

Liturgy We Live *by Dr. Gil Haas*

A Christian feast's celebration is sometimes extended. A **novena** (Latin, "nine") is nine days of devotion preceding a feast, particularly Pentecost (memorializing the days of communal prayer for the Holy Spirit by the disciples and Mary described in Acts). An **octave** (Latin, eighth) is the celebration of a feast for eight days beginning with the feast itself. Our BCP does not mention the word "octave". However, there are propers for each of the weekdays of Easter Week which may be likened to an octave. An **eve** or **vigil** occurs on the evening before a feast, and our BCP provides directions for vigils of Easter, Pentecost, and burials. Easter Vigils began in the second century when baptismal candidates listened all night to readings. At cockcrow on Easter Day, the catechumens were baptized. Our Book of Occasional Services provides forms for vigils of Christmas, the Baptism of our Lord, New Year's (feast of the Holy Name), All Saints' Day, and baptism. The 1662 Prayer Book listed 16 feasts to be preceded by a vigil. Early evening prayers are called **vespers** (Latin, evening). In the context of a feast, a feast's vespers are prayers offered the evening of a feast.

If you have a liturgical question or an inquiry about anything that transpires during or around our worship service, please forward the question you would like researched to: gghaas@aol.com, or drop the question in the offering basin. Please note whether we can credit you as the source of the question.