

Charter for the Society of St. Nicholas Ferrar

revised December 2020

Rationale

By the grace of God, the Liturgical Movement of the 20th century reestablished the Holy Eucharist as the principal act of Christian worship, addressing its gradual replacement by Morning Prayer in many parts of the Anglican Communion.

However, this Eucharistic renewal has coincided with lamentable neglect of the Daily Office as a pillar of historic Anglican worship.

We hold firmly that the spiritual lives of Anglican Christians in all orders of ministry, both lay and ordained, ought to be built around the sustained exercise of the Daily Office as well as the regular practice of the Holy Eucharist.

In order that we might cultivate and exemplify such a corporate life of devotion, we covenant to establish an apostolate inspired by the example of St. Nicholas Ferrar, who fostered a life of prayer in his family and community.

Bylaws

1. General

The ‘Society of St. Nicholas Ferrar’ (SSNF) shall be a voluntary association of Christians within the Anglican Communion committed to the preservation and propagation of this classical Anglican rhythm of worship.

The core of this rhythm consists of the celebration of the Holy Eucharist on Sundays and Feast days and the daily recitation of the liturgy of canonical hours known as the Daily Office.

The Society shall not be a religious order bound by vows and shall not recognize gradations in membership. Members may be clerical or lay, secular or religious.

Membership in the Society shall complement, not replace, membership in any other orders or societies with similar aims, such as the Society of Catholic Priests.

2. Membership

All Members shall be uniformly bound by a shared, fourfold commitment:

- i. To observe at least the major canonical hours of the Daily Office—Morning Prayer (Matins) and Evening Prayer (Vespers or Evensong)—every day.
 - a. These Offices should be recited in community with other Christians whenever possible.
 - b. Recitation of the Daily Office, whether private or public, should conform to the rubrics of the current prayerbook of the Member’s Province (i.e., the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* for Members in the Episcopal Church), but Members may also draw on any resources authorized for use by their entire Province.
- ii. To attend a celebration of the Holy Eucharist every Sunday and on Principal and Major Feasts of the Church, insofar as circumstances allow.
- iii. To encourage, through word and example, the public observance of this same pattern of worship in their communities and dioceses.
- iv. To intercede daily for other Members, generally (using the collect for the Society) and by name.

Members shall make this commitment on a year-to-year basis and are free to withdraw from the Society at any time as circumstance or desire dictates.

Members may join anywhere and at any time by notifying the Society of their intention to adhere to the Society's charter until the Feast of St. Nicholas Ferrar (1 December).

Members shall renew their commitment annually on the Feast of St. Nicholas Ferrar, notifying the Society of their intention to remain Members for the coming year.

3. Diocesan Chapters

Recognizing the diocese as the fundamental unit of the local Church, Members are encouraged to form Chapters of the Society, organized at the diocesan level.

Chapters shall consist of a minimum of three (3) Members and may be constituted at any time by notifying the Society of their intention and providing a roster of members.

Each Chapter shall identify one Member to serve as Chapter Moderator for the coming year, coordinating and communicating the Chapter's activities.

Chapters shall renew their commitment annually on the Feast of St. Nicholas Ferrar in the same manner as Members.

Chapters are encouraged to make their diocesan bishops aware of the Society and its activities, offering their assistance in educating the diocese about the Daily Office.

As the inaugural Chapter of the Society, the Chapter in the Diocese of Minnesota shall serve as a hub for the Society as a whole until such time as other leadership structures are developed.

4. Community

Members of the Society are encouraged to pray the Office together on a regular basis, normatively once each month. This may be done locally by a Chapter or generally by the Society at large via online platforms.

The Society shall provide at least one (1) weekly offering of the Office via an online platform accessible to all Members and those interested in becoming Members.

The Society shall pray one of the Offices collectively via an online platform each year on the Feast of St. Nicholas Ferrar, using the following Propers: Psalm 84; Genesis 32:24-30; Acts 2:41-47; Luke 11:1-13.

Members are encouraged to build up fellowship outside regular meetings and to lovingly hold each other accountable in the practice of the Daily Office. These bonds of Christian charity are a fruit of our pattern of worship and the means by which we invite others to take up the practice of the Daily Office.

Collect for the Society of St. Nicholas Ferrar

Most Merciful Father, who through your Holy Apostles has enjoined us to persevere in the prayers of the Church and diligently to observe the Sacraments of the New Covenant; grant that we, who strive in the spirit of your saint Nicholas Ferrar to uphold this office, may be faithful stewards of this worship and constant beacons of its fruits; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, in glory everlasting.

