

(Updated Edition
September 2012)

(This translation is the work of Sister Carol Dvorak of Mississippi Abbey. It was not submitted for approval by the Holy See. The work is a translation of the approved French text and has used approved English texts when these were available.)

CISTERCIAN RITUAL

**according to the Statutes of the General Chapters
of either the Cistercian Order
or the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance**

**according to the general and particular Decrees of the
Congregation of Divine Worship
and the Discipline of the Sacraments
after Vatican Council II**

2004

INTRODUCTION

The founders of Cîteaux, having pronounced their vows according to the Rule, sought with great zeal for authenticity in the Liturgy according to the teachings of our Father Saint Benedict. After this first determination, the first abbots of the meeting at the Cistercian Chapter, as is said in the *Charter of Charity*, decided that the books necessary for the celebration of the Divine Office and the Mass would be the same everywhere. This liturgy, developed progressively through the XIIth century, lasted, almost unchanged, until the Council of Trent.

After this, the reform of the liturgical books of the Roman Church did not intend to make the reform obligatory for the rites of Churches that had no more than two centuries of existence. Nevertheless, this renewal satisfied the wishes of the men of this time. That is why, in the XVIIth century, under the direction of Abbot Claude Vaussin, there appeared new books for the use of the Order, and above all the *Cistercian Ritual* which remained the norm and the ceremonial of authentic Cistercian rites until Vatican Council II.

After the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of this Council, it became more and more clear that the liturgy was not only the business of the clergy but of all the baptized, not only of monks and nuns but also of the faithful who frequent our monasteries. As after the Council of Trent, the new books of the Roman liturgy were well received by the monks and nuns, proposing on one hand an Ordinary of the Mass and a more abundant choice of prayers, and on the other hand, varied Lectionaries, as well as a Liturgy of the Hours and a richer sacramental ritual.

It follows that the two Orders of the Cistercian Family (canonically distinct since 1892), who previously worked together on common liturgical questions, again made their own efforts under the authority of their respective General Chapters. Thus as time went on they obtained from the Apostolic See a *Proper Calendar* (1972 and 1973) and a *General Instruction on the Divine Office*, in 1974. Finally, the common efforts of the two Orders, as desired by their Chapters, resulted in the Apostolic See giving us *Variations for the Ritual of the Anointing of the Sick*, the *Rite for the Reception of Brothers and Sisters* and the *Rite for Funerals* on October 19, 1995.

Now after thirty years in a progressive renewal of the liturgy, it seems opportune to publish in a single volume all these documents so that all and each of the communities have in hand what has been established for them by the competent authority. This is why in this book entitled *Cistercian Ritual*, besides what has been approved for us by the Holy See, one finds other texts promulgated by each General Chapter, such as *Prayers for the Dead* after the rite for funerals, *The Rite for the Election and Confirmation of an Abbot or an Abbess* as well as the particular usages for the abbatial blessing, so that the legitimate diversity is evident and through it, the fundamental unity of the Cistercian Family.

In this ninth centenary of the foundation of the New Monastery of Cîteaux, we have the joy of presenting this work to all the children of this Church, as the fruit of a more strict collaboration between the commissions and the experts on the holy liturgy.

Fr. Maur Esteva
Abbot General, O.Cist

Fr. Bernardo Olivera
Abbot General, O.C.S.O.

To the Reader

In this book the documents are classified in chronological order. What has been approved, affirmed or decreed first is placed first.

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FIRST PART

CALENDAR

GENERAL CALENDAR

Prot. 2325/71, November 21, 1971: O. Cist.
Prot. 855/72, July 31, 1972: O.C.S.O.
Prot. 667/73, July 11 1973: O. Cist.
Prot. 1074/82, October 27, 1982: O. Cist.
Prot. 203/83, February 5, 1083: O. Cist.
Prot. 330/83, March 5, 1983: O. Cist.
Prot. 1403/92, September 11, 1992: O.C.S.O.

* When the degree of celebration is not indicated it will be an optional memorial.

** According to the universal norms for the liturgical year and the calendar, n. 54, nothing prohibits certain feasts from being celebrated with more solemnity in certain places than ordinarily in a diocese or religious family. For example, for the nuns of the Cistercian Order, St. Agnes, St. Scholastica and St. Gertrude are celebrated as feasts.

JANUARY

1	Octave of the Nativity	
	Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God	Solemnity
2	Sts Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bps and Docts	Memorial
3	<i>The Holy Name of Jesus</i>	
4		
5		
6	EPIPHANY OF THE LORD	Solemnity
7	<i>St. Raymond of Penafort, Priest</i>	
8		
9		
10	<i>St. Gregory of Nyssa, Bishop</i> <i>St. William of Bourges, Bishop O.N.</i>	
11		
12	St. Aelred, Abbot O.N.	Memorial
13	<i>St. Hilary, Bishop and Doctor of the Church</i>	

14		
15	Sts. Maur and Placid, Disciples of Our Father St. Benedict	Memorial
16		
17	St. Anothony, Abbot	Memorial
18		
19		
20	<i>St. Fabien, Pope and Martyr</i> <i>St. Sebastian, Martyr</i> <i>Bl. Cyprian Michael Tansi, Monk Priest OCSO</i>	
21	St. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr**	Memorial
22	<i>St. Vincent, Deacon and Martyr</i>	
23		
24	St. Francis de Sales, Bishop and Doctor of the Church	Memorial
25	CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL, APOSTLE	Feast
26	STS. ROBERT, ALBERIC AND STEPHEN, ABBOTS OF CÎTEAUX (In OCSO: Solemnity <i>or</i> Feast)	Solemnity
27	<i>Sts. Timothy and Titus, Bishops</i> <i>St. Angela de Merici, Virgin</i>	
28	St. Thomas Aquinas, Priest and Doctor of the Church	Memorial
29		
30		
31	St. John Bosco, Priest	Memorial
	Sunday after January 6: BAPTISM OF THE LORD	

FEBRUARY

1	In O. Cist.: <i>St. Raymond de Fietero, Abbot O.N.</i>	
2	PRESENTATION OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE In O.Cist. : Solemnity <i>or</i> Feast	Feast
3	<i>St. Ansgar, Bishop</i> <i>St. Blase, Bishop and Martyr</i>	
4		
5	St. Agatha, Virgin and Martyr	Memorial
6	St. Paul Miki and his Companions, Martyrs	Memorial
7		
8	<i>St. Jerome Emilien</i> <i>Bl. Josephine Bakhita, Virgin</i>	
9		
10	St. Scholastica, Virgin**	

Memorial

- 11 *Our Lady of Lourdes*
- St. Benedict of Aniane, Abbot*
- 12 *Bl. Humbleline, Nun*
- 13
- 14 Sts. Cyril, Monk, and Methodius, Bishop Memorial
(In Europe, a Feast)
- 15
- 16 *St. Peter of Castelnau, Monk O.N. and Martyr: In O.Cist*
- 17 *Holy Founders of the Order of Servites of Mary*
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21 St. Peter Damian, Bishop and Doctor of the Church Memorial
- 22 CHAIR OF ST. PETER, Apostle Feast
- 23 St. Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28

Memorial

MARCH

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 *St. Casimir*
- 5
- 6
- 7 Sts. Perpetua and Felicity
- 8 *St. John of God, Religious*
St. Stephen of Obazine, Abbot
- 9 *St. Frances of Rome, Religious*
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15

Memorial

16		
17	<i>St. Patrick, Bishop</i>	
18	<i>St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop and Doctor of the Church</i>	
19	ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE VIRGIN MARY	Solemnity
20		
21	TRANSITUS OF OUR FATHER ST. Benedict, Abbot (In USA an optional commemoration)	Feast
22		
23	<i>St. Turibio of Mogrovejo, Bishop</i>	
24		
25	ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD	Solemnity
26		
27		
28		
29		
30		
31		

APRIL

	1	
	2	<i>St. Francis of Paul, Hermit</i>
	3	
	4	<i>St. Isidore, Bishop and Doctor of the Church</i>
	5	<i>St. Vincent Ferrer, Priest</i>
	6	
Memorial	7	St. John Baptist de la Salle, Priest
	8	
	9	
	10	
	11	St. Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr
	12	
	13	<i>St. Martin I, Pope and Martyr</i>
	14	
	15	
	16	
	17	
	18	
	19	
	20	
	21	St. Anselm, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
	22	<i>Bl. Maria Gabriella, Nun OCSO</i>
	23	<i>St. Adalbert, Bishop and Martyr</i>
		Memorial

- St. George, Martyr*
- 24 *St. Fidel of Sigmaringen, Priest and Martyr*
St. Franca, Nun O.N.: In O.Cist.
- 25 ST. MARK, EVANGELIST Feast
- 26 *Bl. Rafael, Oblate, OCSO*
- 27
- 28 *St. Peter Chanel, Priest and Martyr*
St. Louis Mary Grignion of Montfort, Priest
- 29 St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church Memorial
(In Europe - Feast)
- 30 *St. Pius V, Pope*

MAY

- 1 *St. Joseph, the Worker*
- 2 St. Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor Memorial
- 3 STS. PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES Feast
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11 Sts. Odo, Mayeul, Odilo, Hugh and B. Peter the
Venerable, Abbots of Cluny Memorial
- 12 *Sts. Nereus and Achilleus, Martyrs*
- 13 *Our Lady of Fatima*
- 14 ST. MATTHIAS, APOSTLE Feast
- 15 St. Pachomius, Abbot Memorial
- 16
- 17
- 18 *St. John I, Pope and Martyr*
- 19
- 20 *St. Bernardine of Siena, Priest*
- 21 *Bl. Christopher Magallanes, Priest, and Companions, Martyrs*
- 22 *St. Rita of Cascia, Religious*
- 23
- 24
- 25 St. Bede the Venerable, Priest and Doctor of the Church Memorial
- 26 *St. Gregory VII, Pope*
St. Mary Magdelene de Pazzi, Virgin
St. Philip Neri, Priest
- 27 *St. Augustine of Canterbury, Bishop*

(In OCSO: Memorial)

28

29

30

31 VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Feast

(In O.Cist: Solemnity or Feast)

The 1st Sunday after Pentecost:

THE MOST HOLY TRINITY Solemnity

The Thursday or the Sunday after the Most Holy Trinity:

THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST Solemnity

The Friday following the 2nd Sunday after Pentecost:

THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS Solemnity

The Saturday following the 2nd Sunday after Pentecost:

The Immaculate Heart of Mary

Memorial

JUNE

1 St. Justin, Martyr

2 *Sts. Marcellinus and Peter, Martyrs*

3 St. Charles Lwanga and his Companions, Martyrs

Memorial

4

5 St. Boniface, Bishop and Martyr Memorial

6 *St. Norbert, Bishop*

7

8

9 *St. Ephrem, Deacon and Doctor of the Church*

10

11 St. Barnabas, Apostle Memorial

12 *St. Alice, Nun O.N.*

13 St. Anthony of Padua, Priest and Doctor of the Church Memorial

14 *Bl. Gerard, monk O.N.*

15

16 *St. Lutgard, Nun O.N.*

17

18

19 *St. Romuald, Abbot*

20

21 St. Aloysius Gonzaga, Religious Memorial

22 *St. Paulinus of Nola, Bishop*

St. John Fisher, Bishop, and St. Thomas More, Martyrs

23

24 **NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST** Solemnity

25
 26 *St. Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer, Priest*
 27 *St. Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop and Doctor of the Church*
 28 *St. Irenaeus, Bishop and Martyr* Memorial
 29 **STS. PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES** Solemnity
 30 *First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church*

JULY

1
 2
 3 **ST. THOMAS, APOSTLE** Feast
 4 *St. Elizabeth of Portugal*
 5 *St. Anthony Mary Zaccaria, Priest*
 6 *St. Maria Goretti, Virgin and Martyr*
 7
 8 *Bl. Eugene III, Pope O.N.*
 Memorial
 9 *St. Augustine Zhao Rong, Priest, and his Companions, Martyrs*
 10
 11 **OUR HOLY FATHER ST. BENEDICT, ABBOT** Solemnity
 12 *St. John Gualbert, Abbot*
 13 *St. Henry*
 14 *Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha, Virgin (In USA)* Memorial
 15 *St. Bonaventure, Bishop and Doctor of the Church* Memorial
 16 *Our Lady of Mt. Carmel*
Bl. Nuns of Orange, Martyrs (Among these the Bl. Sisters of Justamont, O.N.)
 17
 18 *St. Camillus de Lillis, Priest (In USA)*
 19
 20 *St. Apollinaris, Bishop and Martyr*
 21 *St. Lawrence Brindisi, Priest and Doctor of the Church*
 22 *St. Mary Magdalene* Memorial
 23 *St. Brigitte, Religious*
 24 *St. Charbel Maklouf, Priest*
 25 **ST. JAMES, APOSTLE**
 Feast
 26 *Sts. Joachim and Anne, Parents of the BVM* Memorial
 27
 28
 29 *Sts. Martha, Mary and Lazarus, Hosts of the Lord* Memorial
 30 *St. Peter Chrysologus, Bishop and Doctor of the Church*
 31 *St. Ignatius of Loyola, Priest* Memorial

AUGUST

	1 St. Alphonsus Liguori, Bishop and Doctor of the Church	Memorial
	2 <i>St. Eusebius of Vercelli, Bishop</i> <i>St. Peter Julian Eymard, Priest</i>	
	3	
	4 St. John Mary Vianney, Priest	Memorial
	5 <i>Dedication of the Basilica St. Mary Major</i>	
	6 TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD	Feast
	7 <i>St. Sixtus II, Pope, and his companions, Martyrs</i> <i>St. Cajetan, Priest</i>	
	8 St. Dominic, Priest	Memorial
	9 St. Theresa Benedicta of the Cross, Virgin & Martyr (In Europe - Feast)	Memorial
	10 ST. LAWRENCE, DEACON AND MARTYR	Feast
	11 St. Clare, Virgin	Memorial
	12 <i>St. Jane Francis de Chantal, Religious</i>	
	13 <i>St. Pontian, Pope and St. Hippolytus, Priest, Martyrs</i>	
	14 <i>St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe, Priest and Martyr</i>	
	15 ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	Solemnity
	16 <i>St. Stephen of Hungary</i>	
	17	
	18 <i>Bl. John Baptist de Souzy, Priest, and his Companions</i> <i>Martyrs, (among whom were Bl Gervais Brunel and Paul</i> <i>Charles, Priests, and Elias Desgardin, Monk O.N.)</i> <i>St. John Eudes, Priest</i>	
Memorial	19 Bl. Gueric, Abbot O.N.	
	20 ST. BERNARD, ABBOT O.N. AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH	
Solemnity	(In OCSO Solemnity or Feast)	
	21 St. Pius X, Pope	
Memorial	22 <i>Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i> (In O.Cist.: Memorial)	

23	<i>St. Rose of Lima, Virgin</i>	
24	ST. BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE	Feast
25	<i>St. Louis</i> <i>St. Joseph Calasanz, Priest</i>	
26		
27	St. Monica	Memorial
28	St. Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church	Memorial
29	Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist	Memorial
30	<i>Sts. Warren and Amadeus, Bishops O.N.</i> <i>or St. Amadeus, Bishop O.N.</i>	
31		

SEPTEMBER

	1	
	2	
	3	St. Gregory the Great, Pope and Doctor of the Church
	4	
	5	
	6	
	7	
	8	NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
		(In O.Cist. Solemnity or Feast)
	9	<i>St. Peter Claver, Priest</i>
	10	<i>Bl. Oglerio, Abbot O.N.</i>
	11	
	12	<i>Holy Name of Mary</i> <i>St. Peter of Tarentaise, Bishop O.N.</i>
	13	St. John Chrysostom, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
	14	EXALTATION OF THE CROSS
	15	Our Lady of Sorrows
	16	Sts. Cornelius, Pope and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs
	17	<i>St. Robert Belarmine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church</i> <i>St. Martin of Finojosa, Bishop O.N.</i> In O.Cist: <i>St. Hildegarde, Virgin</i>
	18	In O.Cist.: COMMEMORATION OF MEMBERS, RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND BENEFACTORS OF O.N. WHO DIED DURING THE YEAR
	19	<i>St. Januarius, Bishop and Martyr</i>
Memorial	20	Sts. Andrew Kim, Paul Chong & their Companions, Martyrs
	21	ST. MATTHEW, Apostle and Evangelist
	22	
Memorial	23	St. Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest (Padre Pio)
	24	

25		
26	<i>Sts Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs</i>	
27	St. Vincent de Paul, Priest	Memorial
28	<i>St. Wenceslaus, Martyr</i> <i>St. Lawrence Ruiz and his Companions, Martyrs</i>	
29	ST. MICHAEL and all the Angels	Feast
30	St. Jerome, Priest and Doctor of the Church	Memorial

OCTOBER

Memorial	1	St. Therese of the Child Jesus, Virgin & Doctor of the Church	
	2	<i>Guardian Angels</i> In O.Cist.: Memorial	
	3		
	4	St. Francis of Assisi, Religious	Memorial
	5		
	6	St. Bruno, Priest and Hermit	Memorial
	7	Our Lady of the Rosary	Memorial
	8		
	9	<i>St. Denis, Bishop and his Companions, Martyrs</i> <i>St. John Leonardi, Priest</i> In O. Cist.: <i>Bl. Vincent Kadlubek, Bishop O.N.</i>	
	10		
	11		
	12		
	13		
	14	<i>St. Callistus I, Pope and Martyr</i>	
	15	St. Teresa of Jesus, Virgin and Doctor of the Church	Memorial
	16	<i>St. Hedwig, Religious O.N.</i> <i>St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Virgin</i>	
	17	St. Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop and Martyr	Memoria l
	18	ST. LUKE, EVANGELIST	Feast
	19	<i>St. John de Brebeuf and Isaac Jogues, Priests and their</i> <i>Companions, Martyrs</i> <i>St. Paul of the Cross</i>	
	20		
	21		
	22		
	23	<i>St. John of Capistrano, Priest</i>	
	24	<i>St. Anthony Mary Claret, Bishop</i>	
	25	In O.Cist.: <i>St. Bernard Calbo, Bishop O.N.</i>	
	26		
	27		
	28	STS. SIMON AND JUDE, Apostles	Feast
	29		

30
31

NOVEMBER

1	ALL SAINTS	Solemnity
2	ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED (ALL SOULS)	
3	<i>St. Martin de Porres, Religious</i>	
4	St. Charles Borromeo, Bishop	Memorial
5		
6		
7		
8		
9	DEDICATION OF THE LATERAN BASILICA	Feast
10	St. Leo the Great, Pope and Doctor of the Church	Memorial
11	ST. MARTIN OF TOURS, Bishop In OCSO: Memorial	Feast
12	<i>St. Theodore the Studite, Abbot</i> <i>St. Josaphat, Bishop and Martyr</i>	
13	ALL SAINTS OF THE BENEDICTINE FAMILY	Feast
14	In O.Cist.: ALL SOULS OF THE BENEDICTINE FAMILY	
15	<i>St. Albert the Great, Bishop and Doctor of the Church</i>	
16	St. Gertrude, Virgin and Nun O.N. **	Memorial
17	<i>St. Margaret of Scotland</i> <i>St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Religious</i>	
18	<i>Dedication of the Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul</i>	
19	<i>St. Mechtilde, Virgin and Nun O.N.</i>	
20		
21	Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Memorial
22	St. Cecilia, Virgin and Martyr	Memorial
23	<i>St. Clement I, Pope and Martyr</i> <i>St. Columban, Abbot</i>	
24	St. Andrew Dung-Lac, Priest and Companions, Martyrs	Memorial
25	<i>St. Catherine of Alexandria, Virgin and Martyr</i>	
26		
27		
28		
29		
30	ST. ANDREW, Apostle	Feast
Last Sunday in Ordinary time: OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST THE KING		Solemnity

DECEMBER

1
2

Memorial

- 3 St. Francis Xavier, Priest
- 4 *St. John Damascene, Priest and Doctor of the Church*
- 5 *St. Sabas, Abbot*
- 6 *St. Nicholas, Bishop*
- 7 St. Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church Memorial
- 8 **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BVM** Solemnity
- 9
- 10
- 11 *St. Damasus I, Pope*
- In O.Cist.: *Bl. David, Monk O.N.*
- 12
- 13 St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr Memorial
- 14 St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church Memorial
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21 *St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church*
- 22
- 23 *St. John of Kanty, Priest*
- 25 **THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD** Solemnity
- 26 ST. STEPHEN, DEACON AND MARTYR Feast
- 27 ST. JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST Feast
- 28 THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYR Feast
- 29 *St. Thomas Becket, Bishop and Martyr*
- 30
- 31 *St. Sylvester I, Pope*

**LIST
OF OTHER CISTERCIAN
SAINTS INSCRIBED IN THE
MARTYROLOGY**

FEBRUARY

- 3 Bl. Helinand of Froidmont, Monk O.N.
- 9 St. Conrad of Baviere, Monk O.N., hermit
- 13 St. Adolf of Osnabruck, Bishop O.N.

19 St. Boniface of Bruxelles, Bishop

APRIL

- 1 Bl. Hugh of Bonnevaux, Abbot O.N.
- 5 St. Julian of Mont-Cornillon, Virgin
- 13 St. Ida of Louvain, Nun O.N.
- 18 Bl. Idesbald, Abbot O.N.
- 26 St. John of Valence, Bishop O.N.

JUNE

- 7 St. Robert of the New Monastery, Abbot O.N.
- 17 Sts. Sancha, Malfalda and Teresa, Nuns O.N.

JULY

- 7 St. Theobald, Abbot O.N.
- 9 Bl. Albert of Sestri, Lay Brother O.N., Hermit
- 10 Bl. Bertrand of Grandseve, Abbot O.N.
- 24 St. Baldwin, Abbot O.N.

AUGUST

- 9 St. Famien, Monk O.N., Pilgrim
- 16 St. Beatrice of Silva, Virgin

SEPTEMBER

- 2 Bl. Bernard, Monk O.N., Mary and Grace, Martyrs
- 7 Bl. Othon of Freising, Bishop O.N.
- 28 Bl. John of Montmirail, Monk O.N.

OCTOBER

- 3 St. Adalgoth, Bishop O.N.
- 8 St. Martin Cid, Abbot O.N.
- 13 St. Maurice, Abbot O.N.
- 20 Bl. Gilbert de Citeaux, Abbot O.N.

NOVEMBER

- 3 St. Malachy, Bishop
- 15 St. Leopold, Margrave of Austria
- 20 St. Edmond of Canterbury, Bishop
St. Hugh of Noaria, Abbot O.N.

DECEMBER

- 5 St. Galgan, Hermit
- 9 St. Gerard, Abbot O.N.

SECOND PART

**THE DIVINE OFFICE
OR THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS**

GENERAL INSTRUCTION ON THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS FOR THE MONASTERIES OF THE CISTERCIAN ORDER OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE

(Prot. 1554/74, June 25, 1974)

GENERAL NORMS

1. These General Norms in no way intend to provide the doctrinal background of the Liturgy of the Hours; nor do they mean to explain the importance of the Liturgy of the Hours in the Christian life. All these things are to be found treated in abundant detail in the Rule of St. Benedict and also in the documents of Vatican Council II, as well as in the General Instruction for the Liturgy of the Hours (of the Roman Rite: GILH).

Our purpose here is only to indicate especially those particular points that call for greater precision, so that the Liturgy of the Hours may better correspond to the concrete situation of the monks and nuns of our Order.

2. Even though monastic communities are not ‘particular Churches’ in the strict sense, and even though they are not made up exclusively of clerics, they nevertheless represent the praying Church in a special manner; for they manifest in a fuller way the model of the Church, which without intermission praises the Lord with concordant voice; and they carry out the duty of ‘working’ first and foremost by means of prayer for the *up-building and increase of the entire Mystical Body of Christ, and for the good of the particular Churches.*

3. In the Liturgy of the Hours as arranged by monastic communities, the Church recognizes her own voice, and through the authority of the hierarchy ceaselessly keeps watch to see that this same

prayer, while responding to the particular exigencies of the individual communities, nevertheless always maintains its efficacy as a means of expressing the Christian mystery.

4. The prescriptions for the Liturgy of the Hours originally formulated by the *Rule of St. Benedict* and afterwards by ecclesiastical legislation envisage the performance of the Liturgy - whether sung or recited - in choir. It pertains to the solicitude and the right of the Abbot/Abbess, however, to determine the manner in which each member of the community participates in it.

5. The Liturgy of the Hours is arranged according to the prescriptions of the *Rule of St. Benedict*, which through past centuries nourished the prayer life of monks, and which in our own day are no less able to foster that same life of prayer. Nevertheless, the possibility of adapting these prescriptions to the circumstances of the present day is recognized - circumstances which differ from region to region, and which are experienced diversely.

6. Since the Liturgy of the Hours has the purpose of sanctifying the day and all its human activity, the monastic community intends to attain this end by the celebration of those Hours handed down to us by the Fathers.

Nevertheless, the Hour of Prime can be omitted.

Even though the Little Hours may be celebrated outside choir, they are nevertheless always to be celebrated in common. Where, however, special circumstances render the observance of this prescription difficult, the Abbot General, with the consent of his permanent Council, can allow one or two of the Little Hours to be omitted.¹

If an Hour of the Office is celebrated in connection with another Hour or with the Mass, the prescriptions of nn. 93-99 of GILH are to be followed.

7. The Liturgy of the Hours should be so structured as always to have a hymn, psalmody, then a longer or shorter reading from Scripture, and finally, the prayer (or prayers). As regards the manner of performing the psalmody, the prescriptions of GILH, nn. 121-125, are to be followed. Since Gregorian chant is the chant proper to the Roman liturgy, it will be given pride of place - all things, however, being equal. If the Liturgy of the Hours is celebrated in the vernacular, the traditional elements, and in particular the music, can be adapted to the genius of the language and the nature of the individual community.

8. Since Lauds (the morning prayer) and Vespers (the evening prayer) have been handed down by the venerable age-old tradition of the Church as the two hinges on which the daily Office turns, these are to be considered the chief Hours, and are to be celebrated as such. To the extent possible, they should be sung.

Vigils, however, retains its proper nature of night praise, to be celebrated before dawn.

9. If deemed prudent, an optional period of silence may be inserted after each psalm, as was the custom in past ages - especially if a psalm-collect concludes the period of silence; and after the readings, whether long or short ones.

10. The distribution of psalms can be done in these ways:

- as prescribed in the *Rule of St. Benedict*;
- according to one of the schemata approved by the Holy See for use in our Order;
- or according to some other schema, so long as the psalms are recited within a two

¹ Prot. 6390/74 of June 4, 1974: Vigore facultatum a Summo Pontifice Tributatum, Sacra Congregatio pro Religiosis et Institutis saecularibus, attentis expositis, annuit pro gratia preces, ea tamen lege, ut hora parva omissa, privatim absolvatur, servatis ceteris servandis.

week period.

11. The two year cycle of biblical readings drawn up for the Roman Rite Liturgy of the Hours may be followed, should this seem opportune (cf. GILH, nn. 145-146).

12. A Supplement containing readings taken from the Fathers and ecclesiastical authors, but different from those in the Roman Rite Office, is in preparation for use in monasteries. Moreover, the Abbot/Abbess, with the assent of the community, may select still other texts - but only in keeping with the norms issued by the Holy See for the choice of readings.

ORDINARY OF THE DAILY LITURGY OF THE HOURS

VIGILS

a) Introduction

V. *Domine, labia mea aperies*

R. *Et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam. Gloria Patri...*

Invitatory: Ps. 94 or another, according to the schema followed with its antiphon, which is repeated after each strophe of the psalm.

b) Hymn

c) Psalmody

d) Versicle and response

e) Scripture reading with its responsory; an optional period of silence may be inserted before or after the responsory.

f) Psalmody

g) Versicle and response

h) Reading from the Fathers or ecclesiastical writers, with its responsory, as above in e)

i) On Sundays, solemnities and feasts, the following elements are added, to be arranged according to any one of the structures described below; this structure can be simplified for feast days when we work.

A - One or three Canticles with suitable antiphon

- Versicle and response

- Homily from the Monastic Lectionary or by the Abbot/Abbess

- Responsory

- Hymn *Te Deum* (the last part may be omitted, if deemed opportune);

- Gospel: of the Resurrection, or of the Sunday, or of another part of the yearly cycles of readings, or of the solemnity or feast;

- *Te decet laus*

or B - One or three Canticles with suitable antiphon

- Hymn *Te Deum*

- Gospel, as above, and r/*Amen*
 - *Te decet laus*
 - Homily from the Monastic Lectionary or by the Abbot/Abbess
 - Responsory
- or C - One or three Canticles with suitable antiphon
- Gospel, as above, and r/*Amen*
 - Optional patristic reading or homily by Abbot/Abbess
 - *Te Deum*

The *Te Deum*, however, is not said during Lent.

k) Memorials and weekdays:

Kyrie eleison..., or short litany, i.e., for our absent brothers and sisters, for the departed, and for others

l) *Let us pray* (silence), - concluding prayer,

m) *Let us bless the Lord* and r. *Thanks be to God.*

LAUDS AND VESPERS

a) Introduction

V/ *O God, come to my assistance,*

R/ *O Lord, make haste to help me.. Glory be...*

b) Hymn

c) Psalmody

d) Scripture reading (short reading or long) with its short responsory

e) Canticle from the Gospel, with its antiphon

f) Conclusion of the Office:

- Concluding prayers of the sort found in the Roman Rite Liturgy of the Hours;
- The Lord's Prayer said by everyone, and preceded by a brief monition;
- Final prayer (without *Let us pray*) of the day, or of the Hour, or of the Saint according to the rubrics;
- Blessing.

LITTLE HOURS

a) Introduction, as at Lauds

b) Hymn proper to the hour

c) Psalmody

d) Short reading from Scripture

e) Versicle and response

f) Conclusion of the Office:

- *Lord, have mercy...* or Short Litany - i.e., for our absent brothers and sisters, for the departed, and for others;
- *Let us pray* (silence), concluding prayer;
- *Let us bless the Lord* and r/ *Thanks be to God.*

COMPLINE

- a) Introduction, as at Lauds.
- b) If deemed opportune, an examination of conscience. This is done either in silence, or in the framework of a penitential rite based on the Missal formulas.
- c) Hymn
- d) Psalmody
- e) Short reading from Scripture
- f) Versicle *Custodi nos...*and its response; or else the short responsory *In manus tuas.*
- g) Song of Simeon, with its antiphon
- h) Conclusion of the Hour and of the day:
 - *Lord, have mercy...*, or Short Litany, as at the Little Hours
 - *Let us pray* (silence), Concluding prayer of the Hour
 - Blessing *Noctem quietam...*
 - Antiphon *Salve Regina*

SCHEMATA FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF PSALMS

(Cf. GENERAL NORMS, N. 10)

ACCORDING TO THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT

The Psalms of Vigils can be said over two weeks if it is better for the chant. For those who do not say Prime, the psalms of this Hour can be distributed either at Vigils or the Little Hours.

The psalm-schemata are in Appendix IV, Minutes of the General Chapter of 1974.

THIRD PART

**MISSAL
AND
LECTIONARY
OF THE MASS**

THE MISSAL TO BE USED

Prot.525/70, June 8, 1971: O.Cist. and O.C.S.O.

It is possible to adopt the new Roman Missal taking into account the following:

1. The Cistercian Calendar

2. Certain particular elements coming from the Cistercian tradition that can be freely inserted which are:

2.1 The texts taken from the former Cistercian Missal that are not found in the new Roman Missal and, if necessary, will be duly revised.

2.2 The following rites related to the Ordinary of the Mass:

- a. A profound bow instead of the genuflection prescribed in the Roman rite;
- b. The custom of making a large sign of the cross at the Gospel;
- c. The practice of carrying out certain rites in silence such as kissing the Gospel book and the washing of hands;
- d. The ancient practice of preparing the wine and water in the chalice before bringing them to the altar.

HOLY WEEK

Prot. 396/73, January 31, 1973: O.C.S.O.

(For the Lectionary)

PASSION (OR PALM) SUNDAY

1. On this day the Church commemorates the entrance of the Lord Jesus into Jerusalem to accomplish his Paschal Mystery. This is why at every Mass this entrance of the Lord is commemorated: by the Procession before the principal Mass, or by a simple entrance at all the other Masses.

COMMEMORATION OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE LORD INTO JERUSALEM

2. Terce is omitted. Those who do not take part in the procession say Terce in private.

3. At the appointed time, we meet in Chapter or in another place apart from the Church toward which the procession moves. Palm branches are distributed either before the opening Prayer or immediately after the proclamation of the Gospel.

4. The principal celebrant, the concelebrants and ministers, wearing the red vestments of the Mass, go to the place where the faithful are assembled.

5. During this time, the following antiphon or another appropriate chant is sung:

Antiphon

Mt 21:9

Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

O King of Israel! Hosanna in the highest!

6. The principal celebrant greets the people as usual, then gives a short exhortation to invite the faithful to participate actively in the celebration. He may use the following words or similar ones:

Dear friends in Christ, for five weeks of Lent we have been preparing, by works of charity and self-sacrifice, for the celebration of our Lord's paschal mystery. Today we come together to begin this solemn celebration in union with the whole Church throughout the world. Christ entered in triumph into the Holy City, to complete his work as our Messiah: to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us remember with devotion this entry which began his saving work and follow him with a lively faith. United with him in his suffering on

the cross, may we share his resurrection and new life.

7. After this exhortation, the Principal Celebrant, with hands joined, says one of the following prayers:

Let us pray.

**O almighty and eternal Redeemer,
in your goodness you came down from heaven to earth
and freely chose death and suffering,
so that the human race might be set free through your precious Blood.
Listen then, to the prayers and petitions of your Church.
For you are meek and gentle, Lord;
and it was seated on a meek colt of a donkey
that you came of your own free will
to embrace the suffering which redeemed us.
Disciples came in throngs to meet you;
branches were thrown down to carpet your path;
and crowds with palms of triumph in their hands
gathered with shouts of joy and praise:
“Hosanna to the Son of David.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”
Thus was your path carpeted for you with olive branches
on the Mount of Olives.**

If the Brothers/Sisters are carrying olive branches, the following text between parentheses may be added.

(Long ago you piloted Noah over the billows of the deluge, and willed to make known by the ministry of a dove with an olive twig that peace was now restored to earth. So also the Patriarch Jacob set up a stone to the mystery of your glory, and poured upon the top of this memorial pillar oil from the branches of this tree - the oil of blessing. With it you anointed your kings and prophets. For you are the Christ, the Anointed of God. Yours are the fruits of anointing and peace; for in your ineffable praise the psalmist sang, “God, your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellow kings.”)

We humbly ask you, then, O Lord, to bless + these branches which your servants have received with faith, and in honor of your Name. Crowds went forth to meet you in procession, bearing palms and olive branches such as these. May we, like them, go forth to meet you bearing branches, and enter at last with you into the fulness of eternal joy, where you live and reign forever and ever.²

R/. Amen.

Or:

Let us pray.

²*Cistercian Missal, Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae. English translation O.C.S.O.*

Almighty God, we pray you bless + these branches and make them holy. Today we joyfully acclaim Jesus our Messiah and King. May we reach one day the happiness of the new and everlasting Jerusalem by faithfully following him who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Or:

Let us pray.

Lord, increase the faith of your people and listen to our prayers. Today we honor Christ our triumphant King by carrying these branches. May we honor you every day by living always in him, for he is Lord forever and ever.

R/. Amen.

The priest sprinkles the branches with holy water in silence.

8. Then the account of the Lord's entrance is proclaimed from one of the four Gospels. This is done in the usual way or, if there is no deacon, by the priest.

Year A - St. Matthew 21:1-11

Year B - St. Mark 11:1-10 or

St. John 12:12-16

Year C - St. Luke 19:28-40

9. After the Gospel, the priest may give a short homily.

The procession to the church where Mass will be celebrated then begins.

First form: the Procession

10. If incense is used, the thurifer, with lighted censer, goes first, followed by the cross bearer, between two ministers with lighted candles. Then comes the Celebrant with the ministers and other concelebrants, and finally the brothers/sisters and the other faithful carrying branches.

During the procession, the schola and people sing the following or other appropriate songs:

Antiphon

**The children of the Hebrews carrying olive branches,
Went before the Lord crying out and saying:
Hosanna in the highest.**

This can be repeated between verses of Psalm 23

Or: *Antiphon*

**The children of the Hebrews spread their cloaks on the road;
They cried out "Hosanna to the Son of David;
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"**

This can be repeated between the verses of Psalm 46.

Hymn to Christ the King: Gloria laus

Choir

**All glory, laud and honor to thee Redeemer King.
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.**

All

**All glory, laud and honor to thee Redeemer King.
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.**

Choir

**You are the King of Israel, You David's royal Son,
Who in the Lord's name coming are King and Blessed One.**

Refrain - All

**All glory, laud, and honor to thee, Redeemer King!
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.**

Choir

**The company of angels is praising you on high;
And humankind and all things created, make reply.**

Refrain - All

Choir

**The people of the Hebrews with palms before you went;
Our praise and prayers and anthems before you we present.**

Refrain - All

Another form of procession:
Procession with a station before the cross

11. At the appointed time, the processional cross (unveiled) is placed in the cloister against the door or in another suitable place.

After the homily in the chapter room, the procession begins, without the processional cross, preceded by the principal Celebrant, the concelebrants and ministers.

Upon arriving at the door of the church where the cross is, all kneel. The cantor

intones the Antiphon *Ave Rex noster*, or another suitable chant of acclamation that all sing to the end.

Entering the church, the cross is carried at the head of the Procession.

12. WHEN THE PROCESSION ENTERS THE CHURCH, the response
Ingrediēte domino (When the Lord entered), or another chant that recalls the Lord's entrance.

**R. When the Lord entered the holy city,
The children of the Hebrews, foretelling the resurrection of Life,
*Carrying palm branches, cried out, "Hosanna in the highest!"**

**V. When the populace had heard that Jesus was coming
to Jerusalem, they went out to meet him. *Carrying...**

13. Entering the church, the concelebrants precede the principal celebrant.

14. When they arrive at the altar, the concelebrants and the principal celebrant venerate it and then take their places. Omitting all the rest, the principal celebrant concludes the procession by saying the opening prayer of the Mass, which takes place as usual.

15. WHERE IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO HAVE THE PROCESSION IN THE CLOISTER OR OUTSIDE THE CHURCH, the Solemn Messianic Rite of the Entrance of the Lord is celebrated in the church before the conventual Mass.

The brothers/sisters and the faithful assemble either before the door of the church or in the church itself, carrying their palm branches. The principal Celebrant and the ministers along with some of the faithful, go to a place in the church other than the sanctuary which allows a major part of the assembly to follow the rite.

When the principal Celebrant arrives at this place, the antiphon *Hosanna* is sung or another suitable chant. The palms are blessed and the Gospel of the Lord's entry into Jerusalem is proclaimed, as indicated above (nn. 6-8). After the Gospel, the principal Celebrant, accompanied by the ministers and some of the faithful, set out toward the sanctuary, while the response *Ingrediēte Domino* (nn. 12) is sung or another similar response.

When they arrive at the altar, the concelebrants and the principal Celebrant venerate the altar and go to their places. Omitting the rest, the principal Celebrant concludes the procession by saying the opening prayer of the Mass, which continues as usual.

Second form: simple entrance

16. At all other Masses this Sunday, the Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem is commemorated by the simple entrance.

17. As the priest approaches the altar, the entrance antiphon, with the Psalm (n.18) or another chant adapted to this rite, is sung. When the priest arrives at the altar, he venerates it and then goes to his seat, greeting the people; and the Mass continues as usual.

At Masses without a congregation and other Masses where it is not possible to sing the entrance antiphon, the priest goes at once to the altar and venerates it. Then he greets the people and reads the entrance antiphon, and Mass continues in the usual way.

18. *Entrance antiphon*

**Six days before the solemn passover,
the Lord came to Jerusalem,
and children waving palm branches
ran out to welcome him.
They loudly praised the Lord:
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed are you who have come to us
so rich in love and mercy!**

Ps 23: 9-10

THE MASS

19. After the Procession, the principal Celebrant begins the Mass directly with the opening Prayer.

20. *Opening Prayer.*

**Almighty, ever-living God,
You have given the human race
Jesus Christ our Savior
as a model of humility.
He fulfilled your will
by becoming man and giving his life on the cross.
Help us to bear witness to you
by following his example of suffering
and make us worthy to share in his resurrection.
We ask this through our Lord....**

21. The passion is proclaimed without candles or incense. The greeting and signs of the cross are omitted. It is read by the deacon or, if there is no deacon, by a concelebrant or the principal celebrant himself. It may also be read by lay readers, with the part of Christ, if possible, reserved to a priest or a deacon.

Only the deacon asks the blessing before the passion, as he does before the gospel.

22. After the reading of the passion, a brief homily may be given.

The **Creed** is said.

23. *Prayer over the Gifts*

**Lord, may the suffering and death of Jesus,
Your only Son, make us pleasing to you.
Alone we can do nothing,
but may this perfect sacrifice
win us your mercy and love.
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.**

24. *Preface*

**Father, all powerful and ever-living God,
we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Though he was sinless, he suffered willingly for sinners.
Though innocent, he accepted death to save the guilty.
By his dying he has destroyed our sins.
By his rising he has raised us up to holiness of life.**

**We praise you, Lord, with all the angels
in their song of joy:**

25. *Communion antiphon*

Mt 26:42

**Father, if this cup may not pass, but I must drink it,
then your will be done.**

26. *Prayer after communion*

**Lord, you have satisfied our hunger
with this Eucharist food.
The death of your Son gives us hope
and strengthens our faith.
May his resurrection give us perseverance
and lead us to salvation.**

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**PASCHAL TRIDUUM
THE THREE HOLY DAYS**

EVENING MASS IN MEMORY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

According to the Church's ancient tradition, all Masses without a congregation are prohibited on this day.

The Mass of the Lord's Supper is celebrated in the evening, at a convenient hour, with the full participation of the whole local community and with the priests and clergy exercising their ministry.

Holy Communion may be given to the faithful only during Mass, but may be brought to the sick at any hour of the day.

Opening Rites and Liturgy of the Word

1. The Tabernacle should be entirely empty; a sufficient amount of bread should be consecrated at this Mass for the communion of clergy and laity today and tomorrow.

2. *Opening antiphon*

cf. Gal 6:14

**We should glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
for he is our salvation, our life and our resurrection;
through him we are saved and made free.**

3. During the singing of the *Gloria* the church bells are rung and then remain silent until the Easter Vigil, unless the conference of bishops or the Ordinary decrees otherwise.

4. *Opening Prayer*

**God our Father, we are gathered here to share in the supper
which your only Son left to his Church to reveal his love.
He gave it to us when he was about to die
and commanded us to celebrate it as the new and eternal sacrifice.
We pray that in this eucharist
we may find the fullness of love and life.**

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son...

5. After the Gospel is the washing of the feet, unless it has taken place before Mass in the cloister or chapter room.

When the washing of the feet of the brothers takes place outside of Mass and Jn 13:1-15 has been read, another Gospel can be read at Mass, for example Lk 22:24-30.

Verse before the Gospel

**Hail, our King:
You alone had pity on our sins.**

6. The rite takes place according to local customs while the usual *Mandatum* antiphons or other appropriate chants are sung.
7. The general intercessions follow the washing of the feet, or, if this does not take place, they follow the homily. The profession of faith is not said at this Mass.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

8. *Prayer over the Gifts*

**Lord, make us worthy to celebrate these mysteries.
Each time we offer this memorial sacrifice,
the work of our redemption is accomplished.
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.**

9. *Preface*

**Father, all-powerful and ever-living God,
we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
He is the true and eternal priest
who established this unending sacrifice.
He offered himself as a victim for our deliverance
and taught us to make this offering in his memory.
As we eat his body which he gave for us,
we grow in strength.
As we drink his blood which he poured out for us,
we are washed clean.
Now, with angels and archangels,
and the whole company of heaven,
we sing the unending hymn of your praise:
Holy....**

When Eucharistic Prayer I is used, the special Holy Thursday forms of “In Union with the whole Church, Father, accept this offering,” and “The day before he suffered” are said.

10. *Communion Antiphon*

1 Cor 11:24-25

“This body will be given for you. This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood; whenever you receive them, do so in remembrance of me.”

11. After the distribution of communion, the ciborium with hosts for Good Friday is left on the altar. Where the washing of feet has taken place during the Mass or outside of it, in the cloister or another place, it is possible to

read after communion some passages from the Discourse after the Last Supper. All are seated and attentive. The Mass ends with the prayer after communion

12. *Prayer after Communion*

**Almighty God, we receive new life
from the supper your Son gave us in this world.
May we find full contentment in the meal we hope to share
in your eternal kingdom.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

Transfer of the Blessed Sacrament

13. After the prayer the priest stands before the altar and puts incense in the thurible. Kneeling, he incenses the Blessed Sacrament three times. Then he receives the humeral veil, takes the ciborium and covers it with the ends of the veil.

14. The Blessed Sacrament is carried through the church in procession, led by a cross-bearer and accompanied by candles and incense, to the place of reposition prepared in a chapel suitably decorated for the occasion. During the procession the hymn *Pange lingua* (exclusive of the last two stanzas) or some other eucharistic song is sung.

15. When the procession reaches the place of reposition, the priest sets the ciborium down. Then he puts incense in the thurible and incenses the Blessed Sacrament, while *Tantum ergo* is sung. The tabernacle of reposition is then closed.

16. After a period of silent adoration, the priest and ministers genuflect and return to the sacristy.

17. Then the altar is stripped and, if possible, the crosses are removed from the church. It is desirable that any crosses which remain in the church be covered.

18. Vespers is not said by those who participate in the evening Mass.

**GOOD FRIDAY
THE PASSION OF THE LORD**

1. According to the Church's ancient tradition, the Eucharist is not celebrated on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

2. The altar should be completely bare, without cloths, candles or cross.

3. The celebration of the Lord's passion takes place in the afternoon, about three o'clock, unless pastoral reasons suggest a later hour. The celebration consists of three parts: liturgy of the word, veneration of the cross and holy communion.

Holy communion may be given to the faithful only at the celebration of the Lord's passion, but may be brought at any hour of the day to the sick who cannot take part in this service.

4. The priest and other ministers, wearing red Mass vestments, go to the altar and there bow and prostrate themselves, or they may kneel. All pray silently for a while.

5. Then the priest (with the deacon) goes to the chair. He faces the people and, with hands joined, says one of the following prayers.

Prayer (Let us pray is not said)

**Lord, by shedding his blood for us,
Your Son, Jesus Christ, established
The paschal mystery. In your goodness,
Make us holy and watch over us always.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen**

Or

**Lord, by the suffering of Christ your Son
You have saved us all from the death we
inherited from sinful Adam.
By the law of nature we have born the likeness
Of his humanity. May the sanctifying power of
grace help us to put on the likeness of our Lord
in heaven,
Who lives and reigns forever and ever.
R. Amen**

Part One: Liturgy of the Word

6. All sit and the first reading, from the book of the prophet Isaiah (52:13-53:12), is read, with its psalm.

7. The second reading, from the Letter to the Hebrews (4:14-16; 5:7-9).

8. The chant before the Gospel is sung and then the account of the Passion according to John (18:1-19:42) is read in the same way as on Palm Sunday.

9. After the reading of the Passion there may be a brief homily.

General Intercessions

10. The general intercessions conclude the liturgy of the word and on this day is said in the following manner: the priest, standing at his place or, according to the situation, at the ambo or the altar, sings or says the introduction in which each intention is stated. All pray in silence, then the priest, with hands outstretched, sings or says the prayer. During these prayers, the faithful may either kneel or stand.

11. The conference of bishops may provide an acclamation for the people to sing before the priest's prayer or decree that the deacon's traditional invitation to kneel and pray be continued: **Let us kneel — Let us stand.**

12. In case of a serious public need, the local Ordinary may permit or decree the addition of a special intention.

13. The priest may choose from the prayers in the missal those which are more appropriate to local circumstances, provided the series follows the rule for general intercessions (See General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 46).

Part Two: Veneration of the Cross

14. After the general intercessions, the veneration of the cross takes place. Pastoral demands will determine which of the two forms is more effective and should be chosen.

First Form of Showing the Cross:

15. The cross is carried to the altar. Standing at the altar, the priest takes the cross, uncovers it, if it is veiled, and elevates it while singing (he can be assisted by the ministers or even the choir for this chant):

**Behold the wood of the Cross
which bore the salvation of the world.**

The people: **Come, let us adore!**

Then all kneel and venerate the cross briefly in silence; the priest remains standing and holds the cross high.

If the cross is not veiled, the Reproaches may be sung before showing the cross.

Second Form of Showing the Cross

16. The veiled Cross is carried to the altar. The priest, standing before the altar, receives the Cross, uncovers its upper part and lifts it up while singing (the ministers or even the choir may join him for this chant):

**Behold the wood of the Cross,
which bore the salvation of the world.**

The people: **Come, let us adore!**

Then all kneel and venerate the Cross briefly in silence; the priest remains standing and holds the cross high.

Next the priest uncovers the right arm of the Cross, lifts it up again while singing: **Behold the wood of the Cross**, and the rite is repeated as before.

Finally the priest uncovers the entire Cross, lifts it up a third time and sings: **Behold the wood of the Cross** and the rite is repeated as before.

Veneration of the Cross

17. The priest holds the uncovered cross while the Reproaches or other suitable chants are sung.

One or two cantors

O my people, what have I done unto you? Or in what have I offended you? Answer me! I led you out of the land of Egypt: but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

Two brothers (sisters) stand in the sanctuary or another appropriate place: Agios o Theos, (they kneel and venerate the Cross then rise and continue singing)

Agios Ischyros, agios Athanatos, eleison imas.

**O Holy God,
Holy and strong!
Holy immortal One, have mercy on us!**

One or two cantors

**For forty years I led you safely through the desert,
I fed you manna from heaven
and brought you to a land of plenty;
but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.**

Two brothers (sisters) as above: Agios. All: Sanctus

One or two cantors

**What should I have done for you and did it not?
I planted you as my fairest vine,
and you have become very bitter to me, you have quenched my thirst
with vinegar, and with a lance you have pierced your Savior's side.**

Two brothers (sisters) as above: Agios. All: Sanctus.

18. Then the priest places the Cross on the sanctuary step or another appropriate place, or asks the ministers to do so. For the veneration of the Cross, the priest, the ministers and the faithful advance one by one: they pass before the Cross and venerate it either by a simple genuflection or by some other appropriate sign according to local custom, for example, kissing the Cross. All who have venerated the Cross return to their places and sit. During the veneration of the Cross, the hymn ***Crux fidelis*** (Faithful cross) or another similar chant is sung.

19. Only one cross should be used for the veneration.

Hymn for Veneration of the Cross

The number 1 indicates the sections that the cantor or schola sing, number 2 indicates those sung by the assembly; the sections indicated by 1 and 2 are sung by all.

1 and 2 Antiphon

**Faithful Cross, O tree all beauteous!
Tree all peerless and divine.
Not a grove on earth can show us
such a flower and leaf as thine.
Sweet the nails and sweet the wood,
Laden with so sweet a load!**

1 Hymn

**Sing my tongue, the Savior's glory!
Tell his triumph far and wide;
Tell aloud the famous story
of his body crucified;
How upon the Cross a victim
Vanquishing in death, he dies.**

**2 Faithful Cross, O tree all beauteous!
Tree all peerless and divine.
Not a grove on earth can show us
such a flower and leaf as thine.**

**1 Eating of the tree forbidden,
We had sunk in Satan's snare,
when our pitying Creator
did this second tree prepare;
destined, many ages later,
That first evil to repair.**

**2 Sweet the nails, and sweet the wood,
laden with so sweet a load!**

**1 Lo, with gall his thirst he quenches!
See the thorns upon his brow!
Nails his tender flesh are rending!**

**See, his side is opened now!
Whence, to cleanse the whole creation,
streams of blood and water flow.**

**2 Faithful Cross, O tree all beauteous!
Tree all peerless and divine.
Not a grove on earth can show us
such a flower and leaf as thine.**

**1 Lofty tree, bend down thy branches,
to embrace thy sacred load;
Oh, relax the native tension of
of that all too rigid wood;
gently, gently bear the members
of your dying Kind and God.**

**2 Sweet the nails, and sweet the wood,
laden with so sweet a load!**

**1 Tree, which solely was found worthy
the world's great victim to sustain,
harbor from the raging tempest!
Ark, that saved the world again!
Tree, with sacred blood anointed
of the lamb for sinners slain.**

**2 Faithful Cross, O tree all beauteous!
Tree all peerless and divine.
Not a grove on earth can show us
such a flower and leaf as thine.**

1 and 2
**Blessing, honor everlasting,
to the immortal Deity;
to the Father, Son and Spirit,
equal praises ever be;
glory through the earth and heaven
to Trinity in Unity.**

Amen.

Venance Fortunat, bishop of Poitiers (530-609)

20. After the veneration, the cross is carried to its place at the altar. Then the antiphon *Super omnia* may be sung. All kneel.

**You alone, O Cross, are loftier than all cedars,
on you hung the life of the world,
on you Christ triumphed,
and death conquered death forever.**

Part three: Communion

21. The altar is covered with a cloth and the corporal and book are placed on it. Then a minister designated for this, or the priest himself, goes to take the Blessed Sacrament from the place where it was left the day before. He returns directly to the altar while all stand in silence. A minister with lighted candle accompanies the Blessed Sacrament and places it near or on the altar.

22. The minister or priest places the ciborium on the altar and uncovers it. The priest approaches from his chair, genuflects and goes up to the altar. With hands joined, he says aloud:

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:

Or: **United in the same Spirit, we can say with confidence prayer that Jesus gave us:**

He extends his hands and continues, with all present:

**Our Father who are in heaven
Hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.**

With hands extended, the priest continues alone:

**Deliver us, Lord from every evil
And grant us peace in our day.
In your mercy keep us free from sin
And protect us from all anxiety
As we wait in joyful hope
For the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.**

He joins his hands. The people end the prayer with the acclamation:

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.

23. Then the priest joins his hands and says inaudibly:

Lord Jesus Christ, with faith in your love and mercy, I partake of your body. Let it not bring me condemnation, but health in mind and body.

24. Then he takes the consecrated bread and raises it slightly over the ciborium and

continues with the communion rite as usual.

25. The priest then distributes communion to the faithful. Any appropriate song may be sung during communion.

26. When communion has been completed, a suitable minister may take the ciborium to a place prepared outside the church or, if circumstances require, may place it in the tabernacle.

27. A period of silence may now be observed. The priest then says the following prayer:

Let us pray.

**Almighty and eternal God,
you have restored us to life
by the triumphant death and resurrection of Christ.
Continue this healing work within us.
May we who participate in this mystery
never cease to serve you.
We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.**

R. Amen.

28. For the dismissal the priest faces the people, extends his hands towards them, and says the following prayer:

**Lord, send down your abundant blessing
upon your people who have devoutly recalled the death of your Son
in the sure hope of the resurrection.
Grant them pardon; bring them comfort.
May their faith grow stronger
and their eternal salvation be assured.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

R. Amen.

All depart in silence. The altar is stripped at a convenient time.

29. None and Vespers are not said by those who participate in this afternoon liturgical service.

HOLY SATURDAY

On Holy Saturday the Church waits at the Lord's tomb, meditating on his suffering and death. The altar is left bare, and the sacrifice of the Mass is not celebrated. Only after the solemn

vigil during the night, held in anticipation of the resurrection, does the Easter celebration begin, with a spirit of joy that overflows into the following period of fifty days.

On this day holy communion may be given only as Viaticum.

EASTER SEASON

EASTER SUNDAY THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

DURING THE NIGHT: THE EASTER VIGIL

1. In accord with ancient tradition, this night is one of “vigil for the Lord” (Ex 12:42). The Gospel of Luke (12:35 ff) is a reminder to the faithful to have their lamps burning ready, to be like those awaiting their master’s return so that when he arrives he will find them wide awake and will seat them at his table.

2. The Easter vigil is arranged in four parts:

- The service of light and the announcement of Easter;
- The liturgy of the word, when the Church meditates on all the wonderful things God has done for his people from the beginning;
- The liturgy of baptism, when new members of the Church are reborn as the day of resurrection approaches;
- The liturgy of the Eucharist, when the whole Church is called to the table which the Lord has prepared for his people through his death and resurrection.

3. The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil takes place at night. It should not begin before nightfall; it should end before daybreak on Sunday.

4. Even if the vigil Mass takes place before midnight, the Easter Mass of the resurrection is celebrated

Those who participate in the Mass at night may receive communion again at the second Mass of Easter Sunday.

5. Those priests who celebrate or concelebrate the Mass at night may celebrate or concelebrate the second Mass of Easter Sunday.

6. The priest and ministers, deacons and concelebrants wear Mass vestments from the beginning. These vestments are white. Candles should be prepared for all who take part in the vigil.

FIRST PART

SOLEMN BEGINNING OF THE VIGIL: THE SERVICE OF LIGHT

Blessing of the fire and lighting of the Easter candle

7. All the lights in the church are put out.

A large fire is prepared in a suitable place outside the church. When the people have assembled there, the priest goes there with the ministers. The one who sings the Easter announcement carries the Easter candle.

If it is not possible to light the fire outside the Church, the rite is carried out as in no. 13 below.

8. The priest greets the congregation and briefly instructs them about the vigil in these or similar words:

**Dear friends in Christ, on this most holy night,
when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life,
the Church invites her children throughout the world
to come together in vigil and prayer.
This is the passover of the Lord:
if we honor the memory of his death and resurrection
by hearing his word and celebrating his mysteries,
then we may be confident
that we shall share his victory over death
and live with him forever in God.**

9. If the fire is not yet lit, it is done at this time in the most suitable way. Then the priest blesses the fire.

Let us pray.

**Lord our God, we share in the light of your glory
through your Son, the light of the world.
Make this new fire + holy, and inflame us with new hope.
Purify our minds by this Easter celebration
and bring us one day to the feast of eternal light.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

R. Amen.

The Easter candle is lit from the new fire.

10. Depending on the nature of the congregation, it may seem appropriate to stress the dignity and significance of the Easter candle. This may be done as follows:

After the blessing of the new fire, an acolyte or other minister, brings the Easter candle to the celebrant, who cuts a cross in the wax with a stylus. Then he

1

traces the Greek letter below, and the numerals 9 of the cross. At the same time

1 A 9
9

Alpha above the cross, the letter Omega the current year between the arms of the says:

1. Christ, yesterday Ω and today,
(He traces the vertical arm of the cross.)

2. the beginning and the end
(He traces the horizontal arm.)

3. Alpha
(He traces above the vertical arm the letter Alpha.)

4. and Omega;
(He traces below the vertical arm the letter Omega.)

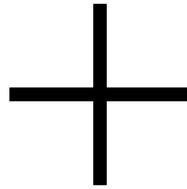
5. all time belongs to him
(He traces the first numeral in the upper left hand corner of the cross.)

6. and all the ages
(He traces the second numeral in the upper right corner.)

7. to him be glory and power
(He traces the third numeral in the lower left corner.)

8. through every age for ever.
(He traces the fourth numeral in the lower right corner.)

R. Amen.



11. When the cross and other marks have been made, the priest may insert five grains of incense in the candle. He does this in the form of a cross saying:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. By his holy | 1 |
| 2. and glorious wounds | |
| 3. may Christ our Lord | 4 2 5 |
| 4. guard us | |

R. Amen.

12. The priest lights the candle from the new fire, saying:

**May the light of Christ, rising in glory,
dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.**

Any or all of the preceding rites may be used, depending on local pastoral circumstances. The conferences of bishops may also determine other rites better adapted to the culture of the people.

13. Where it is not possible to have a fire outside the church, the blessing of the fire is adapted to the circumstances. When the people have assembled in the church, the priest goes with the ministers, one of whom carries the Easter candle, to the back of the church. If possible, the people turn to face the priest.

The greeting and brief instruction take place as above in no. 8. Then the fire is blessed (no.9), and the candle is prepared and lighted as above in nn. 10-12). The procession begins as in n. 14 below.

Procession

14. Whoever will sing the *Exultet* takes up the Easter candle, lifts it high and sings:

Light of Christ.

And all respond:

Thanks be to God.

A richer acclamation may be used.

15. All enter the church in the following order: whoever is carrying the Easter candle (but if incense is used, the thurifer precedes the candle), then the priest, the ministers and the people. At the church door, the one carrying the candle stops, lifts the candle high and sings a second time:

Light of Christ.

And all answer:

Thanks be to God.

All light their candles from the Easter candle and continue the procession.

When the one carrying the Easter candle arrives before the altar, he faces the people and sings a third time:

Light of Christ.

And all respond:
Thanks be to God.

Then the lights in the church are put on.

The Easter Proclamation (Exultet)

16. When he comes to the altar, the priest and concelebrants go to their places. The Easter candle is placed on a stand in the middle of choir or near the ambo. If incense is used, the priest puts some in the censor as at the Gospel of Mass and the book and the candle may be incensed.

begins 17. Whoever is singing the Exultet goes to the ambo or other stand and the Exultet, after having incensed the book and the pascal candle if desired. All stand and hold lighted candles.

If necessary, the Exultet may be sung by one who is not a deacon. In this case, the bracketed words **My dearest friends...** up to the end of the introduction are omitted, as is the greeting: **The Lord be with you.**

The Exultet may also be sung in a shortened form. Acclamations for the people can also be inserted into the text.

(FOR THE EXULTET - LONG AND SHORT FORMS , NOS. 18-19 - SEE ROMAN MISSAL)

PART TWO

LITURGY OF THE WORD

the 20. In this Vigil, "the mother of all vigils", nine readings are provided, seven from Old Testament and two from the New Testament (the epistle and gospel).

21. The number of readings from the Old Testament may be reduced for pastoral reasons, but it must always be borne in mind that the reading of the word of God is the fundamental element of the Easter Vigil. At least three readings from the Old Testament should be read, although for more serious reasons the number may be reduced to two. The reading of Exodus 14, however, is never to be omitted.

22. After the Exultet, the candles are put aside and all are seated except for the priest. Before the readings begin, the priest speaks to the people in these or similar words:

**Dear brothers and sisters, we have begun our solemn vigil:
let us now listen attentively to the word of God,
recalling how he saved his people throughout history
and, in the fullness of time, sent his own Son
to be our Redeemer.
Through this Easter celebration,**

**may God bring to perfection
the saving work he has begun in us.**

23. The readings follow. A reader goes to the ambo and proclaims the first reading. Then the psalmist goes to the ambo to sing the verses of the psalm or canticle and people respond. All rise and the priest says: **Let us pray**. After all have had a moment of silent prayer, he says the prayer.

SEE THE ROMAN MISSAL FOR PRAYERS AFTER EACH READING, NOS. 24 - 30.

31. After the last reading from the Old Testament with its responsory and prayer, the priest intones the **Gloria**, which is taken up by all present. The church bells are rung according to local custom.

32. Next, the priest says the opening prayer

**Lord God, you have brightened this night
with the radiance of the risen Christ.
Quicken the spirit of sonship in your Church;
renew us in mind and body
to give you whole-hearted service.
Through Jesus Christ....**

33. All are seated to listen to the reading of the epistle of St. Paul

34. After the epistle all rise, and the priest intones the solemn **Alleluia**, which is repeated by all present.

The psalmist sings the psalm at the ambo and the people answer **Alleluia**. If necessary, the psalmist may intone the first **Alleluia** instead of the priest.

35. The Gospel of the resurrection of Jesus is read. Incense may be used at the Gospel but candles are not carried.

36. The homily follows the gospel, and then the renewal of baptismal promises begins.

PART THREE

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

37. When the litany is sung, it is done by two cantors. All remain standing (as is customary in the Easter season) and respond to the invocations.

SEE LITANY IN THE ROMAN MISSAL. THE FOLLOWING MAY BE ADDED:

**Sts. Robert, Alberic and Stephen
St. Bernard
St. Lutgard**

38. The priest then blesses the baptismal water, saying

**My brothers and sisters,
let us ask the Lord our God
to bless this water he has created,
which we shall use to recall our baptism.
May he renew us and keep us faithful to the Spirit
we have all received.**

All pray silently for a short while. With hands joined the priest continues:

**Lord our God,
this night your people keep prayerful vigil.
Be with us as we recall the wonder of our creation
and the greater wonder of our redemption.
Bless this water: it makes the seed to grow,
it refreshes us and makes us clean.
You have made of it an instrument of your mercy:
through water you set your people free,
and quenched their thirst in the desert.
With water the prophets announced a new covenant
that you would make with man.
By water, made holy by Christ in the Jordan,
you made our sinful nature new
in the bath that gives rebirth.
Let this water remind us of our baptism;
let us share the joys of our brothers and sisters
who are baptized this Easter.
Through Christ our Lord.**

R. Amen

39. All present stand with lighted candles and renew their baptismal profession of faith.

The priest speaks to the people in these or similar words:

**Dear brothers and sisters,
through the paschal mystery
we have been buried with Christ in baptism,
so that we may rise with him to a new life.
Now that we have completed our lenten observance,
let us renew the promises we made in baptism
when we rejected Satan and his works,
and promised to serve God faithfully
in his holy Catholic Church.**

And so:

The priest proposes one of two formulas for renouncing Satan which follow:

Either:

Priest: Do you renounce Satan, sin and all that leads to sin?

All: We do renounce them.

Or:

Priest: Do you reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God's children?

All: I do.

Priest: Do you reject the glamor of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?

All: I do.

Priest: Do you reject Satan, who is the father of sin in order to follow Christ?

All: I do.

Then the priest continues:

Priest: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

All: I do.

Priest: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

All: I do.

Priest: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

All: I do.

The priest concludes with the following prayer:

God, the all powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and forgiven all our sins.

May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ forever and ever.

R. Amen.

40. The priest, going through the church if appropriate, then sprinkles the

people with the blessed water, and all sing: **I saw water**; or any other baptismal chant.

**I saw water flowing
from the right side of the temple, alleluia.
It brought God's life and his salvation,
and the people sang in joyful praise:
alleluia, alleluia.**

41. After the people have been sprinkled, the priest returns to his place and the blessed water is put in a convenient place. The profession of faith is omitted and the priest begins the general intercessions.

PART FOUR

THE EUCHARISTIC LITURGY

42. The priest goes to the altar and begins the liturgy of the Eucharist in the usual way.

43. *Prayer over the gifts*

**Lord, accept the prayers and offerings of your people.
With your help may this Easter mystery of our redemption
bring to perfection the saving work you have begun in us.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

44. *Preface* (See Roman Missal for Preface of Easter)

Eucharistic prayer: proper texts, I. p. 414; II, p. 416; III, p. 418 of the Missal.

45. *Communion Antiphon* (cf. I Cor 5:7-8)

**Christ has become our paschal sacrifice; let us feast with the unleavened
bread of sincerity and truth, alleluia.**

46. *Prayer after Communion*

**Lord, you have nourished us with your Easter sacraments.
Fill us with your Spirit
and make us one in peace and love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

47. For the dismissal, the deacon, or the priest himself, sings:

**Go in the peace of Christ, alleluia, alleluia.
R. Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.**

PROPER OF THE SAINTS

Prot. 83/75, September 16, 1975: O.C.S.O.
Prot. 425/77, May 9, 1977: O.Cist.

The texts are found in the edition entitled *Missae propriae ad usum Ordinis Cisterciensis*, Rome 1983.

LATER ADDITIONS

Prot. 203/83, February 5, 1983: O.Cist.
Prot. 330/83, March 5, 1983: O.C.S.O.
Prot. 1403/92, September 11, 1992: O.C.S.O.
Prot. 578/95/L, October 19, 1995: O.Cist.
Prot. 629/95/L, October 19, 1995: O.C.S.O.

JANUARY 20

BLESSED CYPRIAN MICHAEL TANSI, PRIEST O.C.S.O.

Prayer

O God, in the priest Blessed Cyprian Michael you joined the apostolic zeal of a pastor to the way of life of a monk, grant us by his intercession that, persevering in prayer, we may seek untiringly the coming of your kingdom. Through our Lord...

FEBRUARY 2

PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

For the blessing of the candles, optional prayer:

Let us pray.

**Lord our God, your power is without measure.
Today your only Son, clothed with our humanity,
is presented in the temple by the Virgin Mary, his Mother:
We ask you to bless + these candles
that we offer you in honor of your name:
Through the intercession of Blessed Mary,
ever Virgin, grant to all those who bear these candles
the comfort of good health.
And in every place where these candles burn
may the work of evil spirits be scattered.
Thus your faithful people may proceed to meet its Spouse
filled with joy in the light of these candles,
and may merit to enter joyfully with him into the wedding banquet.
He who lives and reigns forever³**

APRIL 22

BLESSED MARIA GABRIELLA SAGHEDDU, NUN O.C.S.O.

Prayer

**Lord God, eternal Shepherd, you inspired the blessed virgin, Maria Gabriella, generously to offer her life for the sake of Christian unity.
At her intercession, hasten we pray, the coming of the day when
gathered around the table of your word and of your heavenly bread,
all who believe in Christ may sing your praises with a single heart, a
single voice. We ask this...**

APRIL 26

BLESSED RAFAEL ARNAIZ BARON, OBLATE O.C.S.O.

Prayer

**O God, you made Blessed Rafael an outstanding disciple
in the knowledge of Christ Crucified.
Helped by his example and prayers
to love you above all things,
may our hearts be enlarged,
so that we may run
with inexpressible sweetness of love
along the way of the cross**

³*Collectaneum exemplar Cistercii*, MS. DIJON 114, Municipal Public Library, f^o145 v^o, c.3; *Cistercian Missal* 1617, p. 213.

**and deserve to share the life and joy
of the Risen Lord: Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
One God, forever and ever.**

AUGUST 18

**BLESSEDS JOHN BAPTIST SOUZY, PRIEST,
AND HIS COMPANIONS, MARTYRS**

Prayer

**Lord God, you have given Blessed John Baptist Souzy,
Gervais Brunel, Paul Charles, Elias Desgardin
and their companions
the grace of fidelity and forgiveness
in the severe distress of their deportation.
Grant to us by their example, always to be faithful
to your Church and resolute in seeking reconciliation
with our brothers and sisters. Through Jesus Christ...***

ANOTHER PRAYER FROM THE COMMON OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Prayer

**Eternal and all powerful God, by the action of the Holy Spirit
You have prepared the body and soul of Mary, the glorious Virgin
Mother, to become a worthy dwelling place of your Son.
Grant us who joyfully celebrate her memory, to be free from every evil
and preserved from eternal death. Through Christ our Lord...⁴**

IN MASSES FOR VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES AND INTENTIONS

FOR THE PEACE OF THE COMMUNITY

Opening prayer

**All powerful and eternal God,
it is you who build up and protect
the Holy City, Jerusalem on high,
Be the foundation and the guardian of our communities
that they may be dwelling places of peace and serenity.
Through Christ our Lord.**

Prayer over the gifts

**Lord, in your kindness, sanctify these gifts. As we ask pardon for our
sins, keep up from the evils that threaten us and deliver us from all**

⁴*Cistercian Breviary*: this prayer is found after the antiphon **Salve, Regina** at the end of Compline and has been put back into use here.

* Text used in the diocese of La Rochelle, in which we have inserted the names of the three Cistercians.

adversity. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Prayer after Communion

Lord, you have nourished your family with bread from heaven.

**Guide our community that we may act with prudence in good fortune
and with courage in time of adversity. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

PART FOUR

RITUAL

Prot. xxxxxxxx, June 20, 1974: OCSO

Prot. 578/95/L, October 19, 1995: OCist
Prot. 629/95/L, October 19, 1995: OCSO

At the request of Reverend Father Gregorio Battista, Abbot Procurator General, Cistercian Order - of Reverend Father Armand Veilleux, Abbot Procurator General of the Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance - in the letters dated February 27, 1995, in virtue of the powers delegated to this Congregation by the Sovereign Pontiff John Paul II, we approve in a special way the latin text of the new Cistercian Ritual entitled Distinctly Cistercian, as it is presented in this copy.

The present decree in which the requested approval has been granted by the Apostolic See will be integrally inserted into the text which should be printed. Moreover two copies of the printed text should be sent to this Congregation.

Everything to the contrary notwithstanding.

From the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments,
October 19, 1995.

Antonio M. Card. Javierre
Prefect

□ Gerardo M. Agnelo
Archbishop
Secretary

OPTIONS REGARDING THE ROMAN RITUAL FOR RECONCILIATION OR PENANCE

At n. 70. the Celebrant may choose:

**May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips
so that you may recognize all your sins,
humbly and faithfully, in the name of the Father
+ and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen⁵.**

The celebrant makes the sign of the cross unless he has done it at the beginning of the dialogue as is indicated in the Roman Ordinary, n. 42

At n. 99. the Celebrant may choose:

Go in peace and sin no more.

The penitent then responds:

May the Lord grant you eternal life⁶

⁵*Rituale Cisterciense III, IX, 3.*

⁶*Rituale Cisterciense III, IX, 6.*

OPTIONS REGARDING THE ROMAN RITUAL FOR THE ANNOINTING AND PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK*⁷

39. *The rubric indicated for this number is replaced by the following text:*

Where a particular Ritual adapted to the needs of the region exists, the priest has the possibility of introducing the formulas proper to the Cistercian rite into this Ritual or the formulas of this particular Ritual into the Cistercian Ritual.

52. *The minister may choose to conclude with one of the following formulas:*

**May our all merciful God pardon our sins,
deliver us from all evil,
guard us and strengthen us in every good work,
and lead us to eternal life.**

Or: **May the all powerful and merciful Lord,
grant us by the grace of the Holy Spirit
pardon and remission of all our sins⁸.**

62. *The following rubric is added:*

In the monasteries where the celebration of the Conventual Mass is transmitted to the sick, and during which Communion is carried to them, it suffices that the minister say to each communicant, according to custom:
The Body of Christ or **The Blood of Christ.**

* The nn. indicated for the rubrics are those of the Latin edition.

66. *Between the two rubrics of this number, the following rubric may be incorporated:*

⁷All the proposed proper formulas with their variants can be found in the Cistercian *Collectanea* and in the *Ecclesiastica Officia*, MS, 114 DIJON, Municipal Public Library as well as in the *Rituale Cisterciense*. They are referred to under the respective abbreviations: *Coll.*, *E.O.* and *R.C.*

⁸*Coll. f.* 148 v^o, c.3; *R.C.* V, II, 7.

Wherever possible it is suitable that all the members of the community be present for the anointing of the sick brother or sister. After ringing the bell according to custom, all assemble in the infirmary or the infirmary chapel, or in the church or another suitable place. The procession could be in the following order: holy water, the cross, the brothers (or sisters) in their monastic habit, the sacristan carrying the holy oil and the Superior (or chaplain) dressed in a stole over an alb or at least the cowl and, if it is the Abbot, wearing the cross⁹

70. *After the prayer of n. 239, the following prayer may be said:*

**Almighty and eternal God, through St. James,
your apostle, you gave the precept to bring in priests
of the Church to anoint the sick.
In your mercy, anoint and bless by our hands
and with this consecrated oil,
your servant stricken with infirmity.
Grant that what we ask for with faith,
and perform in outward rite,
may be accomplished spiritually in inward reality
through your divine power invisibly at work.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord¹⁰.**

71. The minister concludes with the proper formulas at his choice as in n. 52.

73. *After the other possible formulas from nn. 240-241, the following may be used:*

Brothers/Sisters, let us ask our Lord Jesus Christ and implore Him by our supplications so that He will deign to visit, delight and strengthen this your servant.¹¹ May the Lord wash away all your sins and heal you from every illness.

R. Kyrie, eleison.

May the Lord save you from death, fulfill all your desires and shower you with gifts.

R. Christe, eleison.

May the Lord grant you healing of body and soul so that you may offer thanks to him forever.

R. Kyrie, eleison¹²

80-82. *Inserted here with their title are the rubrics allowing the celebration of the*

⁹Coll. f^o 149 r^o, c.3; E.O. 93, 1-6; R.C. V, III, 1-4

¹⁰Coll. f^o 149 r^o, c. 3; R.C. V, III, 6

¹¹Coll. f^o 149 r^o, c.31 E.O. 93, 17; R.C. V, III, 16

¹²Coll. f^o, 149 r^o, c.31 E.O. 93, 18; R.C. V, III, 16; corrected in conformity to *Libr Ordinum*, ed. Ferotin, *Ordo ad visitandum vel perungendum infirmum*, c. 71-73

**RITE OF ANNOINTING DURING MASS
OR AN HOUR OF THE DIVINE OFFICE**

80. When the state of the sick person allows it and especially if he or she will receive communion during the celebration of the Anointing of the Sick, this may be given during a Mass or an Hour of the Divine Office, either in church or...

82bis. During an Hour of the Divine Office, the Anointing of the Sick is administered in the following manner:

- based
- a. Instead of the hymn for the day and the Hour, another suitable hymn may be sung.
 - b. After the long reading which will be chosen, the priest gives a homily on the text that was read, pertaining to the situation...
 - c. The celebration of the anointing begins with the imposition of hands (n.74). And then continues...
 - d. Then, at the Office of Lauds and Vespers, the Gospel canticle is said, the litany (n.73) and then after the **Our Father**, the celebration is concluded with the prayer (nn.77, 243-246) followed by the blessing (n.79). But at the Little Hours, after the anointing, the litany is said and concluded by the prayer the anointing and the blessing as above.
- after

101. *In the first instance the following rubric is inserted:*

When the sick person due to receive viaticum is in danger of death and there is sufficient time to administer the sacrament with dignity, the bell is rung according to custom and all assemble in choir. The Abbot (or Chaplain) in a white alb and stole, goes to the tabernacle and takes the Blessed Sacrament.

Then the procession is formed and moves toward the infirmary. Those who carry the incense, the cross and holy water leave first, the Abbot follows (the Chaplain or in the absence of a priest, the Abbess) carrying the Blessed Sacrament covered with a humeral veil, then the Brothers (Sisters) follow in order, singing psalms and hymns¹³.

105. *The priest concludes with one of the optional prayers as indicated in n. 52.*

106. *Other possible formulas:*

**The Lord Jesus Christ said to his disciples:
"What you have bound on earth, shall also be bound in heaven
and what you have loosed on earth, shall also be loosed in heaven"**

¹³*E.O.* 93, 24-39; *R.C.* V, IV, 1-3.

desiring that we be numbered among his elect, although unworthy, may he himself cleanse you by our ministry, from all the sins committed with negligence, in thought, word and deed or by omission. And may he absolve you from your sins and deign to lead you to the kingdom of heaven. He who lives and reigns forever and ever¹⁴

122. *Another formula as above, in n. 106*

145. In virtue of the fraternal charity that all monks should have for one another because of Christ who has called them and brought them together to lead them to eternal life, it is very fitting that, if the dying brother/sister can sustain a longer prayer, following what has been said, the bell will be rung according to custom and all who hear it, who can, will hasten to come.

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All being gathered and the paschal candle being lit, the Abbot/chaplain may, after the greeting, sprinkle the brother/sister and all those present. After having said brief prayer (cf. n. 244 or 246), if suitable, he will present to the dying brother/sister an image of the Crucified to kiss or else he will mark the forehead with the sign of cross, before granting him/her (if he or she has not yet received this grace at the moment of receiving the viaticum) the plenary indulgence granted to the dying (n. 106)¹⁵

Above all, let all recite the litany of the saints, at least in part, while responding **pray for him/her**, making special mention of the patron saint or saints of the dying person. They can also recite or chant other habitual prayers particularly:

The Creed¹⁶ and the Lord's prayer said at the time of baptism;

The Suscipe - said by the monk or nun at the time of solemn profession:
Uphold me, O Lord, according to your promise;

The daily antiphon to the Blessed Virgin Mary: ***Salve Regina.***

When it seems that the moment of death is imminent, the Abbot (or in the absence of the Abbot one of the brothers) can recite one of the following prayers.

All that the Abbot does for the monks, the Abbess can do in the monasteries of nuns.

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at
145 bis. If for different reasons or necessities, it is impossible for the brothers /sisters to assemble around the dying brother/sister, it is suitable that they assemble a proper time and place in order to pray for him/her. Then after the litany of the saints and the prayer of commendation to God, as indicated above, they can chant other psalms and listen to readings from the Word of God, among which are those proposed in n. 144. This could take place during an Hour of the Office, in this order: instead of the brief reading, a longer reading is chosen, followed by the litany, then the Apostles Creed and Our Father, the prayer of commendation and finally the

¹⁴*Coll.* f. 149 r^o, c.3; *R.C.* V, III, 8. This formula is practically the same as the formula in the Roman ritual; **or by omission** is added.

¹⁵*Coll.* f. 149 v^o, c. 1; *E.O.* 94, 1-12; *R.C.* V, V, 1-3.

¹⁶*Coll.* f. 149 v^o, c. 1; *E.O.* 94, 2-13; *R.C.* V, V, 1.4.

antiphon in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

RITE FOR THE INITIATION OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS

THE PRINCIPAL SOURCES AND THEIR ABBREVIATIONS

Coll. Collectaneum, written at Citeaux after 1175: MS. DIJON 114, *Municipal Public Library*.

E.O. Ecclesiastica Officia, Ed. D. CHOISSELET and P. VERNET, according to the editions of manuscripts MS. 114 of the Public Library of Dijon by PH. GUIGNARD, *The Primitive Documents of the Cistercian Rule*, Dijon, 1878; MS. 31 of the Library of Labenne by C. NOSCHITZKA in *Analecta S.O. Cist 6*, 1950, pp. 1-124, and MS. 1711 of the Municipal Library of Trent by B. GRIESSER in *Analecta S.O. Cist 12*, 1956, pp. 153-288.

O.P.R. Ordo Professionis Religiosae. Typis Vaticana 1972

R.B. Regula sancti Benedicti, ed. Lérins 1892 and Westmalle 1949.

INTRODUCTION

NATURE AND VALUE OF RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

1. Many Christians, in response to God's call, dedicate themselves to his service and to the welfare of humankind by the sacred bonds of religious life, desiring to follow Christ more closely through the evangelical counsels so that the grace of baptism may be more fruitful in them.
2. The Church has always esteemed the religious life which has taken various forms in the

course of history under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It has given canonical status to religious life and approved a great number of religious institutes, among which are the monastic Orders, and it protects them by wise legislation.

For it is the Church which receives the vows of those who make religious profession, begs God's grace for them in public prayer, blesses them and unites their offering with the Eucharistic sacrifice.

II. RITES FOR THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE CISTERCIAN MONASTIC LIFE

3. According to the precept of the Rule of Saint Benedict, newcomers to the monastic life, after the difficulty of entry, are tested in the novices' cell in all patience. After two months have elapsed, and again after another six months, and yet again after another four months, this brother/sister novice renews his/her petition; but only this last time is he/she received into the monastery.¹⁷

In our own time, however, the testing takes place during periods determined by the Constitutions in such a way that a period of postulancy precedes the novitiate; temporary profession follows, before the brother/sister is admitted to perpetual profession.

4. On the other hand, as we read in the Rule of our holy Father Benedict, "Then and there in the oratory, he is to be stripped of everything of his own that he is wearing and clothed in what belongs to the monastery." The change of habit within the very act of profession is seen as a kind of self disappropriation.¹⁸ However, already from the earliest days of Christian monastic life this change of habit often carries with it the meaning of a change of life or a new way of life.¹⁹ For just as in baptism the catechumen first lays aside his clothes and goes down stripped into the font, and is afterwards clothed in a white garment, so the novice who is to become a monk/nun should lay aside his/her own clothes in order to be clothed in the monastic habit. This is described in the manuscript-type Collectaneum of Cîteaux: "While (the novice) is being stripped of his/her secular clothes, (let the superior) say: *May the Lord strip you of the old self together with its acts. Amen.* While he/she is being clothed in the monastic habit, (let the superior) say: *May the Lord clothe you with the new self, created according to God, in justice and the holiness of truth. Amen.*"²⁰

Although, in the course of the centuries, this rite came to be anticipated so that the newcomer to monastic life about to begin his novitiate was first clothed in some sort of religious habit;²¹ the black scapular and white cowl were nevertheless reserved for those making profession.²² It should also be noted that in the rites about to be described, whether for beginning the novitiate or for temporary profession as also for perpetual profession, it is not without reason that the prayer for divine grace precedes the change of habit. In this way the prayer of the Church and the blessing of the person take on a greater importance than the rite of clothing itself.

¹⁷R.B. 58, 1-16. This has been the Cistercian practice from the beginning of the Order. But in the seventeenth century the Cistercian Breviary and Ceremonial described the ceremony of this petition both on the occasion of the entrance into the community and on the occasion of the second, eighth and twelfth months.

¹⁸R.B. 58, 24-28.

¹⁹See A. VEILLEUX, OCSO, *La liturgie dans le cénobitisme pachômien au quatrième siècle*. Studia Anselmiana 57 (1968) 198-225. See also John CASSIAN, *The Institutes* IV, 5-7; *Dionysii Areopagitae opera. De ecclesiastica hierarchia* VI, in *PL* 122:1102C and 1103B; *idem*. P. RAFFIN, *Les rituels orientaux de la profession monastique* (Bellefontaine 1969); M. ANDRIEU, *Le Pontifical romain au Moyen-Age*, Tome I. *Le Pontifical romain au XIIe siècle*, Appendice VII, 1, p. 295 (=Ordo Cassinensis).

²⁰*Coll.f.* 149r, c.2.

²¹*E.O.* 102, 13; R.C. VI, I.

²²R.C. VI, II, 17.

5. The novitiate, the beginning of religious life, is a time of testing for both novice and community or Congregation. Entry into the novitiate should be marked by a rite in which God's grace is sought for the special purpose of the period. The rite should, of its nature, be simple and direct, customarily in the presence of the brothers or sisters only. It should take place apart from Mass.

6. First profession then follows. Before God and the Church the novice vows to follow the evangelical counsels according to the Rule of St. Benedict for a limited period of time. Such vows are taken in chapter;²³ if circumstances call for it, temporary vows may also be taken during one of the Hours of the Divine Office, or even during Mass, but without special solemnity.

If for just reasons and in keeping with the Constitution, there is a renewal of temporary vows, this takes place in chapter in the presence of all; or at least in the presence of the Superior and witnesses.

7. After the period prescribed by law, the monk/nun binds him/herself permanently to the service of God and the Church. This solemn profession is a sign of the unbreakable union between Christ and his bride, the Church.

The rite of solemn profession takes place during Mass, with due solemnity and in the presence of the entire community and of the faithful. The rite consists of these parts:

- the
- a) the request of the one to be professed, which is never omitted;
 - b) the homily or address, which reminds the people and the one to be professed of value of Cistercian monastic life;
 - c) the examination, whether simple or longer, by which the Abbot asks the one who is to be professed whether he/she is prepared to be consecrated to God and to follow the way of perfect charity according to the Rule of St. Benedict and the Constitutions of the Order;
 - d) the prayer of all present, either silent or in the form of a litany, in which prayer is offered to God the Father and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints is invoked;
 - e) the profession, of vows made in the presence of the Church, the Abbot/Abbess, the community and the faithful, followed by the solemn placing of the formula of profession on the altar and the proclamation of the verse *Uphold me, Lord*;
 - f) the solemn blessing or consecration of the professed, by which the Church accepts their vows, consecrates them to God, and asks the heavenly Father for abundant gifts of the Holy Spirit for the professed; this solemn blessing can also begin with the request directed by the professed to each of the brothers/sisters to pray for him/her;
 - g) the presentation of the cowl, which is the monastic habit by which perpetual dedication to God is symbolized.

According to the Constitutions, the Abbot of the monastery presides over the rite of solemn profession during Mass in case of monks, but the Father Immediate in the case of nuns. Should the Bishop of the diocese (by delegation of the Abbot of the monastery or of the Father Immediate) preside over the rite of solemn profession in a monastery, after the homily he examines the one making profession. For this examination he uses the questions proposed in the present ritual, even though afterwards the profession is made before the Abbot or Abbess who receives the profession.

²³According to traditional usage.

III. MASS FOR THE RITE OF RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

8. For solemn profession and so often as circumstances call for the celebration of temporary profession during Mass, it is appropriate to choose one of the ritual Masses for the day of religious profession. On a solemnity or a Sunday of the Advent, Lent or Easter seasons, the Mass of the day is used with the special formulas for the eucharistic prayer and final blessing to suit the occasion.
9. Since the liturgy of the word for the rite of profession can be an important aid in bringing out the meaning of religious life and its responsibilities, it is lawful, when the Mass for the day of religious profession may not be used, to take one reading from the special lectionary. But this may not be done during the Paschal Triduum, on the solemnities of Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension, Pentecost or Corpus Christi, or on other solemnities of obligation.
10. White vestments are worn for the ritual Mass for the day of religious profession.

IV. ADAPTATIONS TO BE MADE BY INDIVIDUAL MONASTERIES

11. So often as the present Ritual has the rubric "or similar words" or something equivalent, the formulas in the Roman ritual for the same liturgical action may be used.

RITE FOR THE RECEPTION OF NOVICES

1. On the day when the canonical novitiate begins, it is fitting that there should be a ceremony to ask God's grace. This rite, which expresses the nature of monastic life and the characteristics of our Order, should be simple and direct, and should be performed in the presence of the community only. The chapter room is accordingly the appropriate setting for the rite. It is forbidden to perform the rite during Mass.²⁴

Although the arrangement of this rite as regards particulars belongs to the competence of each individual community, this rite is here described with the elements received from our own tradition or else proposed by the Roman Church after the Second Vatican Council.

2. The texts of the rite must avoid anything that may seem to diminish the novice's freedom of choice or obscure the true meaning of the novitiate or time of testing.²⁵
3. The community gathers in the chapter room. The verse "May God's help remain with us always"²⁶ or some other is said. The postulant comes to the middle of chapter and prostrates or kneels or bows. The Abbot/Abbess asks him/her in these or similar words:

What do you ask:

²⁴Cf. *OPR* 1, 1-5 and II, 1-5.

²⁵*OPR* I, 4 and II, 4

²⁶This is the customary verse or blessing used from the beginning of the Order for the opening of the daily chapter. *Coll*, f° 151 r°, c. 2; *EO* 102, 3.7; *RC* VI, I, 1.

The postulant replies:

The mercy of God and of the Order.²⁷

Or in similar words, for example:

**I wish to try your way of life,
and if you find me suitable,
to be admitted into this Cistercian community
in order to follow Christ.**²⁸

Or the question may be omitted, and the postulant, facing the Abbot/Abbess and community, says:

**Drawn by the love of God
I have come here to learn your way of life.
I ask you to teach me to follow Christ with the Gospel for my guide
according to the Rule of St. Benedict
and the Cistercian traditions.**

Or the postulant may use similar words, expressing his/her own aspirations and thoughts.²⁹

The Abbot/Abbess responds in these or similar words:

May the Lord help you.³⁰

4. Then a text from the Rule of our blessed Father Saint Benedict is read (from the Prologue, or some other passage); the Abbot/Abbess explains to the postulant the nature and character of our life, and at the end asks what his/her resolve is, for example:

**Are you therefore ready to follow Christ perfectly
with the Gospel for your guide,
and according to the way which the Holy Rule shows?**³¹

Or:

**Are you determined to serve in the monastery
under the Rule and an abbot/abbess, in this monastery of
brothers/sisters, so that, by following Christ
you may attain to perfect faith, hope and charity?**³²

The postulant replies in these or similar words:

**With the help of God's grace, I hope and desire
to serve the Lord, Christ the true King.**³³

Then the abbot/abbess says, for example:

²⁷RC VI, I, 1.

²⁸OPR I, 7, where the text appears in the plural and II, 7

²⁹OPR I, 8 and II, 8.

³⁰OPR I, 7 and II, 7.

³¹Cf. RB Prol. 21

³²Cf. RB 1,2

³³RB Prol. 3

May God bring to perfection what he has begun in you.³⁴

Or:

**May God in his mercy be with you always
and may Christ our teacher grant you light.**³⁵

All express their assent: **Amen.**³⁶

Then the novice kneels in the middle of chapter before the Abbot/Abbess. Where customary, the Abbot/Abbess can give him/her a new name, explaining as he/she does so the reasons for this change of name.

5. The community stands and the Abbot/Abbess says, for example:

**My brothers/sisters, because Saint Benedict in his Rule admonishes us
that every time we begin a good work we should pray to the Lord
earnestly to bring it to perfection, let us beseech the Lord all together
that what is not possible to us by nature he may supply to our
brother/sister N. in his goodness.**³⁷

All pray in silence. the Abbot/Abbess adds a collect in which he expresses the baptismal name of the novice or, where customary, another name.

**Lord, draw near to us who call upon you in prayer
for your servant N., whom we are receiving in your name.
Grant that, through the gift of your grace, he/she may remain steadfast
in your Church and be found worthy to receive eternal life.
We ask you this through Christ our Lord.**³⁸

Or:

**Lord God, you call us to your service and inspire us to hear your call.
This brother/sister of ours desires to test our way of life: help him/her to
know what you ask of him/her and strengthen us all in your service.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

All respond: **Amen.**

6. The clothing of the novice is carried out during the singing of a suitable canticle of praise or hymn or responsory. The abbot/abbess gives the novice the proper novices' habit in keeping with the Constitutions, as a sign of conversion.

The rite concludes with a verse or blessing, such as:

**V. Our help is in the name of the Lord
R. Who made heaven and earth.**³⁹

³⁴RC VI, I, 1.

³⁵OPR I, 8, where the text appears in the plural and II,8

³⁶This **Amen** is the agreement of the brothers/sisters.

³⁷Cf RB Prol. 4 and 41

³⁸RC VI, I, 10, with a few textual variants.

³⁹Habitual verse at the end of chapter: *E.O.* 70, 86-87.

Or: **V. Let us bless the Lord.**
R. Thanks be to God.

Or: **May the Lord direct our hearts and bodies
to the love of God and the endurance of Christ.**⁴⁰

Or: **To the King of ages,
incorruptible, invisible, the only God,
honor and glory forever and ever.**⁴¹

All respond: **Amen.**

RITE OF TEMPORARY PROFESSION

7. The rite of temporary profession is customarily performed in the chapter room; for a reasonable cause it can take place in church, either during one of the Hours of the Office or during Mass.⁴²

8. The community gathers in the chapter room. The verse "May God's help remain with us always" or some other is said. All are seated and the one to be professed comes to the middle of chapter and prostrates or kneels or bows. The Abbess asks her in these or similar words:

What do you ask?

He/she answers:

The mercy of God and of the Order.

Or in similar words, for example:

**I, brother/sister N., ask of you, Father/Mother, that I be allowed to
dedicate myself to God and his kingdom by making profession
in this monastery N.⁴³ (or in this Congregation) of the**

⁴⁰2 Th 3:5

⁴¹1 Tm 1:17

⁴²In the chapter room, in keeping with the custom of the Order. In connection with one of the Hours of the Divine Office or during Mass, in keeping with *OPR* - though the intention of the *OPR* is that the celebration during Mass be preserved for solemn profession.

⁴³*Cf. OPR* I, 25 and II, 28

Cistercian Order (or of the Strict Observance).

The Abbot/Abbess and community reply:

Thanks be to God.

Or they express their approval in some other way.

9. After the reading of a passage from the Holy Rule and an exhortation, the Abbot/Abbess examines the resolve of the one to be professed. To this end he/she can examine him/her in more detail, in these or similar words:

Dear Brother/Sister, by water and the Holy Spirit you have been consecrated to God on the day of your baptism, are you resolved to unite yourself more closely to him by religious profession?⁴⁴

He/she answers: **I am.**

The Abbot/Abbess asks:

Brother/Sister, are you resolved, in order to follow Christ perfectly, to promise obedience, stability in the community and fidelity to monastic life?⁴⁵

He/she answers: **I am.**

The Abbot/Abbess asks:

Are you resolved to strive with constancy and steadfastness in the straight and narrow way which the Rule shows to that love of God and neighbor which, when perfect, casts out fear and is poured forth in our hearts by the Spirit?⁴⁶

He/she answers: **I am.**

In monasteries wholly ordered to contemplation, the Abbot/Abbess may add:

Are you resolved to truly seek God in solitude and silence, through the way of prayer, in humble work and in lectio divina, in willing penance and in fellowship with the brothers/sisters?⁴⁷

He/she answers:

Yes, Father, but with the grace of God and the help of your prayers.

The Abbot/Abbess replies:

May God bring to perfection what he has begun in you.

All reply: **Amen.**

10. After this the novice makes profession in one of the following ways:

⁴⁴*OPR* I, 27, where the text is in the plural, and II, 30

⁴⁵*cf. RB* 58,17.

⁴⁶*Cf OPR* I, 57 and II, 62

⁴⁷*Cf OPR* I, 58 and II, 63

Either he/she reads the profession schedule written by himself/herself according to the formula of the Constitutions, or of the Order or the Congregation, or of the Monastery;⁴⁸ but instead of saying **until death**, he/she specifies **for three years** or **for one year**; then he/she signs it and presents it to the Abbot/Abbess;

Or he/she kneels before the Abbot/Abbess (and placing his/her hands in those of the Abbot/Abbess) he/she says:

Father/Mother, I promise you obedience according to the Rule of Saint Benedict and the norms of our Constitutions (*either* for three years *or* for one year).

In both cases the Abbot/Abbess says to him/her:

May God give you perseverance.⁴⁹

All respond: **Amen.**

The Abbot/Abbess then embraces the newly professed.

11. The Abbot/Abbess stands and says: **Let us pray.**

The newly professed kneels in the middle of the Chapter room.

All pray briefly in silence. Then the Abbot/Abbess continues;

O God, you have turned your servant N. away from the vanity of the world, and you inflame him/her to pursue the prize of your upward calling. Come into his/her heart, and pour forth your grace, may he/she carry out what you have given him/her to promise, and by fulfilling his/her profession, may he/she attain to what you in your kindness have promised to those who persevere in you. We ask this through Christ our Lord.⁵⁰

Or: **Lord, hear the prayers of your people. In your goodness you have called this servant of yours, N. to follow Christ. Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of the Church, pour forth your Holy Spirit upon him/her so that he/she may fulfill the promises he/she has made this day.**⁵¹

All respond: **Amen**

12. After this, all are seated. The newly professed kneels at the feet of the Abbot/Abbess. With the help of the novice master/mistress, the Abbot/Abbess clothes the newly professed with the habit

⁴⁸*Cf* RC VI, II, 4

⁴⁹This has been the practice of the Order: cf. *Usus conversorum*, MS DIJON, 114, 13, 2, ed. Guignard Ph., *Les monuments primitifs de la Règle cistercienne*, Darantière, Dijon 1878, 285, and also RC VI, VI, 6.

⁵⁰*Liber sacramentorum gellonensis*, CCL CLIX, p. 401, *Missa monachorum*, n. 2583; RC VIII, VII, 10.

⁵¹*OPR* I, 142, In the singular.

b *OPR* II, 36

51 *OPR* I, 32.

of the Order, saying nothing. Meanwhile this antiphon may be sung:

I have sought him whom my heart loves.
(With verses from Psalm 44 or another appropriate chant.)

13. After the song, if customary, the Abbot/Abbess gives the newly professed a copy of the Holy Rule, saying these or similar words:

**Receive the Rule of our Father St. Benedict:
By observing it faithfully,
may you arrive at the perfection of love.⁵²**

The professed replies **Amen**. After receiving the book, he/she returns to his/her place and remains standing there among the brothers/sisters.

14. Finally the Abbot/Abbess concludes the rite saying for example:

**V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.
R. Who made heaven and earth.**

Or: **V. Let us bless the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.**

Or: **May the Lord direct our hearts and bodies
to the love of God and the endurance of Christ.**

R. Amen

Or: **To the King of the ages,
immortal, invisible, the only God,
be honor and glory forever and ever.**

R. Amen.

15. The proper place for a temporary profession is the Chapter room. If, however, it should happen to take place during one of the hours of the Divine Office or during Mass, the rite is arranged in this way:

At Lauds and Vespers there is a long reading from Holy Scripture, chosen from among those proposed for the Mass for Temporary Profession. After this reading, or at Mass, after the Gospel, the one to make profession makes his or her petition as above in n. 8, then is seated for the address or homily. At the end of the sermon, the one to make profession stands and the dialogue between him/her and the abbot/abbess is begun. Then he/she reads the formula of profession and everything takes place as above in nn. 9-13. The blessing is delayed until the end of the celebration.

Special care must be taken with these rites to avoid any confusion with solemn profession, which is described as follows in Chapter 3.

16. After the celebration, whatever formula is used, the profession should be registered in a special book where the day, month and year, will be carefully noted, followed by the signatures of the Abbot/Abbess, the professed and finally two witnesses.

THE RITE OF SOLEMN PROFESSION AND THE BLESSING OR CONSECRATION OF A MONK/NUN

17. It is fitting that the rite of profession by which a brother/sister binds himself/herself solemnly to God forever should take place on a Sunday or a solemnity of the Lord, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or of a saint distinguished in the living of the monastic life.⁵³

18. The rite of solemn profession takes place separately from other rites of profession.⁵⁴

19. Where the custom has been retained, the petition is made in Chapter in the usual way. After the Abbot/Abbess's exhortation, the one to make profession kneels before him/her and pronounces the so-called regular promise of obedience⁵⁵ in the following manner:

The one to make profession prostrates or kneels or bows. He/she then stands before the Abbot/Abbess who asks him/her:

What do you ask?

He/she replies:

The mercy of God and of the Order.

After the exhortation, the Abbot/Abbess once again questions him/her in order to determine his/her resolve. The one to make profession replies that he/she is resolved to observe everything. He/she immediately kneels before the Abbot/Abbess and (placing his/her joined hands between the hands of the Abbot/Abbess) says:

**Reverend Father/Mother, I promise you and your legitimate successors,
obedience according to the Rule of Saint Benedict until death.**

The Abbot/Abbess says:

And may God give you eternal life.

All reply: **Amen.**

Then the Abbot/Abbess embraces him/her.⁵⁶

20. Solemn profession, with the blessing or consecration of the monk, takes place during Mass,⁵⁷ so that it may be seen that monastic profession has a public character in the Church. The priest celebrant is the Abbot in houses of monks and the Father Immediate in houses of nuns or his delegate, the Bishop of the diocese.

As the nature of the rite demands, the whole liturgical service should be celebrated with fitting solemnity, but with a becoming sobriety in harmony with the humility and simplicity of our Order.

21. It is fitting that one of the Ritual Masses for Perpetual Profession be said. White vestments

⁵³OPR I, 40 and II, 43.

⁵⁴OPR I, 41 and II, 44.

⁵⁵Cf. RB 58,14 and RC VI, II, 2.

⁵⁶Cf. RC VI, I, 1 and VI, II, 2.

⁵⁷EO 102, 24

are worn. On a solemnity or a Sunday of the Advent, Lent or Easter seasons, the Mass of the day is used with the special formulas for the eucharistic prayer and final blessing to suit the occasion.⁵⁸

22. Everything is arranged so that all may have a full view of the liturgical rites.⁵⁹ The rite of profession takes place in front of the Celebrant's chair or in front of the altar or on a step of the sanctuary.

Apart from what is needed for the concelebration of Mass and communion, there will also be prepared:

- this Ritual of profession,
- the cowl that will be given to the new monk/nun.
- (in the case of nuns) the black veil that will be placed on the new nun.

Petition

23. After the Gospel everyone sits.⁶⁰ The one to be professed stands before the Abbot/Abbess, who is seated with (miter and) staff, and makes his /her petition.

The Abbot/Abbess questions him/her in these or similar words:

What do you ask?⁶¹

He or she answers in these or similar words:

The mercy of God and of the Order.

Or: **Called by the Spirit to follow Christ in the monastic way of life, I have learned in your community how to seek God truly in fellowship with the brothers/sisters and in prayer. Today, after lengthy deliberation, I desire to embrace your way of life; and I ask you, Father/Mother, to be allowed to make solemn profession for the glory of God and the service of the Church.**⁶²

The Abbot adds:

May God bring to fulfillment what he has begun in you before the day of Christ Jesus.

All respond: **Amen.**⁶³

The one to be professed is seated in his place and the Celebrant, standing, gives the homily, commenting on the Biblical readings and the grace and obligations of religious monastic profession.⁶⁴

Interrogation

⁵⁸Cf. Introduction, nn. 8-10.

⁵⁹Cf. *OPR* I, 43.

⁶⁰Cf. *OPR* I, 53 and II, 58.

⁶¹*RC* VII, II, 6. The one making profession stands. This is to avoid having two different interpretations for the same gesture within the same liturgy - that is, the full-length prostration (for the petition and for the blessing or consecration).

⁶²Cf. *OPR* I, 55 and II, 60 as well as *RB* 58: 7,16

⁶³*RC* VI, II, 7.

⁶⁴*Coeremoniale Episcoporum*, ed. Vaticana 1984, 756

24. After the homily, the Abbot/Abbess may continue to question more simply the one making profession saying:

Are you resolved to follow Christ with the Gospel for your guide in the straight and narrow shown by the tradition of the Order, by promising stability, fidelity to monastic life and obedience according to the Rule of our father Saint Benedict?

The one to be professed replies:

Yes, I am, but with the help of your prayers and the grace of God.

Or the Abbot/Abbess may examine him at greater length, in this way:

Dear Brother/Sister, in baptism you have already died to sin and been consecrated to God's service.

Are you now resolved to unite yourself more closely to God by the bond of solemn profession?

He/she answers: **I am.**

The Abbot/Abbess:

Are you resolved to follow Christ with the Gospel for your guide in the straight and narrow way shown by the tradition of the Order, by promising stability, fidelity to monastic life, and obedience according to the Rule of our Father St. Benedict?

He/she answers: **I am.**

The Abbot/Abbess:

Are you resolved to strive with constancy and steadfastness, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, for that love of God and neighbor which, when perfect, casts out fear?

He answers: **I am.**

In monasteries wholly ordered to contemplation, the Abbot/Abbess may add:

Are you resolved to live for God alone, in solitude and silence, in persevering prayer and willing penance, in humble work and holiness of life?

He/she answers:

Yes, Father/Mother, but with the help of your prayers and the grace of God.

Prayer of the Faithful

25. Then the Celebrant invites the assembly to pray:

**Saint Catherine of Siena,
Saint Teresa of Avila,
Blessed Maria Gabriella,
All holy men and women,**

**Lord, be merciful,
From all evil,
From every sin,
From everlasting death,
By your incarnation,
By your death and resurrection,
By your gift of the Holy Spirit,**

Be merciful to us sinners,

**a. By the self offering of your servant, make
the life of your Church ever more fruitful,**

or **Give in ever greater abundance the gifts of
the Holy Spirit, to your servant Pope N. and
to all his brother bishops,**

**b. By the life and labor of all religious, promote
the welfare of the human family,**

or **Lead all men and women to the fullness of the
Christian life,**

**c. Grant that all religious communities may live
and grow in the love of Christ and the spirit
of their founders,**

or **Give to all who profess the Gospel counsels
a fuller share in the work of redemption,**

**d. Visit and console our monasteries and all
who dwell in them,**

or **Teach us how to grow through our observance
of the Holy Rule,**

**e. Reward a hundredfold the parents of your
servant for the sacrifice they have made,**

**f. Make this servant of yours more and more
like Christ, the firstborn of many children,**

or **Grant this servant of yours the grace of
perseverance,**

or **Bless your servant, our brother/sister,**

**Pray for us.
Pray for us.
Pray for us.
Pray for us.**

**Lord, save your people.
Lord, save your people.**

Lord, hear our prayer.

consecrate and sanctify him/her,

Lord, hear our prayer.

Jesus, Son of the living God
Christ, hear us
Lord Jesus, hear our prayer

Lord, hear our prayer.
Christ, hear us.
Lord Jesus, hear our prayer.

27. After the period of silent prayer or after the litany, the Celebrant stands and says with hands extended:

**Lord, hear the prayers of your people,
and grant your grace to your servant,
May the fire of your Spirit purify every fault
and set him/her on fire with an ardent charity.
Through Christ our Lord.⁶⁸**

All respond: **Amen.**

Except on Sundays and during Easter Time, the deacon says: **Let us rise**, and all stand.

Profession

28. The Abbot/Abbess sits and receives his/her (miter and) staff.⁶⁹ The one making profession stands before the Abbot/Abbess and reads the profession formula written him/herself, as found in the Constitutions of the Order, or the Congregation, or the Monastery.⁷⁰

Then the newly professed goes to the altar to place on it the formula of profession, and to sign it upon the altar itself. He then kisses the altar and returns to his place in the middle.⁷¹ The Abbot/Abbess rises (without the miter), and all rise with him/her.

29. The newly professed stands as before and sings the following verse three times:
**Receive me, O Lord, as you have promised that I may live.
Do not disappoint me in my hope.**

Each time he or she kneels after the verse, hands and knees on the ground asking for mercy.

The community repeats the same verse three times, and at the end of the final repetition adds the doxology.⁷²

⁶⁸ *OPR* I, 63 and II, 68. In the singular.

⁶⁹ *Caeremoniale Eiscoporum*, ed. Vaticana 1984, 760.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Coll.* f° 149 r°, c. 1 and *RC* VI, II, 4, here modified in keeping with the Constitutions. Re: the profession of nuns, according to Statute 14 of the General Chapter of 1573: "in every blessing and call to profession, the name of the Abbot who blesses precedes the name of the Abbess", the profession schedule of nuns in the *French Ritual for the nuns of the Order of Citeaux*, Paris 1715, VI, II, 6, is formulated as follows: "...in the presence of Reverend N. Abbot of N; and of Reverend N. Abbess". In our day, not only does it seem more appropriate to name first the Abbess who receives the profession and then the name of the one in whose presence she makes her profession, but it does not even seem necessary to mention the priest who is celebrating the Mass.

⁷¹ *RB* 58:20; *Coll.* f° 149 r°, c.1; *EO* 102, 26-27; *RC* VI, II, 10; *OPR* I, 65.

⁷² *RB* 58:21-22; *Coll.* f° 149 r°, c. 1; *EO* 102, 30; *RC* VI, II, 11.

Solemn Blessing or Consecration of the Professed

30. Then the professed kneels at the feet of the Abbot/Abbess and of all the solemn professed, saying to each:

Pray for me.

They embrace the newly professed and reply in these or similar words:

The Lord be with you.

or: **May the Lord keep you now and forever.**

Afterward, the professed returns to the center before the Abbot/Abbess and prostrates full length.

Meanwhile, the community sings Psalm 50 **Have mercy on me, God**, or another psalm or appropriate chant.

This rite may be omitted when it seems more opportune for the newly professed to be given the kiss of peace after being clothed in the cowl (see n. 33 below).

31. At the end of the singing, the Abbot/Abbess puts aside the cross (and miter). He/she stands and extends his/her hands over the professed who lies prostrate,⁷³ and pronounces one of the following blessings. What is between parentheses may be omitted.

*Either: God, through your co-eternal Son you created all that is,⁷⁴
and through the mystery of his holy Incarnation graciously
renewed the world grown old in sin. We humbly ask that the
grace of that same Lord of ours may mercifully look upon this
your servant who has promised to renounce the world.
Renewed in the depth of his/her spirit, may he/she
remove the old self and its deeds and put on the new
self, created in your image.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

All respond: **Amen.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Way, and no one comes
to the Father but through you. We implore your mercy.
Your servant has been drawn away from earthly
desires of the flesh; guide him/her now along the paths
determined by the Holy Rule. In your goodness you called
sinners, saying, "Come to me, all you who labor and are
burdened, and I will give you rest." Grant that your invitation
may have such power in him/her that, casting off the burden of sin, and
tasting your goodness, he/she may receive nourishment from you, as you
have promised. Acknowledge him/her as a sheep of your own flock and**

⁷³*Coeremoniale Episcoporum*, 762.

⁷⁴Invocation of the three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity: *Coll. f° 149 r°*, c. 1 and 2; *RC VI*, II, 15; at the request of the Congregation for Divine Worship according to a text approved for the Benedictine Congregation of Solesmes (in Latin and French).

let him/her so acknowledge you that he/she follow not after any stranger, but you alone, or listen to a stranger's voice, but yours alone, as you say, "If anyone wishes to be my servant, he/she must follow my way." You who live and reign forever.

All respond: Amen.

O Holy Spirit, in your goodness you have revealed yourself to mortals as Lord and God. We implore the favor of your boundless goodness: since you breathe only where you will, be pleased to grant this, your servant, a heart ready and willing to serve. Because he/she was created by your wisdom, may he/she also be guided by your providence; and by that grace which is ever yours to give, may your anointing teach him/her concerning all things. Through the intercession of St. Benedict, whom you have given as the author of this holy way of life, (and through the intercession of all the other saints whose names have been invoked today) turn him/her in all truth from the vanity of the world. You are the remission of all sin: loose the burdens of ungodliness that weigh him/her down, and fire him/her with zeal that he/she may stand firm in his/her holy resolution. In trials and difficulties, may he/she find refreshment in your unfailing consolation. May his/hers be the firm support of true humility and obedience in fraternal love, so that he/she may fulfill in blessed perseverance that which you yourself have inspired him/her to promise. In your goodness, be pleased to grant all this, you who in live in glory with God the Father and his only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, forever and ever.

All respond: Amen.

Or:

Father in heaven, source of all holiness, creator of the human race, your love of us was so great that you gave us a share in your own divine life. Neither the sin of Adam nor even the sins of the whole world could altar your loving purpose. At the dawn of history you gave us Abel as an example of holiness. Later, from your beloved Hebrew people you raised up men and women graced with every virtue. Foremost among them all stands Mary, the ever-virgin daughter of Zion. From her pure womb was born Jesus Christ, your eternal word, the Savior of the world. He came among us as our pattern of holiness; he became poor to make us rich, a slave to set us free. With love no words can tell he redeemed the world by his paschal mystery and won from you the gifts of the Spirit to sanctify his Church. The voice of the Spirit has drawn countless numbers of your children to follow Christ. They leave all things to be one with you in the bonds of love and give themselves wholly to your service and the service of all your people. Look with favor, then, on this your servant who has heard your call. Send him/her the Spirit of holiness; help him/her to fulfill in faith what you have enabled him/her to promise in joy. Keep always before his/her eyes Christ, the divine teacher. [Give him/her perfect chastity, ungrudging poverty and wholehearted

obedience. May he/she glorify you by his/her humility, serve you with docility, and be one with you in fervent love.]
May he/she build up the Church by holiness of life, advance the salvation of the world, and stand as a sign of the Kingdom to come. Lord, protect and guide this servant of yours. At the judgment seat of your Son be yourself his/her great reward. Give him/her the joy of vows fulfilled. Made perfect in your love, may he/she rejoice in the communion of your saints and praise you forever in their company. Through Jesus, the Christ, our Lord.⁷⁵

All respond: Amen.

Or:

Lord God, source of growth and holiness in your Church, all creation sings your praise. At the beginning of time you created the world to share your joy. When it lay broken by Adam's sin, you promised a new heaven and a new earth. You entrusted the earth to our care, to be made fruitful by our work. Living in this world we were to direct our steps to the heavenly city. By your sacraments you make us your children and welcome us into your Church; you distribute among us the many gifts of your Spirit. Some serve you in chaste marriage for the sake of your kingdom. Sharing all things in common, with one heart and mind in the bond of love, they become a sign of the communion of heaven.

Lord, we pray now, send your Spirit upon this servant of yours who has committed himself/herself with steadfast faith to the word of Christ. Strengthen his/her understanding and direct his/her life by the teaching of the Gospel. May the law of love rule in his/her heart, and concern for others distinguish his/her life so as to bear witness to you, the one true God and to your infinite love for all humankind. By courage in daily trials may he/she receive, even in this life, your promised hundredfold, and at the end, the joy of your victory.⁷⁶

All respond: Amen.

Or:

Lord God, Creator of the world and Father of humankind, we praise and thank you for having chosen a people from the race of Abraham and consecrated it in giving it your name. When it crossed the desert, you sustained it with your word and protected it with your hand; if it was poor and abandoned, you made a covenant of love with it; if it strayed far from your friendship, you lovingly brought it back to the right way; and when it sought you, your Father's love guided it to live in a country of freedom.
But above all, Father, we praise you for having brought us to the knowledge of truth through Jesus, the Christ, your Son and our Brother. Born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he delivered your people from sin by dying on the cross and by his resurrection he gave it the pledge of the glory to come. Seated at your right hand, he sent the Holy Spirit, who

⁷⁵OPR I, 67. In the singular.

⁷⁶OPR I, 143. In the singular.

constantly brings disciples: they have consecrated their entire life to the glory of your name and the salvation of all people following the councils of the Gospel.

Today it is fitting that your house resound with a new canticle because our brother/sister, who has responded to your call, comes to offer himself/herself to your service. Thus, send us your Holy Spirit, Lord, on the one who has left everything for you. May the face of your Christ shine in him/her so that all, in seeing him/her, will discover his presence in your Church.

Father, we ask you to keep his/her heart free, that he/she care for his/her brothers/sisters; that in helping the unfortunate she may witness to the patience of Christ; that in regarding human events he/she may see them ordained by your providence. In losing his/her/ life may he/she help your kingdom come soon, until the day when he/she will be with all your saints in heaven. Through Jesus, the Christ, our Lord.⁷⁷

Presentation of the cowl and black veil (for the nuns)

32. At the end of the blessing, the newly professed rises and goes to the Abbot/Abbess, who removes the cloak and clothes him/her in the cowl, either saying nothing, or else saying these or similar words:

May the Lord clothe you in the new self created according to God in justice and holiness of truth:⁷⁸ and may the ministry which we outwardly perform be realized inwardly through the gift of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁹

Or:

Our Brother/Sister is now being clothed in the garment which the holy Fathers appointed to be worn by those who renounce the world as a sign of innocence and humility. May the Son of God who in his goodness put on the garment of our mortal nature, himself grant our brother/sister to be clothed in his very self, who lives and reigns forever and ever.⁸⁰

All respond: **Amen.**

33. Where customary, and where it seems more opportune (See above, n. 30), the Abbot/Abbess and community next admit the newly professed to the kiss of peace. Meanwhile the antiphon is sung:

**How good and how pleasant it is,
where brothers/sisters live in unity.
With Psalm 132, or some other appropriate song.⁸¹**

34. After this the newly professed takes his/her place in choir and the Abbot/Abbess returns to

⁷⁷OPR II, 159. In the singular.

⁷⁸Coll. f° 149 r°, c. 2; EO 102, 43; RC VI, II, 17.

⁷⁹Omitted is the last part of the *apologia* found in Coll. f° 149 r°, c.1, and in RC VI, II, 15

⁸⁰Cf. Coll. f° 149 r°, c. 2, and RC VI, II, 16 for the blessing of the cowl.

⁸¹Cf. OPR I, 70.

his/her place. The Mass continues. The Credo is said if foreseen in the rubrics. The prayer of the faithful is omitted if the litany has been sung.

In the Eucharistic prayers, the offering of the professed may be mentioned according to the Missal formulas in the Mass for Religious Profession. After the Postcommunion prayer and before the dismissal rite, the Abbot/celebrant may give the blessing for the newly professed, taken from the optional blessings the Missal proposes for this day.⁸²

35. After the dismissal the Abbot/Abbess takes the profession schedule from the altar and carries it to the sacristy, where it is given to the secretary to be preserved permanently.⁸³

Afterward the profession is entered in a special register, the day, month and year are carefully noted. The Abbot/Abbess signs first; then the newly professed, and finally the witnesses. The same is done under the newly professed's signature in the profession schedule from which he/she read the profession.⁸⁴ Then the Abbot informs the parish where the newly professed was baptized about his/her solemn profession.

RITE FOR THE CHANGE OF STABILITY

36. When a monk from an autonomous monastery transfers to another autonomous monastery of our Order, or transfers from the Benedictine family to us, the rite is arranged as follows, all requirements of the law being observed.

37. Where customary, the petition and promise of obedience take place in Chapter. The monk or nun, after a period of probation, comes to the center of Chapter and prostrates or kneels or bows before the Abbot/Abbess, who asks:

What do you ask?

He/she answers: **The mercy of God and your mercy.**

The Abbot/Abbess tells him/her to rise and then delivers an exhortation. The monk/nun then kneels before the Abbot/Abbess and placing his/her joined hands between those of the Abbot/Abbess says:

Father, I promise you and your legitimate successors, obedience unto death according to the Rule of St. Benedict.

The Abbot/Abbess replies:

May God grant you eternal life.

All respond: **Amen.**

Then the Abbot/Abbess embraces him/her.⁸⁵

⁸²*OPR* I, 73 and 76, as well as II, 80 and 83.

⁸³*RB* 58:29.

⁸⁴*RC* VI, II, 20.

⁸⁵cf. *RC* VI, VII, 2-3.

38. It is suitable that on this occasion Mass be celebrated by the Abbot in a monastery of monks;
in a monastery of nuns by the Father Immediate. After the reading of the Gospel and the homily, the monk or nun who has completed the period of probation goes before the altar and reads the profession of his/her change of stability in this way:

**I, Brother or Sister N., monk/nun (or laybrother/laysister) of the
Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance, promise my stability
according to the Rule of Saint Benedict, Abbot, before God and all
his saints (whose relics are here), in this monastery⁸⁶ of N. of the
Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance, in the presence of Reverend
Father N. Abbot of this monastery (or Rev. Mother N. Abbess of this
monastery.)⁸⁷**

After having read the text, he/she signs it and then gives it to the Abbot/Abbess.

39. Then the Abbot/Abbess and community receive the professed with the kiss of peace. Meanwhile the choir can sing **Where there is charity, there is God**, or Psalm 132 **How good and how pleasant it is**, or some other suitable song. Then the professed takes his/her place in choir and the Mass continues. If the professed who has just made stability is a priest, he can concelebrate with the other priests at the Mass.

40. Afterwards, the act is entered in the register and the document is duly signed by the Superior, the professed and witnesses. A copy of this document is sent as soon as possible to the monastery from which the newly stabilized monk/nun had withdrawn.⁸⁸

APPENDIX

OPTIONAL RITE FOR THE 25TH OR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF PROFESSION

1. In the Cistercian Order it has become customary in the course of the centuries to celebrate the "jubilee" on the 50th anniversary of monastic profession. In some monasteries this custom has now been extended to include the 25th anniversary.⁸⁹

Besides the proper prayers of the Missal there are, for celebrations of this kind, various

⁸⁶If the new stability is made for another monastery, the text reads: **for the monastery of N...**

⁸⁷If the new stability is received by a delegated Abbot (Prior), the text here reads: **in the presence of Dom N.N., delegated by Dom N.N., Abbot (Prior) of that monastery.**

Cf. *Libellus diffinitionum* (1237 and 1257), Dist. II, 5. Concerning the testing and profession of a monk of another Order. Let a monk of another Order received into one of the monasteries of our own Order, if he is not already blessed, be in the novitiate for a year, and be blessed according to the same rite as other novices are blessed. But should he be already blessed, let the cowl be given to him immediately. At the end of at least four months, at the bidding of the Abbot, let him make his petition in chapter for the profession which is to take place in church; and like a novice who becomes a monk, let him read his profession and offer it upon the altar, doing nothing further. (In B. Lucet, *Les codifications cisterciennes de 1237 et 1257*, ed.

Continuation of footnote 86. See above. CNRS, Paris 1977, 214. However in this present ritual, the schedule is not brought to the altar at this moment since there is only one monastic solemn profession even if there is a change of stability.

⁸⁸Cf. *RC VI, VII, 6*

⁸⁹Cf. *OPR, Preliminaries 7.*

customs from tradition described below.

THE MASS TO BE CELEBRATED

2. This Mass may be celebrated on any day except Sundays, solemnities, feast days, weekdays of Advent from December 17 to 24 (inclusive), Ash Wednesday, the whole of Lent and Holy Week.⁹⁰
3. The entrance and communion antiphons may be taken from one of the three Masses "For Religious Profession".⁹¹
4. The **Gloria to God** may be sung in keeping with n. 31 of the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal*.
5. The Missal has proper formulas for this occasion, for the opening prayer, the prayer over the gifts and the prayer after Communion.
6. The readings may be taken from the Mass of the day or from those suggested for Religious Profession.⁹²
7. At the Prayer of the Faithful a petition regarding the Profession Anniversary may be made according to the norm n.45 of the General Instruction for the Missal.
8. In the Eucharistic prayer the Preface of Religious Profession may be used.

THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF PROFESSION

9. After the Gospel and the homily, the Brother/Sister may go to the sanctuary step and there, while all are standing and turned toward the altar, say:

I, Brother/Sister N. N. renew the vows I made twenty-five years ago, stability, conversion of manners and obedience according to the Rule of St. Benedict, Abbot in the presence of Rev. Father/Mother N., Abbot/ Abbess of N... I confirm my profession today in thanksgiving for the past and with humble confidence for the future, sustained by the mercy of God and the prayer of the Brothers/Sisters.

The Abbot/Abbess says to the Jubilarian:
And may God grant you perseverance.

All reply: **Amen.**

The Abbot/Abbess gives the Jubilarian the kiss of peace.

10. The Abbot/Abbess may immediately add one of the following prayers:
Lord Jesus Christ, you are the true way leading to the Father. Through

⁹⁰*Missal* and *OPR*, appendix.

⁹¹*Missal*, for 25th and 50th Anniversary of Religious Profession.

⁹²*OPR* Introduction 9-10 and Rite for the Renewal of Vows 83.

twenty-five years you have mercifully granted this your servant our Brother/Sister N. to serve you in the monastic life. We beg you in your kindness, to bless and renew him/her in the depths of his/her soul, so that, through the intercession of our Father St. Benedict, rooted in your love, he/she may run with overflowing heart in the way of your commandments, until he/she arrives at last, through your guidance, in the safe haven of everlasting salvation.

You who live and regne forever and ever.⁹³

Or: **Lord, in your providence you have called your servant to be perfect as the Gospel teaches. In your mercy grant that he/she may persevere to the end along the way of your love which he/she has set out with such joy. We ask this through Christ our Lord.⁹⁴**

All respond: **Amen**

11. Or, if it seems more opportune, in the general intercessions, more ample provision may be made for the votive intention of this celebration, but without neglecting the intentions of a universal nature. At the end of the intentions one of the prayers given above may be said, with the necessary adaptations.

12. For a nun everything takes place in the same way. However, in place of the prayer *Lord, in your providence*, n. 10, the following may be said:

Lord, look upon our Sister N... whom, in your love, you have called to follow your Son more closely. Mercifully grant that she may persevere to the end along the way of your love on which she has set out with such joy. We ask this through Christ our Lord.⁹⁵

FOR THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF PROFESSION OR JUBILEE

13. After the Gospel, the jubilarian either goes before the Abbot/Abbess, or else is led before him or her by two seniors of the community. The Abbot/Abbess is seated with (miter and) staff. Meanwhile the choir may sing an antiphon such as the following:

Confirm, O God what you have wrought in us, from your holy temple in Jerusalem.

14. The Abbot/Abbess asks: **What do you ask?**

The Jubilarian replies: **The mercy of God and the grace of the Jubilee.**

After the homily, the Abbot/Abbess says a few words of exhortation. The Jubilarian replies in these or similar words:

⁹³Cf. *Ordo in 25° anniversario professionis religiosae* O.Cist. 1966

⁹⁴*OPR* I, 85. In the singular.

⁹⁵Cf. *OPR* II, 92. In the singular.

I have confidence in the Lord.

Then the Abbot/Abbess says: **If you persevere to the end, you will be saved.**

15. Standing turned toward the altar, the Jubilarian renews his/her profession, saying:

Fifty years ago, I, Brother/Sister NN., promised my stability, my fidelity to the monastic way of life, and obedience in accordance with the Rule of St. Benedict, Abbot, in the presence of Abbot/Abbess, N.N. who was then Abbot/Abbess. Today I confirm this, my profession, grateful and rejoicing for the past, humbly confident for the future, and relying on the mercy of God and the prayers of my brothers/sisters.

The Abbot/Abbess says: **May God grant you eternal life.**

Then the Jubilarian may sing this verse three times:

**Receive me, Lord, according to your promise and I shall live.
Do not disappoint me in my hope.**

The community repeats this verse three times and at the end of the final repetition adds the doxology.

16. The Abbot/Abbess, after putting aside the staff (and the miter), rises and with joined hands says the following prayer:⁹⁶

Let us pray to the Lord, dear brothers/sisters, on behalf of his servant, our Brother/Sister N. that he may mercifully lead him/her unharmed to the goal he/she longs to attain.

After a period of silent prayer, the Abbot/Abbess with extended hands says one of the following prayers:

Almighty and merciful God, you wonderfully brought to a close the great mysteries of salvation on the fiftieth day, and through the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon your faithful the perfect freedom of the children of God, grant to this servant of yours, our brother/sister N., whose jubilee year of the day of his/her profession we celebrate, the full abundance of your grace. Through your gift, he/she has come to the end of the fiftieth year, may he/she obtain the indulgence, and, persevering worthily in this monastic profession, may he/she continue to serve you with all his/her heart. Ever progressing, may he/she ascend to the heights of virtue; and after the combat of this present life, attain to the prize and joy of eternal happiness which you have promised.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Or:

O God, slow to anger and abounding in love, you commanded our fathers in the desert, to celebrate the jubilee at the appointed time, and

⁹⁶*Caeremoniale Sacri Iubilaei professionis religiosae secundum usum Cisterciensium.* Westmalle (Belgium) 1952, 8.11-12 A number of other elements in the present ritual have been drawn from this ceremonial.

to forgive all debts. You sent your Son to proclaim the good news to the poor, and to announce the year acceptable to you. Grant to this servant of yours, our brother/sister N. perseverance in the observance of your commandments and of the Rule, and with your help attain the joys of the heavenly Jerusalem and the everlasting jubilation of glory.

Or:

Most merciful God, from whom all good things come, you gave the Law to your chosen people on the fiftieth day of their coming forth from slavery; and again, through the coming of the Holy Spirit, on the fiftieth day after the resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, you poured forth the law of grace into the hearts of the faithful. We ask you to look with love upon your servant, our brother/sister N. who for fifty years has persevered in your service. Submissive to your divine law, may he/she receive the grace of the Holy Spirit and persevere in it even unto death. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All respond: **Amen.**

17. Now the Abbot/Abbess (unless it seems more opportune before the dismissal rite) may give the kneeling Jubilarian the staff of his/her old age, saying:

Receive this staff, symbol of the Cross of Christ,⁹⁷ the support of your old age. From now on may you use it less to sustain your bodily strength than to obtain spiritual fortitude from our Lord, Jesus Christ, who in the Gospel called us to himself saying: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."

May he be blessed forever.

The Jubilarian replies: **Amen.**

18. If it can be done without difficulty, the Abbot/Abbess and everyone standing in choir may give the Jubilarian the kiss of peace. Meanwhile the choir sings an antiphon, for example, **Shout joyfully to God all the earth**, with Psalm 99 or 65 or 132, or some other suitable chant.

19. The celebration of the Mass continues as usual with the Profession of Faith if prescribed by the rubrics. The General Intercessions may be said (unless the Abbot/Abbess' prayer for the Jubilarian was already in litany-form). At the offertory the following antiphon is appropriately sung:

Lord God, in the simplicity of my heart I have joyfully offered all these things; and I have seen with great joy your people here present. O God of Israel, keep this will. (Alleluia)⁹⁸

(Or another similar chant.)

20. Before the dismissal rite, where customary, the Abbot/Abbess, unless he/she has already done so, give the Jubilarian the staff of old age, as above in n. 16. While all are standing, the ***Te Deum*** or some other suitable chant of thanksgiving may be sung.

⁹⁷John Cassian, *De institutis coenobiorum* I. 8, ed. S.C. 109: 48-49

⁹⁸*Graduale*, Common for the Dedication of a Church.

And, if it seems proper, after the solemn blessing, the Jubilarian returns to the sacristy with the celebrant.

21. For a nun Jubilarian, everything takes place similarly; and besides giving her the staff, or instead of giving her the staff, the Abbess may place a crown of flowers on the head of the Jubilarian, saying:

**Receive this sign of the crown
which our Lord Jesus Christ will bestow on you,
after the passage of this present life,
as the reward for your faithful striving,
for your life in God's service,
and for your every good deed.**

The Jubilarian replies: **Amen.**

RITE OF OBLATURE IN COMMUNITY LIFE ACCORDING TO THE RULE

21. No rite has been established for the voluntary and free oblation of any Christian in the regular life of any community in the Cistercian Family; the rite here described is completely non-obligatory. In arranging a rite of this kind, everything must be avoided which in any way would be able to diminish the freedom of the oblate for the future.

22. After due testing of the candidate, the community gathers in the Chapter room on the appointed day. After the verse, **May God's assistance remain with us always** or some other verse; all are seated. The Abbot/Abbess examines the brother/sister who is to be admitted to the oblation who comes and either prostrates, kneels or bows before the Abbot/Abbess, who asks in these or similar words:

What do you ask?

He/she responds:

The mercy of God and your mercy.

23. After the reading of a passage from the Holy Rule and an exhortation, the Abbot/Abbess examines the oblate-elect, asking whether he/she freely intends to follow the path of Christ through the guidance of the Gospel in the regular place of this monastery.

The oblate-elect replies in these or similar words:

**Yes, Father/Mother,
but with the help of your prayers and the grace of God.**

The Abbot/Abbess invites him/her to read before all, the formula of his/her promise written by him/herself, in which he/she expresses his/her personal intention. Thus offered to God, the oblate signs the formula just read and gives it to the Abbot/Abbess who embraces him/her.

24. Except for the oblate, who is kneeling in the center, all rise and the Abbot/Abbess invites the community to pray. After a brief period of silent prayer, he formulates the special intention before concluding with an appropriate collect, such as:

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, our King, you see us gathered by your love, and giving thanks to you for having called us to serve you in this place under the discipline of our holy Father, St. Benedict, we humbly beg your abundant goodness to pour forth your Holy Spirit, upon our Brother/Sister N., whose self-offering in the regular life of our monastery we receive this day in your own name. Grant we ask, by the help of your grace, that, with the support of charity, he/she may seek you faithfully through blessed perseverance in adversity as well as prosperity; and, sure in the hope of your reward, may joyfully serve you day by day with a heart overflowing and with the inexpressible delight of love. You who live and reign forever and ever.

All respond: **Amen.**

Or say together the Lord's prayer with doxology.

After having sung Psalm 132 with the antiphon: **How good and how pleasant it is for brothers/sisters to live in unity** or some other suitable canticle or hymn, the Abbot/Abbess gives the blessing:

V. Let us bless the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Or: **May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, descend upon you and remain with you always.**

R. Amen.

25. Should it happen that circumstances call for the rite of oblature to be carried out during Mass, the new oblate does not place the written formula of oblature on the altar, as in the rite of solemn profession, but offers it to the Abbot/Abbess. It is totally appropriate that, in keeping with n. 49 of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, that the oblate brings to the altar the gifts to be consecrated for the Eucharist.

FUNERAL RITE

THE PRINCIPAL SOURCES AND THEIR ABBREVIATIONS

GeV.Sacramentarium Gelasianum, ed. L.C. MOLHBERG, *Liber sacramentorum romanae ecclesiae ordinis anni circuli*, Rome, 1968

Gre.Sacramentarium Gregorianum, ed. J. DESHUSSES, *Le sacramentaire grégorien, ses principales formes d'après les plus anciens manuscrits*, Fribourg, 1971-1982.

Coll.Collectaneum, written at Citeaux after 1175: MS. DIJON 114, *Municipal Public Library*.

E.O.Ecclesiastica Officia, ed. D. CHOISSELET and P. VERNET.

O.E.Ordo Exsequiarum, Typis Vaticana, 1969.

R.C.Rituale Cisterciense, 1689

INTRODUCTION

1. It is the Paschal mystery of Christ that the Church celebrates with faith in the funeral rites of her children. By their baptism they have become members of Christ who died and was raised. She prays that they may pass with Christ from death to life, that they be purified and joined to all the saints in heaven while awaiting the resurrection of the dead and the blessed hope of the coming of Christ.

The Church offers Christ's paschal sacrifice for the dead so that on the basis of the communion existing between all Christ's members, the prayers for spiritual help on behalf of some members may bring to others comforting hope.

2. In celebrating the funeral rites for their brothers and sisters, Cistercian monks and nuns affirm their hope in eternal life, as other Christians, but in such a way that they do not seem to neglect or ignore the feeling and practice of their own time and place regarding those who have died. Anything that is good may be used freely, but anything alien to the Gospel, should be changed so that funeral rites for Christians may proclaim paschal faith and the spirit of the Gospel.

3. While avoiding all ostentation, it is fitting to honor the bodies of the faithful departed as temples of the Holy Spirit. Because of this, between the time of death and burial, there should be sufficient opportunities for the people to pray for the dead and profess their own faith in eternal life.

The significant times, according to the tradition of the Cistercian family, are the following:

- a. the procession during which the body of the deceased is carried to the church of the monastery;
- b. the vigil near the body of the deceased;
- c. the Eucharistic sacrifice;
- d. the final commendation in the church or the last farewell;

- e. the procession to the cemetery;
- f. the interment;
- g. the last suffrages.

4. After the last breath, civil law of the country being observed and the body being reverently prepared, if there is nothing to prevent it, the body is transferred to the place where the vigil will take place, either in the church of the monastery or in another suitable place and the vigil will begin immediately.

5. The vigil near the body of the deceased takes the form of continual prayer comprised of the following various elements:

- a. the Liturgy of the Hours, either that of the day or from the Office of the Dead if the liturgy of the day allows it, or certain parts of this latter;
- b. the recitation of the Psalter, interspersed with readings and prayers;
- c. the celebration of Mass from the time of death until the day of the funeral.

When the Office of the Dead cannot be celebrated as the Liturgy of the Hours either in the presence or absence of the body, before or immediately after the interment, it can be replaced by a vigil or a celebration of the word.

6. The celebration of the funeral Mass in the church ends with the rite of the last commendation or the last farewell, at which the entire Christian community assists.

This rite is not to be understood as a purification of the deceased - which is effected rather by the Eucharistic sacrifice - but is intended to express a last farewell by which the Christian and monastic community honors one of its members before the body is interred. Although death always brings a certain separation, Christians, as members of Christ, cannot be separated by death because they are always one in Him.⁹⁹

The Celebrant introduces this rite with an invitation to pray: then follow a period of silence, the sprinkling with holy water, the incensing, and the song of farewell. The text and melody of the latter should be such that it may be sung by all present and be experienced as the climax of this entire rite.

The sprinkling with holy water, which recalls the person's entrance into eternal life through baptism, and the incensing, which honors the body of the deceased as a temple of the Holy Spirit, may also be considered signs of farewell.

The rite of final commendation and farewell is to be held only in the funeral celebration itself, that is, with the body present.

7. This rite of final commendation or farewell in which the entire Christian community takes part, is followed by the procession to the cemetery. The members of the family of the deceased and any guests present, may follow with the monastic community.

This procession symbolizes the crossing of the Red Sea and the exodus from Egypt when the Hebrew people set out for the promised land. It is also the symbol of the Passover of Christ when he passed from death to his Father. As for the cemetery, it prefigures the refreshment, light and peace of Paradise in the center of which stands the tree of life.

8. After the blessing of the tomb, at the moment of interment or the return of the deceased to the earth from which man was formed by God, the Celebrant, as a sign of hope in the resurrection, performs the following: sprinkling with holy water, incensing and the throwing of several shovels

⁹⁹Cf. Simeon Thessalonic., *De ordine sepulturae*: P.G. 155, 685 B

of dirt upon the deceased.

9. Then the last suffrages are said under the solemn form of a common prayer. A long litany may be chosen followed by the concluding prayer said by the Celebrant.

10. Though this Ritual describes the funeral rite according to the unique model received from the tradition of the Cistercian family, it can happen that in a country or region, the Chapter or the Regional Conference foresees a particular need and if suitable may add or even be obliged to add the customs of places recognized by the Episcopal Conference.

11. In every celebration for the dead, whether the funeral service or any other, emphasis should be given to the biblical readings. These proclaim the paschal mystery, support the hope of reunion in the kingdom of God, teach respect for the dead and encourage the witness of faithful Christian living.

12. The Church employs the prayer of the psalms in the offices for the dead to express grief and to strengthen genuine hope. When pastoral considerations indicate the use of other sacred songs, these should reflect a "warm and living love for sacred scripture" and a liturgical spirit.¹⁰⁰

13. In prayers too, the Christian community expresses its faith and intercedes for those who have died so that they may enjoy eternal happiness with God. Prayers are offered also for the relatives of the dead, so that in their sorrow, they may experience the consolation of faith.

14. While the Church prefers the custom of burying the body, as the Lord himself was buried, if for some reason, circumstances require the cremation of the body of the deceased, the funeral rite should be celebrated in conformity to what has been established by the Holy See.

In this case, the celebration of the rites in view of the burial can be held at the same place as the cremation, in the presence of the Abbot/Abbess and several brothers/sisters.

OFFICES AND MINISTRIES TOWARD THE DEAD

15. The Abbot (or Chaplain) should remember that when they commend the dead to God in the funeral liturgy, it is their duty to strengthen the hope of those present and to foster their faith in the paschal mystery and the resurrection of the dead. In this way the compassionate kindness of Mother Church and the consolation of the faith may lighten the burden of believers without offending those who mourn. He should also be concerned for those present at the liturgical celebration and hear the Gospel: non-Catholics or Catholics who seldom or never participate in the Eucharist or seem to have lost their faith. He is the minister of Christ's Gospel to all people.

16. In monasteries of nuns, apart from the Mass, if there is no priest,¹⁰¹ it is the Abbess who officiates at the ceremonies.

FORESEEABLE ADAPTATIONS

¹⁰⁰Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 24

¹⁰¹*Rituale Romanum, Ordo Exsequiarum*, n.19.

17. It is for the Congregation or the Regional Conference to make the necessary adaptation which should be confirmed by the Holy See, these are:

- a. To prepare the translations of texts, so that they are adapted to the spirit of the various languages and cultures adding, where it seems suitable, melodies for singing.
- b. Wherever this ritual offers several optional formulas, other similar formulas may also be added (in conformity to number d. below).
- c. For pastoral reasons, the sprinkling with holy water and incensing may be omitted or replaced by another rite.
- d. In the edition of liturgical books that are prepared by the Congregation or the Ordinary of the place care should be taken to arrange the texts so as to guarantee the utmost pastoral solicitude. Yet none of the texts contained in the regular edition should be lacking.

However, the rubrics or texts that seem necessary to add should be differentiated from the rubrics and texts of this present Ritual by a suitable sign or typographical symbol.

18. The rite proposed here is so described that it may be celebrated very simply. On the other hand, a generous selection of texts is given for use according to circumstances. For example:

- a. In general, all the texts are interchangeable and may be chosen, to reflect the individual situation.
- b. Some elements of the rite are not obligatory but may be freely added, for example the prayer for the mourners.
- c. Whenever a psalm, indicated or preferred for liturgical reasons, may offer some pastoral difficulty, another psalm is provided for optional use. In addition, one or other psalm verse which seems pastorally unsuitable may be omitted.
- d. In the prayers, the lines within parentheses may be omitted.

VIGIL FOR THE DECEASED ¹⁰²

Transfer of the Body of the Deceased to the Church

After death, the infirmarian and his/her assistants prepare the body of the deceased. They dress it in the monastic habit, cover the head with the hood or veil and then place it on the bier¹⁰³ If the deceased was a priest, a stole may be placed around his neck and down the chest. If he was a deacon, the stole is placed across the body; thus it is transported either to the chapel of the infirmary or another suitable place where the Brothers can assemble.

If they cannot assemble immediately, several brothers/sisters present will watch with the deceased singing psalms and interspersing them with readings and prayers found close by.

2. At the appointed time and at the signal, the body is brought and the community assembles around it. The Abbot (chaplain) vested in a stole of the color for funerals on top of the cowl stands

¹⁰²On Cistercian funerals, cf. F. Bernardin Smal, OCSO, monk of Koningshoeven in Holland, *The funeral liturgies in the liturgy of Cîteaux*, Minutes of the OCSO Liturgy Commission, February 1962, Appendix II.

¹⁰³*E.O.* 94, 18; *R.C.* V, VII, 4-5

near the deceased, surrounded by brothers/sisters who carry holy water, incense and the book.¹⁰⁴ The brother/sister who carries the paschal candle or the cross stands at the foot of the bier.

The R/**Subvenite**¹⁰⁵ may be sung first, if it hasn't been at the time of death, or another appropriate chant.

3. Then, when the community has been greeted, if the paschal candle has not yet been lighted, the Abbot (Chaplain) may do so while saying, for example:

May Christ, who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, bring our Brother/Sister into this city which has need of neither sun nor moon, because the glory of God illumines it and its light is the Lamb.

He sprinkles with holy water making a sign of the cross over the body, either in silence or in saying:

All of us who have been baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Then, he sprinkles the body of the deceased. He may then walk around it as he incenses it.¹⁰⁶

4 The Abbot (Chaplain) invites all to pray and after a moment of silence, says:

O God, it is you alone who gives life after death. Grant us, we pray, that the soul of your servant may be purified of all sin and that he/she may be counted among the number of those who take part in your Redemption. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.¹⁰⁷

Or: **O Lord, receive the soul of your servant N. whom you have called out of this world. Release him/her from the bonds of sin, and welcome him/her into your presence, so that he/she may enjoy eternal light and peace and be raised up in glory with all your saints. We ask this through Christ our Lord.**¹⁰⁸

Or another prayer, cf n. 6 below.

And all respond: **Amen.**

5. The cantor (chantress) intones Psalm 129 or another (such as 114/115, 120, 121)¹⁰⁹ with an antiphon or the response: ***Libera me de viis infernis***¹¹⁰ or another. Then the procession is formed and moves toward the church or another more appropriate place. The procession begins with the candle bearer; then the community follows according to rank beginning with the youngest and finally, behind the casket, the Abbot (Chaplain), with the cross, accompanied by acolytes.¹¹¹

In the church the body is placed in the middle of choir, facing toward the East or the altar; according to circumstances, one follows the recent custom of placing a priest facing the people.

¹⁰⁴*E.O.* 94, 4; *R.C.* V, VII, 1; *O.E.* 32

¹⁰⁵*E.O.* 94, 15; *R.C.* V, VII, 2.

¹⁰⁶*E.O.* 94, 21; *R.C.* V, VII, 6.

¹⁰⁷*Sacramentarium Veronense*, ed. L.C. Mohlberg, 1147; *Coll.* f° 149 v°, c. 3; *R.C.* V, VII, 6.

¹⁰⁸*Gre.* 1400; *Coll.* f° 149 v°, c.2; *R.C.* V, VII, 4(e); *O.E.* 30.

¹⁰⁹*O.E.* 33 and 35.

¹¹⁰In place of the response ***Libera me de morte aeterna*** indicated in *Coll.* f° 149 v°, c.3 and *R.C.* V, VII, 7.

¹¹¹*E.O.* 94, 26-28; *R.C.* V, VII, 7.

6. At the end of the singing, the candle is placed on a stand near the head of the deceased, the Abbot (Chaplain) says a few words. Then there is a long or short reading from among those found in the appendix, or another biblical reading. After a time of silence, the Abbot (Chaplain) invites those present to pray.

At this time a brief litany may be said, for example:

**Lord, receive your servant into your dwelling place,
R. Lord, have mercy.**

**Grant him/her rest and the kingdom of the heavenly Jerusalem.
R. Lord, have mercy.**

**May he/she have a place in the bosom of the Patriarchs,
Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
R. Lord, have mercy.**

**May he/she share in the first resurrection and rise with all those who
have been raised.
R. Lord, have mercy.**

**May he/she rise with those who will rise on the day
of the resurrection of the body.
R. Lord, have mercy.**

**May he/she be presented with the blessed who will
stand at the right hand of the Father.
R. Lord, have mercy.**

**May he/she enjoy eternal life with all those who rejoice.¹¹²
R. Lord, have mercy.**

Then the following prayer:

**Lord Jesus, we entrust to you your servant, our Brother/Sister N.
In your goodness you came to this earth for him/her. Have mercy on
him/her, Savior of the world. In your name may he/she pass from this
ephemeral world and attain to eternal life and the joy of heaven where
you live and reign forever and ever.¹¹³**

Or: **Lord, receive the soul...**
(If n. 4 above has not been said previously.)

Or: **Lord, may the ear of your heart hear our prayers. We humbly implore
your mercy for the soul of your servant whom you have called from this
world. Grant him/her your peace and light and may he/she be
numbered among your elect. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.¹¹⁴**

¹¹²*GeV*. 1612; *Coll.* f° 150 r°, c.3; *R.C.* V, IX, 14 f.

¹¹³*Gre.* 4065; *GeV* 1626 (se also: A. Chavasse, *the Gelasian Sacramentary*, Desclée 1958, 6); *Coll.* f° 149 v°, c. 3; *RC* V, VII, 9. The text was already found in the *Sacramentary of Autun*, *CCL* 159B, 1936

¹¹⁴*GeV* 1686; *OE* 33.

The following prayer for those who mourn may be added or said beforehand:

Father of mercies and God of all consolation, your pursue us with untiring love and dispel the shadow of death with the bright light of dawn. Comfort your servants in their loss and sorrow. (Be our refuge and our strength, O Lord, and lift us from the depths of grief into the peace and light of your presence.)

Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, by dying has destroyed our death and by rising, restored our life. Enable us therefore to press on toward him, so that, after our earthly course is run, he may reunite us with those we love, when every tear will be wiped away. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.¹¹⁵

Or another prayer taken from the Appendix.

All respond: **Amen.**

7. Next, the Abbot (Chaplain) may dismiss the community in saying for example:

Let us go now in peace keeping the memory of our deceased Brother/Sister before God.

Thus ends the commendation of the soul. The paschal candle is left illumined at the head of the deceased and at the foot, the holy water and sprinkler.¹¹⁶

8. If, after immediately placing the body of the deceased in the Church, an Hour of the Office is said and it is not a day mentioned in nn. 1 to 9 of the preceding Tables, then, after the procession and its chant, the verse **O God, come to my assistance** is omitted and the hymn is intoned immediately; after the psalmody come the reading and prayer as above in n. 6.

But if the funeral Mass follows immediately, the procession chant takes the place of the Introit.¹¹⁷

If for any celebration, the presence of the deceased seems unsuitable, it is permitted to transfer it either to another part of the Church or to the Chapter Room or to another appropriate place.

The Vigil Properly Speaking or Continual Prayer Near the Body of the Deceased

9. In keeping with the tradition, the body of the deceased remains alone as little as possible.¹¹⁸ when the community is not celebrating in choir, this vigil consists of the recitation of the Psalter, interrupted with chosen biblical readings and devotional practices which move the heart of those who are watching with the deceased. Or silent prayer may be observed.

¹¹⁵OE 34.

¹¹⁶EO 94, 35-37; RC V, VII, 10.

¹¹⁷OE 37.

¹¹⁸EO 94, 45-56 and 9596; RC V, VIII.

10. Outside of Sundays, solemnities, feasts of the Lord in the General Calendar, the ferials of Lent and Holy Week, days in the Octave of Easter and Christmas, the ferial days between December 17 and 24 inclusive, it is suitable to celebrate the Office of the Dead in entirety for the deceased, in place of the office of the day; but the other days before the burial, this Office is celebrated only in part, that is, only at Vigils, Lauds and Vespers for which include: the invitatory antiphon, the hymn, the second reading taken from the Fathers or ecclesiastical writers, the *Benedictus* and *Magnificat* antiphons, the litanies and the prayers.¹¹⁹

11. If the Office of the Dead is not celebrated, either entirely or in part, a celebration of the Word of God takes place at an appropriate time, conducted by the Abbot (Chaplain), but not immediately before the funeral Mass so as not to make the rite unwieldy or repetitious.¹²⁰ Such a celebration could be joined to the Hour of Compline.

In this case, there could be biblical and patristic readings that express and foster the meaning of Christian death, interspersed with songs, especially those taken from the Psalms or the Office of the Dead.

12. This celebration is arranged in this way: first, an introductory monition; after the psalmody, a biblical reading with a period of silence before or after the optional responsory; then a second reading from the writings of the Fathers or ecclesiastical writers - though in place of this second reading the Abbot (Chaplain) or some other priest (or Abbess) may address those present. A reading may also follow each of the psalms, but in such a way that the New Testament reading comes after the Old Testament, and the Gospel last of all. The whole celebration is opportunely concluded with the general intercessions and Lord's Prayer, or some other suitable prayer.

13. When this celebration is held at the time for Compline, it may be arranged in this manner:

- Introductory verse, **O God, come to my assistance;**
- A suitable hymn;
- Psalmody, for which psalms other than those designated by the Rule may be said;
- A long biblical reading, with a period of silence before or after the responsory;
- A second reading from the bible or from the writings of the Fathers or ecclesiastical writers; or else a homily;
- The Canticle of Simeon, *Nunc dimittis*;
- The litany
- A prayer
- The blessing
- The Marian antiphon *Salve, Regina*.

The Funeral Mass

14. The funeral Mass may be celebrated on any day except solemnities which are holidays of obligation, Thursday of Holy Week, the Paschal Triduum, and the Sundays of Advent, Lent and the Easter season.¹²¹

A brief homily is given after the gospel reading, but there is never to be a eulogy. After the homily the intercessions take place. It is recommended that the faithful, especially those belonging to the family of the deceased, take part in the eucharistic sacrifice offered for the deceased by

¹¹⁹*Ceremoniale Episcoporum* 1160; *GILH* 245; *Documentorum explanatio*, in the *Notitiae* 16 (1980) 474.

¹²⁰*OE* 27-29.

¹²¹*GIRM* 336.

receiving holy communion.¹²²

15. Upon reception of the news of a death, Mass may be celebrated not only on the same days as for a funeral Mass, but also on days within the octave of Christmas, on obligatory memorials or on weekdays other than Ash Wednesday or those of Holy Week.¹²³

16. According to custom, when the body is present, not only the funeral Mass but all other Masses may be celebrated for the deceased unless some particular obligation stands in the way.¹²⁴

THE BURIAL RITE

Final Commendation in Church or Farewell¹²⁵

17. Just as the vigil in the presence of the deceased brother begins with a celebration in common around the body of the deceased, so also, when the body is to be carried to the grave, before it is taken from the places where the departed faithfully served the Lord in the monastery, the community assembles to conclude this solemn vigil together.

18. Following the prayer after communion of the funeral Mass, or, if the eucharistic sacrifice is not celebrated, at the conclusion of the liturgy of the word,¹²⁶ the Celebrant, vested in stole, alb and chasuble, goes with staff and mitre (if an Abbot) to the funeral bier. Next to him are the ministers with book, holy water and incense. At the head another minister holds the paschal candle or the cross.¹²⁷

19. When neither Mass nor an Hour of the Divine Office has preceded, the Abbot (Chaplain) may greet those present, as at the beginning of Mass, or else he may say:

**May the God of hope fill you with all peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope and the power of the Holy
Spirit, and the Lord may be with you always.**¹²⁸

All respond: **Amen.**

20. The Abbot, (or Chaplain) puts the cross aside and says the invitatory in these or similar words:

**With faith in Jesus Christ, we must reverently bury the body of our
brother/sister. Let us pray with confidence in God, in whose sight all
creation lives, that he will raise up in holiness and power the mortal**

¹²²*GIRM* 338-339; *OE* 41-44.

¹²³*GIRM* 337

¹²⁴*EO* 97; *RC* V, VIII, 5-8.

¹²⁵*OE* 46 has the title *Ultima commendatio et valedictio* (*Final Commendation in OCF*), in keeping with the received Cistercian tradition, there are further ample rites and prayers in the cemetery, in which the community together with relatives of the deceased and guests participate. Accordingly, the title here in our own ritual is *Final Commendation in Church or Farewell*.

¹²⁶*RC* V, IX, 1; *OE* 46

¹²⁷*Coll.* f° 149 v°, c.3; *EO* 98, 1-5; *RC* V, IX, 1-2

¹²⁸Roman Missal for francophone regions, November 2; cf. Rom 15:13

body of our brother/sister and command his/her soul to be numbered among the blessed.

May God grant him/her a merciful judgment, deliverance from death, and pardon of sin. May Christ, the Good Shepherd, carry him/her home to be at peace with the Father. May he/she rejoice forever in the presence of the eternal King and in the company of all the Saints.¹²⁹

All pray briefly in silence.

21. Then the Abbot (Chaplain) sprinkles the body with holy water and incenses it. Meanwhile the responsory *Credo quod Redemptor* is sung.

**I know that my Redeemer lives
And on that final day of days,
His voice shall bid me rise again:
Unending joy, unceasing praise!**

**This hope I cherish in my heart:
To stand on earth, my flesh restored,
And not a stranger but a friend,
Behold my Savior and my Lord.**¹³⁰

Or another such as *Subvenite (Saints of God)*, or *Qui Lazarum (Lazarus you raised)*, or *Libera me de viis (Deliver me, Lord, from the paths)*, or some other suitable **song**.

22. Then the Abbot (Chaplain) says the prayer:

To you, O God, the dead do not die, and in death our life is changed, not ended. Hear our prayers. Bid your holy angels bear our Brother/Sister N. up in their hands and lead him/her to the bosom of your patriarchs - Abraham, your friend, Isaac, your chosen one, Jacob, your beloved.

Thus sorrow takes flight and sadness too and sighing; and the souls of the faithful rejoice in blissful delight. Grant that, at the great judgment on that last day, he/she may, amidst your saints and chosen ones, receive a portion of that everlasting glory which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the human heart what things you have prepared for those who love you.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.¹³¹

Or this prayer may be said:

Into your hands, Father of mercies, we commend our brother/sister N. in the sure and certain hope that, together with all who have died in Christ, he/she will rise with him on the last day.

(We give you thanks for the blessings which you have bestowed upon N. in this life. They are signs to us of your love and of our fellowship with the saints in Christ.)

¹²⁹*Gre.* 1413 and 4062; *GeV.* 1623; *Coll.* f° 150 r°, c.3; *RC* V, IX, 14 d; *OE* 46.

¹³⁰This responsory is preferred by reason of its content, as in the *Ordo exsequiarum monasticus* 61. Moreover, the responsory *Subvenite (Saints of God)* was already sung at the moment of death. The responsories *Subvenite* and *Libera me de viis* are found in *Coll.* f° 150 r°, c.1; *RC* V, IX 4-8.

¹³¹*Gre.* 4067; *Coll.* f° 150 r°, c.1 and *RC* V, IX 6 where the prayer begins with: *Deus cui omnia vivunt.*

God of tenderness, listen to our prayer. Open the gates of paradise to your servant and help us who remain to comfort one another with assurances of faith, until we all meet in Christ and are with you and our brother/sister forever.¹³²

Or:

To you, O Lord, recommend the soul of N. your servant; in the sight of this world he/she is now dead; in your sight may he/she live forever. Forgive whatever sins he/she committed through human weakness and in your goodness grant him/her everlasting peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord.¹³³

All respond: **Amen.**

Procession to the cemetery

23. At the end of the prayer of commendation, the procession to the cemetery takes place while the bells are rung. First come the ministers carrying the holy water, the censer, the paschal candle or the cross; then the brothers/sisters according to rank, beginning with the juniors; then the funeral bier; finally, the Abbot with staff and miter (or Chaplain). (The Abbess carries the cross.) The relatives of the deceased and the guests may follow after the Abbot (Chaplain), unless it seems better to reverse the order, that is, the Abbot (Chaplain) and community come after the paschal candle or the cross and the funeral bier, beginning with the seniors.¹³⁴

24. Psalms are sung during the procession, namely Psalm 113 A with the antiphon:

May choirs of angels welcome you and lead you to the bosom of Abraham; and where Lazarus is poor no longer, may you find eternal rest.¹³⁵

Or: **May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs come to welcome you and take you to the holy city.**¹³⁶

Psalm 117 with the antiphon:

Open for me the holy gates: I will enter and praise the Lord.¹³⁷

Also, if necessary, Psalm 41 with the antiphon:

I will go to the altar of God, to his dwelling place.¹³⁸

The same psalms may be sung under a single antiphon:

May choirs of angels, as above

¹³²OE 48.

¹³³Coll. f° 149 v°, c.2; RC V, VII, 3; OE 192.

¹³⁴OE 98, 1-12; RC V, IX, 10.

¹³⁵Coll. f° 150 r°, c. 1; EO 98,8; RC V, IX, 9 and 15.

¹³⁶OE 50.

¹³⁷Psalm as indicated above n. 34; antiphon OE 155.

¹³⁸Psalm as indicated above, n. 34; antiphon OE 147.

Or: **May the angels**, as above

Or: **I heard a voice from heaven: Blessed are those who die in the Lord.**¹³⁹

Or: **I am the resurrection and the life. All who believe in me shall live, even though they die. All who live and believe in me shall never die.**¹⁴⁰

Or: A simple **Alleluia** as a response.

Burial

25. When the procession arrives at the grave, the ministers carrying the holy water and incense stand at the foot of the grave, but the cross or paschal candle bearer at the head. If the disposition of the place so allows, the community stands on each side. The Abbot (Chaplain) stands at the foot of the grave with the other ministers.¹⁴¹

26. When all have taken their places around the grave, the Abbot (Chaplain) addresses the bystanders in these or similar words:

Dear Brothers and Sisters, faithfully and lovingly we remember our dear brother/sister whom the Lord has taken from this world to himself. We implore, then, the mercy our God, that he himself may graciously grant him/her a peaceful, quiet dwelling place, and remission of all his/her offenses.¹⁴²

¹³⁹*OE* 35.

¹⁴⁰*OE* 166.

¹⁴¹*RC* V, IX, 11.

¹⁴²*Gre.* 1398 and 4047; *GeV.* 1607; *Coll.* f° 150 r°, c. 2; *RC* V, IX, 12 a.

The Abbot (Chaplain) then blesses the grave saying:

Almighty God, you created the earth and shaped the vault of heaven; you fixed the stars in their places. When we were caught in the snares of death, you set us free through baptism; in obedience to your will our Lord Jesus Christ broke the fetters of hell and rose to life, bringing deliverance and resurrection to those who are his by faith. In your mercy look upon this grave, may your Holy Spirit descend upon it so that your servant may sleep here in peace according to your will and on the day of judgment raise him/her up to dwell with your saints in paradise. You who live and reign forever and ever.¹⁴³

Or: **Lord Jesus Christ, by your three days in the tomb, you hallowed the graves of all who believe in you and so made the grave a sign of hope that promises resurrection even as it claims our mortal bodies. Grant that your servant may sleep here in peace until you awaken him/her to glory. Then he/she will see you face to face and in your light will see light and know the splendor of God, for you live and reign forever and ever.**¹⁴⁴

Or: **O God, by whose mercy the faithful departed find rest, bless this grave, and send your holy angel to watch over it. As we bury the body of our brother/sister, deliver his/her soul from every bond of sin, that he/she may rejoice in you with your saints forever. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.**¹⁴⁵

Or: **God of endless ages, through disobedience to your law we fell from grace and death entered the world; but through the obedience and resurrection of your Son you revealed to us a new life. You granted Abraham, our father in faith, a burial place in the promised land; you prompted Joseph of Arimathea to offer his own tomb for the burial of the Lord. In a spirit of repentance, we earnestly ask you to look upon this grave and bless it, so that, while we commit to the earth the body of your servant N. his/her soul may be taken to paradise. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.**¹⁴⁶

All respond: **Amen.**

After the prayer, the Abbot (Chaplain) sprinkles the grave with holy water, and then incenses it. In those places where one of the community goes down into the grave to receive and arrange the body becomingly, the Abbot (Chaplain) can hand him/her the censor to incense the grave.¹⁴⁷

27. While the body is being laid in the grave, Psalm 41 (A) may be sung with its antiphon, unless it has already been sung:

I will go to the altar of God, to his dwelling place.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³M. Andrieu, *Le Pontifical roman au Moyen-Age*, Tome 2. *Le Pontifical de la curie romaine au XIIIe siècle* 509; Coll. f ° 150 r °, c.2; RC V, IX, 12 d; OE 194.

¹⁴⁴OE 53.

¹⁴⁵OE 193.

¹⁴⁶OE 195.

¹⁴⁷Coll. f ° 150 r °, c.2; EO 98, 19-21; RC V, IX, 13; OE 53.

¹⁴⁸See notes 136 and 139.

Or psalm 125 with its antiphon:

Those who sow in tears shall sing for joy when they reap.¹⁴⁹

Or Psalm 131 with its antiphon:

This is my resting place forever, here have I chosen to live.¹⁵⁰

Or a responsory is sung.

28. When the body has been lowered into the grave and arranged, and the head covered, the Abbot/Abbess takes a shovel or scoop and casts a handful of dirt onto the body. Then he/she stands back opposite the grave.¹⁵¹

While the brothers/sisters appointed for this are covering the body with earth, the psalmody may be continued, especially with Psalm 138 and its antiphon:

**You fashioned me from earth, and clothed me with flesh,
O Lord, my Redeemer, raise me up on that last day.**¹⁵²

Final Suffrages

29. When the body has been covered, the psalmody is interrupted and the intercessions are said¹⁵³ - either one of the following formularies, or one in similar words, whether in whole or in part.

A

30. The Abbot (Chaplain) says the invitation to prayer:

**Because God has chosen to call our brother/sister N. from this life to himself, we commit his/her body to the earth for we are dust and unto dust we shall return.
But the Lord Jesus will change our mortal bodies to be like his in glory, for he is risen, the firstborn from the dead.
So let us commend our brother/sister to the Lord, that the Lord, that the Lord may embrace him/her in peace and raise up his/her body on the last day.**¹⁵⁴

The Deacon (Abbess) or one of the brothers/sisters reads the petitions, to which all respond **Amen.**

¹⁴⁹Psalm: *OE* 161.

¹⁵⁰Psalm: as indicated above, note 34; *OE* 164. This psalm with its antiphon is taken from the francophone ritual for funerals.

¹⁵¹*Coll.* f° 150 r°, c.2; *EO* 98, 22-23; *RC* V, IX 13.

¹⁵²Psalm: as indicated above, note 34; *EO* 52. This psalm with its antiphon as in the francophone ritual for funerals.

¹⁵³*OE* 56.

¹⁵⁴*OE* 72.

Welcome, Lord, the soul of your servant who returns to you. Clothe him/her in the heavenly garment, and wash him/her in the holy font of eternal life. *R.*

- May he/she taste wisdom with the wise of your people. *R.***
- May he/she take his/her place among the patriarchs and prophets. *R.***
- May he/she follow Christ with the apostles. *R.***
- And with the martyrs may he/she receive a crown. *R.***
- With angels and archangels, ever gaze upon the glory of God. *R.***
- May he/she find, with cherubim and seraphim, the glory of God. *R.***
- May he/she hear with the twenty-four elders the canticle surpassing all other canticles. *R.***
- May he/she join with those who wash their robe in the waters of the river of life. *R.***
- May he/she enter with those who knock on the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem. *R.***
- May he/she attain deep knowledge of your mysteries and enter joyfully the glories of paradise. *R.***
- Among those who are in the light, may he/she see God face to face. *R.***
- With those who sing the new song may he/she join his/her voice. *R.***
- And hear, with those who listen, the heavenly choirs.¹⁵⁵ *R.***

B

31. The Abbot (Chaplain) says the invitation to prayer:

For our brother/sister N., let us pray to our Lord Jesus Christ, who said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me shall live even in death and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."

The Deacon (Abbess) or one of the brothers/sisters says the petitions, to which all respond: **Lord, hear our prayer, or Lord, have mercy on us sinners.**

Lord Jesus, you who wept at the grave of your friend, Lazarus, comfort us in our sorrow, we pray. *R.*

You who raised the dead to life; give our brother/sister eternal life, we pray. *R.*

¹⁵⁵*GeV. 1611; Coll. f° 150 r°, c. 3; RC V, IX, 14 e.*

You promised paradise to the repentant thief, bring our brother/sister to the joy of heaven, we pray. R.

Our brother/sister was sanctified in the water of baptism and anointed with the Holy Spirit, grant him/her the fullness of life of the children of God, we pray. R.

He/she was nourished with your Body and Blood; grant him/her a place at the table in your Kingdom, we pray. R.

Comfort us in our sorrow at the death of N.; let our faith be our consolation, and eternal life our hope, we pray.¹⁵⁶ R.

C

32. Instead of the above intentions, a longer antiphon may be sung, at the end of which a supplication in litany form is repeated three times by all. The Abbot (Chaplain) invites us to prayer:

Dear brothers and sisters, let us pray for the spirit of our dear brother/sister whom the Lord has graciously set free from this world.

We commit his/her frail body to the grave this day but may God, in his goodness grant him/her a place in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, so that when the day of judgment comes, he may raise him/her up in the company of the saints and chosen ones, and place him/her at his own right hand.¹⁵⁷

Then the antiphon *Clementissime Domine* is sung:

Most merciful Lord, because of our sin, you suffered the punishment of death at the hands of the godless. Deliver the soul of your servant from hell's abyss; free him/her, in your mercy, from the bonds of death, and wipe out all his/her sins forever. May the angels bring him/her into your light, and lead him/her through the gates of paradise, so that, while his/her body is here committed to dust, he/she may attain to the joys of eternity.¹⁵⁸

All either kneel or bow, and offer the threefold supplication:

Lord, have mercy on a sinner.

33. All recite the Lord's Prayer together;¹⁵⁹ or else the Abbot (Chaplain) says one of the following prayers:

Almighty God, through the death of your Son on the cross you destroyed our death; through his rest in the tomb, you hallowed the graves of all who believe in you; and through his rising again you restored us to eternal life. Accept our prayers for our brother/sister N. who has died

¹⁵⁶OE 56.

¹⁵⁷GeV. 1620; Coll. f° 150 r°, c. 3; RC V, IX, 14 b.

¹⁵⁸EO 98,8; RC V, IX, 15, changing the words *de ministris tartareis* to *de vinculis mortis*, as in the Dominican Ritual.

¹⁵⁹OE 56.

in Christ in the hope of rising again. Since he/she was true to your name on earth, let him/her praise you forever in the joy of heaven.¹⁶⁰

Or: Presumption indeed it is, O Lord, that a mortal who is dust and ashes should commend to you, our Lord and God, another mortal, also dust and ashes. Yet, certain of your love, we implore you with faith since earth is taking back again this bit of earth, and dust returns to dust.

Receive your servant into the Kingdom. Welcome him/her in the bosom of Abraham, your friend; cool him/her with your refreshing dew and let him/her suffer no harm, but flooded with your joy, may he/she find rest in you, knowing your forgiveness. Then may our brother/sister rise, fashioned anew, and gathered into the assembly of all the saints, receive his/her crown at your right hand. This we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord.¹⁶¹

Or: Lord, our God, have mercy on your servant. Do not count his/her deeds against him/her for in his/her heart, he/she desired to do your will. As his/her faith united him/her to your people on earth, so may your mercy unite him/her to the angels in heaven. Through Jesus, the Christ, our Lord.¹⁶²

Or: Cast down and afflicted by this separation, we entreat you with tears, God of mercy and Redeemer of the world. Receive with kindness the soul of our dear brother/sister N., who now returns to you, source of all holiness. Father of tenderness, in your faithful love, forgive his/her sins, efface them forever so that he/she may be gathered into the assembly of your saints there to sing your praise forever. For you live and reign forever and ever.¹⁶³

Or: Into your hands, Father of mercies, we commend our brother/sister N. in the hope that, together with all who have died in Christ, he/she will rise with him on the last day.
(We give you thanks for the blessings which you bestowed upon N. in this life. They are signs to us of your love and the communion of saints.)
God of tenderness, hear our prayer for your servant who has just left us. (Open to him/her the gates of paradise) Help us who remain to comfort one another with assurances of faith, until we all meet in Christ and are with you and with our brother/sister forever.¹⁶⁴ Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All respond: Amen.

34. The Abbot (Chaplain) may then bring together in a single prayer the deceased monk/nun, the other brothers/sisters in the cemetery and all the faithful departed:

God of love, the peace of heaven is your gift. Forgive our brothers and sisters and all who rest in Christ, here and everywhere, so that free from

¹⁶⁰OE 199.

¹⁶¹*Liber Ordinum*, ed. Ferotin 125; *Coll.* f° 150 r°, c.2; *RC V*, IX, 14; the text has been revised.

¹⁶²*GeV*. 1402; *Coll.* f° 150 r°, c.1; *RC V*, IX, 7; *OE* 56.

¹⁶³*GeV*. 1608; *Coll.* f° 149 v°, c. 2; *RC V*, VII, 4 b.

¹⁶⁴OE 48.

their sins, they may share in the resurrection of Christ. For he lives and reigns with you forever and ever.¹⁶⁵

All respond: **Amen.**

35. A song may conclude the rite, according to local custom,¹⁶⁶ after which the Abbot (Chaplain) optionally blesses the bystanders as at the end of Mass. For the dismissal verse he says:

Let us now go in peace, but mindful of our brother/sister before the Lord.

36. If the procession to the cemetery cannot take place because of bad weather, the psalmody is interrupted at a convenient place, and the final suffrages are arranged as above, nn. 29-35. The body is then laid in a suitable place. Afterward, at the opportune time, the body, accompanied by a few of the brothers/sisters, is buried by the Abbot (Chaplain and Abbess), who blesses the grave, sprinkles it with holy water, and incenses it. He does nothing else, unless out of devotion or out of consideration for particular persons.

37. Afterward, death notices are drawn up to be sent to all the monasteries of the Cistercian Family. The following form is used, with the necessary changes, according to circumstances:

On August 11, 1992, Brother Hilary (novice, temporary professed, lay brother, oblate, deacon, priest, jubilarian, etc.) died in our monastery of Our Lady of Fontenay, of the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance, in the diocese of Dijon, (France). In your charity, we ask for your prayers and sacrifices on his behalf; and we shall pray for your deceased.¹⁶⁷

RECEPTION OF THE BODY OF A DECEASED PERSON¹⁶⁸

38. When one of our guests dies, or it happens that someone's body is brought to the monastery, the community goes in procession to meet the body either at the guesthouse or at the monastery gate or door to the church, and everything takes place as above, nn. 2-8.

39. If the body is to be transferred to a further destination, after the final commendation and farewell, as above, nn. 13-18, the body is brought to the place where it is handed over to those who are to accompany it further. The psalmody is interrupted, and the Abbot or priest celebrant (or abbess) says the appropriate prayer and then dismisses the community.

APPENDIX

TEXTS FOR THE LITURGY OF THE WORD OR FOR THE VIGIL WITH THE DEPARTED

Psalms and Antiphons

¹⁶⁵*Gre.* 1444; *Coll.* f° 150 v°, c. 1; *RC V*, IX, 16, but according to the Roman Missal.

¹⁶⁶*OE* 57.

¹⁶⁷*Cf. RC V*, X, 1.

¹⁶⁸*RC V*, XII.

For the sake of convenience, the select psalms for the departed are here listed together with their antiphons:

- 5 Make clear your way before me, O Lord my God.**
- 6 Return, Lord, rescue my soul, for in death no one remembers you.**
- 7 Let my pursuer not tear me to pieces like a lion, and drag me off with no one to rescue me.**
- 15 Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.
or Even my body shall rest in safety.**
- 22 Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.**
- 24 Do not remember the sins of my youth, O Lord.**
- 26 I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living.**
- 30 (1-6). In your justice, set me free, O Lord.**
- 39 O Lord, come to my rescue, Lord, come to my aid.**
- 40 Heal my soul, O Lord, for I have sinned against you.**
- 41 My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life; when can I enter and see the face of God?**
- 50 The bones that were crushed shall dance before the Lord.**
- 62 Your right hand holds me fast, O Lord.**
- 64 Hear my prayer, O Lord; to you all flesh will come.**
- 83 They are happy who dwell in your house, O Lord.**
- 84 O Lord, you have favored your land; you have forgiven the guilt of your people.**
- 85 Turn your ear, O Lord, and give answer.
or Lord, you are slow to anger and abounding in love.**
- 90 With length of days I will content him; and I shall let him see my saving power.**
- 114 I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.**
- 120 The Lord will guard you from all evil, the Lord will guard your soul.**
- 129 If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive?**
- 137 Discard not the work of your hands, O Lord.**

**142 Do not hide your face, for I put my trust in you.
or in E.T. For your name's sake, Lord, save my life, alleluia.**

**150 Let everything that lives and that breathes give praise to the Lord.
Alleluia!**

Biblical Readings

As in the *Order of Christian Funerals*, Section 13. **Funerals for Adults**, pp. 208-247

Readings from the Fathers

As in the Office for the Dead in the Roman *Liturgy of the Hours*.

Formularies for the General Intercessions

In addition to the formularies contained in the present Order of Funerals, the following may also be used: *Order of Christian Funerals*, n. 401, 1-4.

Concluding Prayers

As in the *Order of Christian Funerals*, Prayers for the Dead, n. 398, 1-47 and n. 399, 3.

Suffrages for the Departed

IN THE CISTERCIAN ORDER OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE
ACCORDING TO THE DECISIONS OF THE 1971 GENERAL CHAPTERS
OF ABBOTS AND ABBESSES

1. EVERY YEAR: The All Souls anniversary, November 2.
2. EVERY MONTH: Except during privileged seasons, a conventual Mass is celebrated for the departed of the Order and of our families, as well as for other deceased who are closely associated with the monastery or the Order. The day is designated by the Abbot/Abbess. Monk priests who celebrate in private will have this intention for the departed on this day, as well as all the concelebrants.
If the Abbot/Abbess deems it opportune, a Service of the Word may be celebrated also.
3. EVERY DAY: at the Divine Office, mention is made of the departed during the prayer. (For example, in the final litany of certain of the Hours).
4. ON PARTICULAR OCCASIONS
 - a) Each time a religious of the Order dies, or a close relative of a member of the community (father, mother, brother, sister, marriage partner, child), each brother or sister adds over and above the monthly conventual Mass some meritorious good work or some particular prayer.
 - b) When the Pope, the local bishop, the Abbot General or the Father Immediate

dies, a special community Mass is celebrated for his intention.

5. WHEN A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY DIES:

- the vigil and the funeral rites;

- an alms on the part of the entire community;

- the celebration of three Masses by each of the priests (in a community of monks), by the Chaplain in a community of nuns, after the burial. (This could be conventual Masses celebrated or concelebrated on the third, seventh and thirtieth days after death. according to the norms of the Missal).

The Abbot/Abbess may determine with his/her Council if something more should be done.

RITUAL FOR THE ELECTION, CONFIRMATION AND BLESSING OF AN ABBOT OR ABBESS

IN THE ORDER OF CISTERCIANS OF THE STRICT OBSERVANCE

Approved by the General Chapter of OCSO Abbots in 1974 and updated according to the norms of Canon Law (1983) and the Constitutions of the Order (1990).

Introduction: For the making of an abbot or abbess, three acts are necessary: the first is the election; the second, the confirmation and installation; the third, the blessing. All that is said here of the abbot, in the masculine, holds good for the abbess, except where otherwise indicated; this also holds for a prior or prioress of a major or simple priory, making the necessary changes.

THE ELECTION

1. When an abbot has died and one of the Churches of the Order is without a superior, or when an abbot is approaching the prescribed end of his term, the Prelate to whom it pertains by law decides upon and indicates an opportune day for the future election, and convokes all the electors, in keeping with the norm of the law.

During these days the brothers are not only to be exhorted to give themselves more frequently to prayer and good works; they are also to be seriously advised concerning the election as regards the pertinent legislation, whether universal or particular.

2. On the appointed day and at the appropriate time prior to the election itself - on the eve after Vespers, for example - the President of the election convokes the electors. If he has been delegated, the instrument of his delegation, in so far as this is possible, is first of all read aloud. The President

makes a brief exhortation, and then, from the assembly itself, three (or at least two) scrutators are elected by secret vote. It lies within the power of those elected to agree to this election or to refuse it; but if one of them refuses, another is elected. Of those elected, the senior or first scrutator is held to be the one nominated by the majority of votes.

The choice and convocation of a notary (or secretary) and two witnesses also lies within the competency of the President. It is customary that these be selected from outside the assembly, in so far as this is possible.

3. The members of the conventual chapter should also indicate, by secret vote, their personal option, in keeping with the Constitutions, either for the election of an abbot for an unrestricted term, or for a six year term.

4. On the day of the election, the votive Mass of the Holy Spirit is celebrated as the conventual Mass, in keeping with the norms of the General Instruction of the Missal, with the (**Gloria** and) prayers proper to the action. All the electors are present and, if they wish, communicate at this Mass, which is presided over by the President; present also are the notary and the witnesses.

If it is foreseen that, after the installation, the blessing of the elected Abbot is to follow on the same day, the Mass of the Holy Spirit can be celebrated before the preparatory chapter.

The Chapter for the Election

5. At the appointed time the bell is rung, and all taking part in the election assemble in the chapter room or some other suitable place. From this time on until the conclusion of the election none of them has contact with any person outside the assembly.

If the installation is expected to follow immediately, a book of Gospels, the keys of the church, the seal of the monastery and the pectoral cross of the abbot are placed on a table.

The President begins with the verse *Divinum auxilium* or some other, and all respond **Amen**. But if the Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit was celebrated on the preceding day (or is not permitted by the norms of the Missal), then first of all the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* is sung, to which the President adds the prayer, *Deus qui corda fidelium*.

6. After the reading from Chapter 64 of the Rule, the President briefly comments on the text and encourages a spirit of faith and discernment among the electors, so that they may appoint a steward worthy of the house of God.

7. Then the cantor (or notary) reads the list of all the electors according to seniority. Each upon hearing his name read stands and says "present". If one of the electors is absent, the prior or another indicates the reason for this to the President. At the end the number of those voting is announced. If the President thinks it opportune, the participants may take an oath.¹⁶⁹

8. The election then follows. The cantor distributes voting papers to each of the electors, beginning with the scrutators. These ballots may be prepared in such a way that, for instance, the names of all the electors are written out, so that it suffices to circle or make a sign next to the name of the one to whom each elector wishes to give his vote. There should also be a space to write the name of a non-elect and that of his monastery.

9. The junior scrutator removes the lid of the voting box or urn which the first scrutator turns upside down to show that it is empty. Then he turns it right side up and replaces the lid.

10. Upon the indication of the President, the scrutators go with their ballots to the table prepared

¹⁶⁹The formulas are to be found in the Appendix.

for this purpose; they write their votes, then drop them in the ballot box placed on the table before the witnesses, and then sit down in front of this table. The other electors do the same, and after having cast their ballot in the voting-box, leave the election hall.

11. The scrutators, together with the witnesses and the notary, go to any of the sick who are in the house but are unable to be present, so that they too make their vote.

12. After all the ballots have been collected, the first scrutator scrambles them, takes them out of the ballot box and counts them to see if they equal the number of electors. If there is one too many, the electors are recalled. The President declares the election null, the ballots are destroyed and the election is repeated.

13. If the number of ballots is correct, the first scrutator unfolds the ballots, reads them and passes them to his companions to be likewise read. Each of them writes down the number of votes given to each. The ballots are reckoned according to the norms of the Constitutions, and the results are made known to the President and witnesses.

14. When the ballots of all have thus been written down and counted, and the electors have meanwhile been called back to the hall, the first scrutator enumerates the votes received, beginning with the one receiving the fewest, in such a way as to conclude with the words:

Brothers, disregarding the X ballots which are null, the majority required by our legislation is X. Therefore:

- we have neither an election nor a postulation.

Or:

- In keeping with our Constitutions, Fr. N., who has received X votes has been elected (postulated).

If the one elected is the first scrutator, another scrutator says and does all of the above.

15. If there has been neither an election nor a postulation, one proceeds to a new election.

However, the President with the consent of the conventual chapter, has the power to limit the number of ballots for the good of the community. In this case, when neither an election nor a postulation has been obtained, the session is concluded as below, n. 18.

16. But if an election or a postulation has been obtained, and has been announced by the scrutator, the President proclaims:

I declare Father N. truly and canonically elected (postulated) as the legitimate abbot of this monastery of Our Lady of N.

17. If the abbot elect (or postulated) is present in chapter, or is found close by, the President summons him, and, in a few words asks him, standing before him, whether he wishes to consent to the election (or postulation). The abbot elect (or postulated) clearly expresses, also in a few words, his consent to the abbatial ministry.

If the abbot elect (or postulated) is absent and cannot come immediately, he is notified of his election as soon as possible, and the session is meanwhile concluded as below, n. 18.

But if the abbot elect (or postulated) refuses absolutely and for a reasonable cause, he is not to be forced; rather, one should proceed to a new election, or act as otherwise provided for in keeping with the norms of the Constitutions.

Where the President of the election has the full or delegated right to confirm the abbot elect, and the abbot elect, present in the chapter, consents to the election, after an interval sufficient to

convoke and assemble the temporary professed and the novices in chapter, one proceeds to the confirmation as indicated below (Cf. Ch. 2).

18. But if the confirmation and installation of the abbot elect has to be deferred, the instrument of election is drawn up by the notary, and is publicly read; all then go to the table of the notary and sign their names according to order of precedence, that is: the President of the election, the abbot elect, the witnesses, the notary. After the verse *Adiutorium nostrum* or another is said and also prayer *Actiones nostras*¹⁷⁰ is proclaimed by the President, everyone leaves.

The ballots and other notes used in the election are carefully destroyed by the notary or someone else. But a copy of the instrument of election is sent to the Abbot General as soon as possible.

CONFIRMATION AND INSTALLATION

19. As long as the abbot elect (or postulated) has been neither confirmed nor installed, he exercises no jurisdiction except by way of delegation by the competent authority. In community, however, his place is next to the abbatial seat.

20. At the designated hour, the bell is rung and all the brothers, both professed and novices, gather in chapter and the President of the election or the delegate of the competent authority, proceeds to the confirmation and installation.

After the verse *Divinum auxilium* or another is said; Chapter 2 of the Rule is read. The President addresses the abbot elect and confirms that he is juridically confirmed:

**I, Brother N., in virtue of the authority given to me, (confirm you)
(declare you confirmed) as true abbot of this monastery of Our Lady of
N.**

21. The new abbot pronounces his profession of faith and the oath of fidelity according to the formula approved by the Holy See.¹⁷¹

22. Afterwards the President presents the new abbot with the keys to the Church and the seal of the monastery, saying:

**Through the handing over of its seal and keys, receive, as its true abbot,
the plenary government of this monastery of O.L. of N.**

23. He then has him seated in the abbot's place and, if it is the current practice, he may hand him the pectoral cross, saying nothing, or else saying the following:

**Receive this sign of the cross as a reminder of him whose place you are
believed to now hold.**

24. The the new abbot receives each of the professed as they come to renew their promise of obedience. Each kneels and places his joined hands in the hands of the abbot saying:

**Father, I promise you obedience according to the Rule of St. Benedict
until death.**

The temporary professed say:

**Father, I promise you obedience according to the Rule of St. Benedict
and the Constitutions of the Order.**

¹⁷⁰Lord, our God, we pray that you will inspire all our actions and help us to accomplish them. Thus all our prayer and action will always have their beginning and their end in you. Through Christ, our Lord. R. Amen

¹⁷¹The formulas are to be found in the Appendix.

The abbot embraces each one and answers in these or similar words:

And may God give you eternal life.

To the temporary professed: **...perseverance.**

He may then embrace the novices and others present and give an address to all.

25. According to circumstances, all either remain in chapter or else go in procession to church, two by two. Whether in chapter or in the procession to church, the *Te Deum* or some other suitable chant is sung as a thanksgiving hymn.

At the conclusion of the hymn, the President turns toward the new abbot and says:

Almighty and everlasting God, who alone perform great marvels, send upon your servant N. and upon the community entrusted to him the Spirit of salvation and peace. May all be filled with your blessing forever and be truly pleasing to you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

R. Amen.

26. Afterwards, or at the opportune time, if the instrument of election has not yet been signed, all who took part in the election sign the instrument of election, confirmation and installation drawn up and publically read aloud by the notary, as described above, n. 18. Otherwise only the President, abbes, witnesses and notary sign the instrument of installation and confirmation, which is not given a public reading.

ABBATIAL BLESSING

27. The Roman Pontifical is followed with due regard to the right of the Abbot General to bless all abbots and abbesses of the Order, and the Order's received tradition of giving the crozier to abbesses as well as abbots.¹⁷²

28. If the abbatial blessing is conferred on the same day or the next day by the prelate who has presided at the election, confirmation and installation of the abbot, it is fitting that during the act of confirmation, after reading the Rule and the instrument of delegation, the president should interrogate the abbot elect as in the rite of the abbatial blessing. In this case, during the Mass of blessing, after the homily, the abbot elect is led by two monks before the seat of the President and the litany of the saints, (preceded by its monition) is sung immediately, without any preliminary interrogation. After the reception of the blessing and crozier, the abbot receives the kiss of peace from the Prelate and abbots and abbesses present; he does not embrace the monks since this was done earlier in the chapter where the rite of installation was carried out. Then if the locality permits, the President installs the abbot in his place in choir.

ELECTION OF THE ABBOT GENERAL

29. The Abbot General is elected in the same manner as the abbots, as above. Yet, he is elected by the General Chapters of both Abbots and Abbesses in separate sessions. Whoever obtains an absolute majority in both Chapters is considered elected. In place of Chapter 64 of the Rule, Constitutions 82-83 of the Order are read.

¹⁷²*Rituale Cisterciense*, Westmall 1949, L. VIII, c. V,1 and VI, 9; as well as the Apostolic Constitution *Non mediocri*, July 30, 1902, and the Resc. S.C.R., May 8, 1913.

30. Once all the votes have been examined and counted and the electors returned to their proper room, the first scrutator (scrutatrix) names those who have received votes (with their number), beginning with those who have received the least. Then each one concludes with the following formula:

**There were X nul votes:
Therefore the majority required by our law is X.
Thus:**

A.

No one obtained the required majority and
(Once the number of votes obtained in the other Chapter is known, the scrutator (scrutatrix) adds)

**In the Chapter of Abbesses (of Abbots),
Dom N. has obtained so many votes, etc.**

B.

In our Chapter, Dom N. has obtained the required majority.
(Once the number of votes obtained in the other Chapter is known, the scrutator (scrutatrix) adds)
However, we have neither an election nor a postulation for he has not obtained this same majority in the Chapter of Abbesses (of Abbots).

In this Chapter, Dom N. has obtained so many votes, etc.

C.

In our Chapter Dom N. has obtained the required majority.
Once the number of votes obtained in the other Chapter is known, the scrutator (scrutatrix) adds)
and we have an election (or a postulation) for he has obtained this same majority in the Chapter of Abbesses (of Abbots). In this Chapter Dom N. has obtained so many votes, etc.

31. Once the election is finished, the two Chapters meet in the same room and the President of the Chapter of Abbots (or if he is elected, the abbot of the oldest house in seniority) proclaims:

**I declare the Reverend Father Dom X
truly and canonically elected (or postulated) the legitimate Abbot
General of the Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance.**

If the elect or the one postulated is in the room or not far from it, the President asks him to come before him and asks if he accepts his election (or postulation). The elect (or one postulated) expresses clearly his acceptance of the charge of Abbot General.

Then the President of the election (of if he is elected, the abbot of the oldest house in seniority) embraces him, giving the newly elected or postulated the kiss of peace. The one elected has no need of confirmation.

32. In the case of an election, once those who did not participate in the election have been admitted into the room, the new Abbot General pronounces the profession of faith and the oath of fidelity approved by the Holy See.¹⁷³ He then takes the place of the President.

¹⁷³The formulas are found in the Appendix.

Then, or after a short address by the elect, all sing the solemn *Te Deum*.

Once the chant has ended, the President (or if he has been elected, the abbot of the oldest house in seniority), turns toward the new Abbot General, saying:

Almighty and everlasting God, who alone perform great marvels, send upon your servant N. and upon the Order entrusted to him the Spirit of salvation and peace. May all be filled with your blessing forever and be truly pleasing to you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

R. Amen.

At an opportune time, each of the two General Chapters is convoked and when the instrument of the election is finished by the secretary and read in public, all come to sign it, in the following order: the new Abbot General, the President of the election, the electors, the witnesses, the secretary. The papers used during the election are carefully destroyed by the secretary or another person.

33. If the one who is elected to be the Abbot General is not present in the Chapter and cannot come immediately, or in the case of postulation, if it is necessary to await an indult from the Holy See, the instrument of the election is drawn up and signed as above in n. 32 and, after the verse *Adiutorium nostrum* or another, ending with the prayer *Actiones nostras*¹⁷⁴ said by the President, all leave.

At an opportune time, once the elect has arrived or the postulation has been accepted by the Holy See, the two General Chapters meet together, or at least their delegates and the witnesses. Once the elect (or he who was postulated, if he hasn't already done it) has accepted his election publically, he pronounces the profession of faith and the oath of fidelity and takes the seat of the President. The *Te Deum* is then sung, followed by the prayer, as in n. 32 and the secretary draws up the instrument which is signed by at least the Abbot General, two witnesses from each Chapter and the secretary.

APPENDIX

OATHS

Oaths may be sworn if deemed opportune.

A. The oath for the scrutators (and also the notary and witnesses) may be pronounced by one from among them:

I, Brother N. (each one says his name), **swear before God, author of faith and truth, that in this matter and in the carrying out of the election, I shall act in good faith, without fraud and deceit, and that I shall reveal nothing of what is done or said except to those with a right to this.**

(And, touching the book of the Gospels with outspread hands, each one adds:)

So help me God, and his holy Gospels which I am touching.

B. The first elector, touching the Gospels with two hands says:

I, Brother N., swear and promise almighty God that I shall elect the one I believe will be the most useful to our Church in things spiritual and

¹⁷⁴Lord, our God, we pray that you will inspire all our actions and help us to accomplish them. Thus all our prayer and action will always have their beginning and their end in you. Through Christ, our Lord. R. Amen

temporal.

So help me, God, and his holy Gospels which I am touching.

The others, two by two, go according to order of precedence to the President, and touching the book of the Gospels with both hands, say:

So help me God, and his holy Gospels which I am touching.

PROFESSION OF FAITH AND OATH OF FIDELITY

[A.A.S. 81 (1989) p.105]

I, N., with firm faith, believe and profess all that is contained in the Symbol of Faith, together and separately, namely:

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, died, and was buried. On the third day he rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

With firm faith, I also believe everything contained in the Word of God, whether written or handed down in Tradition, which the Church, either by solemn judgment or by the ordinary and universal Magisterium, sets forth to be believed as divinely revealed.

I also firmly accept and hold each and everything definitively proposed by the Church regarding teaching on faith and morals.

Moreover, I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings which either the Roman pontiff or the College of Bishops enunciate when they exercise their authentic Magisterium, even if they do not intend to proclaim these teachings by a definitive act.

Act of Fidelity on Assuming the Charge of Abbot

I, N., in assuming the office of Abbot, promise that in my words and in my actions I shall always preserve communion with the Catholic Church. With great care and fidelity I shall carry out the duties incumbent on me toward the Church, both universal and particular, in which, according to the provisions of the law, I have been called to exercise my service.

In fulfilling the charge entrusted to me in the name of the Church, I shall hold fast to the deposit of faith in its entirety; I shall faithfully hand it on and explain it, and I shall avoid any teachings contrary to it.

I shall follow and foster the common discipline of the entire Church and I shall maintain the observance of all ecclesiastical laws, especially those contained in the Code of Canon Law.

With Christian obedience I shall follow what the Bishops, as authentic doctors and teachers of the faith, declare, or what they, as those who govern the Church, establish.

I shall also faithfully assist the diocesan Bishops, so that the apostolic activity, exercised in the name and by the mandate of the Church, may preserve the nature and end of my Institute and be carried out in communion with the Church.

I also promise in good faith that I want to be useful to my Brothers according my resources, that I will love my Brothers by kindly respecting them, that I will teach them the Divine law and remain faithful to the Holy See in Rome and the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance, that I will not sell, give away, mortgage nor alienate in any way the goods of my Monastery, if it is not according to Canon Law and the Constitutions.

He ratifies this with his hand on the Gospels:

So help me God, and God's Holy Gospels on which I place my hand.

