

Threefold rule of prayer - functions

- Different effects, functions (usually – people vary)
- We are attracted to various forms in relation to our personality; we differ; what feeds one may not feed another

“The prayer and life of each member is wholly dependent on the health of the total organism” “Eucharist – Office – private prayer forms one whole balanced organic life” and “private prayer is absolutely dependent on the Office and the Eucharist” M. Thornton

| | Martin Thornton | John Macquarrie | Evelyn Underhill | Kenneth Leech |
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| Eucharist | <p>“Living heart of the Body of Christ”</p> <p>”Centered on our Lord Jesus Christ”</p> <p>In <i>Christian Proficiency</i></p> | <p>“The Eucharist sums up in itself Christian worship ..It seems to include everything. It combines Word and Sacrament; its appeal is to spirit and to sense ...; it is communion with God and communion with man Gathers up in itself the meaning of the church; its whole action implies and sets forth our mutual interdependence in the Body of Christ; it unites us with the Church of the past ...; an anticipation of the heavenly banquet.” In <i>Paths in Spirituality</i></p> | <p>“For the fully Christian life is a Eucharistic life: that is, a natural life conformed to the pattern of Jesus, given in its wholeness to God, laid on His altar as a sacrifice of love, and consecrated, transformed by His inpouring life, to be used to give life and food to other souls.” <i>The Mystery of Sacrifice: A Meditation on the Liturgy</i></p> | <p>“We share the Eucharist in order to be able to share the world. God feed us so we can help to recreate the world. It is the vision of a recreated, transformed world which lies behind – and beyond – the sometime elaborate ritual which has come to surround the celebration of the Eucharist .. candles, incense, brightly colored vestments, bells ...” <i>True Prayer</i></p> |
| <p>Office</p> <p>John MacQuarrie – “built chiefly out of the psalms, the scriptures and the prayers of the Church”</p> | <p>“Its continual beat or pulse”</p> <p>“”objectively ‘give’ to God Almighty”</p> <p>In <i>Christian Proficiency</i></p> | <p>“...a way by which we keep ourselves in constant awareness of the divine order; an order of love and justice which embraces and underlies all order “The cantus firmus is the recurring rhythmic pattern which serves as the basis for the music, giving it a unity and consistency. ...it is the recurring cycle of prayer and communing with God which gives, as it were, the dominant ‘set’ to life. But over that cantus firmus all kinds of distinct melodies may be heard interweaving in a complex texture” “...the offices keep us in touch with the whole church. They do not impede the individual’s spiritual growth, but both nourish it and supply a standard by which it is to be judged” “.we need immersion too in Christian truth if we are rightly to interpret life and culture” In <i>Paths in Spirituality</i></p> | <p>“The real significance of the Divine Office is that in its recitation the individual or group enters the ancient cycle of prayer, by which day by day and hour by hour the church in the name of all creation adores and implores the eternal God” Evelyn Underhill In <i>Paths in Spirituality</i>, MacQuarrie</p> | <p>“The value of the Office is its objectivity. It is a means by which we pray with the whole church, uniting our prayer with that of millions of other Christians living and dead. This is true whether one is alone or in a group, for the Office is essentially a corporate act. It is objective too in that it does not depend on our feelings, but gives our prayer life a regularity and a disciplined framework.” <i>True Prayer</i></p> |
| <p>Personal Devotions</p> <p>Thornton sees three forms</p> <p>-increasing our knowledge, love & communion with God (mental prayer)</p> <p>-saying our prayers – petition, intercession, etc. (colloquy)</p> <p>-momentary acts of prayer throughout the day; practicing the presence of God (recollection)</p> | <p>“circulation of the blood which gives life and strength to its several members..inspired by the Holy Spirit”</p> <p>“that prayer done physically alone, according to ones unique gifts, personality and temperament”</p> <p>In <i>Christian Proficiency</i></p> | <p>“...the modes and times of prayer, and the balance of prayer and action, are matters which each has to work out for himself.The aim of all is the vision of God and communion with God – or rather, we should say an ever-deepening vision and communion, for we have seen that the Christian pilgrimage does not come to an end but always keeps its dynamic character. We would agree with St. Gregory of Nyssa: ‘The perfect life is the one whose progress into perfection is not limited by any boundary.’ And he gave a very good reason for this teaching: God is inexhaustible, and there can be no end to our participation and exploration in him.” <i>Principles of Christian Theology</i></p> | <p>“The touch of God upon the soul, which is the preventive cause of all worship, is received by us as we are: creatures of sense and spirit, at various stages of enlightenment and growth. Our response to it is and must be conditioned by our here and now human situation; and by our particular education, capacities and temperament. We use what we have, and realize what we can; and since no two souls process an identical equipment, this is the general reason for the various kinds and degrees of prayer ...” <i>Worship</i></p> | <p>“...prayer must involve the unifying of the personality, the integration of mind and heart into one center.... Without self discovery there can be no further progress. ‘In order to find God whom we can only find in and through the depths of our own soul, we must first find ourselves.’ Without self-knowledge our love remains superficial.” <i>Soul Friend</i></p> |

Used by the Order of the Ascension in parish development training with novices and clinics for priests



Rule for Associates of the Order of the Ascension

The Prayer Book Pattern

The pattern has also been called the Benedictine Triangle and the catholic threefold Rule.

Our life in community, our reflection, and our service are nurtured from the soil of Office and Eucharist. The daily connection with Scripture and common prayer and the weekly receiving of Body and Blood orient us to the ways of eternity and feed us for faithfulness in our life at work, with friends and family and in civic life.

1. Participate in the Holy Eucharist on Sundays, the feasts of the Ascension and of St Benedict. Other Major Feasts as possible in your region.
2. Regular use of some form of the Daily Office.
3. A pattern of reflection and personal devotions that fits your temperament and circumstances. To include regular intercession for the Order and the Associate's parish church, its priest and lay leadership. Intercession for the Order on January 8 and January 30 (commitment to the formation of the Order in 1983 and the First Taking of the Promise in 1988).

Learning

Read two books each year in the field of Ascetical/pastoral theology and/or organization development. In your first year read Michelle Heyne's *In Your Holy Spirit: Traditional Spiritual Practices in Today's Christian Life* and Robert Gallagher's *In Your Holy Spirit: Shaping the Parish through Spiritual Practice*.

In future years – At least one is to come from the reading list provided on the web site for Associates. Some years the Order may suggest a specific book and may establish a forum for conversation among Associates.

Action

According to their vocation and gifts, Associates engage in appropriate forms of service, evangelization and stewardship in their daily life (work, civic life, family and friendships, the parish). Make a yearly financial contribution to the Order.