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Synod special

Next week's issue of the *Catholic Courier* will include a special keepsake edition, featuring stories about the upcoming General Synod and the Rochester diocese on the eve of its 125th anniversary celebration. We will also begin a new semimonthly feature called 'Parish Profiles.' Please look for it!

Liturgy of the Hours



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer
Joelle LaPorte leads a group in song during a Sept. 13 Liturgy of the Hours at Rochester's St. Mary Church.

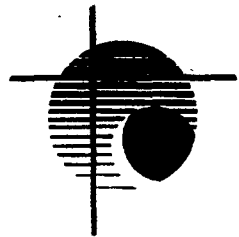
Conference to key on reviving practice for laity

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Only a small percentage of Roman Catholics would recognize the structure of singing and prayer that followed this opening hymn (at right) last Monday evening, Sept. 13, at St. Mary Church, 15 St. Mary's Place, Rochester.

This holds true despite the fact that the Second Vatican Council 30 years ago attempted to restore widespread practice of the Liturgy of the Hours — a daily communal prayer featuring the recitation of various psalms.

If a national convention to be held in Rochester next month proves fruitful, however, then Liturgy of the Hours — also known as Divine Office — will become a more common ritual in parishes across the United States.



*Now it is evening, lights of the city
Bid us remember Christ is our Light.
Many are lonely, who will be neighbor?
Where there is caring, Christ is our light.*

"The Liturgy of the Hours — The Church at Prayer" will serve as the theme for an upcoming national meeting of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions.

The annual event will take place Oct. 14-18 at the Stouffer Rochester Plaza Hotel, 70 State St. According to the national convention's local chairperson, Sister Mary Louise Heffernan, SSJ, approximately 250 Roman Catholic pastors, church musicians and liturgical committee members are expected to

attend the gathering.

Sister Heffernan said that Liturgy of the Hours was chosen as the theme during discussions among representatives from Region II (New York state), the hosting region of this year's Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions convention.

During the upcoming conference, various presentations and workshops will attempt to make the Liturgy of the Hours — which has largely been a practice limited to men and women reli-

gious since the Middle Ages — more prevalent among the laity.

"It's a rite of the church that has not taken hold," noted Sister Heffernan, coordinator for the diocesan Office of Liturgy. "Yet it is the prayer of the church, and the Second Vatican Council encouraged that it would be shared by all the people."

Liturgy of the Hours is most commonly separated into two parts: morning prayer, also known as *Lauds*; and evening prayer, commonly referred to as *Vespers*.

Divine Office gatherings typically last less than an hour. They feature the singing of several psalms intertwined with opening and closing hymns, Scripture readings, silent reflection, intercessions and recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

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