THE DIVINE OFFICE

FROM THE TEMPLE TO TAIZÉ

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Master of Arts

by

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The Ohio State University
1961

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For giving me valuable constructive criticism and factual information, I am deeply indebted to two of my professors: to my adviser, Miss Gertrude Kuehefuhs, without whose knowledge of the Catholic liturgy this paper could not have been written; and to Mrs. Mary Borelli, who gave me several important references on the subject of the Taizé monastery, and helped me with the translations from the French. Several persons have contributed unpublished or scarce materials: Miss Marilou De Wall, Mr. Michael Glazier of the Helicon Press, and Prior Roger Schutz of Taizé. I am also very grateful to the Pontifical College Josephinum of Worthington, Ohio for giving me free access to their fine library. Let me end with tribute to my wife, who read the entire manuscript and showed me how to remove some of its faults.

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August, 1961
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INTRODUCTION

For several years I have watched with hope and sympathy the progress of the Christian communities in Iona (Scotland), Grandchamp (Switzerland), and Taizé (France). Although ecumenicity is the raison d'etre of the last-named group, they have made an important contribution to the present-day liturgical movement. The Taizé brothers use a Protestant breviary for the three daily offices of their community.

With the renewal of the beautiful tradition of the Divine Office, discarded to a great extent in the Reformation, the brothers of Taizé wish to combat the rapid secularization of Christians and their worship. Their breviary is a guide for laymen as well. It outlines a prayer discipline for Protestants who wish to give themselves up with ardor to the devout life while remaining in the world. This purposefully eclectic book draws heavily from Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran, Anglican, and Calvinist sources. It is a vivid expression of the brothers' passion for Christian unity.

That this Protestant breviary may be studied not in isolation but in the context of Christian thought on the subject,

its examination is preceded by a history of the Divine Office, gathered from Christian writings of the early church, the Middle Ages, and modern times.

CHAPTER I

THE APOSTOLIC EPOCH: THE ORIGINS OF THE PRAYER HOURS

The distribution of prayer over various times of the day was not an innovation of the early Christian church. To study its origin it is necessary to look back beyond the monastic movement of the fourth century, beyond the early patristic writings, beyond the New Testament itself, to commands in the Pentateuch establishing the morning and evening sacrifice.[1] The rule in these passages required a burnt-offering and cereal oblation both morning and evening. Later, when the tabernacle was replaced by the temple, the practice continued. Corresponding synagogue services were held in the villages at the beginning and end of the day. The early Christian church continued this practice in the form of morning and evening prayers, at first privately, later, under the influence of asceticism, publicly. Eventually these prayers became the offices of Lauds and Vespers as incorporated in the monastic rule.

Vespers (at first called Lucernarium) with its age-old

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[1] Exodus 29:38-42.
Numbers 28:1-8

custom of the blessing of the evening lamp, was transmitted to the infant church by its Jewish nucleus. Lauds (also called Gallicinium) early in its history included the recitation of Psalms 148, 149, and 150. The private recitation of these three praise psalms at dawn was a Jewish custom. Thus, both Lauds and Vespers resemble the Lord's Supper in that they grew from a Jewish devotional practice entirely familiar to Christ and His disciples.

In the New Testament there appears a more complicated schedule for daily prayers, one involving the third, sixth, and ninth hours of the day (nine, twelve, and three o'clock). The pouring-out of the Holy Spirit on the assembled disciples took place at the third hour.[2] At the sixth hour Peter went up to the house-top to pray, at which time he received the vision of the beasts.[3] At the ninth hour John and Peter were entering the temple to pray when they cured the lame man.[4] These three incidents, however, should not be interpreted as fixed prayer hours for the Jews or for the early Christians. There is no mention of prayer in the first text, and Peter's

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[2] Acts 2:15.

[3] Acts 10:9.

[4] Acts 3:1.

entry into the temple with John was doubtless in order to be present at the evening sacrifice. J. A. Jungmann in his study of the early liturgy makes the mistake of stating that the prayer hours of Terce, Sext, and None are based on Jewish prototypes.[5] He quotes the above three texts from the Acts of the Apostles as well as Daniel 6:10 in which the following prayer habits of the prophet Daniel are mentioned: "He kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." C. W. Dugmore in his excellent study on the debt of early Christianity to Judaism insists that although morning and evening prayer were Jewish customs, prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours was not. He offers the following comment on the text from Daniel:

> Can we maintain that these prayers were said at the third, sixth, and ninth hours? Surely not. For we know that the morning and evening sacrifices were still offered at dawn and at sunset in his time, and these hours would certainly account for two of his daily prayers. The third prayer may have been at noon, though we are not told that it was, and was probably purely private custom, for we have no other reference to a

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[5] Josef A. Jungmann, The Early Liturgy to the Time of Gregory the Great (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1959), p. 99.

> regular daily prayer either at noon or in the afternoon at that period. Moreover, the form, or content, of the prayers which were recited three times daily in the developed Jewish liturgy was not the same at each of the three services. If these prayers formed the background of the Christian prayers we should expect to find this difference reflected in them also. But from the beginning the same programme of Psalms and the Lord's Prayer seem to have been followed at each of the three hours. Thus it appears unlikely that the Christian Hours of Terce, Sext, and None were based on any corresponding times of prayer in Judaism.[6]

Pius Parsch is another writer who makes the mistake of attributing Terce, Sext, and None to Jewish custom; moreover, he states that the other prayer hours are specifically Christian in origin.[7] As we have seen, the exact opposite is true. The three New Testament texts are a mere foreshadowing of later tendencies to consecrate certain hours of the day to prayer and praise. As we shall see later, certain church fathers quoted these texts as reasons for prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours. Others stated that at these times Jesus was sentenced, was crucified, and died upon the cross. Still others maintained that since these are the normal divisions of the day,

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[6] Clifford W. Dugmore, The Influence of the Synagogue upon the Divine Office (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), pp. 65-66.

[7] Pius Parsch, The Breviary Explained (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1952), p. 16.

prayer should be offered. The last reason is probably the most logical. Christian as well as pagan writers tell of the Roman day divided by the third, sixth, and ninth hours, probably announced by bells or a crier.[8] It is only natural that devout persons wishing to sanctify each day with formal prayer would make use of these reminders. This practice of private prayer led to the offices of Terce, Sext, and None.

The first element of regular public prayer in the early Christian church was the vigil, held during the night between Saturday and Sunday. Msgr. Batiffol in his history of the Divine Office states that since the Lord's Day was a

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[8] Matthew 20:2-6. The passage is Christ's parable of the lord of the vineyard. It divides the day by means of the third, sixth, and ninth hours.

See also Wilhelm Kubitschek, Grundriss der Antiken Zeitrechnung ("Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft," Vol. I, Part 7; Munich: C. H. Beck, [n.d.]), pp. 187-88.

Not one of the ancient or modern writers on the Divine Office mentions the relevant fact that the Roman day and night were each divided into four three-hours periods. The exact correspondence of the eight prayer hours to these eight segments of the twenty-four hour day is much more than a coincidence. It is obvious that this division of time played an important role in the genesis and arrangement of the canonical hours.

commemoration of Christ's resurrection, it became a weekly Easter celebration, and the solemn paschal vigil of Easter gave birth to the Sunday vigil.[9] The Anglican scholar, Dom Gregory Dix, is of the opinion that the frequency of the vigil service is greatly overrated by modern scholars:

> There is said, too, to have been the 'vigil' service, at which the church, in hope of the second coming, regularly kept watch all through the Saturday night with lections and chants and prayers until the eucharist at cock-crow consoled her for the delay of the Lord's coming, by its proclamation of the Lord's death 'till He come'.... When one scrutinises the second century evidence there is room for suspecting that the pre-Nicene 'corporate vigils' of the church (except for that of the Pascha) are an invention of manuals of liturgical history.... Looking at the pre-Nicene evidence as a whole it seems to be improbable that a vigil-service was at all a frequent devotion for the laity, and quite likely that it was confined to the baptismal vigil at Pascha (and also on occasions, one at Pentecost).[10]

Regardless of its frequency, there was definitely an early Christian tradition of night prayer, one which led to the office now called Matins.

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[9] Msgr. Pierre Batiffol, History of the Roman Breviary (3d ed. rev.; London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1912), pp. 1-2.

[10] Dom Gregory Dix, The Shape of the Liturgy (2d ed.; London: Dacre Press, 1954), p. 325.

In the following two chapters, the development of these six rudimentary prayer hours will be traced. Beginning with the most important Church Orders, the examination will include the writings of the church fathers, and culminate in the completed Divine Office as formulated in the Rule of St. Benedict in the sixth century.[11] When tracing the development of the early church it is usual to distinguish two chronological areas: 1. The Ante-Nicene epoch, from the beginning of the second century to the Council of Nicaea in 325; 2. The Post-Nicene epoch, from the Council of Nicaea to the end of the sixth century.

[11] The remaining two offices of Prime and Compline were conventual in origin and will be discussed in their chronological place.

CHAPTER II

THE ANTE-NICENE EPOCH: THE GROWTH OF THE PRAYER HOURS

The Didache

The Didache, or The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles, was the first of a series of Church Orders--early manuals containing disciplinary and liturgical rules. The Church Orders advocated a common norm of practice and doctrine that was rooted in tradition, and claimed to be delivered to the church by the Apostles. As local types of Christianity acquired their own dignity, complete agreement of the Apostles was important only for basic doctrine and practice. In time, each area appealed to a particular Apostle for its authority--Jerusalem to St. James, Rome to St. Peter, Alexandria to St. Mark. Written attempts at detailed legislation for the entire Christian church were replaced by local collections of canons and liturgical service books.

The Didache was the most influential of the Church Orders, and was incorporated into several subsequent ones. Saint Athanasius in his Festal Letter XXXIX dated 367, calls it an

excellent book for those "who wish for instruction in the word of godliness."[1] Most scholars agree that it is a document from the early second century.[2] There is no mention of meetings for prayer other than on Sunday, but in Chapter VIII there occurs the following instruction: "Thus pray ye: Our Father.... Three times in a day pray ye so."[3] In the absence of any specific directions about meeting in assembly, this oldest record of the Lord's Prayer outside the New Testament must be taken to refer to private devotions. No hint is given of the exact times of day intended, but the passage is definitely a reference to the tendency to regulate prayer. The Lord's Prayer is perhaps the most important prayer of the canonical hours. It has been claimed that the hours are essentially a lengthy development of this model prayer.[4]

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[1] St. Athanasius, Select Works and Letters ("A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church," Second series, Vol. IV; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), pp. 551-52.

[2] An argument for a later date is presented in Burton Scott Easton(ed.), The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1934), p. 9.

[3] The Apostolic Fathers ("The Fathers of the Church," Vol. I; New York: Cima Publishing Co., Inc., 1947), p. 178.

[4] Dom Jules Baudot, The Breviary, Its History and Contents (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1929), p. 113.

Tertullian

An important witness of the late second century is Tertullian, who mentions five hours of prayer--at the beginning of the day, the third, sixth, and ninth hours, and at evening. The relevant passages are from his De oratione, Chapter 25:

> 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, Terce, Sext, and None. These, it can be found, are mentioned in holy Scripture as being more deserving of note.[5]

Tertullian goes on to quote the three texts from Acts already mentioned in Chapter I.[6] What follows is more important, however:

> Although these incidents simply happen without any precept of 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, as by a law, from our business to such an obligation so that we may offer adoration no less than three times a day at least, being debtors to the three divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And this, too, we read was observed by Daniel according to the rites of Israel. Of course, we are excepting the appropriate prayers which are due without any admonition at the approach of dawn and evening.[7]

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[5] Tertullian, Disciplinary, Moral, and Ascetical Works ("The Fathers of the Church," Vol. X.; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1959), p. 183.

[6] See above, p. 4.

[7] Tertullian, op. cit., pp. 183-84.

The above passage reveals two significant facts about the prayer hours in Tertullian's time: morning and evening prayer was an old and well-established custom; the early church fathers were seeking Biblical or symbolic background for the newer practice of prayer thrice daily. Tertullian mentions Daniel, the early apostles, the relationship of the number three to the Trinity, and the more obvious fact that Terce, Sext, and None are the usual divisions of the day. The last two reasons, as well as the fact that these hours marked the climaxes of Christ's suffering on Good Friday, doubtless have more to do with establishing this new Christian practice than any Judaic or Apostolic customs.

The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus

The second important Church Order that mentions hours for prayer is the Apostolic Tradition, written by a schismatic bishop c. 217. It consists of laws for church organization and the conduct of worship which Hippolytus believed to be truly apostolic. He believed these principles were being flaunted by the reforms of Callistus, a pope who had excommunicated Hippolytus. It is ironic that the Eastern church gave much

higher authority to Hippolytus' work than did his home city; it was the reforms of Callistus and not the conservatism of Hippolytus that shaped subsequent Roman polity. Today, however, his writings are considered an important source for Roman church customs of the late second century.[8]

Tertullian mentioned five prayer hours in his De oratione. In the Apostolic Tradition, Hippolytus mentions seven. The following pertinent exerpt is from Chapters 35 and 36:

> Let all the faithful, whether men or women, when early in the morning they rise from their sleep and before they undertake any tasks, wash their hands and pray to God; and so they may go to their duties. But if any instruction in God's word is held that day, everyone ought to attend it willingly, recollecting that he will hear God speaking through the instructor and that prayer in the church enables him to avoid the day's evil; any godly man ought to count it a great loss if he does not attend the place of instruction, especially if he can read....
>
> But if on any day there is no instruction, let everyone at home take the Bible and read sufficiently in passages that he finds profitable.
>
> If at the third hour thou art at home, pray then and give thanks to God; but if you chance to be abroad at that hour, make thy prayer to God in thy heart. For at that hour Christ was nailed to the tree; therefore in the old covenant the law commanded the showbread to be

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[8] Dugmore considers the Apostolic Tradition a picture of a group of Greek-speaking Christians at Rome rather than representative of early Roman use. See op. cit., p. iii.

offered continually for a type of the body and blood of Christ, and commanded the sacrifice of the dumb lamb, which was a type of the perfect Lamb; for Christ is the Shepherd, and he is also the Bread that came down from heaven.

And at the sixth hour likewise pray also, for, after Christ was nailed to the wood of the cross, the day was divided and there was a great darkness; wherefore let the faithful pray at that hour with an effectual prayer, likening themselves to the voice of him who prayed and caused all creation to become dark for the unbelieving Jews.

And at the ninth hour let a great prayer and a great thanksgiving be made, such as made the souls of the righteous ones, ...At that hour, therefore, Christ poured forth from his pierced side water and blood, and brought the rest of the time of that day with light to evening; so, when he fell asleep, by making the beginning of another day he completed the pattern of his resurrection.

Pray again before thy body rests on thy bed.

At midnight arise, wash thy hands with water and pray. And if thy wife is with thee, pray ye both together; but if she is not yet a believer, go into another room and pray, and again return to thy bed; be not slothful in prayer....

It is needful to pray at this hour; for those very elders who gave us the tradition taught us that at this hour all creation rests for a certain moment, that all creatures may praise the Lord: stars and trees and waters stand still with one accord, and all the angelic host does service to God by praising Him, together with the souls of the righteous. For this cause believers should be zealous to pray at this hour; for the Lord, testifying to this, says: "Behold at midnight is a cry, Behold the Bridegroom cometh! Rise up to meet him!"; and he adds insistently: "Watch ye therefore, for ye know not at what hour he cometh".

> And at cockcrow rise up and pray likewise, for at that hour of cockcrow the children of Israel denied Christ, whom we have known by faith, by which faith, in the hope of eternal life at the resurrection of the dead, we look for his Day.
>
> And so, all ye faithful, if ye thus act, and are mindful of these things, and teach them to one another, and cause the catechumens to be zealous, ye can neither be tempted nor can ye perish, since he have Christ always in your minds.[9]

The above passage gives new and significant information on the development of the prayer hours:

1. It is the earliest evidence of prayers at midnight and cockcrow. Although private, they contain the seeds for Matins and Lauds.

2. Mention is made of daily morning instruction which the faithful should attend if possible--the first mention of a gathering of Christians for common prayer at stated hours on weekdays.

3. Mention is made of Scripture reading and instruction in God's word, an important element in the subsequent canonical hours.

4. Hippolytus justifies prayer at Terce, Sext and None by referring to Christ on the cross. Unlike Tertullian, he does not mention the prayers of the early Apostles or of Daniel at these hours. Here are the roots of the theme that was to pene-

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[9] Easton, op. cit., pp. 54-56.

trate the three daytime offices--the redemptive passion of Christ.

It is important to remember that Hippolytus' scheme is, with one exception, for private devotion. His seven hours of prayer are very like the later canonical hours, systematized by the monks. It is tempting to claim them as earliest evidence of the daily offices said in assembly by the church.

St. Cyprian

In the middle of the third century there appeared a beautiful treatise on prayer by the great martyr and African bishop, Cyprian of Carthage. In his De Dominica oratione, Chapter 34 contains a reference to prayer hours:

> Now in celebrating prayer we find that the three boys with Daniel strong in the faith and victorious in captivity observed the third, the sixth, and the ninth hours, namely, for a sacrament of the Trinity, which in the latest times had to be manifested.... Having determined upon these spaces of hours in a spiritual sense a long time ago, the worshippers of God were subject to them as the established and lawful times for prayer. For upon the disciples at the third hour did the Holy Spirit descend, which fulfilled the grace of the Lord's promise. Likewise Peter at the sixth hour going upward upon the housetop was instructed alike by a sign and the voice of God admonishing him, to admit all to the grace of salvation, although before He was hesitant about baptizing the Gentiles. The Lord also, having been

> crucified from the sixth to the ninth, washed away our sins by His blood, and, that he might be able to redeem and quicken us, He then completed the victory with His passion.[10]

Although St. Cyprian later mentions morning and evening prayer, he emphasizes the newer, threefold daily office, appealing to all the Biblical and symbolic reasons mentioned by Tertullian and Hippolytus.

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[10] St. Cyprian, Treatises ("The Fathers of the Church," Vol. XXXVI; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1958), p. 157.

CHAPTER III

THE POST-NICENE EPOCH: THE PRAYER HOURS BECOME THE DIVINE OFFICE

The Monastic Movement

In the first three centuries after Christ, the influence of His followers spread with a rapidity beyond comprehension. The Edict of Milan in 313, and the ensuing Council of Nicaea gave Christianity new prestige, hastening the conversion of the Roman empire. In fact, the danger existed that the church was growing too fast--that it could only receive the world into itself by becoming secularized. A reaction to this growth also had danger inherent in it--the danger that the common man would be excluded from the fold of an elite church.

Paradoxically, this dilemna was solved by the "world-renouncing" movement of monasticism, a fourth-century phenomenon far greater than either the Edict of Milan or the Council of Nicaea. Every day hundreds of Christian men and women were leaving the world to give themselves to nothing else but worship. It is only natural that they sought to augment the relatively small amount of corporate Christian worship by utiliz-

ing the regime of prayer already present in the Christian home. In the deserts of Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, the monks added the regular recitation of the entire psalter to the formal utterance of prayers at stated hours. The hermits prayed, read, and meditated "without ceasing." Monks and nuns in communities interrupted their devotions with menial tasks, only to enable themselves to resume praying with refreshed intensity.

As a direct result of the monastic-ascetic movement, the Divine Office began to influence the secular churches. In Antioch, Jerusalem, and later, Rome, the custom first established itself as a nightly public vigil service composed of psalms, canticles, and readings. Soon the whole daily round of offices was held, first of all in the important pilgrimage center of Jerusalem, later in the churches of the West. The enthusiasm of the returning pilgrims stimulated the demands of the laity for similar services in their own churches, not always to the joy of the secular clergy.

> The monk and his imitators gave the church the divine office and the conception of the <u>whole</u> life of man as consummated in worship, instead of regarding worship as a department of life, like paganism, or the contradiction of daily life, like

the pre-Nicene church.[1]

St. Basil

St. Basil is one of the first to write in detail about the public prayer services of the fourth century. The great doctor introduced the practice in Caesarea in the year 375. In much of his writing on the subject, he defends himself against the criticism of his clergy who were disturbed in their old customs, and had accused him of introducing an innovation of his own devising. Here is an excerpt from Letter 207:

> As to the charge regarding psalmody, by which especially our slanderers terrify the more simple, I have this to say, that the customs now prevalent are in accord and harmony with those of all the churches of God. Among us the people come early after nightfall to the house of prayer, and in labor and affliction and continual tears confess to God. Finally, rising up from their prayers, they begin the chanting of psalms. And now, divided into two parts, they chant antiphonally, becoming master of the text of the Scriptural passages, and at the same time directing their attention and the recollectedness of their hearts. Then, again, leaving it to one to intone the melody, the rest chant in response; thus, having spent the night in a variety of psalmody and intervening prayers, when day at length begins

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[1] Dix, op. cit., p. 332.

> to dawn, all in common, as with one voice and one heart, offer up the psalm of confession to the Lord, each one making His own the words of repentance. If then, you shun us on this account, you will shun the Egyptians, and also those of both Libyas, the Thebans, Palestinians, Arabians, Phoenicians, Syrians, and those dwelling beside the Euphrates--in one word, all those among whom night watches and prayers and psalmody in common have been held in esteem.[2]

The description of the antiphonal and responsorial chanting of the psalms is an invaluable reference to early performance practice in the Divine Office. Important also is St. Basil's assertion that this antiphonal psalmody was widespread in the Eastern churches. The offices referred to here are probably the Vespers-Matins-Lauds sequence.

St. Basil was famous as a monk as well as a bishop. In his Long Rules (Regulae fusius tractatae), St. Basil wrote fifty-five sections or chapters on special monastic problems. Rule 37 deals with the daily prayer and psalmody:

> Prayers are recited early in the morning so that the first movements of the soul and the mind may be consecrated to God and that we may take up no other consideration before we have been

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[2] St. Basil, Letters, Vol. II ("The Fathers of the Church," Vol. XXVIII; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1955), pp. 83-84.

cheered and heartened by the thought of God.... Again at the third hour the brethren must assemble and betake themselves to prayer, even if they may have dispersed to their various employments. Recalling to mind the gift of the Spirit bestowed upon the Apostles at this third hour, all should worship together, so that they also may become worthy to receive the gift of sanctity, and they should implore the guidance of the Holy Spirit and His instruction in what is good and useful....

But, if some, perhaps, are not in attendance because the nature or place of their work keeps them at too great a distance, they are strictly obliged to carry out wherever they are, with promptitude, all that is prescribed for common observance, for 'where there are two or three gathered together in my name,' says the Lord, 'there am I in the midst of them.' It is also our judgement that prayer is necessary at the sixth hour, in imitation of the saints who say: 'Evening and morning and at noon I will speak and declare; and he shall hear my voice.' And so that we may be saved from invasion and the noonday Devil, at this time, also, the ninetieth Psalm will be recited. The ninth hour, however, was appointed as a compulsory time for prayer by the Apostles themselves in the Acts where it is related that 'Peter and John went up to the temple at the ninth hour of prayer.' When the day's work is ended, thanksgiving should be offered for what has been granted us or for what we have done rightly therein and confession made of our omissions whether voluntary or involuntary, or of a secret fault, if we chance to have committed any in words or deeds, or in the heart itself; for by prayer we propitiate God for all our misdemeanors....

Again, at nightfall, we must ask that our rest be sinless and untroubled by dreams. At this hour, also, the ninetieth Psalm should be recited.

> Paul and Silas, furthermore, have handed down to us the practice of compulsory prayer at midnight. As the history of Acts declares: 'And at midnight Paul and Silas praised God.' The Psalmist also says: 'I rose at midnight to give praise to thee for the judgements of thy justifications.' Then, too, we must anticipate the dawn by prayer, so that the day may not find us in slumber and in bed, according to the words: 'My eyes have prevented the morning; that I might meditate on thy words.' None of these hours for prayer should be unobserved by those who have chosen a life devoted to the glory of God and His Christ. Moreover, I think that variety and diversity in the prayers and psalms recited at appointed hours are desirable for the reason that routine and boredom, somehow, often cause distraction in the soul, while by change and variety in the psalmody and prayers said at the stated hours it is refreshed in devotion and renewed in sobriety.[3]

This is one of the most detailed and helpful schemes for the Divine Office in the fourth century. St. Basil clearly distinguished between the two night offices of midnight and early morning. The latter is clearly not part of the first office of the series; thus, there are definite offices for both Lauds and Prime. Besides being the first record of eight canonical hours, Rule 37 also includes the first mention of prayers at nightfall, a rudimentary office of Compline. Many scholars seem to

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[3] St. Basil, Ascetical Works ("The Fathers of the Church," Vol. IX; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1950), pp. 308-11.

overlook this obvious reference, and point to St. Benedict's Rule as the first mention of Compline.[4] It is difficult not to see in this passage a description of the primitive service of Compline, even though it may not have been more than the recitation of a few prayers before sleep.

The Apostolic Constitutions

One of the last and most ambitious of all the Church Orders, the Apostolic Constitutions is a collection and revision of earlier authoritative sources. It was compiled in Syria or Constantinople c. 375, when the Church Order formula was already becoming obsolescent. It is a valuable source for the early "Clementine Liturgy," which had such a profound influence on later Eastern rites. The work contains several pertinent references to organized daily prayer in Book II, Chapter 59:

> When thou instructest the people, O Bishop, command and exhort them to come constantly to church, morning and evening, every day, and by no means to forsake it on any account, but to assemble together continually; nor to diminish the church by withdrawing themselves,

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[4] Msgr. L. Duchesne, Christian Worship (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1912), p. 449n.

Dom Suitbert Bäumer, Histoire du Bréviaire (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1905), I, 254-55.

> and causing the body of Christ to be without its members.... Assemble yourselves together 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 hundred and fortieth; but principally on the Sabbath-day, and on the day of our Lord's resurrection, which is the Lord's day, meet more diligently, sending up praise to God that made the universe by Jesus, and sent him to us, and condescended to let him suffer, and raised him from the dead.[5]

This is obviously an exhortation concerning daily attendance at Lauds and Vespers. It specifies a certain psalm for each office, and especially recommends the Sunday office. Lauds and Vespers, along with the various vigils, were evidently considered very important for the laity. Terce, Sext, and None were for the ascetic communities.

Book VIII, Chapter 34 contains references to six specific prayer hours. The last sentence quoted implies they are public, probably for the devout laity. The mystical and symbolic reasons for prayer at these hours are an orderly remembrance of those things that make a man a Christian:

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[5] Irah Chase (ed.), The Constitutions of the Holy Apostles (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1848), p. 73.

> Offer up your prayers at the dawn of day, and at the third hour, and the sixth, and the ninth, and at evening, and at cock-crowing:--at the dawn, returning thanks, because the Lord hath sent you light, hath led away the night, and brought on the day; at the third hour, because at that hour the Lord received the sentence of condemnation from Pilate; at the sixth, because at that hour he was crucified; at the ninth, because all things were in commotion at the crucifixion of the Lord, as trembling at the bold attempt of the wicked Jews, and not bearing the injury offered to the Lord; at evening, giving thanks, because he hath given you the night, a season of repose from the daily labors; and at cock-crowing, because that hour bringeth the good news of the coming of the day, for the performance of works requiring the light.
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> But if it be not possible to go to the church, on account of the unbelievers, thou, O Bishop, shalt assemble the faithful in some house, that a godly man may not enter into an assembly of the ungodly.[6]

St. John Chrysostom

About this time, the great preacher of Antioch was insisting on the importance of attendance at morning and evening prayer services. Chrysostom was speaking to a congregation, and his concern was for public worship, not private devotion. In Homily VI on I Timothy 2:1-4, written in Antioch in 397, Chrysostom mentions the morning and evening offices and the

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[6] Ibid., p. 234.

content of the prayers. "What is 'first of all'? It means in the daily Service; and the initiated know how this is done every day both in the evening and the morning, how we offer prayers for the whole world, for kings and all that are in authority."[7]

In Homily XIV, also on I Timothy, the Saint gives a detailed picture of the Divine Office in the monasteries of his day. The offices of Lauds, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Matins are clearly designated:

> At the crowing of the cock their President comes, and gently touching the sleeper with his foot, rouses them all. For there are none sleeping naked. Then as soon as they have arisen they stand up, and sing the prophetic hymns with much harmony, and well composed tunes. And neither harp nor pipe nor other musical instrument utters such sweet melodies, as you hear from the singing of these saints in their deep and quiet solitudes....
>
> And when the day is coming on, they take rest again; for when we begin our works, they have a season of rest.... These holy men, having performed their morning prayers and hymns, proceed to the reading of the Scriptures. There are some too that have learned to write out books, each having his own apartment assigned to him, where he lives in perpetual quiet; no one is trifling, not one

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[7] St. Chrysostom, Homilies on Galations, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon ("A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church," Vol. XIII; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 426.

> speaks a word. Then at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, and in the evening, they perform their devotions, having divided the day into four parts, and at the conclusion of each they honor God with psalms and hymns, and whilst others are dining, laughing, and sporting, and bursting with gluttony, they are occupied with their hymns. For they have no time for the table, nor for these things of sense. After their meal they again pursue the same course, having previously given themselves a while to sleep. The men of the world sleep during the day: but these watch during the night.[8]

John Cassian

The early fifth century authority on monasticism, and one of the greatest writers on the subject, is John Cassian. He was trained in a Bethlehem monastery, traveled widely in the Near East on a tour of famous monasteries, and later established two important monasteries in the south of Gaul. In 417 he wrote his famous De institutis coenobiorum on the organization and rules of the Eastern monasteries. This work with its detailed description of the canonical hours in the East had a profound influence on the Western office, especially on its formulation in the Rule of St. Benedict.

In Book III Cassian begins with a description of the services at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, as observed in

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[8] Ibid., pp. 456-57.

the monasteries of Palestine and Mesopotamia. He contrasts this practice with that of the Egyptian monks, who observe the nocturnal system of prayers, but have no organized daily prayers. Chapter 4 of Book III contains Cassian's most important contribution to the history of the Divine Office--the origin of the office of Prime:

> But you must know that this Mattins, which is now very generally observed in Western countries, was appointed as a canonical office in our own day, and also in our own monastery, where our Lord Jesus Christ was born.... For up till that time we find that when this office of Mattins (which is generally celebrated after a short interval after the Psalms and prayers of Nocturns in the monasteries of Gaul) was finished, together with the daily vigils, the remaining hours were assigned by our Elders to bodily refreshment. But when some rather carelessly abused this indulgence and prolonged their time for sleep too long, as they were not obliged by the requirements of any service to leave their cells or rise from their beds till the third hour;.... a complaint was brought to the Elders by some of the brethren who were ardent in spirit and in no slight measure disturbed by this carelessness, and it was determined by them after long discussion and anxious consideration that up till sunrise, when they could without harm be ready to read or to undertake manual labour, time for rest should be given to their wearied bodies, and after this they should all be summoned to the observance of this service and should rise from their beds.... And this form, although it may seem to have arisen out of an accident and to have been appointed within recent memory for the reason given above, yet it clearly makes up according to the letter that number which the blessed David indicates (although it can be taken spirit-

> ually): "Seven times a day do I praise Thee because of Thy righteous judgments." For by the addition of this service we certainly hold these spiritual assemblies seven times a day, and are shown to sing praises to God seven times a day in it. Lastly, though this same form, starting from the East, has most beneficially spread to these parts, yet still in some long-established monasteries in the East, which will not brook the slightest violation of the old rules of the Fathers, it seems never to have been introduced.[9]

The meaning of the passage is obscured by the word "Mattins" (matutina--morning office), for it does not refer to our night office of Matins. If this chapter is a reference to the origin of Prime, then the first occurrence of the word "Mattins" must be interpreted to mean Prime, the new office. The second occurrence of the word must refer to a pre-existent morning office immediately after the Nocturns, namely, Lauds.

Some scholars insist that both these words refer to the same service, and that Lauds was the new office instead of Prime.[10]

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[9] John Cassian, Writings ("A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church," Second series, Vol. XI; New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1894), p. 215.

[10] Dom Jacques Froger, Les Origines de Prime (Rome: Edizione Liturgiche, 1946), passim.

Dom Froger is of the opinion that Prime was instituted not in Bethlehem but in the West, at the beginning of the sixth century. For an argument against this viewpoint see O. Chadwick, "The Origins of Prime," The Journal of Theological Studies, XLIX (1948), 178-82.

This argument is refuted by the last part of Cassian's Chapter 4 in which he writes that the new morning office brings the total number to seven. Since Cassian makes no mention of Compline, this means that the six pre-existent offices must have included Lauds, and that the new office was that of Prime. St. Basil, who describes the same phase of monasticism (late fourth century), also mentions prayer at the first hour of the day, an office distinct from Lauds.[11]

Our conclusions as to the early history of the office of Prime must be this: it is likely that the first observance of Prime was in Bethlehem in the late fourth century. Although practiced by the monks of St. Basil, its observance did not spread rapidly in the Eastern monasteries. (In the Greek church, the office of Prime is still said continuously with Lauds.) Early in the sixth century the monasteries of southern Europe were observing it as a distinct and important office.

The Peregrinatio Sylviae

It is obvious from the writings of the church fathers that the church at Jerusalem played an important role in the develop-

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[11] See above, p. 24.

ment of the Divine Office. The literature from Jerusalem itself, even the writings of the great St. Cyril, tell us very little about the prayer hours there. However, there is one important source from the year 385. A Spanish abbess named Aetheria made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and wrote letters to her nuns describing her journey to the Holy Land. These important manuscripts were discovered in 1887 and given the name Peregrinatio Sylviae because at first the lady was thought to be Sylvia, sister of a famous Aquitainian minister. Later her true identity was established.

In these letters Aetheria describes both the ecclesiastical and monastic offices held in the Anastasis, Jerusalem's church of the Resurrection. The laity attended only Vespers and Lauds. The Nocturn (Matins) was attended by a large crowd only on Sunday since this was the traditional office of the Sunday vigil. The Little Hours (Aetheria does not mention a daily Terce, however.) were attended by the monazontes (solitaries) and parthenae (virgins). Here are some short excerpts from her descriptions of the Divine Office at Jerusalem:

> Now that your affection may know what is the order of Service day by day in the Holy Places, I must inform you, for I know that you would willingly have this knowledge. Every day before cock-

crow all the doors of the Anastasis are opened, and all the Monks and Virgins, as they call them here, go thither, and not they alone, but lay people also, both men and women, who desire to begin their vigil early. And from that hour to daybreak hymns are said and psalms are sung responsively, and antiphons in like manner; and prayer is made after each of the hymns. For Priests, Deacons, and Monks in twos or threes take it in turn every day to say prayers after each of the hymns or antiphons. But when day breaks they begin to say the Matin hymns. Thereupon the Bishop arrives with the Clergy, and immediately enters into the Cave, and from within the rails he first says a prayer for all....

In like manner at the sixth hour all go again to the Anastasis, and psalms and antiphons are said while the Bishop is being summoned; then he comes as before.... And the same is done at the ninth hour as at the sixth.

Now at the tenth hour, which they call here licinicon, or as we say lucernare, all the people assemble at the Anastasis in the same manner, and all the candles and tapers are lit, making a very great light. Now the light is not introduced from without, but it is brought forth from within the Cave, that is from within the rails, where a lamp is always burning day and night, and the Vesper Psalms and antiphons are said, lasting for a considerable time. When the Bishop is summoned, and he comes and takes an exalted seat, and likewise the Priests sit in their proper places, and hymns and antiphons are said....

But on the seventh day, that is on the Lord's Day, the whole multitude assembles before cockcrow, in as great numbers as the place can hold, as at Easter, in the basilica which is near the Anastasis, but outside the doors, where lights are hanging for the purpose. And for fear that they should not be there at cockcrow they come beforehand and sit down there. Hymns as well as

> antiphons are said, and prayers are made between the several hymns and antiphons, for at the Vigils there are always both Priests and Deacons ready there for the assembling of the multitude, the custom being that the Holy Places are not opened before cockcrow. Now as soon as the first cock has crowed, the Bishop arrives and enters the Cave at the Anastasis; all the doors are opened and the whole multitude enters the Anastasis, where countless lights are already burning. And when the people have entered, one of the Priests says a psalm to which all respond, and afterwards prayer is made; then one of the Deacons says a psalm and prayer is again made, a third psalm is recited by one of the Clergy, prayer is made for the third time and there is a commemoration of all.... And forthwith the Bishop betakes himself to his house, and from that hour all the Monks return to the Anastasis, where psalms and antiphons, with prayer after each psalm or antiphon, are said until daylight; the Priests and Deacons also keep watch in turn daily at the Anastasis with the people, but of the lay people, whether men or women, those who are so minded, remain in the place until daybreak and those who are not return to their houses and betake themselves to sleep.[12]

St. Benedict

The first complete, detailed description of the Divine Office of the Western church is found in the Rule of St. Benedict. Although it is no longer held by modern liturgiologists that the

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[12] Duchesne, op. cit. pp. 547-50. The appendix of Msgr. Duchesne's book contains an extract from the Latin text with a translation into English.

Saint introduced the offices of Compline and Prime, his role as codifier and arranger is extremely important. He is the first to call the offices by explicit names. After the confusing terminology of writers like John Cassian, it is easy to understand why early scholars gave St. Benedict credit for more than he had actually accomplished.

At the end of his directions for the opus Dei (St. Benedict's word for the monastic Divine Office), he humbly adds that he does not wish to impose his will on anyone, and that any abbot may alter what he will. But posterity has been a better judge of his work. The order and psalmody suggested by St. Benedict was used by the Roman church for its own system of canonical hours. Dom Bäumer, in his book on the history of the Divine Office, has extracted from the Rule five principles which guided St. Benedict in his arrangement of the various hours:

> 1. The entire psalter was to be recited at least once per week, and the entire Bible, with the appropriate patristic homilies, was to be recited at least once per year.
> 2. For the night office, the sacred number of twelve psalms must always remain the same.

3. The psalms and lessons were arranged so that the night offices were shorter in the summer than in the winter, since the nights themselves were shorter. Day offices were shorter than those at night so that the work of the day might be accomplished.

4. Consideration for human weakness should prevail and keep the offices from becoming too long.

5. Each hour should display a balanced arrangement of psalms, hymns and prayer.[13]

An examination and comment on the Benedictine directions for the Divine Office (Chapters 8 through 20) would require a separate thesis. Only Chapters 8 and 16 will be quoted here:

In the winter time--that is, from the first of November till Easter--the brethren shall get up at the eighth hour of the night by reasonable calculation, so that having rested till a little after midnight they may rise refreshed. Let the time that remains after Matins be used, by those brethren who need it, for the study of the Psalter or lessons. From Easter to the foresaid first of November let the hour for saying Matins be so arranged that after a brief interval, during which the brethren may go forth for the necessities of nature, Lauds, which are to be said at daybreak, may presently follow.

. . . . . .

The prophet says, "Seven times I have sung Thy praises." This sacred number of seven will be kept by us if we perform the duties of our service in the Hours of Lauds, Prime, Tierce, Sext, None, Evensong and Compline. It was of these day Hours the prophet said, "Seven times

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[13] Bäumer, op. cit., I, 243-45.

> a day I have sung Thy praises," for of the night watches the same prophet says, "At midnight I arose to confess to Thee." At these times, therefore, let us give praise to our Creator for His just judgments, that is, at Lauds, Prime, Tierce, Sext, None, Evensong and Compline, and at night, let us rise to confess to Him.[14]

The cycle of the monastic offices is now complete. They are spaced in such a way that they cover the waking hours of the day and the watching hours of the night. Msgr. Batiffol ends his chapter on the genesis of the canonical hours with a paragraph that forms an excellent summary of the first three chapters of this thesis:

> From the point at which we have arrived, we take in at one view the whole process in which is found the genesis of the canonical hours. A primitive Christian idea, perhaps that of the end of the world and the return of Christ, created the ancient vigil, viz. the evening, night, and early morning office of Sunday. In the fourth century, the confraternities of ascetics and virgins caused it to become of daily observance. The desire of paying honour to God at each of the hours which divided the day produced the offices of Terce, Sext, and None, pious offices which throughout the whole of Christian antiquity remained peculiar to the monks. The two exercises known as Prime and Compline originated in the conditions of the coenobitic life. We recognize in these

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[14] Cardinal Gasquet (ed.), The Rule of Saint Benedict (London: Chatto and Windus, 1925), pp. 36 and 44-45.

broad features of the canonical office the parts respectively due to the primitive Church and to monasticism--parts which remained separate until the sixth century.[15]

[15] Batiffol, op. cit., p. 29.

CHAPTER IV

THE MIDDLE AGES: THE FORMATION OF THE ROMAN BREVIARY

For our purposes the Middle Ages includes about ten centuries, beginning with the early seventh century and the influence of Gregory the Great, through the Carolingian era, up to the Council of Trent. This epoch is marked by a peak of perfection at its outset, followed by a long period of decline.

St. Gregory the Great

The Roman office was already in existence at the accession of St. Gregory I. Several popes before him, especially St. Damasus, had contributed their labors to it; their work is often forgotten in the shadow of the contributions of St. Gregory. The exact role played by the Saint is hard to determine. The earliest manuscripts of the Gregorian liturgy are dated two centuries later than St. Gregory's time. Our knowledge of his work on the liturgy and the chant comes from the testimony of the centuries that follow him. These attestations by various popes, the Venerable Bede, Egbert of York, and others, as to the important role played by St. Gregory have been collected

by Dom Germain Morin.[1] They speak of his renovation of the compositions of his predecessors, and his purification of the chant and liturgy from old abuses. Dom Bäumer describes St. Gregory's work with the following statement:

> It is he who collected the prayers and liturgical customs of his predecessors and assigned each item to its place, ... it is he, therefore, who gave the liturgy its present form. The liturgical chant owed to him its name of "Gregorian", because through him it reached its highest perfection. The canonical hours and the present form of the Mass are a result of his work.[2]

The Influence of the Roman Office in Europe

The period after St. Gregory was marked by a diffusion of the well-organized Roman office over the rest of Europe. The monasteries founded in Germany, the Low Countries, and Great Britain were under the influence of Rome and established a Gregorian tradition in those countries. Influence was especially strong in Great Britain, where in 747 the Council of Clove-

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[1] Dom Germain Morin, "Le role de Saint Grégoire le Grand dans la formation du répertoire musical de l'église latine," Revue Bénédictine, VII (1890), 62-70.

[2] Bäumer, op. cit., I, 289. The theory that St. Gregory's rôle in the formation of the Roman office was an unimportant one is presented by Batiffol, op. cit., pp. 42-46. This theory is attacked by Bäumer in his op. cit., I, 294-316.

shoe decreed that in the principal festivals of the year the chant should be executed in the Roman manner.

The introduction of the Roman psalmody and office into the Frankish empire was made possible by the close ties established between Rome and the Frankish court by the Carolingian dynasty. Under King Pepin, Bishop Chrodegang of Metz imposed the Roman usage on his clergy. Under Charlemagne, Alcuin exerted his great liturgical scholarship to establish the Roman psalmody in Gaul.

Thus, in the eighth and ninth centuries, the Roman office spread throughout all of Europe, gradually replacing local rites. The only exceptions were the Mozarabic rite at Toledo, and the Ambrosian rite at Milan.

Since manuscripts of the eighth and ninth centuries are very rare, first-hand knowledge of the structure of the Divine Office is impossible. Our knowledge of its make-up comes from the commentaries of contemporary writers. One of the most important is Walafrid Strabo (d. 850), author of De rebus ecclesiasticus[3] and abbot of the famous Reichenau monastery.

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[3] J. P. Migne (ed.), Patrologiae Latinae (Paris: Garnier and Migne, 1878-1890), CXIV, 919-66.

Another is Amalarius (d. 850), pupil of Alcuin, and a greater liturgist than his master. His De ordine Antiphonarii[4] is our best authority on Roman liturgical customs in Gaul. From these writers we learn the following concerning the organization of the Divine Office in the Carolingian epoch:

1. No one text of the psalms was in uniform use. Not until the Council of Trent did the pope establish the universal use of the Gallican psalter.

2. The recitation of the eight parts of the Divine Office was made mandatory for both monks and priests.

3. The Little Hours--Prime, Terce, Sext, None and Compline--did not have the clearly defined structure of the remaining three.

4. The distribution of the psalms over the days of the week followed the Roman division.

5. Hymns were introduced into the Divine Office in the ninth century.

6. The office opened with the verse Deus in adjutorium (Psalm 70) and the Gloria Patri, and concluded with the Kyrie

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[4] Ibid., CV, 1245-1315.

eleison, the preces or capitella, Pater Noster, and a prayer; the suffrages followed, and the Benedicamus Domino.

7. The old custom of giving a blessing before the lessons was continued.

8. The system of lessons was too complicated to state here in detail. Readings were taken from the Holy Scriptures, the Acts of the Martyrs, and the patristic writings. The plan of St. Benedict's Rule, as perpetuated by Gregory the Great, maintained its influence.

9. The four chief festivals of Mary (Her Nativity, Annunciation, Purification, and Assumption) were established in the course of this period.

10. The antiphons and responses were almost the same as at the present day.

11. The recitation of the Divine Office took up much more time then than now; this was the result of the long lessons and the practice of singing the antiphon after each psalm verse or after every two or three verses.

St. Gregory VII

The next important figure in the history of the Divine Office is the monk Hildebrand, who became pope in 1073. The

political and religious decline that followed the splendid reign of Charlemagne had its effect on the liturgy. There was an invasion of innovations that corrupted the Roman office: new systems of reading, unauthorized observances of Embertides, and a resurgence of the Mozarabic usage in Spain. In spite of his important role in political problems, St. Gregory VIII gave detailed attention to liturgical issues. At the Lenten Synod of 1078, he put an end to the Embertide abuse, and throughout his reign labored to restore the Roman usage.

Unfortunately, St. Gregory's successors did not show an equal zeal in advancing the regeneration of the Roman liturgy. Many of them were absent from Rome for long periods of time. The influence of the Roman usage was replaced by the ritual of the itinerate papal Curia. The independent liturgical practices of the pope's court became the preponderating factor in the subsequent formation of the Roman breviary.

The Formation of the Roman Breviary in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

In the complicated liturgical evolution of the thirteenth century, there are two important factors that must be brought to the fore. The first is the "modernization" or abbreviation

of the readings of the Roman office for the convenience of the Roman Curia. The second is the formation of one book (a compilation called a breviary), instead of the many different books needed for the recitation of the Divine Office. A list of these books is formidable, especially if one considers that some of them would have to be in several volumes: psalter, antiphonary, responsorial, Bible, hymnal, martyrology, to mention only the more obvious ones. This immense mass of writing was no burden to those in the monasteries, but certainly not meant for recitation on the road. As soon as the daily recitation of the Divine Office had become a duty incumbent on all the clergy, there was a pressing need for a well-defined codification, resulting at last in the production of a "breviary." The derivation of the term is now quite clear--an "abridged version" for use outside the choir.

Radulph of Tongres, a writer at the end of the fourteenth century, was an eyewitness to this phenomenon. He describes it in detail in his De canonum observantia. "The clerks of the papal chapel, whether of their own accord or by order of the Pontiff, always abridged the Roman office, and often modified it in other ways, to suit the convenience of the Pope and the

cardinals."[5] The result of this abridgement was called the Breviarium secundum consuetudinem Romanae Curiae. This shortened form of the Divine Office was readily adopted by the hard-working Franciscans, who made their own modifications. Msgr. Batiffol, after an examination of the writings of Radulph of Tongres, the Franciscan Rule, and various thirteenth-century documents, places the official formation of this new practice in the second decade of the thirteenth century.[6] He summarizes the influence of the Curia and the counter-influence of the Franciscans in the following words:

> The Palatine breviary of Innocent III (1198-1216) had become the breviary of the Friars Minor: under Nicholas III the breviary of the Minorites becomes the breviary of the Roman Church, and henceforth there was to be no other "Roman" office but according to this new form. In 1337, when the Holy See was established at Avignon, Benedict XII suppressed the old books which were used by the clergy and in the churches of Avignon, in order to impose upon them the breviary of the Curia.[7]

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[5] Quoted in Batiffol, op. cit., pp. 157-58.

[6] Ibid., pp. 159-63.

[7] Ibid., pp. 163-64.

Thus, at the end of the Middle Ages, the dignified Divine Office of St. Gregory I was in a state of liturgical dishabille. The festivals of saints had been multiplied to such a degree that the Temporale--the essence of the Roman office with its emphasis on the life of Christ--was condemned to disuse. The desire to consecrate the passage of time with prayer and worship degenerated into a duty to be performed as quickly and conveniently as possible. The councils of the fourteenth and fifteenth century vie with one another in an effort to deplore the coldness with which the clergy recited the Divine Office. The great schism of the West only made matters worse. In the fifteenth century, the printing press produced a Roman breviary badly in need of reform.

CHAPTER V

THE MODERN PERIOD

The Reforms of the Sixteenth Century

Those who desired the reform of the Divine Office in the early sixteenth century are in two categories. The first were the humanists whose ideal was a breviary written in Ciceronian Latin, containing hymns modeled on the odes of Horace. In fact, under Leo X (1513-21), a Neapolitan bishop named Zacharia Ferreri published a hymnal which was intended as a forerunner of a new breviary. A glimpse of his poetry makes one thankful that the ideals of this group were not realized. In the place of

> Ave maris stella
> Dei Mater alma
> Atque semper virgo
> Felix coeli porta

Ferreri substituted

> Ave, superna janua
> Ave, beata semita
> Salus periclitantibus
> Et ursa navigantibus[1]

The second group were men of tradition who advocated a

[1] Batiffol, op. cit., p. 179.

return to ancient rites and a purging of the apocryphal legends, excessive festivals, and the accumulation of several offices on the same day. The criticisms of the Protestant reformers made the Catholic church more aware of the demands for reform within her own ranks.

The most important reform before the Council of Trent was the work of Cardinal Francis Quignonez, whose Breviarium Sanctae Crucis was begun in 1529 and published in 1536. The breviary of Quignonez enjoyed a rapid popularity, surpassing the Cardinal's plan that it be a breviary for private use only. But its popularity was short-lived; twenty-two years later it was proscribed by Rome. This book, intended as a restoration of the Divine Office in its pristine form, was essentially a break with tradition. There was an entirely new order for the psalmody. The patristic readings were suppressed. There was no distinction of dignity between the various festivals. The new prominence of readings from the Holy Scripture, an excellent idea in itself, was overdone at the expense of prayer and praise.

The leaders of the Catholic church, especially Pope Paul IV, realized that the breviary of Cardinal Quignonez was not

the answer to the need for a purification of the Divine Office. When the Council of Trent convened in 1545, the conditions for a good reformation of the breviary had been admirably stated by Paul IV. The new book must not abolish the traditional arrangement of the Divine Office as it stood in the old breviary of the Roman Curia. Only the errors of history needed to be removed.

Near the conclusion of its sittings, the Council of Trent attacked the problem of breviary reform. In June of 1563, the pope was informed that the correction of the breviary was in the hands of the Commission of the Index. Five years later the new breviary was published. The famous bull Quod a nobis of Pope Pius V was included in this new book. It pronounced the withdrawl of all preceding breviaries less than two hundred years old, and stated that nothing might be added or removed. The Divine Office, as ordained by the breviary of Pius V (called the Breviarium Pianum), was marked by the following rejuvenations:

1. The calendar of fixed feasts was lightened so that offices of saints' days, including octaves, took only one hundred days from the office of the time.

2. The version of the psalter and of the Scripture lessons was the Vulgate.

3. The antiphonary and responsorial remained intact.

4. A set of general rubrics embracing the whole office was placed at the beginning of the book.

5. The legends of the saints were scrutinized and many apocryphal stories were eliminated.

The Breviarium Pianum was received with great esteem by the Catholic church. Within a short time it was in use in all of Italy and Spain.[2] As a result of the efforts of the Jesuits, its use spread throughout the rest of Catholic Europe. Even though many French dioceses had been using their own breviaries for over two hundred years, liturgical uniformity made rapid progress in that country.

The proclamation of St. Pius V that nothing should be added to the Breviarium Pianum was not obeyed by his successors. Five years after its publication it was already being altered.

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[2] An exception was the archdiocese of Milan. No less a personage than St. Charles Borromeo, then archbishop of Milan, interceded in behalf of the Ambrosian liturgy and undertook a revision of its service books.

Gregory XIII added festivals, reformed the Julian calendar, and revised the Martyrology. Succeeding popes continued to make alterations. As the sixteenth century drew to a close, a committee appointed by Clement VIII was working on a new edition of the breviary, based on legitimate criticisms of the Breviarium Pianum. This book appeared in 1602 with the papal bull Cum in ecclesia. The work of this committee included a restatement of some of the general rubrics, lessons and psalter from a new edition of the Vulgate (1598), the addition of a common for holy women to the commons for other saints, and still more feasts. Once again the Sanctorale was given a preponderance over the Temporale.

The Reforms of the Seventeenth Century

The most important revision of the seventeenth century affected the hymns. Pope Urban VIII (1623-44) appointed a committee of Jesuits to correct the so-called barbarisms of St. Ambrose, Prudentius, and others. Their task was very difficult since the pope insisted that the measure, sense, and music of the hymns should be preserved. Their efforts, though not as ambitious or gross as those of Ferreri, resembled the sophisticated humanist movement of the preceding cen-

tury. In almost one thousand places, the "faults" of the ancient hymn writers were corrected. Unfortunately, these "corrected" hymns are still used in the Roman breviary today, although Catholic scholars clamor for a restoration.[3]

Urban VIII's reform included several less important and less harmful items than the hymn revision. One beneficial innovation was the marking of the middle of each psalm verse with an asterisk to facilitate chanting. The revision of Urban VIII was the last major reform before the work of Pius X in our own century. In the intervening period, no alteration of the text of the Roman breviary was made under papal supervision. The remainder of the seventeenth century saw only the addition of new saints' feasts, and the elevation in rank of various festivals. This produced a widespread suppression of ferial and even Sunday offices.

The Eighteenth Century

In the early eighteenth century, a feverish liturgical activity arose outside Rome. Under the influence of Jansenism and

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[3] Batiffol, op. cit., p. 222.
Parsch, op. cit., p. 27.

nationalism, the French were publishing their own breviaries. Their reforms were based on a desire to restrict the cultus of the saints, and to abolish the outward signs of devotion to the Virgin Mary. First of all, the breviary had to be short. The process of diversification became so widespread that, by the time of the French Revolution, dozens of different breviaries were in use across France. Priests imprisoned in the same cell could not recite the Divine Office in common.

The papacy under Benedict XIV (1740-58) realized that the French were justified in their criticism of the Roman breviary. This pope was more tolerant of their new books than his predecessor, Clement XII. He resolved to introduce no new office during his pontificate, and set about reforming the breviary.

The committee appointed by Benedict XIV addressed themselves especially to the critical suggestions of the French regarding the overabundance of saints' feasts, particularly of recent saints. The records of their work show a careful investigation of this and other areas. In 1747 their project was complete. However, the book was never ratified by the pope. He seemed unwilling to accept the work of others, and decided to make the reform his own personal task. He did not find enough time in

the next ten years, and in the spring of 1758 he died.

The Nineteenth Century

The arrival of the nineteenth century in France was marked by continued agitation against the Roman breviary. Germany and Austria were also introducing innovations of their own. Breviaries of Cologne, Münster, and Trier joined the independent ranks of the Parisian books. The devastations of Napoleon and the turmoil of the Restoration only increased the diversification.

The second half of the century saw a gradual return to the Roman usage in France and Germany. This return was not the result of pressure from Rome, but the product of a reaction. The many innovations led to a feeling of distaste and restlessness. In 1853 Pius IX was able to congratulate the French bishops on their rapid return to the unity of the Roman liturgy. Much of the credit for this reunion must go to Dom Guéranger of Solesmes, the passionate leader of liturgical reform in nineteenth century France, who was eventually involved in a projected reform of the breviary in 1856. Pius IX had appointed a commission to examine the possibilities for reform, but their recommendations had no direct result. The same is true of a series of proposals and motions from various

countries, intended to draw the attention of the Vatican Council to the correction and simplification of the breviary. In place of simplification, Pius IX and his successor Leo XIII made a remarkable number of additions to the liturgical calendar. Dom Baudot, whose history of the Roman breviary closes with the advent of the twentieth century, ends his book with suggestions and a plea for reform.[4]

The Twentieth Century

Pleas for reform received sympathetic attention from St. Pius X, author of the famous Motu proprio of 1903. The subsequent restoration of the Gregorian chant was accompanied by corrections in the Divine Office. One of the most influential critics of the Roman office was Dom A. Grospellier, a seminary professor from Grénoble, who became a consultant of the Congregation of Rites in 1907. His sketches for reform aimed at a return to the traditional Roman office.[5] The suggestions advocated a reshaping of the Sanctorale by reducing the greater number of lesser doubles and semi-doubles to the rank of simple

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[4] Dom Jules Baudot, The Roman Breviary, Its Source and History (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1909), p. 235.

[5] Pertinent quotations from Dom Grospellier's writings may be found in Batiffol, op. cit., pp. 306-11.

feasts. Since this would bring back a more frequent recitation of the Sunday and ferial offices, he advocated shortening them by means of a rearrangement and abridgement of the psalter.

The bull Divino afflatu of St. Pius X in 1911 is essentially a reform based on Grospellier's suggestions regarding the psalter.[6] In it the pope decreed that the whole psalter should be recited each week, but that the cultus of the saints should not be lessened. The offices were not made longer by this increased use of the psalter, but were shortened by means of the following three innovations:

1. The Matins of all offices, whether ferial, Sunday, or saints' days, were assigned nine psalms. This shortened the Sunday Matins especially. The only exceptions were the Paschal and Pentecostal Matins which retained their three psalms.

2. The psalms no longer recited at Matins were assigned to Lauds, the lesser hours, and Compline. All the hours now would have their own psalms, varying each day. These ferial psalms were to be recited on all double feasts, unless the feast had its own proper psalms for the principal hours.

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[6] Pope Pius X, "Apostolic Constitution--Divino afflatu," American Catholic Quarterly Review, XXXVII (1912), 152-79. This article contains the original Latin text and an English translation.

3. The long psalms were divided into shorter sections, each counting as a psalm.

The transference of festivals, the unanimous complaint of conscientious liturgists, was also restricted so that less than half of the year was comprised of unaltered offices of the Sanctorale.

The reform of St. Pius X, although incomplete, is an astounding one. The redistribution of the psalter abandoned a Roman liturgical tradition over one thousand years old. Yet the new practice with its restoration of the Sunday office to its rightful place was a return to liturgical antiquity. The new breviary became at once a more practical and dignified book.

The tendency toward a simplification of the Divine Office has continued up to the present day. During the past decade, the Congregation of Rites has been working on a clearer and simpler form for the rubrics of the breviary and missal. One product of their work was the decree On the Simplification of the Rubrics dated March 23, 1955. The provisions of the decree have been incorporated into a new edition of the rubrics, approved and ordered by Pope John XXIII in his apostolic letter Rubricarum instructum of July 25, 1960.[7] This new code is to

[7] Contained in Rubrics of the Roman Breviary and Missal (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1960), pp. 10-12.

be inserted into future editions of the Roman breviary and missal printed after January 1, 1961. On that day the previous general rubrics of the Roman breviary and missal, as well as the changes made by the bull Divino afflatu of St. Pius X, became inoperative. Some important changes brought about by the new rubrics are:[8]

1. A Sunday of the first class is preferred to any feast whatever.

2. The "double and simple" terminology of feasts disappears. Feasts or days are now merely of the first, second, third, and fourth class, or commemorations.

3. Ten feasts are reduced in rank.

4. Five feasts are increased in rank.

5. The feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord is changed to "The Octave of Christmas" (January 1), and becomes a liturgical day of the first class.

6. Nine feasts are dropped from the calendar.

7. Three feasts are added to the calendar, including the Commemoration of the Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ (January 13, second class).

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[8] Ibid., pp. 130-62.

It is evident that the above is a continuation of the movement toward the re-emergence of the Temporale as the more important aspect of the liturgical year.

The glorious but tortuous history of the Divine Office, a liturgical tradition second only to the Lord's Supper, ends in an era of liturgical progress. As we shall see in the following chapters, its influence has spread outside the Roman Catholic Church. Protestants, desiring the sanctification of daily life with corporate prayer, are renewing the meaningful tradition of the Divine Office, so long lost to the Reformed churches.

CHAPTER VI

THE COMMUNITY OF TAIZÉ[1]

The tiny French village of Taizé in the department of Saône et Loire had an empty Romanesque church for many years. Now, three times a day, a bell from its tower announces that a worship service is to begin. These three services are like no others: they form the Divine Office of the only Calvinist monastery in the world.

The Community of Taizé was established in the spring of 1949 by five young Protestants who decided to dedicate their lives to the glory of God and the unity of Christians. The three traditional vows of celibacy, obedience, and poverty were pronounced by the five friends, but not in a burst of sudden zeal. Years of thought, preparation, and work had preceded their decision.

In 1940 Roger Schutz, a young Swiss theologian, came to Taizé and purchased a large, deserted house, to be used as a place to promote spirituality and Christian mercy in an area

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[1] Material for this chapter is taken from personal letters written by the Prior of Taizé, and from a recent magazine article: "Le premier monastère prostestante de France," Lectures pour tous, September, 1960, pp. 26-31.

of distress. The house soon became an important haven for refugees on their way to the Swiss border. Fleeing Jews were directed to this place of refuge; guerillas found food and shelter there--but not for long.

The frequent visits of the Gestapo forced Schutz to abandon his project. He returned after the war with three friends: Max Thurian, a theologian; Pierre Souvairan, a mason; and Daniel de Montmollin, a potter. Their aim was to strengthen one another in prayer and worship, and to work together as Christians in the world. The large house at Taizé was opened as an orphanage where the four friends taught and raised fifteen children. The project received financial help whenever the men found time to do work in their professions. The group also engaged themselves in detailed liturgical research, and soon were sponsoring spiritual retreats that attracted, and sometimes held, visitors.

In 1948, Dr. Robert Giscard, then a Parisian medical student, decided to join the community after he took his final examinations. He is now the doctor for the monastery, the village, and the surrounding area.

These were the five men who knelt on the stones of the empty church and took their vows. The vow of obedience was

made to Roger Schutz, who is the prior of Taizé. From that day on the monks have called him only "mon frère," although they call each other by their first names.

The community has grown. From Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, and France come young Protestants attracted by the community's ideals of dedication and work. They participate in the retreats and discussions which are organized there. Each year there are those who ask to stay. These remain novices for two years, sharing the communal life without interrupting their work or study. If they are then judged worthy and ready by all the brothers, they promise themselves for the rest of their lives.

It would be a mistake to see this vow as a withdrawal from the world. Instead, the brothers are plunged into the world as never before, for their aim is to destroy what they call the "Christian ghetto"--a self-imposed isolation that prevents Christians from witnessing to the world. Thus, only thirty of the forty-five brothers actually live in Taizé. The others are <u>en mission</u>, members chosen for their spiritual vigor to live in places of great distress as a witness for Christ. They live among the poor in Marseille and Algeria; they work

in coal mines and stores, not preaching, but reminding Christians of their duties.

The brothers at Taizé have various tasks. One runs an exemplary co-operative dairy for the surrounding farmers. Four operate a successful printing press that produces the community's monthly ecumenical magazine Verbum Caro. Taize's artists produce paintings, sculpture, ceramics, and stained glass. Their works enhance the Taizé monastery, and are in great demand outside its walls. All their earnings go into the communal coffers.

But work and Christian example are not what makes Taizé unique. Its real reason for existence is ecumenicity, and one of its major goals is to foster friendship and understanding between Protestants and Roman Catholics. The Rule of Taizé forbids the brothers to take part in the scandalous division between Christians. It commands them to have "a passion for the Unity of the Body of Christ."[2] In the autumn of 1960, Taizé was sponsor to an ecumenical assembly which was attended

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[2] "Ce village va-t-il réconciler Catholiques et Protestants," Paris-Match, November 19, 1960, p. 127.

The Rule of Taizé was slowly and gradually developed. Not until 1952 did it find expression in writing. An edition in English is being prepared at the present time by the Taizé press.

by nine bishops and sixty-five priests from the Roman Catholic Church. Soon afterwards Prior Schutz and Max Thurian visited the Pope.

The Prior of Taizé expresses his desire for ecumenicity in a recently published book:

> So far as we are concerned, we refuse to let ourselves be enclosed by untroubled denominational conscience; we want to try, as far as we can, to open a breach in the barriers that are reared between Christians. Here is a vocational programme which demands great continuity over generations, as well as an ardent patience. Is not a monastic community precisely one of these places offering the possibility of continuity, around which can break the waves of enthusiasm or of scepticism, for or against ecumenism.[3]

The strength needed for these ambitious goals is extracted from the treasury of prayer that belongs to the Christian church. Three times a day, at seven A.M., noon, and seven P.M., the brothers drop whatever they are doing and assemble in the old Romanesque church, placed at their disposal by the bishop of Autun. Garbed in white robes they chant their Divine Office, based on the great liturgical traditions of Christianity, a rite purposefully eclectic to express the brotherhood of believers.

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[3] Roger Schutz, This Day Belongs to God (London: Faith Press, 1960), p. 43.

A witness of the liturgy of Taizé had commented on their insistence on a more formalized means of worship:

> It is understood that human beings need forms to express their spirituality and that empirical consciousness can only exist in the vital synthesis of form and matter. It is seen that it is impossible to accept God's order without acceptance of order in our own lives. This is, in fact, a primary expression of our own response to God's will for us.[4]

Taizé itself has written the following about its liturgy:

> The great principle which has presided over the working out of these offices is this: we do not wish to make something very new, but to implant ourselves in the tradition of the church in order to revive it and to make it up to date.[5]

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[4] Malcolm Boyd, "The Taizé Community," Theology Today, XV (1959), 488-506.

[5] Letter from Roger Schutz, Prior of Taizé, Sept. 30, 1960.

CHAPTER VII

THE BREVIARY OF TAIZÉ

The Structure of the Breviary

The breviary used by the brothers of Taizé for their three daily offices is entitled L'office divin de chaque jour. It was published in 1953 by Delachaux and Niestlé S.A. of Paris and Neuchâtel, Switzerland. The title page states that it is the second edition, and from the preface one learns that the first edition of 1943 was a quite different book. It was entitled L'office divin de l'Église universelle and was more a series of outlines for daily offices than an actual breviary. The title was intended to point to a common heritage, rather than to suggest that the book be used by all Christians. However, the new title is a better choice.

L'office divin is not the work of the brothers of Taizé themselves. It is the result of years of labor on the part of a group of Swiss Reformed pastors. They studied the liturgies of primitive Christianity, made a comparative analysis of the canonical hours of the Eastern and Western Church, and examined

the liturgical services of the Lutherans and Anglicans. Next came a practical test for their new breviary--the test of daily use. The names of the pastors do not appear in the book. The preface is signed by R. Paquier and A. Bardet, evidently the leaders of the group. The others, in the best liturgical tradition, remain anonymous.

This breviary is now used by three Reformed groups: Taizé; Grandchamp, a community of Protestant sisters in Switzerland; and Église et Liturgie, a third order of laymen who have adopted a daily prayer discipline. Taizé's endorsement of the breviary is in the form of a short essay by Prior Schutz and Max Thurian.

The preface is followed by the indications pratiques which explain the abbreviations used and comments on the general structure of the book. Each office contains two kinds of material--that which varies only with the season of the church year (a Common of the Time), and that which is different every day (a Proper of the Time). A list of eight rubrics closes the introductory portion of the book.

The breviary is divided into six large sections:

Invariable Texts and Offices

In this section are the elements that occur in each office or are used so frequently they warrant a single printing at the head of the book. This includes: the responses said in each office after the psalms and lessons, the three famous New Testament canticles, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the Te Deum, Gloria in excelsis, and a French translation of the Byzantine Vesper hymn, Phôs hilaron. Next follow the five invariable offices. Since they contain few elements that vary with the seasons of the church year, they are included here. They are the offices for Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday evenings, and the noon office, which, save for the psalms and short lesson, is the same every day.

Offices for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany

Since four evening offices and the noon office are invariable, the succeeding sections each contain the ten variable offices in their chronological order. This forms the Common of the Time, with rubrics for those elements that vary within the season.

The variable elements for each day are listed together in a separate section, forming the Proper of the Time. This in-

cludes the psalms for the morning and evening offices, the Old Testament, Gospel, and Epistle lessons, the Capitulum (a short lesson to be read at the noon office), and the Collect which changes only every two or three days.

This system makes L'office divin extremely easy to use. The elements of each office are in only two places in the breviary: A disadvantage is that the book, unlike the Roman breviary, is not complete in itself. One also needs a Bible, a hymnal,[1] and a psalter if the psalms are sung.

Offices for after Epiphany, Septuagesima, and after Pentecost

The make-up of this section resembles the above. However, the Proper of the Time for after Pentecost is given near the end of the book in its chronological place.

Offices for Lent and Holy Week

This section contains seven special offices placed after the ten ferial offices. These are for the last three days of Holy Week. Good Friday has three: a morning and evening office, and one for the ninth hour.

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[1] The accompanying hymnal is L'office chanté (Neuchâtel: Delachaux and Niestlé S.A., 1950).

Offices for Paschal Time

The structure is similar to the second section.

Offices for Saints' Days

There is a common morning and evening office for nineteen of the saints' days observed by the community. The Proper of the Saints includes twenty-three feasts, but four of them retain the ferial office with little or no change. These four are:

December 26: St. Stephen, Martyr

December 27: St. John, Apostle and Evangelist

December 28: The Holy Innocents

March 25: The Annunciation

The nineteen saints' days with special offices are:

November 30: Saint Andrew, Apostle

December 21: Saint Thomas, Apostle

January 25: Conversion of Saint Paul, Apostle

February 2: Presentation of Christ at the Temple

February 24: Saint Matthew, Apostle

April 25: Saint Mark, Evangelist

May 1: Saints Philip and James, sons of Alpheus, Apostles

June 11: Saint Barnabas, Apostle

June 24:	Nativity of Saint John the Baptist
June 29:	Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles
July 25:	Saint James, Apostle
August 15:	Mary, Mother of the Lord
August 24:	Saint Bartholomew, Apostle
August 29:	Death of Saint John the Baptist
September 21:	Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
September 29:	Saint Michael and all the Angels
October 18:	Saint Luke, Evangelist
October 28:	Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles
November 1:	All Saints' Day

The Structure of the Offices

The implication has already been made that L'office divin owes its greatest debt to the Roman breviary. Although the overall structure of the two books is very different, the form of the Protestant offices is modelled on the Roman usage. Since there are only three daily offices instead of eight, the diversity of the canonical hours of one Roman day has been spread over the entire week.

From Matins is derived the office for Monday and Thursday mornings. It begins with a translation of the opening verse

for Matins, Domine, labia mea aperies, instead of Deus in adjutorium which opens all the other Roman offices. The words ask God for permission to break the silence of the night. A few verses of the Invitatory (Psalm 95) follow the opening verses. The hymn varies with the season. The psalms, Old Testament, and Gospel lessons follow, but the Roman custom of three nocturns has been discarded. A lesson taken from the church fathers has always been an integral part of Matins. Like its prototype, this service continues the practice, including also readings from Luther, Calvin, and other Reformers. Three prayers follow the lessons: the collect proper for that day, a collect of the time, and an extemporaneous prayer. The Te Deum closes the office.

Although only two morning offices are based on Matins, the Roman usage of Scripture reading at this hour is found in each morning office. The remaining morning hours are based on Lauds, Prime, and Terce; however, they have no Capitulum, as do those offices in their Roman form. They have a Gospel and Old Testament lesson instead. The Epistle lesson is read at the evening office.

Lauds is the basis of the office for Wednesday and Saturday mornings. It begins with the Deus in adjutorium and contains the Benedictus and several Old Testament canticles. The hymn varies with the season, as does its Roman counterpart. The Benedictus has been moved from its usual place after the hymn, and is sung instead after the psalms. This allows the office to end with a psalm of praise, a custom borrowed from primitive times and from which the hour received its name. (Many of these psalms begin with the word Lauda or Laudate.) The Taizé breviary calls for a metrical psalm here.

The Tuesday and Friday morning office is based on Prime, the first of the Little Hours. In these the hymn is at the beginning rather than midway in the office. The hymn for Roman Prime is the same every day, Iam lucis orto sidere. It is included in this office outside the Christmas and Easter seasons.

The Sunday morning office is also based on one of the Little Hours--Terce. This seems strange since the Sunday offices are larger and more important in the Roman church. Actually, the Roman clergy has often voiced the wish that these offices be shortened since priests are already so busy on Sunday.[2]

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[2] Batiffol, op. cit., p. 308.

The creators of this breviary have yet another reason:

> We are afraid of encroaching on the primordial right of the great eucharistic service which the church must usually celebrate on this day. The concise office of Terce which we have chosen is only the introduction and preparation; there is no risk at all that it becomes a substitute, and thereby contribute to the shocking deformation which still encumbers many Reformed churches, where the Word has eliminated the sacrament.[3]

The hour of Terce has always invoked the Holy Spirit since this is the time He poured Himself out upon the Apostles. The hymn for Terce is Nunc Sancte nobis Spiritus, used here outside the Christmas and Easter seasons. The Benedictus is also included in this office.

The invariable noon office is based on Sext. The hymn, Rector potens, verax Deus, remains the same each day in the Roman office, and that practice is continued here. The Beatitudes are recited at the close of the mid-day office, an idea borrowed from the Eastern church.

The invariable Friday evening office is based on None. The opening verses are of Eastern origin. The hymn varies with the church year. Since this hour commemorates Christ's death on the cross, His seven last words are recited near the close of the hour. This is particularly appropriate for a Friday

[3] L'office divin, p. 15.

office.

The important office of Vespers has influenced no less than four of these new Protestant prayer hours. Monday and Thursday evening draw from the Roman Vespers. Like their prototype they are longer offices, containing the Magnificat, long responses, and a variable hymn. The final song is not the Magnificat, however, but a praise hymn based on Eastern usage.

Eastern Vespers (hesperinos) has influenced the formation of the offices for Sunday and Wednesday evenings. The Sunday office retains the Western Magnificat canticle, but the versicles, responsories, and the invariable hymn, Phôs hilaron, are of Eastern origin.

The invariable offices for Tuesday and Saturday evenings are based on Compline. On Tuesday the hymn is Te lucis ante terminum, but on Saturday it is Christe qui lux es et dies from the Dominican breviary, a hymn that replaced the Te lucis during winter in primitive Roman usage. The Saturday evening office has two Eastern features: a litany, and the substitution of the Beatitudes for the Nunc dimittis.

The Elements of the Offices

If the structure of the hours in L'office divin is of Roman

origin, Protestant influence is very strong in the individual elements of these prayer hours. The Genevan metrical psalms and the patristic readings from the Reformers have already been mentioned. Many of the variable hymns are Lutheran chorales, and a few are of Anglican origin. From the Book of Common Prayer come several collects. Many of the responses are drawn from the Lutheran and Moravian liturgy.

The debt to the Eastern Orthodox Church increases the ecumenical impact of this breviary. Litanies and collects have been drawn from Greek, Coptic, and Nestorian sources. Two of the oldest hymns of Christianity are the gift of the early Eastern Church: the Phôs hilaron, and the recently discovered Oxyrynchos hymn. The latter is used in L'office divin for the first time in modern Christendom.

An innovation of this breviary is the recitation of the complete psalter over a three-month period. Since the time of St. Pius X, the Roman Church has recited all one hundred and fifty psalms each week. The Anglicans recite the entire psalter once a month in their canonical hours.

At Taizé the age-old tradition of singing the psalms antiphonally has been continued. The brothers use the psalmody of

Joseph Gelineau, a new, folk-like style of song in which the strict rhythm nevertheless follows the patterns of speech. "The rhythm of the verses is based on the regular recurrence of accented or stressed syllables.... The number of these stresses is fixed for each line, but the number of syllables between the stresses is variable."[4] Each psalm is provided with an antiphon and may be sung in unison or in four-part harmony.

The Spirit of the Offices

Complementing the Protestant hymns, responses, and metrical psalms that permeate L'office divin is an unmistakable Reformed quality--variety. A Christian of Calvinist persuasion will always be suspect of excessive repetition, perhaps overly suspect. In this psychological attitude toward worship he is different from a Lutheran, an Anglican, and certainly from a Roman Catholic. For the latter, repetition increases the intensity and unity of his worship; for the Calvinist it becomes a stumbling block. Therefore, L'office divin strives to maintain a balance between stimulating variety and meaningful unity.

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[4] Twenty Four Psalms and a Canticle (Toledo: Gregorian Institute of America, 1955), p. 3.

Unity takes on a deeper meaning as one familiarizes himself with the breviary of Taizé. Its dominating spirit is ecumenicity. It seeks to place in one volume the sacred words that call together the followers of Christ over all the world. The fact that it borrows heavily from all major Christian confessions makes it open to charges of eclecticism and whimsicality. This criticism overlooks the fact that L'office divin was drawn up by Calvinists. Unlike Lutherans and Anglicans these Protestants have not inherited the beautiful tradition of the canonical hours. The creators of L'office divin justify their eclecticism with the following statement:

> We Reformed have precisely nothing in this domain. But this initial poverty, deplorable as it might be, gives us in return a larger open field for our construction. So that even more may be rebuilt on the foundations of faith, why not seize the providential occasion of making a breviary that is more complete, more inclusive, less unilateral, in terms of the new vision given to us by the ecumenical movement--the Universal Church.[5]

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[5] L'office divin, pp. 12-13.

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