

PRAYER AND FASTING MANUAL
for
the order: ecumenical

1975-76

PRAYER AND FASTING MANUAL for the Order : Ecumenical																					
PRAYER HOUR														FASTING							
DESIGN					RUBRICS					REFLECTION				DESIGN	REFLECTION			RUBRICS			
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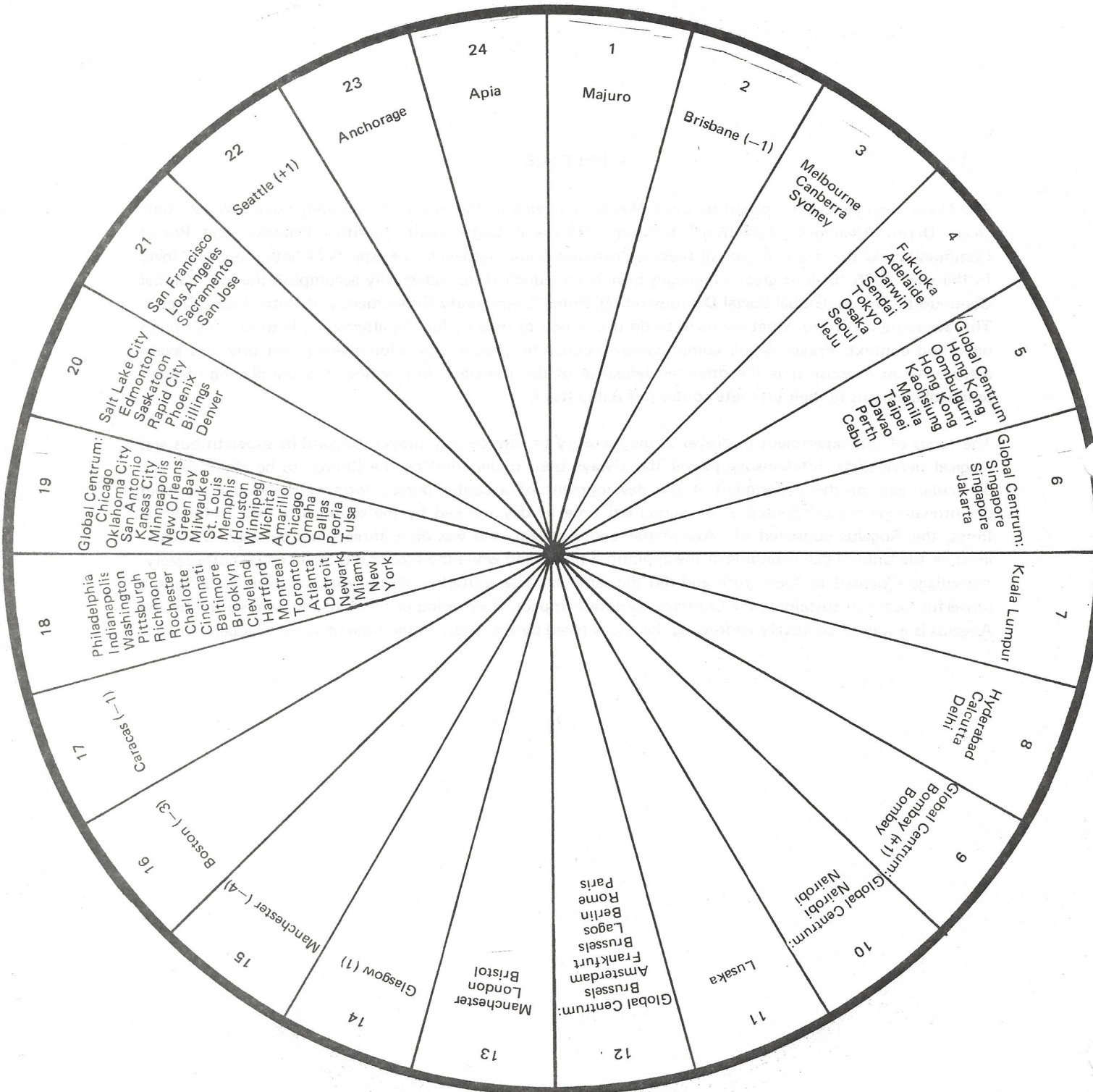
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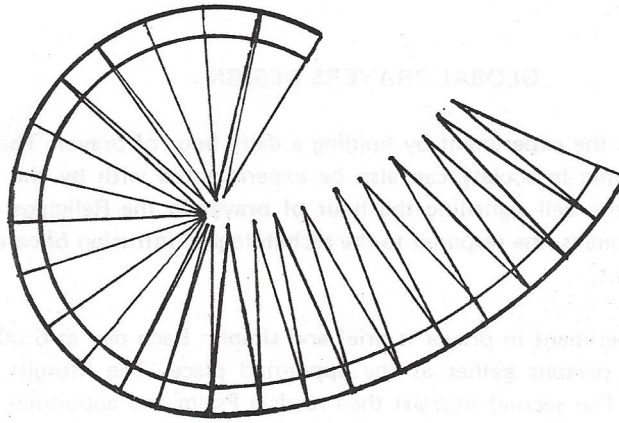
PREFACE

The Order:Ecumenical has begun its Long March of service to the world. Its comprehensive task has come clear: Depth Awareness, Functional Eptitude, Historical Engagement, Spiritual Prowess, and Primal Community. At the heart of each of these is Profound Consciousness in the aspects of faith, hope and love. In the year 1975-76, four great campaigns have been launched to strategically accomplish the task: Global Community Forum, Global Social Demonstration, Primal Community Experiment and Metro Cadre Circuit. The awesome clarity on what we have to do drives one to prayer, for the alternative is to diminish one's operating context. Prayer is the comprehensive, concrete, practical decision-making that precedes every action. As an exercise it is the dramatic rehearsal of this dynamic. In practice, it is the placing of one's practical concerns in their ultimate context of Being Itself.

The focus of the experiment in prayer is the recovery of intercessory prayer. Beyond its superstitious and magical perversions, intercessory prayer has always been understood by the Church to be effective. The particular aim of the experiment is the development of a contemporary form of the *Angelus* a brief devotional exercise conducted at an appointed time of day marked by the sound of a bell. In Medieval times, the Angelus consisted of Ave Marias and a collect, and was done three times per day. One can imagine the Church bell sounding at the appointed times, and while the Monks did the exercise corporately, the villagers paused in their work and did the same exercise solitarily. This devotional exercise became a powerful factor in sustaining the Church's corporate impact. Recovering of the dynamic represented by the Angelus is a way of creatively addressing the issues faced by the Order in the time of social engagement.

GLOBAL PRAYER WHEEL





THE ORDER AT PRAYERS 24 HOURS A DAY AROUND THE GLOBE

- | | | | |
|-----|--|--|--|
| 1. | Majuro | | |
| 2. | Brisbane (-1) | | |
| 3. | Sydney | Canberra | Melbourne |
| 4. | Adelaide
Tokyo
Seoul | Darwin
Osaka
Jeju | Sendai
Fukuoka |
| 5. | Oombulgurri
Taipei
Perth | Davao
Manila
G.C.:Hong Kong | Cebu
Kaohsiung
Hong Kong |
| 6. | Singapore | G.C.:Singapore | Jakarta |
| 7. | Kuala Lumpur (+1) | | |
| 8. | Calcutta | Hyderabad | Delhi |
| 9. | Bombay | G.C.:Bombay (+1) | |
| 10. | G.C.:Nairobi
Nairobi | Nairobi | |
| 11. | Lusaka | | |
| 12. | Berlin
Amsterdam
Lagos | Rome
Brussels
G.C.:Brussels | Frankfurt
Paris |
| 13. | London | Bristol | Manchester |
| 14. | Glasgow (+1) | | |
| 15. | Manchester (-4) | | |
| 16. | Boston (-3) | | |
| 17. | Caracas (-1) | (-1) | |
| 18. | Cincinnati
Hartford
Montreal
Ottawa
Richmond
Miami
Atlanta | Indianapolis
New York
Newark
Baltimore
Toronto
Cleveland
Charlotte | Rochester
Brooklyn
Philadelphia
Washington
Pittsburgh
Detroit |
| 19. | Green Bay
Memphis
Minneapolis
Omaha
Winnipeg
San Antonio
G.C.: Chicago | Milwaukee
New Orleans
Kansas City
Tulsa
Wichita
Amarillo | Peoria
St. Louis
Houston
Dallas
Oklahoma City
Chicago |
| 20. | Rapid City
Billings
Edmonton | Denver
Salt Lake City | Saskatoon
Phoenix |
| 21. | Los Angeles
San Francisco | Sacramento | San Jose |
| 22. | Seattle (1) | | |
| 23. | Anchorage | | |
| 24. | Apia | | |

GLOBAL PRAYERS DESIGN

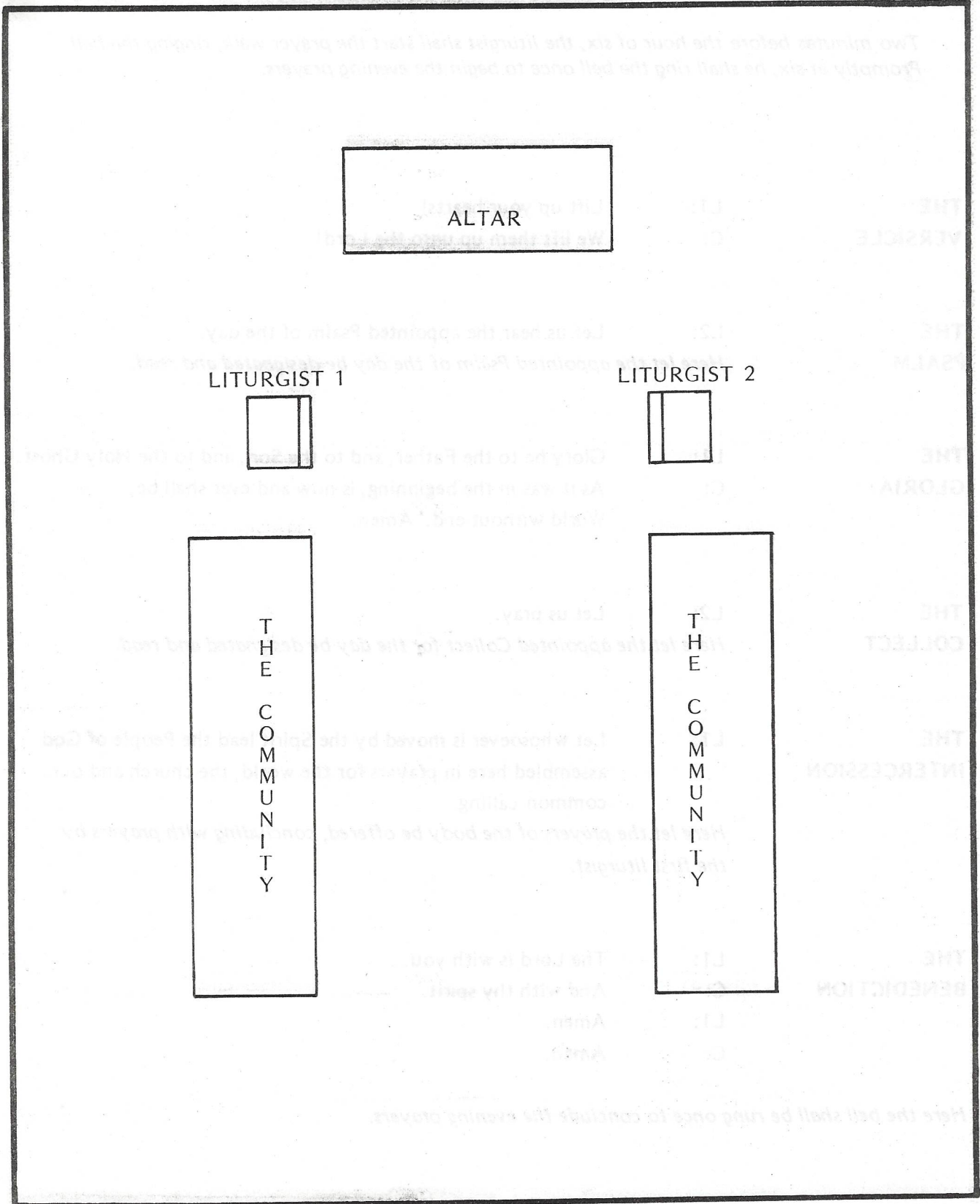
The Symbolic Order continues the experiment by holding a daily hour of prayer. This move towards the recovery of the Angelus dynamic in society can also be experimented with by the Movemental Order. Whether it be the ringing of the bell signalling the hour of prayer in the Religious Houses or the mere pausing at 6:00 p.m. wherever one is, the response to the eschatological intrusion of care for all is the intent of the Global Prayers experiment.

The content of the initial experiment in prayer is brief and simple: Each day at 6:00 p.m. a bell is rung throughout the building and persons gather at the appointed place. The liturgist calls the group to consciousness with a versicle. The second liturgist then reads a Psalm and appointed collect for the day, members of the group who are moved by the Spirit offer prayers of intercession, and the first liturgist offers the final prayer. The group is then sent out with a benediction.

The following operating principles are recommended for the initial phase of the experiment.

- 1) That each Religious House and Centrum Nexus perform the exercise set forth in this manual at 6:00 p.m. local time thereby insuring that every hour of every day someone in the Order is in prayer over the mission;
- 2) that a Prayer Room be set aside for this exercise in every location and that it be decorated with appropriate representations of the mission of sociologically loving the world;
- 3) that a first and second liturgist be assigned for each day and that attendance by others be voluntary;
- 4) that the New Jerusalem Bible be used for the Psalm reading;
- 5) that the first liturgist rehearse the Psalm reading aloud before the exercise begins;
- 6) that periodic reflection be held throughout the quarter and that results be sent to Global Research Centrum, Chicago Nexus for refinement of the corporate experiment;
- 7) that a "Prayer Wheel" similar to the one in this manual become part of the decor of each Prayer Room;
- 8) that each collect be used for a day of the week.

SAMPLE PRAYER ROOM DESIGN



EVENING PRAYERS

Two minutes before the hour of six, the liturgist shall start the prayer walk, ringing the bell. Promptly at six, he shall ring the bell once to begin the evening prayers.

THE VERSICLE

L1: Lift up your hearts!
C: We lift them up unto the Lord!

THE PSALM

L2: Let us hear the appointed Psalm of the day.
Here let the appointed Psalm of the day be designated and read.

THE GLORIA

L1: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
C: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen.

THE COLLECT

L2: Let us pray.
Here let the appointed Collect for the day be designated and read.

THE INTERCESSION

L1: Let whosoever is moved by the Spirit lead the People of God assembled here in prayers for the world, the church and our common calling.
Here let the prayers of the body be offered, concluding with prayers by the first liturgist.

THE BENEDICTION

L1: The Lord is with you.
C: And with thy spirit.
L1: Amen.
C: Amen.

Here the bell shall be rung once to conclude the evening prayers.

COLLECTS FOR THE HOUR OF PRAYER

GLOBAL COMMUNITY FORUM (MONDAY)

O Thou controller of the course of history, who did give mankind the community of the globe and the companionship of his neighbors, we pray that the Global Community Forum will provide an authentic and effective method for the sharing of men's concerns and the catalyzing of their care in concrete actions, so that they may discover anew what it means to be responsible for the future, in the name of the one who took on responsibility for all mankind, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

METRO CADRE (TUESDAY)

O Thou mighty one who sends thy people into all the world to make disciples of all nations, we pray for the emergence of metro cadres around the globe that effective form may be given to the longings of all mankind to participate in building the new form of human society, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRIMAL COMMUNITY EXPERIMENT (WEDNESDAY)

O God who in thy mysterious providence led our fathers to form communities to sustain and humanize solitary souls, grant that the Primal Community Experiment as it serves the local suffering of mankind, may hold in dynamic tension the communal wisdom of the past and the global beckonings of the future that all men may grasp their present destiny as the sons of God, in the name of Him who pioneered the role of Sonship for all mankind, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HISTORIC CHURCH (THURSDAY)

O Thou who has had thy people in every age and place, we pray for the role of the historic church in the 20th century that it may become the transparent sign of Those Who Care authentically and effectively embodying service to all men, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GLOBAL SOCIAL DEMONSTRATION (FRIDAY)

O Thou all powerful presence through whom all miracles are possible, grant the building of reconstructed local communities in Majuro, Oombulgurri, JeJuDo, Taj Gunj, Kawangware, Trastavere, Isle of Dogs, City Five as places where the fullness of men's lives is affirmed and engaged on behalf of their whole earthly home, that ever hereafter men having seen those signs can mold and employ the many structures of society for responsible service to men of every condition, in the name of the one who pioneered in radical demonstration of love of God and neighbor, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COUNCIL '76 (SATURDAY)

O Thou merciful and everlasting God who has throughout history called together thy people to discern thy will and give form to that new direction, grant, we beseech thee, that Global Council 1976 be a sign of the church gathered caring for the needs of the world as recreated community so that effective methodologies for releasing the profoundly human element in every situation might be shared with all people. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

TRAINING (SUNDAY)

O giver and destroyer of life who calls all men to the searing care of one another, we pray for the intuitive wisdom necessary to create the nurturing forms of priorship training, so that through the discipline of obedience to such forms we may rise to the gigantic task of leadership in our tumultuous world, in the name of the Son of life who showed what all men could do, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**QUARTER TWO
THE PSALM LECTIONARY**

wk. day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
MON	1 & 2	10	18 1-25	23	30	35 1-10	40	47	53	59	66 1-7	70	77
TUE	3 & 4	11	18 26-50	24	31 1-11	35 11-28	41	48	54	60	66 7-20	71	78 1-8
WED	5	12	19	25	31 12-24	36	42	49 1-11	55 1-15	61	67	72	78 9-35
THU	6	13	20	26	32	37 1-17	43	49 12-20	55 16-23	62	68 1-27	73	78 36-55
FRI	7	14 & 15	21	27	33	37 18-40	44	50	56	63	68 28-35	74	78 56-72
SAT	8	16	22 1-22	28	34 1-10	38	45	51	57	64	69 1-18	75	79
SUN	9	17	22 23-31	29	34 11-22	39	46	52	58	65	69 19-36	76	80

**QUARTER THREE
THE PSALMS LECTIONARY**

wk. day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
MON	81	86 11-17	90	97	103	106 17-31	110	117	119 81-104	122	129	136	143
TUE	82	87	91	98	104 1-18	106 32-48	111	118 1-14	119 105-120	123	130	137	144
WED	83 1-8	88	92	99	104 19-35	107 1-22	112	118 15-29	119 121-144	124	131	138	145
THU	83 9-18	89 1-14	93	100	105 1-15	107 23-43	113	119 1-8	119 145-168	125	132 1-10	139	146
FRI	84	89 15-23	94	101	105 16-23	108	114	119 9-32	119 169-176	126	132 11-18	140	147
SAT	85	89 24-37	95	102 1-17	105 24-45	109 1-19	115	119 33-56	120	127	133&134	141	148
SUN	86 1-10	89 38-51	96	102 18-27	106 1-16	109 20-31	116	119 57-80	121	128	135	142	149

**QUARTER FOUR
THE PSALMS LECTIONARY**

wk. day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
MON	150	9	17 23-31	22 23-31	29	34 11-22	39	46	52	58	65	69 19-36	76
TUE	1 & 2	10	18 1-25	23	30	35 1-10	40	47	53	59	66 1-7	70	77
WED	3 & 4	11	18 26-50	24	31 1-11	35 11-28	41	48	54	60	66 7-20	71	78 1-8
THU	5	12	19	25	31 12-24	36	42	49 1-11	55 1-15	61	67	72	78 9-35
FRI	6	13	20	26	32	37 1-17	43	49 12-20	55 16-23	62	68 1-27	73	78 36-55
SAT	7	14 & 15	21	27	33	37 18-40	44	50	56	63	68 28-35	74	78 56-72
SUN	8	16	22 1-22	28	34 1-10	38	45	51	57	64	69 1-18	75	79

**QUARTER ONE
THE PSALMS LECTIONARY**

wk. day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
MON	80	86 1-10	89 38-51	96	102 18-27	106 1-16	109 20-31	116	119 57-80	121	128	135	142
TUE	81	86 11-17	90	97	103	106 17-31	110	117	119 81-104	122	129	136	143
WED	82	87	91	98	104 1-18	106 32-48	111	118 1-14	119 105-120	123	130	137	144
THU	83 1-8	88	92	99	104 19-35	107 1-22	112	118 15-29	119 121-144	124	131	138	145
FRI	83 9-18	89 1-14	93	100	105 1-15	107 23-43	113	119 1-8	119 145-168	125	132 1-10	139	146
SAT	84	89 15-23	94	101	105 16-23	108	114	119 9-32	119 169-176	126	132 11-18	140	147
SUN	85	89 24-37	95	102 1-17	105 24-45	109 1-19	115	119 33-56	120	127	133 & 134	141	148

INTERCESSORY PRAYER CONTEXTS

<p>ONE</p> <p align="center">RETURN TO PRAYER</p>	<p align="center">PRAYER IS DOING</p> <p align="center">The Exercise Itself <i>on the knees, in sacred space, saying words</i></p>	<p align="center">PRAYER IS MEETING</p> <p align="center">A Corporate Exercise <i>two or three spirit men</i></p>
<p>TWO</p> <p align="center">PRAYER IS AN EXERCISE</p>	<p align="center">CORPORATE EXERCISE</p> <p align="center">An Edge Worry <i>in exercise of the exercise, AWE happens</i></p>	<p align="center">CONSCIOUSNESS OF CONSCIOUSNESS</p> <p align="center">Objective Humanness <i>most objective state there is</i></p>
<p>THREE</p> <p align="center">INTERCESSORY PRAYER</p>	<p align="center">CORPORATE ACTIVITY</p> <p align="center">See You at Prayers <i>history is bent by prayer meetings</i></p>	<p align="center">CORPORATE INTERCESSION</p> <p align="center">It Takes a Group <i>the solitary leads the group in prayer</i></p>
<p>FOUR</p> <p align="center">AWARENESS OF A STRANGE POWER</p>	<p align="center">PROFOUNDLY EMPIRICAL</p> <p align="center">Word <i>has to do only with this life lived through Word</i></p>	<p align="center">RADICAL OBJECTIFICATION</p> <p align="center">Symbol <i>has nothing to do with motivation</i></p>
<p>FIVE</p> <p align="center">INTERCESSION AND SOCIAL DEMONSTRATION</p>	<p align="center">SOCIAL REVOLUTION</p> <p align="center">Transestablishment Act <i>has to do with structural revolution</i></p>	<p align="center">THE "GIVEN" FUTURE</p> <p align="center">Prayer Changes Future <i>the given is not a "closed system"</i></p>
	<p align="center">SOCIAL DEMONSTRATION</p> <p align="center">Relation to Prayer <i>injection of the alien image</i></p>	<p align="center">MOVEMENTAL ORDER</p> <p align="center">Solitary Office <i>intercessory prayer is heart of solitary</i></p>

Since prayers and intercessions for health belong to the normal intercourse between man and God, it is difficult to draw a sharp boundary line between Spirit-determined and magical praying. Generally speaking, one can say that a Spirit-determined prayer seeks to bring one's own personal center, including one's concern for the health of one's self or of someone else, before God, and that it is willing to accept the divine acceptance of the prayer whether its overt content is fulfilled or not. Conversely, a prayer which is only a magical concentration on the desired aim, using God for its realization, does not accept an unfulfilled prayer as an accepted prayer, for the ultimate aim in the magic prayer is not God and the reunion with him but the object of the prayer, for example, health. A prayer for health in faith is not an attempt at faith healing but an expression of the state of being grasped by the Spiritual Presence.

Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, III; p. 279f.

... every serious prayer produces something new in terms of creaturely freedom which is taken into consideration in the whole of God's directing creativity, as is every act of man's centered self. This newness, created by the prayer of supplication, is the Spiritual act of elevating the content of one's wishes and hopes into the Spiritual Presence. A prayer in which this happens is "heard", even if subsequent events contradict the manifest content of the prayer. The same is true of prayers of intercession which not only produce a new relation to those for whom the prayer is made but also introduce a change in the relation to the ultimate of the subjects and objects of intercession.

Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, III; p. 191

God's directing creativity is the answer to the question of the meaning of prayer, especially prayers of supplication and prayers of intercession. Neither type of prayer can mean that God is expected to acquiesce in interfering with existential conditions. Both mean that God is asked to direct the given situation toward fulfillment. The prayers are an element in this situation, a most powerful factor if they are true prayers. As an element in the situation a prayer is a condition of God's directing creativity, but the form of this creativity may be the complete rejection of the manifest content of the prayer. Nevertheless, the prayer may have been heard according to its hidden content, which is the surrender of a fragment of existence to God. This hidden content is always decisive. It is the element in the situation which is used by God's directing creativity. Every serious prayer contains power, not because of the intensity of desire expressed in it, but because of the faith the person has in God's directing activity—a faith which transforms the existential situation.

Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, I; p. 267

The right provision which it befits the Church to have of what will be salutary for it in its coexistence with the world naturally becomes Prayer.

As the consciousness of the Church thus moves to and fro between the present and the future, it enters in a two-fold way into combination with the God-consciousness. In view of the fact that every success attained is due not solely to its own activities but also to the divine government of the world, it becomes thankfulness or resignation for what in the present is the outcome of previous exertions, according as the average result of human effort is surpassed (thankfulness) or unachieved (resignation). But for that which still remains undecided it becomes prayer—i.e., the inner combination with the God-consciousness of a wish for full success. . . .

But the mind of man (ever anticipating as it does the temporal development of things) is unable to refrain from painting what is possible in a variety of imaginative pictures and comparing their values for its own projects, or from coming to cling by preference to those from which it expects most advantage; and as long as this mental activity lasts, it is bound to combine with the God-consciousness and become prayer. This is always going on, so that we have no cause to regard the injunction to pray without ceasing as hyperbole. If we did not pray, that could only be due to a disappearance either of our interest in the Kingdom of God, which evokes these ideas of an advantageous but uncertain future, or of our God-consciousness, which keeps present to our mind the absolute powers of the divine world-government. . . .

...the Church's duty is first to reconcile the uncertain elements of prevision (so far as they may be discordant) which flow from the imperfect common consciousness of individuals, and then to appease the feeling of uncertainty through the gathering together of individuals for common prayer; for through the very form of common religious action each individual feels himself be drawn away from what is more personal in origin to that which could be the same in all, and is guided by the content and meaning of such common action to that which lays hold on all equally. . . .

So far, then, it is true that every prayer is prayer in Jesus' name where the petition (whatever it be) is offered with reference to the Kingdom of God. But the more definite the prayer is, the more necessary it becomes that its object should be conceived of as in agreement with the order according to which Christ rules His Church, so that the person who prays may as such be regarded as a true and acceptable representative of Christ. It follows that none can be true prayer in Jesus' name except that which springs from the self-consciousness of the Church as a whole, i.e., such prayer as in its content keeps the whole condition of the Church in view. Prayer of this kind certainly belongs to the common prayer of the

Church at any given moment, and that such prayer is heard it is impossible to doubt. If the Church's need has been rightly apprehended, and if the dominating presentiment has arisen out of the Church's whole consciousness of its own inner condition and outward circumstances, then the prayer is charged with full truth: it represents Christ's knowledge of His spiritual body and defines His ruling activity. Hence, in view of the power received by the Son from the Father, its content cannot but be fulfilled. Every other prayer, springing from a less perfect Church consciousness, even though it touch equally Christ's concerns and arise from a sincere endeavor to act in His spirit, can look for fulfillment only in the measure in which it harmonizes with the normative prayer as just described; indeed, it is only thus far that it ought to claim fulfillment. Such prayer, accordingly, can only gain confidence by subordinating itself to prayer that is normative and seeking to be heard only on that condition. . . .

But between prayer and its fulfillment there exists a connexion due to the fact that both things have one and the same foundation, namely the nature of the Kingdom of God. In that Kingdom the two are one—prayer as Christian presentiment growing out of the whole action and influence of the divine Spirit, and fulfillment as expressive of Christ's ruling activity in relation to the same object. Seen thus, fulfillment would not have arrived in the development of the Kingdom of God on which the fulfillment must follow. But fulfillment does not come because prayer was offered (as though prayer could here be regarded isolatedly as a cause in itself), but because the right prayer can have no other object than what is in line with the divine good-pleasure. Neither would it have come, in virtue of the divine decree, even had there been no prayer (as though the divine decree bore upon particulars apart from their natural nexus); it comes because of the inward state that gives rise to prayer itself forms part of the conditions under which it was possible for the result effectually to emerge. . . .

Right prayer only arises when we are engaged in the activities that go to fulfill our Christian vocation. Thus every true moment of prayer rests on a moment or element of action, so that prayer cannot destroy action without being itself destroyed; on the other hand, the presentiment expressed in such prayer as originates otherwise is bound to be purely arbitrary, and can carry with it no certainty whatever that it is in harmony with the ruling activity of Christ. No more can action destroy prayer, for action of such a kind could not be directed upon the Kingdom of God. The agent is readily satisfied with what he himself can achieve; and such action could give no guarantee of its being under the influence of Christ's rule.

Friedrich Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, II; Pp. 668-674

"LORD JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, HAVE MERCY ON ME A SINNER."

—Prayer of the Staret

*The Preparation: Repeat it aloud, or only in thought, slowly, lingeringly, but with attention, and from a heart freed as much as possible from all that is inappropriate to it. Not only worldly interests are inappropriate, but also such things as every kind of expectation or thought of answer, or inner visions, testings, all kinds of romantic dreams, curious questionings and imaginings. ** Simplicity is as inescapable a condition as humility, abstemiousness of body and soul, and in general everything that pertains to the invisible warfare.*

GLOBAL FAST DESIGN

Fasting is an exercise of the spirit and is a symbol of a decision to do a deed. Therefore the act of fasting is radically practical, and the rubric is clear liquids only for 24 hours. Each House in preparation for its fast day will corporately reflect on what the fast is about and over. The contextual framework within which the exercise takes place allows the full depth of the experience to happen, so sensitivity to each day of the House's fasting and the necessary contextual statements are required.

Each House will maintain a notice board that indicates which House is fasting on behalf of the whole Order that particular day. Feast days could be marked by the same board.

On the Fast day the "no-meals" would be celebrated corporately using the normal meal structures, with the exception of silence being substituted for "Let us feast."

THE FAST SOLITARY CONTEXTS

- I. Fasting is an experiment in the experience of spiritual poverty, designed as a corporate rehearsal of the state of detachment. We have attempted to recover the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, taking the traditional practice of fasting as the mark of those who self-consciously participate in that promise. In the church, it is grasped solely as a missional index of those who have decided to corporately be the People of God in history.
- II. Fasting is the intentional, symbolic withdrawal of a people for the purpose of total engagement. But, man is both fascinated by the call of complete expenditure and fearful of losing himself in that same process. He seeks security, therefore, by attaching himself to instinctual behavior. To the degree one is attached to anything other than that which is unsynonomous with any other thing, one reduces that part of life into an un-living, a dead, object. Fasting, however, has nothing to do with reality; but, rather, is symbolic, not of whether you possess much or little, but of the stance of nonchalance relative to "abounding or abasing".
- III. In the fast, one is confronted with one's own personal contingency. The frailty of human existence seems ever close and real. In fact, the drive to posit oneself in time seems to be itself a Herculean struggle. In one's mind, all images pass away. One has to muster every sensation to grasp his awareness of life at all. This is the human experience of bottomless concern for life. It is this diving care for life that undergirds the spirit for building societies.
- IV. To dramatize this basic posture, fasting becomes a literal sign of concern for men. It is a ritual act that points beyond itself in the representational sense. Fasting becomes a means of grace whereby all men participate in and through the fast.
- V. Primitive man fasted when, with fire and tools, he was able to break the 24-hour search for food. His preoccupation with things was broken as fewer hours were needed for actual procurement. This breakthrough itself signified the dawn of consciousness which separated man from beast.
- VI. The ancient church tradition of fasting has its roots in just such a recollection. She has used the calendar to remind both herself and all of civilization in an intentional way that consciousness of consciousness is fought for. And the great Feast Days always followed the fast, in which the break-fast was as important as the fasting. In fact, all of one's conscious life can be understood in terms of a rhythm of fasting and feasting.
- VII. Fasting as a community practice has its precedent in most world religions. These serve as times of deep reflection when a whole group steps back from the frenzy of life and re-appropriates its own uniqueness and significance. This is experienced as a healing time for the community. Without the pause of detachment, our engagement lacks intentionality and creativity.
- VIII. The feast is the exodus from the fast. But it has within it the paradox of the desert. While it is a return to the bounties of life, it is a return to feast on the spirit. It is a celebration of the journey from unconsciousness to consciousness of consciousness. The fast has given us the possibility to feast forever in grace.

- IX. The fast is built on a human dynamic. Take, for example, the experience around noontide, when, during a day the tedium results in lassitude and indifference. Yet, the craving for food grinds away. When we pull back, we see that our body drives on in spite of our indifference.
- X. The spirit within is really what is slothful and vacant. The growling within is symbolic of the inner perturbation that is constantly going on in our spirit. We are driven to seek others but fall back on our own disquietitude. We continue to work with this strange rumbling within.
- XI. Amid this double occurrence, we find ourselves able to stand outside of ourselves and observe with penetrating lucidity our own life action. Perhaps it is more like levitating the body as it seems to float around the room looking at what is going on. It is as if whatever happens, one can perceive it intently. There is sheer delight in apprehending and having the event apprehending you in every sense as you live the occasion.
- XII. Fasting is always relative to a temporal concern as it comes out of a concrete situation. But, the purpose of fasting is to discern the actual situation and not just the superficial manifestations. One sees the situation as if through it, in order to expose or "smoke out" the real nature of the contradiction. One takes a second look and calls out or names the one block or points to that which requires his total effort.
- XIII. Directly after his baptism, Jesus went into the desert for a forty-day fast. The images he had of himself on high places, turning rocks into bread or seated on Caesar's throne were fantasies with which he had to struggle. These three temptations were personified in the one image of Satan. Over against these contentions, he remained loyal to his calling to be the Son of God.
- XIV. Jesus' disciples were chided for not fasting enough. Jesus replied that the bridegroom is always present, therefore the fast must be decisional, not mechanically religious. One always fasts within the Word and feasts on it continually, thereby has permission to take into himself all of the suffering of mankind.
- XV. The intense awareness of one's own contingency prefigures the deathly encounter with Satan. As one's sense of time fades, the present hour intensifies one's own sensitivity. All of one's struggle and guilt relative to his own life becomes focussed. And one realizes his only temptor is the rebellious Satanic force itself. The only decision one must struggle with, is the struggle to be faithful to one's own calling.
- XVI. Jesus left the fast in the desert full of the Holy Spirit. He now went forth to preach the message of the good news that the kingdom of God is at hand and is available to all. The realization of the other world was his one mission. It was here in our midst, and now there is only one temptation. That is the temptation not to embody the posture of both worlds.

We have been concerned with the intensification of interior discipline that will be life or death to the movement over the 20-year march. The wearing of the cross as a sign of chastity, the night watch as a sign of obedience, and now the Fast as a sign of poverty are three ways we are experimenting with recovering corporate vows, or the interiorizing of corporateness. The Fast has to do with spiritual detachment, the intentional withdrawal from life's many attachments in order to be free to follow the Word. More than the previous two exercises, the Fast confronts the participant with his own frailty and contingency, causing images of significance to fade, and throwing him upon the only unending concern—the mystery of life and death. Thus the Fast gives external indication of the final commitment, the decision to travel the whole distance.

As we trace the historical journey of the Fast and the Feast, we have to begin with the dawn of consciousness of man, when the animal activity of taking in sustenance was self-consciously developed into a pattern of fasting and feasting. That doubtlessly exploded the gift of the meal within the community. The Church further discovered the formation tool of the Fast as training in spirit discipline; at the same time she appropriated the feast in the calendar as a major celebrative event. It was understood that a man engaging in a Fast as a religious exercise cast out demons, particularly the one of attachment, unblocking him in the freedom of his spirit to be creative intentionality. A Fast was marked by the return to feasting, which now becomes a radical embracing of the bounty of life.

The experience of the Fast is unique to each person, but wisdom from previous fasts indicates that certain dynamics can be expected. The absence of meals will disrupt the day's rhythm resulting in hunger pangs at strange times, tedium, and a physical lassitude. One's spirit vacillates between deep restlessness and a vacant slothfulness in the midst of the corporate missional thrust. The senses are intensified; in experiences ranging from penetrating lucidity to euphoria or passionate engagement. Critical in the entire experience is the awareness of the double occasion of the Fast; *over* a temporal, particular reality in history and *about* the eternal or one's relation to final mystery.

The scriptures describe fully the context within which fasting goes on. There is the story of Jesus in the desert as the most obvious example of the effects, the temptations, and the decision in the experience of the Fast. Jesus stands as the Word which gives permission to self-consciously fast or feast on behalf of all of suffering mankind. He related fasting to the casting out of demons when he pointed out to his disciples that "some demons can be cast out only by prayer and fasting." Also, the resurrectional life is portrayed through the imagery of the feasting on the other side of the fast—the risen Christ breaks bread and eats fish, though as the dead one he needs no food. Finally, he ascends to prepare places for all the disciples at the eternal feasting on the Spirit that goes on in the Other World in the midst of this world.

—from *Global Research Assembly, 1972*

The more frequently one fasts the more crucial it is to prepare for it. That is why celebration together just preceding the fast is most important. It prepares us to go on the fast together. But one must personally prepare himself. This means something like doing a homily for one's self before beginning the fast or early in it.

It is a glory to me that this fast comes during the emphasis on the Mountain of Care. In the River of Consciousness the bridegroom was with us. Not so in the Mountain of Care. He has gone away that we may learn that he is with us always. When you go to the mountain you are left all alone. This enables the detachment necessary to lift the mountain. The fast is the detachment for Golgotha, for the Mountain of Care.

The detachment from food is a sign of my detachment from temporality. The desire for food is probably the most basic, foundational propensity of man. Fast from food is a symbol of detachment from everything else, that is every other propensity of man. In our day it is hard for us to grasp just how basic the propensity for food is, when we live in a culture of such affluence. There have been moments in history when this propensity has driven men to the eating of one another in the midst of tragic circumstance, when a group would have to decide which in their midst would die so that the others might live.

