

- 14 Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consumption of Philosophy*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1999, pp 176–7 and p 218.
- 15 *ibid.*, pp.242–243.
- 16 This was a position I accepted all too readily in my article, ‘Schillebeeckx’s Soteriological Agnosticism’, *New Blackfriars*, February 1997, p 81.
- 17 Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1999, pp 18–25.
- 18 Mary Douglas comments, ‘microcosmic thinking uses analogies as a logical basis for a total metaphysical framework’ (*Leviticus as Literature*, p 25).
- 19 *Leviticus as Literature*, p 134. See also Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, Penguin, Middlesex, 1970, pp 54–77, where Professor Douglas spells out in some detail what seems to be going on in Leviticus 11 and concludes, ‘If the proposed interpretation of the forbidden animals is correct, the dietary laws would have been like signs which at every turn inspired meditation on the oneness, purity and completeness of God. By rules of avoidance, holiness was given a physical expression in every encounter with the animal kingdom and at every meal. Observance of the dietary rules would thus have been a meaningful part of the great liturgical act of recognition and worship which culminated in the sacrifice of the Temple (p 72).
- 20 See my development of this theme in ‘Schillebeeckx’s Soteriological Agnosticism’, *New Blackfriars*, February 1998, pp 82–83.

## The Use of “Night Prayer” at the Vigil for the Deceased with Reception at the Church

Joseph Sullivan

Around ten years ago the *Order for Christian Funerals* (henceforth *OCF*) was published.<sup>1</sup> Given personal extended pastoral and liturgical use, I would like to make one suggestion which may prove equally useful to others involved in preparing the Funeral Liturgy. I have found the use of “Night Prayer” of *The Divine Office*<sup>2</sup> a real boon in celebrating the Vigil for the Deceased with Reception at the Church.

### Legitimacy

The *OCF* states that prior to the Funeral Liturgy “the vigil is the principal celebration of the Christian community” and then mentions that such a vigil may, as one alternative, take the form of “some part of the office for the dead” (n. 45). The *OCF* offers “Morning Prayer” and “Evening Prayer” without denying the use of other parts (or combination of parts) of the Office for the Dead. In *The Divine Office* itself, the Office for the Dead indicates that its Night Prayer be taken from the version for Sunday,

after Evening Prayer II. Hence it is already legitimate to use this “Night Prayer” at a Vigil for the Deceased. Furthermore the *OCF* allows generous scope for pastoral application: even psalms outwith the Office for the Dead, if appropriate, may be used (*OCF* n. 540). The appropriateness is determined by the time of day of the vigil and by suitability for use within the Office for the Dead. However according to the General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours (henceforth *GILH*) all the weekday psalms for Night Prayer in *The Divine Office* are psalms “which evoke confidence in God.”<sup>3</sup> As such sentiments are appropriate at a Bereavement then these Night Prayer Psalms may, in addition, be legitimately used at a Vigil for the Deceased with Reception at the Church. Finally the psalms of Night Prayer after Sunday Evening Prayer I, may replace those of the Weekday (*GILH* n. 88). Therefore *each and every* “Night Prayer” may be legitimately used at a Vigil with reception.

Against the mere legitimacy of using Night Prayer in such a manner, *GILH* indicates that Night Prayer is designed for use just prior to retiring (n. 84). Unless the Vigil for the Deceased was being held in the vicinity of the people’s bedrooms my suggestion faces serious opposition. Indeed thirty years ago, for this reason, A.-M. Roguet was lamenting the fact that Night Prayer was usurping the place of Evening Prayer in some parishes and communities.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, some have found Evening Prayer from the Office for the Dead as being the preferred option from the *OCF*.<sup>5</sup> However, I would argue that in the case of Night Prayer at a Vigil for the Deceased the practice is not just legitimate (as shown above), it is also desirable and further, even more desirable than Evening Prayer in this context.

### **Appropriateness**

It is worth mentioning at the outset that the customary entrance procession with the corpse, the sprinkling with Holy Water, the placing of the Pall and of Christian Symbols would be accomplished before beginning the Psalmody of Night Prayer. This would mean omitting its own Introductory Verse, Examination of Conscience and Hymn. The Hymn itself may be inserted at the Entrance Procession (*OCF* n. 102). In addition, a brief homily may be appropriately added after the reading. Finally the Concluding Prayer may be more fittingly taken from those specifically composed for the Funeral Liturgy (cf. *OCF* nn. 580–581). All of the foregoing vis-à-vis Night Prayer is comparable to the use of Evening Prayer at the Vigil for the Deceased with Reception at the Church (*OCF* nn. 567, 572 & 577, respectively).

By way of general comment, Night Prayer presents in a gentle manner, *falling asleep* as an act of faith in God who will guard and

protect. However the experience of death is inseparable to that of falling asleep. After all, Jesus describes Jairus' daughter as "but sleeping" (*αλλα κατηευδει* : Mk 5: 39) and refers to his friend Lazarus as having "fallen asleep" (*κεκοιμεται*: Jn 11: 11).<sup>6</sup> In addition Paul in the earliest Christian Scripture links the two and offers hope regarding "those who have fallen asleep" (*τον κοιμομενον*: 1 Thess 4: 13). Moreover, Christian Tradition maintains the association which falling asleep has with death. One of the principle ways of discerning the Tradition is *lex orandi, lex credendi*. Based on this rule, one finds many Hymns for late Evening/Night which may appropriately be used as hymns at a funeral Liturgy.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore two of the Eucharistic Prayers make comfortable use of such terminology:

"... and all who sleep in Christ" and "who have gone to their rest in the hope of rising again".<sup>8</sup>

Given such solid Tradition the use of the expression "those fallen asleep" can become more than a common euphemism but rather lie at the heart of Christian faith and hope.<sup>9</sup> The phrase, in the present context, requires further specification. Though each person is created "for eternal life", it is the death and resurrection of Christ which breaks the bonds of "sin and death" (*OCF* n. 1). Hence the suffix "in Christ" is necessary. For example then, "Office for Those Asleep in Christ" would be a more faithful description in the *OCF* rather than "Office for the Dead" and such-like.

Indeed this article would be more aptly entitled: "The Use of Night Prayer at the Vigil for Those Asleep in Christ with Reception at the Church."<sup>10</sup>

By way of overview, Night Prayer "of those falling/fallen asleep" is the perfect setting to include the three main aspects of the Funeral Liturgy: praise and thanksgiving to God for the gift of a life (*OCF* n. 5), forgiveness of the sins of the Deceased (*OCF* n. 6) and hope and consolation for the living (*OCF* n. 7). As will be shown, Night Prayer incorporates each of these three main requirements.

More specifically, the hopes and fears of the Bereaved are particularly addressed by Night Prayer as it is the living who hear Jesus' and Paul's words addressed to them. The Bereaved, like Jesus' words to Jairus (Mk 5: 39), are comforted at the gentleness of *falling asleep* inherent in Night Prayer. Moreover, its association with what everyone has experienced and will experience, its link between the end of the day and the end of life, the merely human inability to "awaken" the person and its implicit expression of faith, all harmonise well with the requirements of a Vigil for the Deceased. Finally, the request for a Christian Minister presumes the funeral will have a Christian context, hence the necessary nomenclature:

*Those Asleep in Christ.* The Bereaved may associate the *in Christ* with both their own faith and that of the deceased as much or as little as they are able and God knows the heart.

Clearly then the “falling asleep” at night is easily appropriated to the hopes and fears of the Bereaved in addition to being applied directly to the Deceased person himself/herself. Having briefly shown that the overall context of Night Prayer is appropriate for use at the Vigil, specific elements of Night Prayer need to be examined which will in turn underline the basic premiss. These will now be explored.

Firstly, the Psalmody of each evening, with differing nuances, is suitable for both Night Prayer and Vigil for the Deceased. Saturday Night Prayer (i.e. after the Vigil of Sunday) appeals for peace with God and with oneself in a context of Night Prayer (Ps 4 and 134[133]).<sup>12</sup> Sunday has one of the most consoling psalms in the midst of serious danger and evil (Ps 91 [90]); moreover this psalm is mentioned as suitable for Night Prayer at least since St Basil (c. 330–79).<sup>13</sup> Monday presents a “homely” psalm which appeals for mercy on the distressed (Ps 86 [85]); indeed Jews recite this psalm on the penitential day of *Yom Kippur*. Tuesday’s psalm is a prayer in desolation linking human suffering to estrangement from God (Ps 143 [142]: 1–11). Wednesday’s two psalms allow one to offer a confident prayer to God in the midst of difficulties while repenting of one’s own wickedness (Ps 31 [30]: 1–6 and Ps 130 [129]).

Luke bases Jesus’ dying words on Ps 31 [30]: 5 and, in addition, these words are reiterated in the Responsoy of Night Prayer: “Into your hands I commend my spirit.” Moving along the week, the ground of one’s hope is the Lord and not earthly happiness, proclaims Thursday’s psalmist (Ps 16 [15]). The “night” here (v. 7b) is intensified in Hebrew, allowing the two crucial meanings to my argumentation. The Psalmist intends to refer to both the period of night-time and the sense of serious illness and personal abandonment. Moreover, the paschal sense (of death and resurrection) inherent in this psalm is ensured by its own scriptural application (i.e. of vv. 8–11) to the death and resurrection of Christ (in Acts 2: 25–28) and hence in Christ, to the Christian. Finally, Friday’s psalm reflects the mood appropriate for the day of the Lord’s death: the unfathomable mystery of human suffering, death and the apparent absence of God, alongside a persistent belief in the God of salvation (Ps 88 [871]). In their various ways, therefore, the identified emotions and themes explored by the psalmody of Night Prayer are easily applicable to a Vigil for the Deceased.

Secondly, and likewise, each Scripture Reading has its own gentle approach without ever being bland. Saturday (i.e. after the Vigil of Sunday) can command loyalty and yet remain appealing: “...you shall

love the Lord your God..." (cf. Deut 6: 4–7).<sup>14</sup> Sunday can proclaim the radical discontinuity between the Old Creation and the New Creation: "...see the Lord face to face..." (cf. Rev 22: 4–5).<sup>15</sup> Monday presents an all-embracing in faithfulness: "...live together with (Christ), whether we are alive or dead...", while giving the earliest written witness to the redemptive truth of Christ's own death for us (cf. 1 Thess 5: 9–10).<sup>16</sup> Tuesday can be consoling but exhortative: "Be calm but vigilant..." (cf. 1 Pet 5: 8–9).<sup>17</sup> Wednesday can admonish while simultaneously encouraging in very practical matters: "...the sunset must not find you still angry..." (cf. Eph 4: 26–27).<sup>18</sup> Thursday can enfold "you" (i.e. the "spirit, soul, and body" both of the Deceased and of the Bereaved) in eschatological "peace" (cf. 1 Thess 5: 23).<sup>19</sup> Friday can appeal with pathos to Yahweh in the simplicity of being part of the Covenant relationship: "...called by your name..." (cf. Jer 14: 9).<sup>20</sup>

Summarising the overview of the Psalmody and of the Readings, one discovers a healthy balance is achieved. The Psalmody and Readings for Night Prayer maintain the tension between consolation and challenge, between trust and doubt, between thankfulness and sadness, between hope and fear. These human emotions are not alternatives, they are found in varying degrees in each person. The existential honesty found in Night Prayer will allay some of the concerns expressed by some regarding the sanitising of the reality of death which is found amidst the Funeral Liturgy.<sup>21</sup>

Thirdly, the Responsory *Into your hands* originates from Ps 31 [30]:5 which is itself used on Wednesday Night Prayer. More importantly, the Responsory offers a continuous line between Jesus' self-committal to the Father and unique death (and including the falling asleep of the person reciting Night Prayer) and the (unique) death of the Deceased whose Remains lie present before the altar. Luke himself wishes us to join this, the prayer of Jesus on the cross (Lk 23: 46), to the similar cry of St Stephen in martyrdom: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7: 59). If similar sentiments to Stephen's prevail, even inchoately, the prayer may be suitably applied to each and everyone who dies *in the Lord*.

Furthermore, exegetically there is a connection between Stephen's plea ("Lord Jesus, receive my spirit") and the dramatic moment of the Good Thief ("Jesus, remember me when you into your kingdom").<sup>22</sup> Hence, continuing the theological line, if the Responsory connects Stephen to the Good Thief then *a fortiori* the poignant moments of the Good Thief can in prayer be appropriated to the Deceased person. Praying the Responsory includes the possibility of a plea on behalf of the Deceased ("Jesus remember me...") whatever may be the "due reward for (his/her) deeds" (cf. Lk 23: 41). According to Luke, Paradise is not a place

which is reserved for the Messiah and some others; no, Paradise is opened in and through Jesus. The essential concern is falling asleep or dying “in the Lord.” By means of the Responsory, those at the Vigil join not only the prayer of the Psalmist, Christ and Stephen to the Deceased, but also the experience of the Good Thief and Stephen to the Deceased.

Fourthly, the Gospel Canticle (Lk 2: 29–32, the *Nunc Dimittis*) is a fitting culmination of the whole Hour (*GILH* n. 89). As to its fittingness at the death of a Christian, D.R. Jones proposes that such was the canticle’s use from early years.<sup>23</sup> In addition, as situated in Night Prayer there is no need to presume an elderly person (like Simeon) falling asleep (to awaken the next morning).<sup>24</sup> Consequently the canticle may be used appropriately by mourners in the context of a deceased Christian of any age. Moreover, the Canticle reflects Isaian universalism (for example cf. Is 49: 6; 52: 9–10; 60:1) which joins “the revelation to the Gentiles” and “the glory for Israel.” Hence, in the context, the canticle proclaims eschatological fulfilment of the promises on a universal scale.<sup>25</sup> The now of the Good News is fittingly announced both to the *one fallen asleep* and to the Bereaved, wherever they happen to be on the spectrum of faith.

Importantly, the canticle does not focus on the work of Simeon (albeit righteous and devout) but on the completion of God’s Word. This is a consoling truth applicable to the *one fallen asleep* and to the Bereaved who will be at differing places on the spectrum of Christian praxis. The Canticle as the climax of Night prayer “softens” and puts into proper context the demands which Night Prayer also expresses. As shown above the readings and psalms, in various fashions, expect repentance and appeal for (greater) belief, (firmer) hope and (more sincere) love.

Finally, addressing an Anthem to Our Lady enhances the overall gentleness of the Liturgical Action. She was the first to believe and already enjoys that to which the Body of Christ is directed; she is our hope (*spes nostra*). Moreover, unlike reciting the Rosary which can stand apart from the main Liturgical Action, this anthem allows for an appropriate Marian Devotion which is naturally incorporated into the Service.

## Further Considerations

First of all, the sacred silence helps the prayer become interiorised and personalised (*GILH* nn. 201–222). The silence is probably best after the reading, with or without a homily. The homily itself is recommended at the Vigil (*OCF* n. 79) while a “brief homily may” be given when Evening Prayer is incorporated into the Vigil (*OCF* n. 572) and so analogously (*analogia legis*) a similar one may be given when Night Prayer is incorporated into the Vigil.

This leads us to consider further adaptations of Night Prayer which

some *may* seek in this new context. In my experience the use of the Litany (Prayer of Intercession) with the Our Father seems valuable (*OCF* nn. 80, 112 & 113) and may conveniently be placed after the Gospel Canticle without constructing an ugly hybrid. During the first few centuries, intercession for the needs of the Church and the world was at the heart of the daily prayer of Christians.<sup>26</sup> Therefore there is good reason for Night Prayer to be enriched with similar supplication. Similarly, in my opinion the simpler blessing of Night Prayer could be replaced by the more formal blessing of the Vigil with Reception (*OCF* n. 115).

I would align myself with those who regard the incorporation of Evening Prayer (in the Vigil for the Deceased with Reception at the Church) as preferable to the proffered Service (*OCF* nn. 100-115).<sup>27</sup> Unless properly prepared, the outlined Service often becomes a passive experience on the part of the Bereaved with the Minister leading everything. If part of the Divine Office is used the Service is more two-way, especially for those unfamiliar with Liturgical dialogue. By this means the “full participation by all present” (*OCF* n. 83) is more easily facilitated.

Evening Prayer is normally to be preferred as it is one of the two “hinges” of the Divine Office (*GILH* n. 29 & 38).<sup>28</sup> However, my pastoral experience teaches me that Night Prayer is preferable to Evening Prayer for the Dead in this context. The vast majority of the Bereaved will not be accustomed to the regular use of the Prayer of the Church (neither Night nor Evening Prayer) and a majority will barely be acquainted with it. Given these limitations, I have found Night Prayer more accessible to most of the Bereaved than Evening Prayer (from the Office for the Dead).<sup>29</sup> Night Prayer is simpler than Evening Prayer without being ephemeral. At a Vigil with Evening Prayer it is already legitimate (*OCF* n. 570) for pastoral reasons to use other psalms (those of Night Prayer, perhaps?) or to reduce the number of psalms (to the single one of Night Prayer, perhaps?).

I recognise that Evening Prayer (for the Dead) includes the various human (and Christian) emotions and responsibilities which are met in this context. Moreover, like Night Prayer, Evening Prayer includes the triad of thanksgiving for a life lived, forgiveness of sins and consolation for the living (*OCF* 5,6 & 7). However, I have argued above that the context of “falling asleep” is the perfect ambient for these selfsame prayers and ensemble of emotions. The day and its work is now-finished and there is a self-bestowal into the loving hands of the Almighty. The ending is but apparent; the conclusion lies open to God’s future in trust. The symphony called a human life remains unresolved and can only be completed by the transcendent harmony of the Risen one. By means of

such a context using Night Prayer at the Vigil with Reception at the Church offers a golden mean between the (at times) basic-ness of the suggested Service and the rather involved arrangement of Evening Prayer. Ultimately perhaps the greater accessibility lies in the existential fact of being human. It is more appropriate to pray Night Prayer as someone not-yet-fallen-asleep but for someone who-has-fallen-asleep in Christ rather than to pray Evening Prayer for someone who-has-fallen-asleep in Christ but by someone who has not-yet-fallen-asleep. It is a pastoral rule: begin from where people are.

Finally the felicitous ambiguity inherent in the term of *falling asleep* brings with it the (necessary) pastoral corollary. Wherever the pastor may find the mourners (and the bereaved) (beginning from where people are), it is also the pastor's job to foster a growth in the triad of faith, hope and love. The Bereaved are not to be left in what could remain a saccharine platitude. The *sleep* is not what is important in Christian Eschatology though it may make use of such metaphor. *In Christ* the dead are alive: this is the truth on which the Funeral Liturgy stands.

- 1 Episcopal Conference of England and Wales and Episcopal Conference of Scotland, (Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1990). The *OCF* is based on the Roman Ritual, *Ordo Exsequiarum*, 1969.
- 2 *The Divine Office, Liturgy of the Hours according to the Roman Rite* (Collins, London & Glasgow, 1974). J. D. Crichton wonders whether public recitation of Night Prayer is an "anomaly." However he also recalls that on particular occasions St Benedict would gather the community during which Compline would be recited, cf. *Christian Celebration: The Prayer of the Church* (Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1976) p. 75, footnote 27. I will argue here that a Vigil for the Deceased would be an appropriate setting for Night Prayer.
- 3 "General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours," n. 88 in *The Divine Office*, op. cit. p. 1.
- 4 Cf. *The Liturgy of the Hours. The General Instruction with Commentary* (Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1971), p. 109.
- 5 For example cf. B. O'Higgins, "The New 'Order of Christian Funerals': One User's Response" in *Liturgy* vol. 15 – No. 6, Aug.–Sept. 1991, p. 233. He does not seem to have considered the appropriateness of Night Prayer.
- 6 Jesus in fact here prays for the dead Lazarus, giving foundation to the Catholic Tradition regarding supplication for sins of the Deceased; cf. my article, "Praying for the Dead in John 11" in *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 1995, vol. 61, Nos 3/4, pp. 205–211.
- 7 Cf. any standard hymnal of any Christian denomination.
- 8 The first Eucharistic Prayer has: "...qui... dormiunt in somno pacis" and "...et omnibus in Christo quiescentibus." The second Eucharistic Prayer has: "...qui in spe resurrectionis dormierunt."
- 9 I am aware that J. Ratzinger has shown the limitations of such imagery. If unaccompanied by the full tapestry of Catholic Doctrine such imagery could lead to the denial of both the Immortality of the Soul and the Beatitude of the Saints immediately after death (*mox post mortem*). Ratzinger traces a too literalist interpretation of *falling asleep* to M. Luther. The euphemism remains merely a euphemism without its Christian foundation: *those who have died are alive in Christ*. Though acceptable as a first step, *those fallen asleep* is only one poetic image. The New Testament insists on the centrality of belonging to the Lord "whether alive or dead." Cf. J. Ratzinger



*Eschatology, Death and Eternal Life* (The Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C., 1985), pp. 125–6 and p. 131. Here I am presuming that the use of Night Prayer is situated within the context of both the Funeral Liturgy the following day and a comprehensive catechesis regarding Christian death.

- 10 Or this article could be even better entitled: “The Use of Night Prayer at the Vigil for *Those Asleep in Christ* with Reception at the *Church Building*.” Although not the subject of this article, one wonders when ‘Church’ is going to return to its primary meaning in common usage, that is, as *People* (*hierarchically and charismatically endowed*) rather than Church understood as *Building*.
- 11 For comment on this triad cf. P. Gallagher, “A Theology of the Rites of Death” in *Priests and People*, pp. 407–411, especially pp. 408–410.
- 12 The translation used in the Divine Office is the *Grail* one. Hence, in this exposition, the notes on the Christian significance of the psalms given by A. Jones and L. Johnston will be followed, cf. *The Psalms: Singing Version* (Collins, London & Glasgow, 1966). The notes of this book accompany a *Grail* translation. Additional comment has been gathered from *Psalms 1* and *Psalms 2* by C. Stuhlmüller (Michael Glazier Inc., Wilmington, Delaware, 1983). This latter is part of the *Old Testament Message* series, ed. by C. Stuhlmüller & M. McNamara.
- 13 *Reg. Fus. Tract. XXXVII, III–V*, in *Collectio selecta SS. Ecclesiae Patrum XLV* (Parent-Desbares, Paris, 1835) pp. 90–93.
- 14 Cf. R. Clifford, *Deuteronomy* (Michael Glazier Inc., Wilmington, Delaware, 1982) pp. 46–48. This and the following six exegetical footnotes are either from the *Old Testament Message* series, ed. by C. Stuhlmüller & M. McNamara or from the *New Testament Message* series, ed. by W. Harrington & D. Senior.
- 15 Cf. A. Y. Collins, *The Apocalypse* (Veritas Publications, Dublin, 1979), p. 150.
- 16 Cf. J. Reese, *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (Veritas Publications, Dublin, 1979), pp. 60–61.
- 17 Cf. D. Senior, *1 & 2 Peter* (Veritas Publications, Dublin, 1980), pp. 91–92.
- 18 Cf. L. Swain, *Ephesians* (Veritas Publications, Dublin, 1980), pp. 89–80.
- 19 Cf. J. Reese, *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (Veritas Publications, Dublin, 1979), pp. 67–69.
- 20 Cf. L. Boadt, *Jeremiah 1–25* (Michael Glazier Inc., Wilmington, Delaware, 1982), pp. 111–112.
- 21 For example cf. E. Duffy “An Apology for Grief, Fear and Anger” in *Priests and People* vol. 5, No. II, November, 1991, pp. 397–401.
- 22 Cf. J. Jeremias; cf. “paradeisos” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament V*, ed. by G. Kittel (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968), pp. 770–771.
- 23 Cf. “The Background and Character of the Lukan Psalms,” in *Journal of Theological Studies* 19 (1968), p. 47; as referred to by R. E. Brown in *The Birth of the Messiah* (Image Book, Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York, 1979), p. 456.
- 24 C. Stuhlmüller links Ps 90 [91]: 14–16 to this Gospel Canticle, thereby convalidating a more general application of the Canticle already inherent in Night Prayer, cf. *Psalms 2*, op. cit. p. 74.
- 25 The exegesis of R. F. Brown op. cit. (pp. 439–440 and pp. 456–460), is being followed and applied to the specific context of this article.
- 26 Cf. P. F. Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church* (Alcuin Club, S.P.C.K., London, 1981, rep. 1983), p. 151, one of the main conclusion to his historical inquiry.
- 27 For example, B. O’Higgins “The New ‘Order of Christian Funerals’: One User’s Response” in *Liturgy* vol. 15– No.6, Aug–Sept 1991, p. 233. I have not found his suggestion to sing the Prayer (p. 234) so pastorally suitable.
- 28 However P. F. Bradshaw has challenged the ubiquitous assumption that the “hinges” (i.e. Lands and Vespers) were the most important in antiquity, cf. op. cit. pp. 150–151; and after scholarly criticism he maintains his position, cf. *Worship* 56 (1982) pp. 266–267 and *Daily Prayer...* op. cit. p. ix. No one suggests any particular importance to Night Prayer, so far as I am aware. .
- 29 I have presided at about 80 Vigils with Evening Prayer and perhaps 60 Vigils with Night Prayer.