

22nd February, 2024 “Clear, brief and easily assimilated by all” Handouts n. 220

Meditation on the Presence Of God

A Golden Chain of texts -- *Catena Aurea*

O God Almighty, Creator

Truly Thou art a **hidden** God, the God of Israel, the Saviour. (Isaiah 45:15)

Heaven and earth are full of Thy **glory**. (Psalm 18[19]:1; Isaiah 6:3)

Be **still**, and know that I am God. (Psalm 46 [45]: 10)

Speak, Lord, Thy servant is listening (1 Samuel 3:10)

O Blessed Trinity, the Holy One

Jesus rejoiced in the **Holy Spirit**... and said,

All things have been delivered to Me by My **Father**;

and no one knows who the **Son** is except the Father

or who the Father is except the Son

and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him...

Come unto Me. (Luke 10: 21; Matthew 11:28)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. (Luke 2:14; Matthew 28:19)

as it was in the **beginning**, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. (Apocalypse 1:2)

O Son Incarnate

In the beginning was **the Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;

the same was in the beginning with God;

all things were made through Him, and without Him was nothing made that was made...

and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld **His glory**,

the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth... (John 1:1-18; cf. Genesis 1:1; Apocalypse 1:4, 8)

**The Real Presence of Jesus Christ,
Body & Blood, Soul & Divinity,
in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar:-
contained in a Presence-Sacrament,
offered to & accepted by the Father in a Sacrifice-Sacrament,
received by us in a Communion-Sacrament.**

And behold! **I am with you always** [until] I come in glory. (Matthew 28:20; cf. 25:31)

With desire have I desired to eat **this passover** with you before I suffer. (Luke 22:15)

Do this in memory of Me. (Luke 22:19)

Eat this Bread and **live** for ever. (John 6:58)

His Abiding Presence in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar

Truly, the Lord is in this place **and I knew it not**...

How **awesome** is this place!

It is none other than the **House of God** and the **Gate of Heaven**. Genesis 28:16-17

The Lord is in His holy temple; let the whole earth keep **silence** before Him. Habakuk 2:20

The Master is here and calls thee. John11:28

“The Liturgy of the Hours”

The Sanctification of Time

Opus Dei – The Work of God

our Work for God is Praising God in the Words of God especially in the Psalms

The “Roman Breviary” – a brief Bible

for a daily *Lectio Divina*, a Divine Reading

WITH CHRIST, PRAYING to His FATHER

The pre-VCII Breviary had prayer to Christ in preparation for the recitation of the Office:-

O Lord, in union with that Divine intention, by which Thou didst on earth offer praises to God, I now recite these hours (this office) unto Thee.

The Lord Jesus said (see Luke 24:44):

Everything written about Me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled,

Indeed, He referred to Psalms in His preaching (Matthew 21:9,15,6;22:42-45) and on the Cross (Matthew 27:46; Luke 23:46).

Also Acts 13:13, in the Greek, refers to Psalm 2 as “the first psalm”. Our Psalm 2 is Messianic – “Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee,” which is both Trinitarian and incarnational – could this mean that Psalm 1 is also Messianic?

Psalm 1 proclaims the Psalter’s background theme: Good versus Evil, Godly versus Devilish, God versus Devil:

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. Psalm 1:1-2.

Who is “the blessed Man” of the Psalms?

Is it King David (or other human authors)?

And/or, it Jesus Himself, speaking as Head of His Mystical Body, on behalf of each of us?

If so, how could He ever speak of Himself as a sinner (Psalm 50:4 etc)? Yet “For our sake He (God) made Him (Christ) to be sin Who knew no sin” (2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:11b-12; Romans 8:3).

Or does He pray those “psalms that were about Himself” as though He were prompting us to repeat the words after Him, like a priest leading a bridegroom & bride to say their vows?

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St Ambrose’s eulogy on the glory of the psalms as Christian prayer is in *The Liturgy of the Hours* volume III, pp. 180 & 184:-

History instructs; the Law disciplines; Prophecy foretells; Correction shows our faults; and Morality shows what should be done. But the Psalms are more than all this: a **gymnasium for virtues and medicine for a spiritual ill**.

MOVING the LIPS – a RECITATION

Long ago, those in Holy Orders, and others such as Religious bound to recite the Office, had to do exactly that, to **recite it by moving their lips**, albeit in a low whisper, just as priests are still bound to do for the validity of the consecration when celebrating Mass.

Such a **movement of the lips makes it a recitation** even though not in a group.

Nowadays, it is lawful to **read it silently** like reading an ordinary book. However, this is not a recitation – an actor with stage fright.

RECITATION of the Office by moving the lips has important advantages:-

- slows us down and avoids distractions;
- improves concentration of mind and memory;
- increases fervour of faith, hope & charity;
- elevates vocal prayer into a meditation;
- lifts human reading to divine, a *Lectio Divina*;
- shares in Christ’s usage of the Psalms;
- enters into His prayer to the Father.

Some prayers of the Office seem to assume that lips, mouths and tongue are in actual use:-

- “Lord, open my lips (*labia*)” (note the singular, praying like Christ Himself on behalf of His Mystical Body).
- “And my mouth (*os*) shall declare Thy praise.”
- “My tongue (*lingua*) is like the pen of a ready writer,” Psalm 45.

In the current (*Novus Ordo*) Latin Breviary (but not in English Breviary), an old prayer before the Office is not in the book itself but on a slip-in card. It assumes lip movement, whispered or muttered:-

Open my mouth, O Lord, to bless Thy Holy Name. also cleanse my heart from all vain, evil and alien thoughts; enlighten my understanding, inflame my will, to enable me to recite this Office worthily, attentively and devoutly, and merit to be heard before the face of Thy Divine Majesty, through Christ our Lord. Amen

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So take your time, make time, slow down, and see if it helps you to praise God – *Venite adoremus*.

Father James Tierney