



NewsLetter

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USCCB Approves Plan of Action for Revised *Liturgy of the Hours*, Bl. Francis Xavier Seelos for U.S. Proper Calendar

The Latin Church Bishops of the USCCB approved a “scope of work” for the future *Liturgy of the Hours, Second Edition* during their November 2012 plenary meeting. The scope of work was approved on a vote of 189–41 with one abstention. While an exact timeline has not yet been established, the Committee on Divine Worship hopes that this project can be brought to completion in three to five years.

The psalter will make use of the *Revised Grail Psalter*, which was approved for liturgical use in 2010. The collects from the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*, will be put in place for Sundays, solemnities, feasts, and memorials. Biblical texts will be taken from the current *Lectionary for Mass* approved for liturgical use. Orations, hymns, new texts from the Proper of Saints, and additional antiphons for the Canticles of Zechariah and Mary for use on Sundays and solemnities are being translated by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL). The Committee on Divine Worship will also work with ICEL to determine the best course in regard to the retranslation of certain elements such as the intercessions, the *Te Deum*, and the *General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours*. It is envisioned that other elements, such as the texts of the Gospel Canticles (the Canticle of Zechariah and the Canticle of Mary) and the non-biblical readings of the Office of Readings, will remain in their current form.

Of particular note is the plan regarding the texts of hymns for the *Liturgy of the Hours*. In recent years, many have inquired about the availability of an English translation of the hymns found in the *Liturgia Horarum, editio typica altera*, many of which are of ancient origin. Rather than choose hymns from the common repertoire, which are otherwise available in hymnals and other collections, the Committee has decided to include English translations of the Latin hymns in the amended Liturgy of the Hours.

The body of Bishops also voted 213 to 1 with one abstention to inscribe the Optional Memorial of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos on October 5 into the Proper Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States. Bl. Francis was born in Bavaria in 1819 and joined the Redemptorist order in 1842. Ordained a priest in 1844 in Baltimore, he spent his entire ministry in the United States, dedicating himself as an itinerant missionary throughout the Northeast and Midwest, finally settling in New Orleans in 1866. Bl. Francis died of yellow fever on October 4, 1867, and was beatified by Blessed John Paul II on April 9, 2000. The inscription will be sent to the Holy See for its confirmation. Proper liturgical texts, already approved for use in those dioceses where the Memorial is observed, will be made available at the appropriate time. A Spanish translation will be prepared and submitted for approval together with the Spanish translation of the *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia*.

Daniel Cardinal DiNardo Elected Next Chairman of Committee on Divine Worship

During the November 2012 USCCB plenary meeting, Daniel N. Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston–Houston, was elected as the 20th Chairman of the Committee on Divine Worship, for a term beginning on November 14, 2013 through November 17, 2016. He was elected on a vote of 122–115 over the other candidate, Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron of Detroit.

Cardinal DiNardo has served as Archbishop of Galveston-Houston since 2006, and was raised to the College of Cardinals by Pope Benedict XVI in 2007. Within the USCCB, he was a consultant of the then–Committee on the Liturgy from 2002 to 2004, and most recently served as Chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities from 2009 to 2012. He is also the Episcopal Moderator of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. Cardinal DiNardo now joins the Committee on Divine Worship as Chairman–Elect.

November 2012 Meeting of the Committee on Divine Worship

The Committee on Divine Worship, together with the Committee’s consultants, met on Sunday, November 11, 2012 in Baltimore, Maryland. In addition to reports from the Subcommittee on Divine Worship in Spanish, the Secretariat staff, the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, and the Instituto Nacional Hispano de Liturgia, the Committee addressed several significant action items:

Order of Confirmation and Order of Celebrating Marriage – The Committee reviewed the comments and observations submitted by bishops regarding the preliminary draft translations (“Green Books”) of the *Order of Confirmation* and the *Order of Celebrating Marriage*. The Committee added several of its own comments and suggested modifications and forwarded all the recommendations to the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL). It is expected that the final draft translations (“Gray Books”) will be presented for canonical vote by the body of Bishops in November 2013.

In light of the draft translation of the *Order of Celebrating Marriage*, the Committee also began discussion of potential adaptations to the Rite for use in the Dioceses of the United States. In addition to those adaptations contained in the current *Rite of Marriage*, the Committee also considered the inclusion of English translations of cultural adaptations contained in the *Ritual del Matrimonio*. The Committee will make final decisions about proposed adaptations at its next meeting in June 2013.

50th Anniversary of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* – In anticipation of the fiftieth anniversary of the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the Committee began work on a Committee Statement to be released in Fall 2013. Members also continued to develop plans for the scholarly symposium on *Sacrosanctum Concilium* to be held November 8–9, 2013 in Baltimore. More details about the event will be forthcoming soon.

Feasts of the Lord in the *Lectionary* – The Committee considered a proposal to grant permission to use only two scripture readings for feasts of the Lord when they do not fall on Sundays. The Introduction to the *Lectionary for Mass*, no. 79, gives Conferences of Bishops the authority to permit the use of two readings (rather than three) when such feasts occur on weekdays. Currently, the *Lectionary for Mass* allows for this provision only for the Feast of the Holy Family and the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. This will be presented for consideration and canonical vote by the body of Bishops in November 2013.

Roman Missal Supplement – The Committee authorized the development of a *Roman Missal Supplement*, which will eventually be published to include the proper prayers for recently canonized saints and other new additions to the Proper Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States. Work will not begin immediately, but only after such time that a sufficient amount of material deems the publication of a supplement necessary. In the meantime, every effort will be made to make new liturgical texts available through other means.

Music in the Liturgy – The Committee continued its discussion (from the June 2012 meeting) on the means of approving music for use in the Sacred Liturgy.

Liturgical and Sacramental Propositions from the 2012 Synod of Bishops

The Thirteenth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops met in Vatican City from October 7–28, 2012 on the topic of The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith. At its conclusion, the Synod Fathers approved 58 propositions to Pope Benedict XVI for his consideration in a future Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation. For the benefit of our readers, we present the propositions related to the liturgy and sacraments:

Proposition 11: New Evangelization and the Prayerful Reading of Sacred Scripture

God has communicated himself to us in his Word made flesh. This divine Word, heard and celebrated in the Liturgy of the Church, particularly in the Eucharist, strengthens interiorly the faithful and renders them capable of authentic evangelical witness in daily life. The Synod Fathers desire that the divine word “be ever more fully at the heart of every ecclesial activity” (*Verbum Domini*, 1).

The gate to Sacred Scripture should be open to all believers. In the context of the New Evangelization every opportunity for the study of Sacred Scripture should be made available. The Scripture should permeate homilies, catechesis and every effort to pass on the faith.

In consideration of the necessity of familiarity with the Word of God for the New Evangelization and for the spiritual growth of the faithful, the Synod encourages dioceses, parishes, small Christian communities to continue serious study of the Bible and *Lectio Divina* — the prayerful reading of the Scriptures (cf. *Dei Verbum*, 21-22).

Proposition 33: The Sacrament of Penance and the New Evangelization

The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is the privileged place to receive God’s mercy and forgiveness. It is a place for both personal and communal healing. In this sacrament, all the baptized have a new and personal encounter with Jesus Christ, as well as a new encounter with the Church, facilitating a full reconciliation through the forgiveness of sins. Here the penitent encounters Jesus, and at the same time he or she experiences a deeper appreciation of himself and herself. The Synod Fathers ask that this sacrament be put again at the center of the pastoral activity of the Church.

In every diocese, at least one place should be especially dedicated in a permanent way for the celebration of this sacrament, where priests are always present, allowing God’s mercy to be experienced by all the faithful. The sacrament should be especially available, even on a daily basis, at places of pilgrimage and specially designated churches. Fidelity to the specific norms which rule the administration of this sacrament is necessary. Every priest should consider the Sacrament of Penance an essential part of his ministry and of the New Evangelization, and in every parish community a suitable time should be set apart for hearing confessions.

Proposition 34: Sundays and Feast Days

The Eucharist must be the source and summit of the New Evangelization. The Synod Fathers urge all Christ’s faithful to renew their understanding and love for the Eucharistic celebration, in which their lives are transformed and joined to Christ’s offering of his own life to the glory of God the Father for the salvation of the whole world.

Even though there is a tension between the Christian Sunday and the secular Sunday, Sunday needs to be recovered for the New Evangelization according to Blessed John Paul II’s teaching in “*Dies Domini*.” Sunday with its sacred and special character together with Sunday Mass should be the center of Catholic life. Full, active and conscious participation in the liturgy on the part of the whole community is the goal. The liturgical year with its feasts should be followed by a true program of evangelization, especially at Christmas and Easter.

Proposition 35: Liturgy

The worthy celebration of the Sacred Liturgy, God’s most treasured gift to us, is the source of the highest expression of our life in Christ (cf. *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 10). It is, therefore, the primary and most powerful expression of the new evangelization. God desires to manifest the incomparable beauty of his immeasurable and unceasing love for us through the Sacred Liturgy, and we, for our part, desire to employ what is most beautiful in our worship of God in response to his gift. In the marvelous exchange of the Sacred Liturgy, by which heaven descends to earth, salvation is at hand, calling forth repentance and conversion of heart (cf. Mt 4:17; Mk 1:15).

Evangelization in the Church calls for a liturgy that lifts the hearts of men and women to God. The liturgy is not just a human action but an encounter with God which leads to contemplation and deepening friendship with God. In this sense, the liturgy of the Church is the best school of the faith.

Proposition 36: Spiritual Dimension of the New Evangelization

The principal agent of evangelization is the Holy Spirit, who opens hearts and converts them to God. The experience of encountering the Lord Jesus, made possible by the Spirit, which introduces one into the Trinitarian life, welcomed in a spirit of adoration, supplication and of praise, must be fundamental to every aspect of the New Evangelization. This is the “contemplative dimension” of the New Evangelization which is nourished continually through prayer, beginning with the liturgy, especially the Eucharist, source and summit of the life of the Church.

Therefore, we propose that prayer be encouraged and taught from infancy. Children and youth should be educated in the family and in schools to recognize the presence of God in their lives, to praise Him, to give thanks for the gifts received from Him, and to ask that the Holy Spirit guide them.

Proposition 37: The Sacrament of Confirmation in the New Evangelization

All the Christian faithful are entrusted with the mission to evangelize, due to the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Here the faithful are sealed by the anointing of the Holy Spirit and are called to participate in the mystery of Pentecost. Through Confirmation, all the baptized receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit, his charisms, and the power to give witness to the Gospel openly and with courage.

It is important that mystagogical catechesis accompany the grace of filial adoption received at Baptism, underlining the importance of the gift of the Holy Spirit which enables one to fully participate in the Eucharistic witness of the Church and its influence in all the spheres of life and human activity.

Hence proper and systematic catechesis prior to the reception of these sacraments is of prime importance.

Proposition 38: Christian Initiation and the New Evangelization

The Synod wishes to state that Christian initiation is a crucial element in the New Evangelization and is the means by which the Church, as a mother, brings forth children and regenerates herself. Therefore we propose that the traditional process of Christian initiation, that has often become simply a proximate preparation for the sacraments, be everywhere considered in a catechumenal perspective, giving more relevance to permanent mystagogy, and thus becoming true initiation to Christian life through the sacraments (cf. *General Directory of Catechesis*, 91).

In this perspective it is not without consequences that the situation today concerning the three sacraments of Christian initiation, despite their theological unity, is pastorally diverse. These differences in the ecclesial communities are not of a doctrinal nature but differences of pastoral judgment. This Synod however requests that what the Holy Father has affirmed in *Sacramentum caritatis*, 18, become a stimulus for dioceses and episcopal conferences to review their practices of Christian initiation: “Concretely, it needs to be seen which practice better enables the faithful to put the sacrament of the Eucharist at the center, as the goal of the whole process of initiation” (*Sacramentum caritatis*, 18).

Proposition 39: Popular Piety and the New Evangelization

Popular piety is a true place to encounter Christ, and also express the faith of the Christian people in the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints. The New Evangelization recognizes the value of these faith experiences and encourages them as ways to grow in Christian virtue.

Pilgrimages to shrines and sanctuaries are an important aspect of the new evangelization. Not only because of the millions of people who continue to make these pilgrimages but because this form of popular piety at this time is an especially promising opportunity for conversion and the growth of faith. It is important therefore that a pastoral plan be developed that properly welcomes the pilgrims and, in response to the deep desire of the pilgrims, opportunities be offered so that the time of the pilgrimage can be lived as a true moment of grace.