



# Why Dominican?

## Presentation Notes for Candidacy Module 2: Liturgical Prayer

**Objectives:** At the end of this session, the Candidate will be able to:

1. Better understand how one's day is made more holy through praying the Liturgy of the Hours.
2. Better understand why praying the Liturgy of the Hours is an essential part of Dominican life.
3. Better understand that although the Liturgy of the Hours is prayed somewhat differently in different communities that praying the Liturgy of the Hours nourishes and supports all aspects of Dominican life.
4. Better understand God's outpouring of grace through the different parts of the Eucharist/Mass.
5. Reflect on one's personal life through connecting with the different parts of the Eucharist/Mass.
6. Become more connected within the Dominican community and the parish through his/her efforts at sharing.

**Materials:** Presentation Handout and pens; if a parish –wide meeting: special name tags for the Formation Team and the other Dominicans including the Candidates present (perhaps with a logo), general name tags, and refreshments

**Prayer/Contemplation:** Romans 8: 26-27

**Note:** This study session contains two parts. The first part is the study of the Liturgy of the Hours and is designed for the Dominicans including the Candidates. They will discuss the uniquely Dominican message of fr. Bruno's letter about the Liturgy of the Hours from the notes they took while pre-reading his letter. A short break between the two parts of the meeting is suggested.

The second part of the meeting is a discussion of the Eucharist/Mass. It is suggested that the second part be open to the wider community within the parish, deanery, or even other congregations from other religions. Obtain the approval of the pastor and enlist

his aid in planning and publicizing this event for maximum benefit. A sub-committee of Dominicans and volunteers in the parish can collaborate on some of the details such as pre-registration, duration of the session, meeting place, seating arrangement, publicity through flyers and church bulletins, production and availability of any handouts, and refreshments. Thoroughness rather than elaborateness is the goal. If such an open meeting is not feasible at this time, be sure to plan a break between discussing the two topics.

### **Study:**

Part 1: For the Dominicans: discussion of fr. Bruno's letter

1. Fr. Bruno points out several important connections between the life of a Dominican and praying the Liturgy of the Hours. Begin a general discussion with that statement. Ask the participants to read aloud any particular quote from the letter that caught their attention or read aloud some quotes that the Formation Team has chosen. Some suggestions include:
  - a. "Our common celebration of the Hours is like a series of landmarks that direct our lives as we seek to give them over to our mission of preaching."
  - b. "Our common celebration of the liturgy allows us to encounter the source of our obedience and to draw from it. This obedience is to the mystery of the Word who comes to "configure himself "to humanity so that humanity might become configured to God."
  - c. "Each of the Hours begins with a cry for assistance to Him who alone can support our life, our fraternity, and our preaching.... The Daily Office, the "sanctification of the hours" is an act of faith for us that, despite our failings, brings us always into the Presence of God. "
  - d. "To sing the liturgy hour after hour calls us to be convinced that the world is saved and heard even in the midst of its own noise."
  - e. "By our ordinary work being interrupted, by our "leaving the world" to break into prayer, we give thanks for the sanctifying Presence of God who broke into our world."
2. Continue the discussion by focusing on the notes the Candidates made in their journals in answer to the question "What modifications must the Dominican Laity make that reflect our state in life in response to fr. Bruno's suggestions?" The answers to this question will be based on several factors including if the Candidates have the opportunity to join with a larger Dominican community, the local parish priests, or a church community to pray the Liturgy of the Hours.

Some considerations include if the laity have the opportunity to pray communally, in a two-sided choir arrangement, if the psalms are actually sung, and if the Liturgy of the Hours is prayed in conjunction with the celebration of the Eucharist/ Mass.

3. Fr. Bruno makes several references to the Constitutions of the friars and to their profession. Discuss how praying the Liturgy of the Hours reflects any gestures from the Rites of the Dominican Laity and helps support living the life as a member of the Dominican Laity.
4. This part of the meeting should be followed by a short break as well as preparations for greeting the participants for the second part of the session.

Part 2: Discussion of the Eucharist/Mass (Skip 1 and 2 if no other people will participate.)

1. Pay particular attention to hospitality as the participants arrive for the open meeting. If the expected audience is large, assign one of the Candidates or other Dominicans to each group/table and allow others to choose where to sit. If the expected audience is smaller, pair a Dominican or Candidate with a person from the wider community.
2. After a short prayer, the pastor or presenter should do a brief introduction of the Formation Team. Include that this open session is one of the sessions for the Candidacy part of initial formation for Dominican Laity but is designed to enrich a basic understanding of the Eucharist/Mass for all the participants.
3. Based on the size of the group, determine if the discussion will be conducted in pairs/triads or in small groups. This more personal sharing is recommended rather than the discussion by the whole group would support. At least three separate groupings should be assigned to match the three “Acts” of the drama (Faith, Hope, and Love) within the Mass that fr. Timothy proposes in his book.
4. The entire audience will participate in the discussion of the Introductory part of the book and also in the wrap –up. Dividing the allotted time into two short segments (about 15 minutes each) for these parts and one larger segment (about 25-30 minutes) for discussion of the “Acts” is recommended. The entire discussion should be a minimum of about 75-90 minutes. Appointing a time keeper will encourage all parts of this topic to be addressed adequately.
5. Distribute the Presentation Handout to all participants. Allow the participants to look through the handout briefly to discover its format. Explain that everyone will participate in the first and last sections but that each participant will participate in only one of the middle three sections (“Acts”) along with a small group.

6. Allow a bit of time for each person to read the quotes from the Introduction silently. Invite volunteers to share their experiences briefly about how their participation in the Eucharist/Mass has gradually reshaped their hearts and mind.
7. Explain that the discussions and sharings that follow will help explore how the liturgy connects to our lives and how our lives connect us to the liturgy. Assign each pair/triad or small group to discuss one of the “Acts”. Encourage the Dominicans to utilize their notes from the Study Guide Supplement and take a leadership role in facilitating the sharing group of which they are a part.
8. The recommended procedure is that each group simultaneously discusses the quotes from that part of fr. Timothy’s book. Each quote can be read aloud or silently. Allow time for personal reflection and a short written response or notes. Volunteers can share their thoughts or pose questions for discussion or clarification.
9. About five minutes before the designated end of this section, ask each group to decide what they wish to share collectively with the other groups from their discussion and the person they wish speak for the group.
10. Beginning the sharing with each group’s representative speaking about the Act of Faith, then proceed to those who will speak about Hope, and then Love.
11. At the end of the sharing, allow a period of silence in which the participants reflect on the insights that they have received from the discussions. Allow a brief time of sharing.
12. End the session with the encouragement and hope that the participants will read fr. Timothy’s entire book or even begin to study it together in its entirety.

**Community:** The openness of this session lends itself to collaboration within the Dominican community as well as within the parish or area. It is important that Dominicans find a place within, participate fully in, and support their local parish.

**Apostolate:** Sharing the Dominican approach to everyday liturgical events such as the Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharist/Mass provides an excellent opportunity to unlock the Word of God and share the Good News. This widespread sharing benefits Dominicans as well as the parish or region.

**Follow-up:** If the Formation Team was not able to arrange a meeting for the entire parish or wider community, planning such an event based on what was learned (and perhaps a more thorough reading of fr. Timothy’s book) is encouraged.

**Assignment:** Distribute the Study Guide for the next study session.