



NewsLetter

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Robert Cardinal Sarah Appointed CDWDS Prefect

On November 24, 2014, Pope Francis appointed Robert Cardinal Sarah as the new Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. Cardinal Sarah, from the country of Guinea, was raised to the College of Cardinals by Pope Benedict XVI in 2010 and has most recently served in the Holy See as President of the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, the body responsible for coordinating humanitarian missions and promoting charity among the Church's members and organizations.

Cardinal Sarah succeeds Antonio Cardinal Cañizares Llovera, who was appointed as Archbishop of Valencia in Spain in August 2014. The Committee on Divine Worship congratulates Cardinal Sarah on his appointment, and looks forward to collaborating with him on the many liturgical projects affecting the Church in the United States.

USCCB Approves Five Liturgical Items at November 2014 Meeting

The November 2014 plenary meeting of the USCCB saw the approval by its Latin Church members of three "Gray Book" translations prepared by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), and a set of modifications to the *Revised Grail Psalter*. All four items will be sent to the Holy See for the requisite confirmation. In addition, the Committee on Divine Worship received permission to begin the process of drafting a revision to the *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities*.

Among the ICEL Gray Books, the *Order of Dedication of a Church and an Altar* was approved 168-6 with two abstentions. The new translation will supersede the existing one, which received *ad interim* confirmation in September 1978. There are no changes to the ritual itself, although the texts will now reflect the translation principles introduced in *Liturgiam authenticam*.

Exorcisms and Related Supplications was approved by the USCCB by a vote of 179-5 with two abstentions. This is the first English translation for this ritual book, the Latin *editio typica* of which was approved in 1999 and emended in 2004. Although the complete printed edition will only be provided to bishops and exorcists, Appendix II of the text – a set of prayers and supplications that may be used by the faithful to combat evil – will be made available to the faithful. Finally, a supplement to the *Liturgy of the Hours* featuring liturgical texts for celebrations added to the General Roman Calendar since 1984 was approved by a vote of 210-2. This will be printed as a fascicle to be inserted into the existing *Liturgy of the Hours*.

By a vote of 167-34 with two abstentions, the body of Bishops also approved a set of modifications to the *Revised Grail Psalter*. The original psalter was confirmed by the Holy See in 2010, and these changes to the text are intended to improve the rhythm further, correct a few inconsistencies, and bring out more clearly some of the imagery behind the original Hebrew language. The *Revised Grail Psalter* is already known for its accuracy and musical quality. These changes also build on observations and recommendations based on four years of use by some communities since approval in order to arrive at the best possible translation before incorporating them into the *Liturgy of the Hours* and other ritual texts.

Finally, the USCCB gave its approval for the drafting of a revised edition of *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities*; the vote was 207-1 with one abstention. The first edition, published in 1995, has served the Church well. However, due to increased understanding and advancements in technology and treatment of autism spectrum disorders, celiac disease, and any number of other physical or mental impairments, updated guidelines were deemed necessary. A revised text is expected to be presented to the Bishops for a vote in November 2015.

November 2014 Meeting of the Committee on Divine Worship

The Committee on Divine Worship met in Baltimore, Maryland on November 9, 2014. After hearing reports from Bishop Arthur J. Serratelli, Committee Chairman, and Bishop Octavio Cisneros, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Divine Worship in Spanish, the Committee was given a presentation by Ms. Rita Thiron, Executive Director of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC). The centerpiece of her report to the Committee was the recent survey on the *Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA), conducted on their behalf by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). The survey paints a rich picture of how the various rites and activities pertaining to the RCIA are implemented on the parish level across the country, and in particular, what areas of practice may call for further examination.

Liturgy of the Hours, Second Edition

Aside from approving various modifications to the Committee's action items for the November 2014 USCCB plenary meeting, the Committee devoted some time toward the ongoing development of the *Liturgy of the Hours, Second Edition*. Following up from the Committee's June 2013 meeting, in which they recommended the use of Old Testament, New Testament, and Gospel Canticles as translated by Conception Abbey in Conception, Missouri, members reviewed a number of proposed modifications on the first draft of those texts. The proposed Cantic translations employ the same style and attention to meter as the *Revised Grail Psalms*. A revised translation will be prepared for further modifications and approval of the body of Bishops at the June 2015 plenary meeting.

The *General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours* famously makes reference to a two-year cycle of biblical readings for the Office of Readings, with a second cycle located in a "supplement for optional use" (see nos. 145-146). Unfortunately, no Latin typical edition of such a supplement was ever produced, although *Notitiae* did publish proposed scriptural periscopes recommended for such a second cycle in 1976. These recommendations have already been put into use in several Conferences, such as Italy, Germany, and Mexico, as well as among some religious communities. The Committee directed the Secretariat to examine how other Conferences and religious communities have implemented a second cycle (both of Biblical and patristic/ecclesiastical readings) and report its findings at the June 2015 Committee meeting.

Other Matters

Members of the Committee approved a proposal to consider an expanded Mass formulary for the Memorial of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, celebrated on July 14. Because of her importance as the first Native American to be beatified and canonized, the celebration of her memorial would be appropriately enhanced by the addition of a Prayer over the Offerings and Prayer after Communion to the existing formulary. The Secretariat will make appropriate consultations to arrive at proposed texts for eventual approval of the body of Bishops and the Holy See. Finally, the Committee approved a National Shrine petition, which will be forwarded to the Administrative Committee for a final decision in March 2015.

29 Questions on Exorcism and Its Use in the Church, Part One

The Latin Church Bishops of the USCCB approved the English translation of *De Exorcismis et Supplicationibus Quibusdam, editio typica* in November 2014, and the final text of *Exorcisms and Related Supplications* (ERS) is being sent to the Holy See for the requisite confirmation. In the course of the approval process, a list of frequently asked questions on exorcism and its use in the Church's liturgical life was developed by the Secretariat of Divine Worship. Answers were provided by specialists in this ministry and by experts in canon law. Since so much of the common perception of the nature and application of exorcism is shaped by the exaggerations of movie scripts and television programs, the Committee on Divine Worship has approved dissemination of these basic questions and answers, in hopes that clear information is brought to bear on a topic that is often shrouded in mystery or misinformation.

What is an exorcism?

Exorcism is a specific form of prayer that the Church uses against the power of the devil.

What is the difference between an exorcism and the Sacrament of Penance?

Exorcism is a prayer that falls in the category of sacramentals, that is, one of a number of sacred signs instituted by the Church "to sanctify different circumstances of life" (*Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 351), thus varying from the seven sacraments of the Church which were instituted by Christ himself. The Sacrament of Penance forgives our sins and reconciles us to the Church, renewing Baptism and bestowing grace to fight evil and grow in virtue. As a sacramental, exorcism prepares one for the grace of the Sacrament.

Why does the Church need exorcisms?

There are instances when a person needs to be protected against the power of the devil or to be withdrawn from his spiritual dominion. At such times, the Church asks publically and authoritatively in the name of Jesus Christ for this protection or liberation through the use of exorcism.

Is there a scriptural basis for exorcism?

While the basis for exorcism is grounded in the ministry of Jesus Christ (cf. Mk 1:34, 39; Lk 4:35; Mt 17:18), there is no scriptural basis for a formal rite of exorcism apart from the use of the psalms and Gospel pericopes that were included in the rite of exorcism as it evolved.

What is clear, however, is that the Lord Jesus involved the disciples in his mission and through their commissioning continued the exorcistic work begun by Jesus himself (cf. Mt 10:8; Mk 3:14-15; 6:13; 16:17; Lk 9:1; 10:17). It was not a work they did in their own names, but in the name of the One who had bestowed it upon them. Thus the ministry of exorcism continues in the life of the Church as part of the regular pastoral care of souls.

Do the Fathers of the Church refer to exorcisms in their writings?

Several of the Fathers of the Church, including Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Athanasius provide us with insights into the exorcistic practices of their day through their extant writings. Through them we gain a glimpse into the unfolding developments in the structure and form of exorcism as a rite gradually took shape. In addition to the use of Jesus' name, other elements contributed to the shape of an early ritual such as the Sign of the Cross, exsufflation (breathing on the person's face), fasting, and simple adjurations containing scripture and prayer.

Are there different kinds of exorcisms?

Exorcisms are divided into two kinds (or forms). Simple or minor forms of exorcism are found in two places: first, for those preparing for Baptism, the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA) and the *Rite of Baptism for Children* both call for minor exorcisms; secondly, the appendix of *Exorcisms and Related Supplications* includes a series of prayers which may be used by the faithful.

The second kind is the solemn or "major exorcism," which is a rite that can only be performed by a bishop or a by priest, with the special and express permission of the local ordinary (cf. Code of Canon Law, can. 1172). This form is directed "at the expulsion of demons or to the liberation [of a person] from demonic possession" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1673).

When and how is an afflicted member of the faithful referred to an exorcist?

It is advisable that every diocese establish a protocol to respond to inquiries made by the faithful who claim to be demonically afflicted. As part of the protocol, an assessment should occur to determine the true state of the person. Only after a thorough examination including medical, psychological, and psychiatric testing might the person be referred to the exorcist for a final determination regarding demonic possession. To be clear, the actual determination of whether a member of the faithful is genuinely possessed by the devil is made by the Church, even if individuals claim to be possessed through their own self-diagnosis or psychosis.

May anyone receive a “major exorcism?”

Since the rites of exorcism are categorized as sacramentals, effectively as blessings, the practice of who may receive a “major exorcism” is governed by canon 1170 of the Code of Canon Law. The following are able to receive this specialized blessing if it is determined necessary: 1) Catholics; 2) Catechumens; 3) Non-Catholic Christians who request it; and 4) Non-Christian believers provided they have the proper disposition—meaning, they are sincere in their desire to be free of demonic influence. In cases involving a non-Catholic, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Diocesan Bishop (cf. ERS, no. 18).

How frequently is a “major exorcism” performed?

The frequency of exorcisms of this sort is determined by the credible need for the rite. That is why establishing a diocesan protocol is important. Through the centuries, the Church has moved cautiously when evaluating alleged cases of demonic possession. The reason for this is not to deny access to members of the faithful who are in genuine need. However, the Church is equally concerned that individuals not get caught up in a sensationalist mentality and thus create a kind of sideshow affair. Although rare, genuine cases of demonic possession should be addressed in a balanced manner with the utmost care being extended to the afflicted person.

What is the difference between a major exorcism and a minor exorcism?

While both forms of exorcism are directed against the power of the devil, the Rite of Major Exorcism is employed only when there is a case of genuine demonic possession, namely, when it is determined that the presence of the devil is in the body of the possessed and the devil is able to exercise dominion over that body.

Minor exorcisms are prayers used to break the influence of evil and sin in a person’s life, whether as a catechumen preparing for Baptism or as one of the baptized faithful striving to overcome the influence of evil and sin in his or her life.

Are there examples of each in the text of *Exorcisms and Related Supplications*?

The ritual text *Exorcisms and Related Supplications* is comprised of an introduction, two chapters (“The Rite of Major Exorcism” and “Various Texts”), and concludes with two appendices. The second chapter provides a series of additional texts which serve as options in the administration of the rite itself. The first appendix contains exorcistic prayers to be used at the discretion of the diocesan bishop when a thing or place has become demonically penetrated or the Church herself faces persecution and opposition. This latter series of prayers is not to be confused with the Rite of Major Exorcism itself. Finally, the second appendix provides prayers and supplications for the private use of the faithful.

Who may perform the various kinds of exorcisms?

The minister of a minor exorcism is the designated authorized minister of the sacrament (RCIA or Baptism for Children) or blessing being celebrated. Additionally, the prayers in Appendix II, “Supplications Which May Be Used by the Faithful Privately in Their Struggle against the Powers of Darkness” may be offered by any member of the clergy or by the lay faithful. However, the Rite of Major Exorcism is to be celebrated only by a bishop or a priest who has obtained the special and express permission of the diocesan bishop.

The second part will appear in the December 2014 issue, along with a weblink to the full list of questions and answers in English and Spanish.