be pastorally effective in this capacity. The crux of their criticism rests upon the opinion that the reformed Hours continue to represent an essentially monastic and not a cathedral Office, and are consequently much better suited to be used for private devotion than as an expression of the communal, public worship of the faithful. By far the most widespread and most serious of the reasons offered for arriving at this conclusion are the use of the *recitatio continua* of the psalter, or the monastic principle of the recitation of the entire psalter “in course,” and the *lectio continua* of the rest of the sacred scriptures, which practices must presume upon the presence of the worshiper at every daily Office in order for it to make sense. As far as public worship involving the laity is concerned, this arrangement is considered to be a totally unrealistic one.” [132] (Grisbrooke, W.J. “A Contemporary Liturgical Problem: The Divine Office and Public Worship.” *Studia Liturgica* 8 (1971-72): 129-68; 9 (1973): 3-18, 18-106.) (Scotto 132, 197 n. 33)
   2. But “the intention of the Church in promoting the celebration of the Hours for all the faithful is principally centered upon the use of the chief Hours of Lauds and Vespers, “the two hinges upon which the daily Office turns,” and the Hours which reflect most clearly the ancient cathedral Office [*IGLH* 37]. Recognized as the Hours of the highest importance, full and active participation in their public and communal celebration is strongly encouraged for all the faithful [*IGLH* 26, 40; *SC* 100].” [133] “Outside of Compline, the other Hours such as those of Readings, Terce, Sext, and None, can realistically be considered as the [197] exception and not the rule for daily, communal and public use by the laity.” (Scotto 133, 197-198 n. 39)
   3. “Although the reformers have maintained the traditional monastic pattern of psalmody for the Office as a whole, they have also done everything possible to ensure that the psalms would be truly prayed rather than merely recited [*IGLH* 110-125]. However, relative to the principal Hours of Lauds and Vespers, despite the rule of praying the psalms “in course,” specific psalms have been chosen primarily for their suitability to the basic meaning of these Hours and to their public celebration with the people [*IGLH* 42-43, 126-127]. This is also true for the Hour of Compline seen as the ideal bedtime prayer for all Christians [*IGLH* 88, 128].” (Scotto 133)
3. **third objection**
   1. “. . . there are those who feel that the very preponderance of psalms in themselves presents one of the principal difficulties with the Office and that people today find the psalter to be increasingly difficult to use as a form of Christian prayer.” (E.g., Weakland, Rembert. “The Divine Office and Contemporary Man.” *Worship* 43 (1969): 215-16.) (Scotto 133)
   2. “The psalms, as the inspired word of God, have always been among the principal sources of prayer for the Christian community and as such have embedded themselves deeply into the entire tradition of the Church’s prayer life. Although the psalms unquestionably need to be explained and understood in order to be most properly and effectively used as prayer in the Divine Office, they should not be neglected or casually abandoned unless every effort has first been made to implement the recommendations of the General Instruction proposed precisely for this very purpose [*IGLH* 101-125]. While perhaps they could possibly be couched to a greater degree in the idiom of contemporary man, we can only talk about actually substituting some other prayers in place of the psalms when another form of prayer is available which is better suited to serve the needs of modern man, while at the same time maintaining the qualities of deep spirituality, poetic beauty and genuine prayerfulness so magnificently charterized [*sic*] by the psalms. Up to this point in time it seems that no such prayer has yet been composed or found. Therefore, despite the very real problem surrounding the effective use of the psalms in the revised Office, they still represent a most venerable form of Christian prayer which has proven itself to be of the greatest value for the spiritual enrichment and edification of the praying community of faith down through the ages. “From the very beginning they have had the power to raise men’s minds to God, to evoke in them holy and wholesome thoughts, to help them give thanks in time of favor, and to bring consolation and constancy in adversity [*IGLH* 100].”” (Scotto 134)
4. **fourth objection**
   1. “. . . there is the objection that the present office is excessively formalistic . . .” (Scotto 135)
   2. But “the Liturgy of the Hours does provide a workable, stable structure which is necessary for any prayer which ordinarily is going to be used for public, communal worship on a regular basis.” (Scotto 135)
   3. “The Church has repeatedly expressed her confidence in the ability of this salutary prayer to serve contemporary man in a most significant manner. . . . the glorified and risen Christ could continue to be authentically encountered throughout [136] the Hours as an extension of the Eucharist, and as a true sacrifice of praise, thereby sanctifying the entire day of the Christian in prayer [*IGLH* 10, 12, 13, 15]. While the Church encourages private and spontaneous forms of prayer and sees them as necessary in the life of the Christian, rarely are these forms of prayer able to integrate an individual or community of believers into the liturgical cycle of the mystery of Christ in the Church Year [*IGLH* 6, 7, 9] . . .” (Scotto 136-137)
   4. Still, the objection has some justification.
      1. “. . . the reformed Office seems to be a mixture of the [135] older and newer traditions—cathedral and monastic . . .” (Scotto 135-136)
      2. “While this attempt [the reformed office] seems to have been quite successful in relationship to the needs of the clergy, it does not seem to be quite as successful relative to the needs and the participation of the laity. . . . the very multiplicity of elements of mixed literary forms make this prayer, most particularly Lauds and Vespers, a rather difficult one for easy adoption by the laity.” (Scotto 136)

## Implementing the Liturgy of the Hours in the Parish

Flannery, Austin, ed. *Vatican II*: *The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*. 1975. Dublin: Dominican, 1986.

Scotto, Dominic F. *The Liturgy of the Hours*: *Its History and Its Importance as the Communal Prayer of the Church after the Liturgical Reform of Vatican II*. Petersham MA: St. Bede’s, 1987.

1. **introduction**
   1. “. . . our primary concern is with the role of the laity in the celebration of the Hours . . .” (Scotto 27)
   2. “The General Instruction informs us that “a cantor or cantors should begin the antiphons, psalms, and other songs [*IGLH* 260],” while the manner in which the psalms are sung can be varied according to the norms of nn. 121-125 [*IGLH* 279]. While the faithful are encouraged to sing the Hours as “the form which best accords with the nature of this prayer [*IGLH* 268], they should sing only those parts which they are capable of singing without placing an undue strain or burden upon their resources and patience [*IGLH* 273]. The cantor can do much to ensure the success of any such sung celebration of the Hours by leading and supporting the faithful to the extent that they may need his assistance, and by establishing a certain harmony of listening and responding between himself and the faithful. However, the cantor should never assume so great a musical responsibility that the role of the faithful is overly curtailed.” (Scotto 146)
2. **a simple form of the liturgy of the hours for parish use**
   1. introduction: “Because of the complexity, variability and expense of the present form of the revised Liturgy of the Hours, it would seem both practical and realistic to initiate the celebration of the principal Hours of Lauds and Vespers on the parish level in a much more simplified and uninvolved manner. Therefore, initially the order of celebration should be kept simple, with a more or less standard format, while at the same time adhering to the essential thrust and structure of the official Office [*IGLH* 33]. This can be accomplished by fully utilizing those recommendations of the General Instruction which permit and encourage adaptation of the Liturgy of the Hours to the particular needs of the Christian community in their public worship. Eventually, once the community becomes well-adapted to this order of celebration, perhaps a more elaborate format may be introduced.” (Scotto 158)
   2. structure of the parish office
      1. “The structure of this parish Office should more closely emulate the ancient cathedral Office of the Church. Therefore, after the introductory verse and response invoking God’s help and blessing [*IGLH* 34], the following basic order of service should be followed: [158]
         1. “*The Opening Hymn:* This hymn could be taken from any authorized source provided that it suits the spirit of the Hour, season, or feast. It is recommended that it be sung. Therefore, both text and music should always be made available [*IGLH* 42, 178].
         2. “*The Antiphons:* An antiphon is said, or sung at the beginning of each psalm and may be repeated at the conclusion of the psalm [*IGLH* 123].
         3. “*The Psalms:* The psalms, and the Old and New Testament canticles, may be recited or sung in various ways; either with alternate verses or strophes recited or sung by two choirs or two separate groups of the congregation, or in responsorial fashion, that is with the choir, or the entire body of the faithful, answering the cantor, who sings or recites the psalms, with a simple refrain [*IGLH* 121, 122, 260].
         4. “*The Readings:* These readings from Sacred Scripture should be proclaimed from a suitably prominent position by a well-qualified lector, or some other delegated person [*IGLH* 259]. Other appropriate readings may be used as well, but only to supplement and never to substitute for the scriptures. Although the service is to be kept simple, it is recommended that, especially in celebrations with the people, a longer selection from the sacred scriptures be read and that a brief commentary or homily be given [*IGLH* 46, 47, 248, 249, 251]. The readings, or homily, should be followed by a period of meditative silence [*IGLH* 48].
         5. “*The Gospel Canticle:* These canticles are expressive of the entire community’s praise and thanksgiving for its redemption. At morning prayer this includes the Canticle of Zechariah, or the Benedictus (Lk. 1:68-79); while at evening prayer the Canticle of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Magnificat (Lk. 1:46-55), is used [*IGLH* 50, 138, 261, 266].
         6. “*The Intercessions:* These are prayers of petition, intercession, and thanksgiving offered up for everyone. At morning prayer they are characterized by a spirit of offering and consecration of the entire day to God; while at evening prayer they are characterized by a spirit of petition and thanksgiving, with a special final intention for all the faithful departed [*IGLH* 51, 179-193].
         7. “*The Lord’s Prayer:* Made sacred by tradition, this model prayer [159] serves as a most fitting conclusion to the worshiping community’s celebration of morning and evening prayer. It is recommended that it be sung standing [*IGLH* 52, 194-196].
         8. “*The Concluding Prayer, Final Blessing, and Dismissal:* A concluding prayer brings to completion the celebration of the Hours. This summary prayer, as well as the final blessing and dismissal, traditionally pertain to the priest or deacon. However, if both should be absent, another form of dismissal which does not imply authority may be employed by one of the faithful. This final blessing and dismissal by the leader calls down God’s blessing upon the praying community and sends it forth in hope, joy, and confidence under his protective power [*IGLH* 53-54, 197-200].” (Scotto 158-160)
   3. practicalities
      1. “It now devolves upon priests and religious to be conscious and appreciative of this restoration of the Divine Office and to promote it as a prayer of the whole Church, rather than have it remain as the official prayer of a select few.” (Scotto 42)
      2. “A simple, inexpensive Office could be drawn up from the above structure for use on the parish level which would involve a minimal amount of material and expense. Since, as we have already noted, the opening hymn may be taken from any authorized source [*IGLH* 42, 178], use can be made of those church hymnals already available for parochial use. Because the antiphons need not be repeated after each psalm [*IGLH* 113, 123], they could be recited or intoned by a cantor or by some other designated person [*IGLH* 260]. Ideally, the readings should be *listened to,* therefore, since they will be proclaimed by the lector, it would be best not to place a copy of them in the hands of the worshiping community [*IGLH* 259]. Both parts of the intercessions may be recited by the priest or minister and need only involve the faithful to the point of repeating an invariable response after each intercession, or to simply pause in silence [*IGLH* 193]. The Lord’s Prayer is well-known to everyone and can certainly be recited from memory, while the concluding prayer, final blessing, and dismissal pertain to the priest or minister [*IGLH* 54, 197]. Therefore, at least initially, all that the people would need would be an economical copy of the psalter properly arranged according to the Hours, a copy of the Old and New Testament Canticles used in Lauds and Vespers, and a copy of the *Benedictus* and the *Magnificat,* in order to be able to participate fully and actively in the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours.” (Scotto 160)
      3. “In planning for any communal celebration of the Hours, it is essential that the praying community be made to feel as comfortable [160] and as familiar as possible with what they are going to be doing. If the faithful come to the service knowing little or nothing of what to expect, this could lead to uneasiness, embarrassment, and discouragement, and could very well vitiate all the good efforts previously expended in the proper preparation. It is essential, therefore, that they have a clear indication of exactly what is expected of them at each point of the celebration. This objective could be effected in various ways. Prior to the actual initiation of the Office, the order of service should be distributed to the entire assembly. This would include all of those directives necessary for the full and active participation of the people including the proper posture. All of this could be printed on a simple card and enclosed in the people’s copy of the psalms and canticles. As a further help it could also be printed in the parish bulletin. All other variable information such as hymn numbers, could be posted in church where all could clearly see it, or announced verbally just before the service.” (Scotto 160-161)
      4. “It is also important that the people be exhorted to be present in church at least five minutes before the scheduled time for the Hour in order that some more proximate preparation or instruction may be actively shared in. This will allow the community time to adjust to any last minute changes or announcements and will also offer the opportunity for a brief but very valuable practice during which the hymns and any other sung portions of the Office may be quickly rehearsed. But the people must not only be impressed with the need for punctuality, but primarily for their presence and active participation as elements vital to the support of the community and the ultimate success of the celebration. The clergy themselves can give the best example in this regard. Tardiness can lead to rushing, confusion, and frustration and can consequently destroy the atmosphere necessary for fruitful prayer, while absenteeism can weaken the very structure of community which is so essential to this communal gathering for prayer.” (Scotto 161)
      5. “Finally, once the praying community is gathered in church and ready to begin the service, allow a brief period of silence so that everyone may become recollected and properly disposed for this encounter with the Lord [*IGLH* 202].” (Scotto 161)
      6. “There are many publications presently available which are able to provide any parish community with a wide variety of musical settings for hymns, psalms, and canticles.” (Scotto 150)
         1. Lucien Deiss, *Biblical Hymns and Psalms,* 2 vols. (Cincinnati, OH: World Library of Sacred Music Publications, 1965-1970). (Scotto 199 n. 66, 201 n. 116)
         2. J. Gelineau, *The Grail Gelineau Psalter* (Chicago: G. I. A. Publications, 1963). (Scotto 199 n. 66, 201 n. 116)
         3. S. Somerville, *Psalms for Singing,* 2 vols. (Cincinnati, OH: World Library of Sacred Music Publications, 1960). (Scotto 201-202 n. 116)
         4. W. G. Storey, F. C. Quinn, and D. F. Wright, eds., *Morning Praise and Evensong: A Liturgy of the Hours in Musical Setting* (Notre Dame, IN: Fides, 1973). (Scotto 202 n. 116)
         5. R. A. Kiefer, ed., *The Catholic Liturgy Book* (Baltimore, MD: Helicon, 1975). (Scotto 202 n. 116)
         6. *Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours, Organ Accompaniment* (Washington, DC: International Commission on English in the Liturgy, 1978). (Scotto 202 n. 116)
      7. “. . . probably the most complete and up-to-date, reliable study of the Psalms in English is L. Sabourin’s *The Psalms—Their Origin and Meaning* (New York: Alba House, 1974). On a [192] much simpler and practical level see M.H. Shepherd Jr., *The Psalms in Christian Worship—A Practical Guide* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1976).” (Scotto 192-193 n. 144)

## Contents of the Present-Day Liturgy of the Hours

The present-day Liturgy of the Hours has seven hours, three major and four minor.

Invitatory not an hour, but the introduction to the first hour of the current day, either Office of Readings or Morning Prayer

Office of Readings formerly Matins, major hour

Morning prayer formerly Lauds, major hour

Daytime prayer minor hours, one or all of

Midmorning prayer formerly Terce

Midday prayer formerly Sext

Midafternoon prayer formerly None

Evening prayer formerly Vespers, major hour

Night Prayer Compline

Canon law requires priests to pray the entire Liturgy of the Hours every day.

It requires deacons to pray the morning and evening hours.

It requires religious to obey their communities’ rules and constitutions (hence practice differs).

Some laity recite portions of the Liturgy of the Hours, perhaps morning and evening hours.

**major hours**

The major hours are Office of Readings, Morning Prayer, and Evening Prayer.

Office of Readings induces reflection; Morning Prayer expresses praise; Evening Prayer expresses thanksgiving.

Office of Readings format:

a hymn

one or two long psalms divided into three parts

a long passage from scripture, usually arranged so that in any one week all the readings come from the same text

a long passage, e.g.,

a hagiographical passage, such as an account of a saint’s martyrdom

a theological treatise commenting on some aspect of the scriptural reading

a passage from the documents of the Second Vatican Council

on nights before Sundays or feast days: the Office of Readings may become a vigil, by inserting three Old Testament canticles and a reading from the gospels

on solemnities, feasts, and Sundays outside of Lent: the hymn *Te Deum* (*Te Deum lauda­mus*, “You, God, we praise”)

concluding prayer

short concluding verse (especially when prayed in groups)

Morning Prayer format (same as Evening Prayer):

a hymn

two psalms, or one long psalm divided into two parts, then a scriptural canticle (from the Old Testament)

a short passage from scripture

a responsory, typically a scripture verse, sometimes liturgical poetry

Canticle of Zechariah (Benedictus, Luke 1:67-79)

intercessions

Lord’s Prayer

concluding prayer

priest or deacon’s blessing; in a group without clergy or in individual recitation, a short conclusion

Evening Prayer format (same as Morning Prayer):

a hymn

two psalms, or one long psalm divided into two parts, then a scriptural canticle (from the New Testament)

a short passage from scripture

a responsory, typically a scripture verse, sometimes liturgical poetry

Canticle of Mary (Magnificat, Luke 1:46-55)

intercessions

Lord’s Prayer

concluding prayer

priest or deacon’s blessing; in a group without clergy or in individual recitation, a short conclusion

**minor hours**

The minor hours are the three daytime hours (Midmorning Prayer, Midday Prayer, Midafternoon Prayer) and Night Prayer.

Daytime hours format (like a compact Office of Readings):

a hymn

three short psalms, or three pieces of longer psalms (usually beginning with a part of Ps 119)

a very short passage of scripture, then a responsorial verse

concluding prayer

short concluding verse (when praying in a group)

Night prayer (preparing the soul for passage to eternal life):

an examination of conscience

a hymn

a psalm, or two short psalms, or simply Psalm 91

a short reading from scripture

the responsory In manus tuas, Domine (Into Your Hands, Lord)

the Canticle of Simeon, Nunc dimittis, from the Gospel of Luke, framed by the antiphon Protect us, Lord

a concluding prayer

a short concluding blessing

a hymn to Mary, the mother of Jesus

The basic four-week cycle of hours prays nearly all of the psalms.

In all offices, antiphons frame psalms and canticles.

All offices conclude with the traditional Catholic doxology.

**liturgical variation**

The Church provides two alternate collections of psalms, readings, canticles, hymns, and antiphons for specific dates in the liturgical Roman Calendar. One collection of alternate selections is the “Proper of Seasons” (for days in Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter); the other is the “Proper of Saints” (for saints’ feast days).

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