

## March 1969 Newsletter Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy

of the conference of bishops, the Consilium stated that "since the Lord's Prayer has become communitarian prayer, while before it was a priestly prayer (in the celebration of Mass), musical compositions of this do not have to be approved." The new ruling treats the Lord's Prayer, for purposes of musical settings, the same as the Sanctus, which is also sung by the priest and people together.

However, the Consilium added: "It is highly recommended that the people also be taught to sing this prayer in Latin in the Gregorian melody. This will greatly help the faithful in some form of participation when they find themselves in international gatherings and at times this will act as a liaison with the Roman tradition and its rite."

The Congregation of Rites renewed at the request of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops faculties to individual bishops (a) to permit one low Mass to be celebrated in parish churches on Holy Thursday morning; (b) to permit the repetition of the Good Friday services; (c) to permit the celebration of the Easter Vigil service early on Easter Sunday morning. These concessions may be made by the individual bishops and are valid for a period of five years.

Archbishop Dearden also announced that the Holy See at this time confirmed the decision of the American bishops regarding approved English translations of the Simple Gradual and of the lectionary.

The Simple Gradual is a book of alternative antiphons or refrains for use at Mass in place of the chants between the biblical readings and at the beginning, offertory, and communion of the Mass. This vernacular translation of the antiphons was prepared by the International Committee on English in the Liturgy. These refrains may be sung in conjunction with any of the translations of the psalms already approved by the U.S. bishops: Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Jerusalem Bible, Grail psalter.

The new texts have already been made available to composers, editors and publishers. Their actual use is optional and official regulations provide for flexibility in choice of antiphons and psalm verses.

A related decision of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops also confirmed by the Holy See allows the use of similar collections of psalms and antiphons as substitutes for the present chants of Mass. The text of the decision refers to "other collections of psalms and antiphons in English . . ., including psalms arranged in responsorial form, metrical and similar versions of psalms, provided they are used in accordance with the principles of the Simple Gradual, and are selected in harmony with the liturgical season, feast, or occasion." This provides a wider choice of music for congregational singing at Mass as alternatives to the fixed texts of the Roman Missal.

In English the principal collections of this kind are the Gelineau, Somerville, and Deiss psalms. The reason for this decision was to permit substitute texts to be used without waiting for the composition of musical settings of the antiphons of the Simple Gradual.

Finally, the Holy See confirmed the U.S. bishops' approval of the biblical translations of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine version, the Jerusalem Bible, and the Revised Standard Version (Catholic edition) for use with the projected lectionary of readings at Mass. The date of publication of this new lectionary is not yet known, although arrangement of Scriptural readings to provide greater variety and richness has been studied and revised by pastors and specialists from all parts of the world. Its most notable feature will be a three-year cycle of readings for Sunday Masses.

Two requests by the American bishops were deferred for the present by the Congregation of Rites. The first was a proposal that individual bishops should be able to permit priests to concelebrate Mass even though they had already celebrated Mass once or more on the particular day. This means that concessions of that kind are limited to the instances mentioned in the decree on concelebration issued by the Holy See on March 7, 1965. Such instances are on Maundy Thursday, both at the Chrism Mass in the morning and at the Mass of the Lord's Supper in the evening; at the Mass of the Easter Vigil and again on Easter Day; in the three Masses of Christmas; and during synods, pastoral visits or clerical gatherings with the bishop or his delegate when, in the judgment of the bishop, another Mass should be celebrated for the convenience of the people.

The second request not granted by the Holy See at this time was that the organ and other permitted instruments be allowed to be played alone in accord with the character of the liturgical celebration, during the services of Advent, Lent, and Holy Week and the offices and Masses for the dead. The present instruction on music issued by the Holy See in May of 1967 therefore remains in force. It provides that the organ and other instruments can be used during those seasons only to accompany singing.