

Discovering Prayer

An Introduction and Tutorial to the Liturgy of the Hours
— 5th Edition 2007

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PREFACE

Like so much in the world, this booklet exists for selfish reasons, but not necessarily bad ones. I struggle to find time to pray and recognized that, though I would like to pray regularly, I needed some *additional* motivation. Given human, communal nature, some healthy peer pressure would suffice in the absence of perfect charity, and so began an effort to organize what good people do naturally — gather and pray.

But pray how and about what? All prayer, especially the “spontaneous” kind, becomes horribly monotonous (if not to the individual, then certainly to God). For example, if prayed before each meal by every Christian, Jew and Muslim on the face of the earth, our poor Father in Heaven hears “God, thank you for this food,” or words to that effect, several billion times a day. An individual person expresses the same sentiment about 75 thousand times in his own life.

Somewhere along the way, the question must occur to the rational person, “why do I keep saying the same things over and over? What am I really doing?” Some people try to make their prayers more eloquent, more interesting to themselves or to whoever else might be listening, but then what really is the point of such prayers? Is God somehow impressed by our creative use of language? Is it only some kind of self-affirmation or comfort? “Ah, that was a *good* prayer.”

At the heart of these questions are more subtle ones: What is prayer and what is its purpose? These are not simple questions and they cannot be simply answered.

Thankfully, the Catholic Church has, from *before* its very beginning, possessed a source of prayer that is rich, enriching, and virtually inexhaustible. The modern version is called *Liturgy of the Hours (LOTH)*, and it is among the Church’s better-kept secrets. Based almost exclusively on Sacred Scripture, *LOTH* leads one to pray with other Christians in the Spirit, through Christ, to the Father.

Having discovered what to pray, then came the task of learning how to pray it. This is not as easy as one might expect. To begin with, the instruction, called the “General Instruction for the Liturgy of the Hours” (*GILH*), though a rich document, was not intended and does not serve well as

a standalone guide to learning the Hours. Ideally, one would learn to pray *LOTH* by regularly praying with other groups, but these are in short supply. Teachers, clear instructions, time and support systems are scarce. Hence this book.

That said, it must be admitted that this project, now ten years in the making, has grown well beyond its original concept and led unexpectedly to an entirely new section on simple chants (and then Latin prayers and Gregorian chant). Instruction on how to chant and the Church’s modern view of chanted prayer are all but nonexistent. As it turns out, chant plays a much more important role in prayer than may be imagined.

I must offer my thanks to the many individuals and organizations who have offered helpful comments towards improving this text.

Finally, though the text draws almost exclusively upon Catholic sources, *Liturgy of the Hours* lends itself readily to ecumenical prayer groups. Even those Christians who would not naturally refer to themselves as Catholic will find within *LOTH* an inspiring and moving font of prayer.

Best wishes in your — in our — pursuit to open our minds and hearts Jesus.

SHM

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER AND THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that utterance may be given me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak. (Ephesians 6:18-20)

Christians are called to consecrate every moment of every day to God. Every action. Every thought. Every word. This is a tremendous and seemingly impossible task, but it is part of our gift as a people who participate in Christ's priestly activity.

Those who attempt to live a life of prayer find it difficult: How quickly the mind is distracted; how quickly we find ourselves falling into monotonous patterns; how quickly we find that we simply don't know how or what to pray, and if we knew, we may not want to do it.

In matters of prayer we are only too apt to deceive ourselves because, generally speaking, man does not enjoy praying. He easily experiences boredom, embarrassment, unwillingness, or even hostility. Everything else appears to him more attractive and more important.... [But without] prayer, faith becomes weak and the religious life atrophies. One cannot, in the long run, remain a Christian without praying, as one cannot live without breathing. (Msgr. Romano Guardini, *The Art of Prayer*.)

But Christ, through the Church, helps us. Prayer is certainly more than informing God what is going on in our lives — something He already knows. At its essence, prayer is a lifting, opening and offering of the heart and mind to God. The *Liturgy of the Hours* is an incomparable guide.

One could write volumes on what prayer is and how one engages in prayer. Different authors identify different elements, levels, types, expressions, intentions and fruits of prayer. It is not the intention of this text to provide such an education. Rather, we highly recommend reading the last quarter of the Universal Catechism on prayer, especially paragraphs 2626-2643 on elements of prayer and 2700-2719 on expressions of prayer. *The Art of Prayer*, by Romano Guardini, is also recommended. For the sake of this tutorial, we will allow the prayer to teach us as we pray it.

If you have never heard of *Liturgy of the Hours*, don't feel bad. Even those very familiar with Catholicism and methods of prayer are frequently unfamiliar with it. If one has not heard the phrase, he has frequently heard of the individual prayers. From the Latin; *Lauds*, *Vespers*, *Compline*, etc.

In fact, *Liturgy of the Hours* is known by several names:

- Liturgy of the Hours
- Divine Office
- Breviary (referring to the book)
- *Opus Dei* (Work of God)
- Christian Prayer
- L.O.T.H. or L.O.H. (acronym)

To understand the meaning and importance of *LOTH*, one must first understand the meaning of "Liturgy." We can then move on to the substance of the prayers and how to participate in them.

LITURGY...

Liturgy is an "action" of the whole Christ (*Christus totus*).... It is the whole community, the Body of Christ united with its Head, that celebrates. "Liturgical services are not private functions but are celebrations of the Church which is 'the sacrament of unity,' namely, the holy people united and organized under the authority of the bishops. Therefore, liturgical services pertain to the whole body of the Church. They manifest it, and have effects upon it.... (CCC 1136-1140)

Liturgy is an action of the entire Church, responding to and acting under the influence of Christ's grace within her. It is distinct from popular piety or devotions, which are certainly graced, but not in the same way as a liturgical action. This is because liturgy is not merely an action of individual Christians or even a group, but an action of Christ, Himself. In liturgy, the People of God participate in and are caught up into the priestly, prophetic and kingly work of Christ in a way not otherwise accessible. Hence the Church's great emphasis upon increased understanding of and participation in liturgy.

... OF THE HOURS

Liturgy of the Hours is not a sacrament, but with the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the

Eucharist and the other liturgical actions, it is the Great Prayer of the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church. As such, it existed inchoate even prior to Christ's death and resurrection with the people God chose for Himself, the people known in various times and places as the Hebrews, Israelites or Jews.

Among the earliest monotheistic traditions was that in which, two or three (or more) times per day, the people would individually or communally stop to offer prayer to God; morning, midday and evening. This tradition — a response to God's love and grace — continues uninterrupted to today in Christianity as the *Liturgy of the Hours*.

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church...

1174 The mystery of Christ, his Incarnation and Pasover, which we celebrate in the Eucharist especially at the Sunday assembly, permeates and transfigures the time of each day, through the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, "the divine office." This celebration, faithful to the apostolic exhortations to "pray constantly," is "so devised that the whole course of the day and night is made holy by the praise of God." In this "public prayer of the Church," the faithful (clergy, religious, and lay people) exercise the royal priesthood of the baptized. Celebrated in "the form approved" by the Church, the Liturgy of the Hours "is truly the voice of the Bride herself addressed to her Bridegroom." It is the very prayer which Christ himself together with his Body addresses to the Father.

1175 The Liturgy of the Hours is intended to become the prayer of the whole People of God. In it Christ himself "continues his priestly work through his Church." His members participate according to their own place in the Church and the circumstances of their lives: priests devoted to the pastoral ministry, because they are called to remain diligent in prayer and the service of the word; religious, by the charism of their consecrated lives; **all the faithful as much as possible**: "Pastors of souls should see to it that the principal hours, especially Vespers, are celebrated in common in church on Sundays and on the more solemn feasts. **The laity, too, are encouraged to recite the divine office, either with the priests, or among themselves, or even individually.**" (Emphasis added, quoted from the Vatican II document, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.)

1176 The celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours demands not only harmonizing the voice with the praying heart, but also a deeper "understanding

of the liturgy and of the Bible, especially of the Psalms."

1177 The hymns and litanies of the Liturgy of the Hours integrate the prayer of the psalms into the age of the Church, expressing the symbolism of the time of day, the liturgical season, or the feast being celebrated. Moreover, the reading from the Word of God at each Hour (with the subsequent responses or troparia) and readings from the Fathers and spiritual masters at certain Hours, reveal more deeply the meaning of the mystery being celebrated, assist in understanding the psalms, and prepare for silent prayer. The *lectio divina*, where the Word of God is so read and meditated that it becomes prayer, is thus rooted in the liturgical celebration.

1178 The Liturgy of the Hours, which is like an extension of the Eucharistic celebration, does not exclude but rather in a complementary way calls forth the various devotions of the People of God, especially adoration and worship of the Blessed Sacrament.

THE ROSARY CONNECTION

The *Liturgy of the Hours* is historically the form of prayer from which the Catholic rosary is derived. *LOTH* developed into its modern form around the traditional recitation of the Psalms. In different times and places, however, illiteracy and other pressures made such recitation difficult, if not impossible, especially among laity.

Consequently, while clergy and religious continued the traditional recitations, the workers in the field could participate in part by reciting shorter, easier prayers while meditating upon the fundamental events (mysteries) in the faith. And so, rather than reciting 150 Psalms, the person praying a complete rosary recites 150 Hail Mary prayers while meditating upon various fundamental truths of the Christian faith. Though these shorter prayers — the rosary, other chaplets, the way of the cross, etc. — are not liturgical but devotional in nature, they do maintain a connection to liturgy and sacraments. Hence, they are frequently called sacramentals or para-liturgical prayers.

PRAYING THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Learning to pray the *Liturgy of the Hours* requires discipline. The books are big with different, poorly marked sections. The instructions were apparently written for people who already knew the prayers and didn't need any instruction. There simply aren't many teachers or examples out there, and as with any act of prayer, an infinite number of other opportunities vie for one's time and attention. But as with many good things, the more difficult it is, the greater the reward for perseverance.

In this section we present a useful step-by-step outline, accessible to most lay persons, for learning to pray the Divine Office.

1. Get a Prayer Book (free online to \$120.00)
2. Get a supplementary Guide Book or calendar (free to \$2.00)
3. Familiarize yourself with the different sections of your book
4. Learn the Order of Prayer (go through a tutorial or two)
5. Find a teacher or companion
6. Make the time and do it

STEP 1. GET A PRAYER BOOK

There are several publications of the *Liturgy of the Hours*. It is important to choose the one that will be appropriate to your budget, temperament and available time. These are available through your local Catholic bookstore or various Internet book stores, and will set you back twelve to one hundred and twenty dollars, depending on what you choose (in Latin they are much more). See the appendix for contact information for ordering these books.

If you intend to pray with a group, it will be *helpful* for you all to have the same version. There are minor differences between the same prayers in different books that can be confusing to beginners. In addition, if everyone has the same books, then it makes it easier to make sure everyone is on the right page number.

The Complete Liturgy in Four Volumes

If you seek a resource to last your entire life, this is the one for you. Each volume covers ap-

proximately one quarter of the year, so you can purchase them one at a time (about \$30 each) without setting your bank account back too far. It is, however, the most complicated set, and not recommended for those who are easily intimidated by lots of ribbons and page-flipping.

The largest part of the complete set is "Office of Readings" and "Readings for Feasts, Memorials and Special Occasions." This is one of the best and easiest ways to become familiar with Scripture and the writings of the saints and Church. If you would like to delve more deeply into Scripture and learn from the saints, then this is the set for you.

It is available in vinyl or leather-cover, and is published by Catholic Book Publishers.

The Single Volume

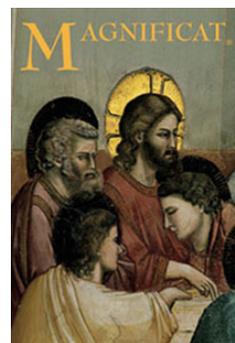
By removing most or all of "Office of Readings" and "Readings for Special Occasions," the *Liturgy of the Hours* is reduced to a single volume. It is slightly easier to follow than the complete set, and some even include simple music/chant scores in the back for those wishing to learn to chant the Psalms. Publishers include Catholic Book Publishers and Liturgical Press.

Shorter Morning and Evening Prayer

Also a single volume, the shorter prayer book has been pared down to only the Morning and Evening Prayers, though it sometimes includes Night Prayer, as well. This is a great starting point for those who want to learn the prayer, but aren't interested in the "Office of Readings." It is also great for travel since it is so small (some can just about fit into a large coat pocket). This version is available from several publishers.

Adaptations

Perhaps the best adaptation we've seen is produced by Magnificat. It is a monthly periodical that contains the entire Liturgy of the Mass, readings for each day, and *abbreviated* versions of Morning and Evening Prayer. Very easy to follow, it can be ordered directly from the publisher and is an excellent response to the



Church's exhortation that the laity be helped to pray at least part of the *Liturgy of the Hours*. At last check, a subscription was approximately \$35 per year.

Online Resources

As of this printing there are two web sites that provide partial, online versions of the *Liturgy of the Hours* for personal and group use:

<http://www.universalis.com/>

<http://www.liturgyhours.org/>

Special note for smaller editions

See the tutorial section for Morning Prayer if you have a condensed prayer book. It includes notes specific to smaller prayer books, and is easily adapted to evening and night prayer.

STEP 2. GET A "ST. JOSEPH GUIDE FOR THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS"

This is a little paperback pamphlet that costs ~\$2.00 and has the *exact* page numbers to which to turn on any given day of the year. **IMPORTANT:** Get the one that goes with your particular book! There are different versions; some for the complete set, and others for the single volume books. They are *not* interchangeable.

An alternative to the "St. Joseph Guide" is called the "Ordo." This pocket-sized annual guide is commonly used by priests to locate the day-by-day readings, colors and brief summaries for the "Celebration of the Eucharist", along with the readings from the *Liturgy of the Hours*. However, it does not give specific page numbers, is not keyed to a particular book, and is also a little cryptic until one becomes familiar with its acronyms.

We also publish and distribute (electronically) a free calendar that folds neatly into most any LOTH prayer book. The calendar identifies the current week and any special feasts one may wish to optionally observe.

Once you are familiar with the prayers, calendars and supplements will rarely be needed.

STEP 3. FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE DIFFERENT SECTIONS IN THE PRAYER BOOK

Your book may have more (or fewer) parts than are listed here. They are arranged differently in various books.

The General Instruction for the Liturgy of the Hours (GILH)

This is included in its entirety at the beginning of volume one of the four volume set. An abridged version is found in most others. This is an introductory document explaining some of the history, meaning and revisions to the *Liturgy of the Hours*. It has a great deal of good information, and is somewhat inspiring, but most people will find the GILH confusing or less than helpful in assisting them to actually learn how to pray the Divine Office from square one. This is not due to any deficiency in the document, exactly, but due simply to the complexity of the Liturgy of the Hours.

The Ordinary

The outline and detailed instructions for the prayers contained in your volume, it is usually found towards the beginning of the smaller volumes, and right after the "Proper of the Seasons" in the middle of the larger ones. Get familiar with it, and place a bookmark in it. Anytime you get lost, which won't be uncommon when starting out, just turn back to the ordinary to find out what is next. It also contains those smaller prayers — openings and closings — that are shared by all of the greater prayers.

The Psalmody (or Psalter)

The heart of the *Divine Office*, it will most likely be near the middle or in the front of your book. Sometimes the pages are marked with red edges to make them easier to find. At the top of every page is a heading like "Week I," "Week II," "Week III," or "Week IV."

The psalter contains introductory text, hymns, psalms, canticles, prayers, and other important parts in a four-week cycle. Your volume will contain the material for at least the Morning and Evening Prayers. More complete volumes will also contain parts for the "Office of Readings" and "Mid-day Prayers."

The Proper of the Seasons

This contains hymns, antiphons, Scripture readings and prayers unique to particular days and seasons. The complete Proper is found only in the four volume set, the bulk of which is the "Office of Readings," but a condensed version is in the single volume, and a highly distilled version in some shorter prayer books.

Night Prayer

Even the Shorter Christian Prayer books contain a few Night Prayers (also known as *Compline*). "Night Prayer" has a one-week cycle, and is similar to the other prayers, but shorter.

The Proper of Saints

Like the "Proper of the Seasons," it is found only in the comprehensive volumes. The "Proper of the Saints" and the "Proper of the Seasons" compliment each other (and are a source of much confusion). The "Proper of Saints" contains alternative readings, usually the second reading for the "Office of Readings," associated with a particular feast, solemnity or memorial day in the Church's calendar.

The Commons

Usually found near the back of larger prayer books, it is closely related to the "Proper of Saints." Many places in the "Proper of Saints" refer readers to the "Commons," which contains *common* prayers and readings shared by different feast days.

Other Stuff

Additional supplementary materials are found in the larger volumes. These contain alternative psalms, readings, poems, and prayers.

STEP 4. LEARN THE ORDER OF PRAYER

This will take some time. Prayer requires effort, and the *Liturgy of the Hours* requires more than most. Now you have your book, but probably can't tell where to start. Don't worry, there is a general form common to all of the prayers.

General Outline

All of the individual "Hours" or "Offices" follow a similar pattern, but some have longer parts than others. Though there are sometimes strict instructions for religious and clerics who pray the *Divine*

Office, the general rule for laity is "do whatever you can," but whatever you do, don't try to do too much! Certainly don't try to memorize all of this. It is tempting for the beginner to attempt too much and quickly get frustrated. Remember, you are under no obligation to pray it in its entirety or follow its directions exactly.

- Introductory Prayers
- Hymn
- Psalms and Canticles with their Antiphons
- Scripture Reading
- Responsories
- Gospel Canticle
- Intercessory Prayers
- Concluding Prayer and Blessing

Once you've gone through the tutorials, you should have a good feel for the overall flow of the Liturgy of the Hours. Following are some important keys to successfully praying the Divine Office:

1. Get to know the Ordinary. The Ordinary is your friend.
2. The labels don't always mean what they mean (e.g., Sunday Evening Prayer I). This will make sense later.
3. Don't recite (but do be aware of) red print, headings, reflective or instructional text.
4. A lot of it is optional. For laity, it's all optional. Focus on those parts that are interesting to you and grow from there. Don't feel bad for praying only one prayer, or even just part of one.
5. Be aware of "Liturgical Shorthand." Many entries in the prayer books are only the first few words to larger prayers. In some cases, the entries aren't even in the same order in which they are prayed (don't ask me why).
6. Be aware of "invisible prayers." These are prayers that are customarily prayed at certain points, but don't always show up in the instructions (e.g., "Glory Be..." after every Psalm or canticle).
7. Get nimble at page-flipping and be sure to make good use of ribbons or bookmarks. This comes with practice.

8. Don't worry if you get lost. It is better to do it poorly than not at all, and it gets much easier and more intuitive over time.

STEP 5. FIND A TEACHER...

... or someone else who wants to learn with you. Though it is perfectly permissible to pray the Office in private, and private prayer is immensely better than none at all, it is ideally suited and intended for communal prayer.

But teachers can be difficult to find, and even more so if you need to find one who you can meet outside of normal work hours. It is among the responsibilities of your parish priest to make himself available to teach and lead the Liturgy of the Hours, but many are too busy. Consider yourself *very* fortunate if your priest is willing to work with you on this.

Try local convents or monasteries. They frequently welcome guests and are eager to teach this form of prayer. Further, they generally pray the complete Liturgy of the Hours every day, so you'll have a choice of times at which to join them. One word of warning: Some religious orders pray a different "psalter" (group of psalms). This may be confusing if you are trying to learn to pray from the standard English books.

If you can't find a teacher, try to find someone who will learn with you. Quite apart from the complexity of the prayer, numerous obstacles will present themselves to your attempts to pray. If you are committed with someone else, this will help both of you continue.

STEP 6. MAKE TIME AND DO IT

Start small, maybe five minutes at a time. Distractions will readily present themselves, especially at the beginning, but gradually move to 10-20 minutes per day. Jesus exemplifies the importance of private prayer time; he frequently went to a "lonely place" to pray. No disruptions. Take off the pager and the cell-phone. Find a private room. Lock the door. Do whatever it takes.

Another solution is to find a lay group in your business or area that regularly prays.

THE CALENDAR OF THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Knowing what to pray on what days can be confusing at first. The easiest solution is to get an inexpensive guide or calendar. It will save you countless frustrations, wondering where to turn and what prayers to pray, because it lists the exact page numbers for every day of the year. But if you don't have the guide, following is a basic rule for staying on the correct week in the Psalter:

Week I begins on the following days. Count from there to get to the proper week and day,

- First Sunday of Advent
- Monday after the Baptism of the Lord
- First Sunday of Lent
- Easter Sunday

On the Monday after Pentecost, use the Week indicated.

- Year 2004 - Week I
- Year 2005 - Week III

Knowing which prayers to pray in the "Proper of Seasons" and "Proper of Saints" is a little more straightforward (no higher math skills are required): For the "Proper of Seasons," simply match the week, day, or event. If it is the 18th week of Ordinary Time, use that section of the Proper. If it is November 30, the Feast of the Apostle Andrew, substitute those parts found in the "Proper of Saints." If it is December 1, for which there is no entry in the "Proper of Saints," remain in the Psalter and "Proper of Seasons." If this is too confusing—and it really can be at first—just stick to the normal Psalter and Proper.

Once you begin praying with some regularity, keeping track of where to begin becomes much easier. Simply move your ribbon(s) to wherever you ended, then pick up there the next time. More details on observing memorials, feasts and solemnities are in a later section in this tutorial.

We also have a small calendar available as a free download from the web site that can help.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW MUCH SHOULD I TRY TO PRAY AT ONCE?

Only as much as you have time for, but do make time every day to try at least one of the prayers, preferably Morning or Evening Prayer.

WHY ARE THERE TWO DIFFERENT SUNDAY EVENING PRAYERS IN MY PRAYER BOOK?

Sunday Evening Prayer I is for Saturday Evening. Sunday Evening Prayer II is for Sunday evening. Why? According to tradition, "tomorrow" begins at sundown, today. (Ever wonder why you can go to Mass on Saturday evening and have it "count" as a Sunday Mass? Now you know.)

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Check to see if your parish has a group that prays the Liturgy of the Hours (sometimes just under the names Lauds, Vespers or Compline). Another good place to start is the nearest convent or monastery. They pray the Divine Office in its entirety and most are happy to share it with you. You might also try arranging an appointment with your parish priest or deacon for instruction.

WHERE CAN I GET PRAYER BOOKS AND HOW DO I CHOOSE THE RIGHT ONE FOR ME?

You can find them on the Internet or at your local Catholic bookstore.

We have received *many* persuasive requests to develop a tutorial specific to the one volume versions of the Liturgy of the Hours. Thus far we have instinctively resisted for two reasons:

1. The smaller books are *much* simpler to follow, and only minor adaptation of the present tutorial is required.
2. One of the greater needs in today's Church is a renewed understanding of the faith by the laity. A superb source for this is Scripture and prayer, of course, but also the interpretation and application of Scripture as is found in the Office of Readings. Though Morning and Evening prayer constitute the cardinal prayers of the Liturgy, we believe that the Office of Readings is an invaluable source for today's laity.

Unless cost prevents you, we *strongly* encourage you to purchase the prayer books that include the Office of Readings. If cost is a factor try purchasing just the volume for the present season. By spreading the cost out, you'll spend about \$10 a month and have the entire set within a year (which might last your whole life).

If you travel frequently, Shorter Christian Prayer is convenient due to its size. The larger single volume is nice, too, but it is the same size as any single book from the four volume set, and so doesn't do much for convenience.

ARE THE PRAYER BOOKS AVAILABLE IN OTHER LANGUAGES?

Yes, but they can be expensive. It will require contacting publishing houses in the various national conferences. See the appendix for a list of books and sources.

CAN MUSIC BESIDES CHANT BE USED WITH THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS?

Yes. It is important, however, that the music selections not detract from the prayers themselves. Rather, the music should harmonize with the prayers and help you to lift and open your mind to God. If it isn't doing this, then it may be better to have no music at all, or use a different form of music.

WHICH PARTS OF THE PRAYERS CAN BE CHANTED?

The entire prayer can be chanted, but it is most common to chant/sing only the psalms and canticles. However, one isn't required to chant or sing any part.

WHY IS THE "GLORY BE" (DOXOLOGY) DIFFERENT THAN THE ONE I KNOW?

It is merely a convention used in the revised Liturgy of the Hours. If you prefer, or if you are part of a group that prays the more traditional one, feel free to do so.

MY PRAYER BOOK HAS [1,2,3,4,5] RIBBONS. WHERE DO I PUT THESE?

See the next section.

SETTING UP YOUR PRAYER BOOK

RIBBONS

Almost every version of the Liturgy of the Hours shares one thing in common: Ribbons. Depending on which book you have, you might see anywhere from one to five ribbons popping out of the binding.

Some ribbons aren't even attached to the binding, but to a plastic card that is inserted into the binding. With use, the ribbons are the first items to wear. By not attaching them to the book, you can replace them without replacing the whole book. An easy way to do this is to get ribbon material of your choosing from your local fabric store, align them on a small piece of cardboard that has been cut to size to fit into your book's spine, then stick them to the cardboard with duct tape, cut the other ends to the desired length, and insert the cardboard into the spine.

One Ribbon Books

Some shortened prayer books will have one ribbon. Place this ribbon in the Psalter.

Two Ribbon Books

Books with two ribbons usually have two distinct sections; a Psalter and the Readings. Place one ribbon in each area.

Five Ribbon Books

Okay, here we go! Place one ribbon in each of the following sections. You'll move them to the correct page as you go through the tutorials:

- Proper of the Seasons
- Ordinary
- Psalter
- Night Prayer
- Proper of the Saints

Don't have any ribbons? Lost them? Holy cards or other bookmarks are good substitutes.

As you finish each prayer, simply move the ribbons ahead to the beginning of the prayer for the following day. If you get into the habit of doing this (and don't miss too many days in a row), then it becomes fairly easy to stay on-track with the right prayers for a given day.

STICKY HELP

Common prayers like the Canticle of Zechariah or Canticle of Mary (the Gospel Canticles) are in the Ordinary. Some prayer books come with additional cards with these and other common prayers on them. It can be helpful to keep these cards tucked into the front or back cover of your prayer book for easy locating. Some people paste the Gospel Canticles inside the covers using rubber cement.

USING THIS TUTORIAL

BOOKS

The tutorial is drawn primarily from volume I of the complete four-volume set, though it is easily adapted to the shorter versions (notes are included for other editions, especially in the tutorial for Morning Prayer). Volume I is usually blue, and covers Advent and Christmas. It is easier to begin and learn the order of prayer in an 'ordinary time' volume or 'ordinary time' section in a condensed/abridged version — it can *almost* be prayed 'straight through,' with little or no page flipping — but we are starting here because it includes an 'average' amount of flipping from one area to another in the books.

DAY OF THE YEAR

The tutorials use the First Monday of Advent as the example for all prayers.

FONTS

For the sake of clarity, every attempt has been made to have the excerpts from *LOTH* look like the actual text. In general, headings and any words in **red** or *italics* are not said aloud while praying. The only words that are prayed out loud appear in this font and color:

Times New Roman

SEQUENCES AND OPTIONAL PARTS

Those parts that are generally considered optional are noted as such in the tutorials. In the order outlines preceding each tutorial, optional items are marked with an asterisk (*).

Second, not all groups (or geographical regions) pray the Liturgy of the Hours in the same way. Some religious orders use a different psalm sequence. Some groups add small parts or prayers, or might suppress others. Some say the antiphon twice at the beginning and once at the end. Some say it once at the beginning, or omit it at the end. Some sing and chant. Finally, the order in which the individual prayers are listed is not necessarily the order in which they are prayed by all.

This can cause some confusion, and it did so even in the formation of this text. For the most part, the order of the prayers can be determined by a careful and thorough reading of the General

Instruction for the Liturgy of the Hours (if one has the time and patience). But some parts, especially optional or supplemental ones, remain ambiguous. For example, the American English edition of the Liturgy of the Hours includes an optional "psalm-prayer" in the text right before the final repetition of psalm antiphons. In early editions of this text we directed people to pray the final verse of the psalm, the psalm-prayer, the doxology, and then the final antiphon.

We then received the following excerpt from *From Breviary to Liturgy of the Hours: Structural Reform of the Roman Office, 1964-1971*:

...it was clearly the mind of Group 9 that the psalm prayer occur *after* the antiphon (if used) and pause for silent prayer and not before the antiphon, as is the case in [the US Liturgy of the Hours]. The antiphon, said the canon, may be considered as almost part of the psalm, and it is erroneous to place it after the psalm prayer. (Footnote #300 from Chapter 5)

The contributor went on to argue that the position of the psalm-prayer in the American English edition was an editorial decision of Catholic Book Publishing Company. Lacking evidence to the contrary, we were convinced, and so have changed the tutorials to reflect the order. However, the reader should be wary of becoming overly scrupulous regarding every posture, phrase and sequence. If visiting other groups, one is likely to encounter variation, and charitable liberty is important in such matters.

LEADER

The tutorial assumes that only laity — one or more — will be present for the prayer. If a priest or deacon is present, it is normative for him to lead the people in prayer and give the final blessing. In the absence of clergy, any prepared lay person may do so.

CHANTING

Chant is a moving and important part of the Liturgy of the Hours. However, it is also a topic unto itself, so a complete introductory tutorial on chant is included at the end of this tutorial. Learn the basics first, then learn chant.

INVITATORY ORDER

stand

+ "Lord, open my lips..."

Antiphon

Psalm 95 (or 100, 67 or 24)

Doxology

Antiphon

Proceed to Office of Readings or Morning Prayer

INVITATORY TUTORIAL

The Invitatory *precedes* the Office of Readings or Morning Prayer, whichever you pray first in the day. *The Invitatory is recommended, but sometimes omitted in private recitation by laity.*

The bulk of the Invitatory is in the Ordinary, but the correct antiphon is sometimes found in the Psalter. It is a good habit to always turn to the Psalter first (go ahead and do so now).

HOW IS IT PRAYED?

For this example, find the beginning of the section Monday, Week I, Invitatory in your Psalter. We will assume that it is the First Monday of Advent. It will begin:

MONDAY, WEEK I

Invitatory

Lord, open my lips.

Antiphon, as in the Ordinary, 647.

Invitatory Psalm, 648.

This is not the full text. It serves only as a reminder. The full text is in the Ordinary. Turn there now, keeping a finger (or ribbon) on Monday, Week I, Invitatory.

Stand, and while making the sign of the cross over your lips, say:

Lord, open my lips.

— And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

If there are two or more of you praying together, then one could pray the first line, while the other prays the second.

Next *find* the “antiphon” for the Invitatory Psalm (but don’t pray it yet). These vary from season to season. An antiphon is usually a short phrase or sentence that acts as a brief refrain throughout a psalm.

Notice that the Psalter stated “Antiphon, as in the Ordinary.” Sometimes the Invitatory Antiphon will be listed right in the Psalter, but in this case we are directed to find it in the Ordinary, where we read that the antiphon for the days between the First Sunday of Advent and December 16 is:

Come, let us worship the Lord, the King who is to come.

Now that you’ve found the right antiphon, look for the Invitatory Psalm, usually Psalm 95, on the same or following page.

Psalm 95

A call to praise God

Encourage each other daily while it is still today
(Hebrews 3:13)

(The antiphon is recited and then repeated)

Come, let us sing to the Lord
and shout with joy to the Rock who saves us.

Let us approach him with praise and thanksgiving
and sing joyful songs to the Lord.

(Antiphon repeated)

...

There is some text in italics before the Psalm, a passage from Hebrews. Do not say this aloud. Merely reflect upon it for a moment.

Now it’s time to actually *say* the antiphon. The antiphon is typically said before the psalm, between verses as noted in your book, and again after the doxology, below. If you are praying as part of a group, it is common for the leader to recite the antiphon once, have it repeated by the group, and then begin the first verse of the psalm. Groups vary on whether or not to repeat the antiphon between each verse, but it is common to do so between each verse of the Invitatory Psalm, or as noted in your particular book.

Psalm 95 is said, while standing, with its antiphon (other Psalms, such as 100, 67 or 24 are sometimes substituted, especially if Psalm 95 appears in later prayers for the day).

After finishing the Psalm, pray:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

Repeat the antiphon one last time. This concludes the Invitatory. If you have a ribbon in the Ordinary, this is a good time to make sure it is moved to the beginning of the next prayer you plan to pray (in the Ordinary), and then proceed to the Office of Readings or Morning Prayer.

OFFICE OF READINGS ORDER

stand

Invitatory or + "God, come to my assistance..."

Hymn*

sit

First Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

First Antiphon*, Silence* and Psalm-Prayer*

Second Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

Second Antiphon*, Silence* and Psalm-Prayer*

Third Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

Third Antiphon*, Silence* and Psalm-Prayer*

Transitional Verse

Scripture Reading

Responsory*

Document Reading

Responsory*

stand

Canticle / Te Deum (Sundays, Feasts and Solemnities)

Concluding Prayer

OFFICE OF READINGS (MATINS) TUTORIAL

The Office of Readings may be prayed at any time of the day. It is often prayed in the early morning, and depending on your speed will take fifteen to thirty minutes.

The Office of Readings is found only in the larger editions. The bulk is in the Proper of the Seasons. There is an abridged Office of Readings in the large single volume Christian Prayer book. It follows the same principles, but in a four-week cycle. As with the other tutorials, turn first to the Psalter.

INTRODUCTORY PRAYERS

For this example, find the beginning of the section Monday, Week I, Office of Readings in the Psalter of your prayer book. We will assume that it is the First Monday of Advent. If you just prayed the Invitatory, then skip these introductory prayers and go immediately to the hymn, below. Otherwise, turn to the section for the Invitatory or continue, below, with the words 'God, come to my assistance.....'

MONDAY, WEEK I

Invitatory

Lord, open my lips.

Antiphon, as in the Ordinary, 647.

Invitatory Psalm, 648.

Office of Readings

God, come to my assistance. Glory to the Father.
As it was in the beginning. Alleluia.

This verse and response are omitted when the hour begins with the invitatory.

This is not the full text. It serves only as a reminder. The full text is in the Ordinary. Turn there now, keeping a finger (or a ribbon) in the Psalter on Monday, Week I, Office of Readings. While standing, make the sign of the cross and pray:

Office of Readings

God, come to my assistance.

—Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

If there are two or more of you praying together, then one could pray the first line, the other prays the second, and so on.

The "Alleluia," noted in the Psalter but not in the Ordinary, is omitted during Lent.

HYMN (OPTIONAL)

Turning back to the Psalter, the listed hymn begins:

O God of truth, prepare...

The hymn is entirely optional. It may be sung, chanted, read, substituted or omitted altogether. Sometimes the hymn won't be listed directly, or optional ones will be listed. When included, it is usually sung standing.

PSALMODY

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 Show me your mercy, Lord, and keep me safe.

Psalm 6

A suffering man cries to God for mercy

I am filled with dismay . . . Father, save me from this hour (John 12:27).

Lord, do not reprove me in your anger;
punish me not in your rage. . .

Be seated for the psalmody, which consists of three psalms (or parts thereof), along with their associated antiphons. For the First Monday of Advent the antiphon is (go ahead and recite it now):

Show me your mercy, Lord, and keep me safe.

Then follows the Psalm number, an editorial heading, and some text in italics before the actual Psalm. Do not say these aloud. Merely reflect upon

them for a moment. When the prayer is said (and not sung or chanted) some groups prefer to pray the text in black italics in place of the antiphon.

Psalm 6 is then said while seated. If praying with others, it is common to alternate reading/chanting individual verses, lines or entire paragraphs.

It might not be listed in your book, but the following is recited after every psalm and canticle:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

Many books will show an optional “psalm-prayer” immediately following the psalm. However, this does not appear to be the intended order of LOTH. Rather, after the Doxology (“Glory to the Father...”), repeat the antiphon for the first psalm a final time, then pray the psalm-prayer.

Psalm-prayer

Lord God, you love mercy and tenderness; you give life and overcome death. Look upon the many wounds of your Church; restore it to health by your risen Son, so that it may sing a new song in your praise.

Ant. Show me your mercy, Lord, and keep me safe.

Repeat the above pattern two more times — antiphon, psalm, doxology, antiphon, psalm-prayer — with the appropriate psalms and antiphons as found in your prayer book, then note the instruction that reads, “Verse, reading and prayer, as in the Proper of the Seasons.” This is instructing you to turn to the Proper of the Season to continue with the Office of Readings. It is where we will find the Verse. Be sure to leave the ribbon or bookmark where you are leaving off (or move it ahead to the beginning of your next intended prayer) in the Psalter.

VERSE

The verse acts as a transitional prayer between the Psalmody and the Readings. It is found in the Proper of the Seasons. Turn now to the beginning of your volume. Look for the page headings for the First Week of Advent, and then find Monday, Of-

fice of Readings. Immediately below this heading will be the verse.

The verse, which begins, “Lord, show us your mercy...” is read aloud.

MONDAY

Office of Readings

Lord, show us your mercy and love.
— And grant us your salvation.

FIRST READING

From the book of the prophet Isaiah
1:21-27; 2:1-5

The judgement and deliverance of Zion. The gathering of the nations.

How has she turned adulteress,
the faithful city, so upright!
Justice used to lodge within her,
but now, murderers.

...

READINGS AND RESPONSES

The readings in the Office of Readings are *long*. In private recitation, they are sometimes read silently and meditatively. In communal recitation, they may be read by a lector, or antiphonally as with the psalms (alternating between readers).

The reading for the First Monday of Advent begins by saying:

From the book of the prophet Isaiah.

There follows some italic text in red. This is not read aloud, but merely summarizes the reading. Then proceed to the reading.

It is common to have a short time of silence following the reading. The Responsory is sometimes omitted or adapted in private recitation. If you choose to say the Responsory, or are praying in a group then say:

RESPONSORY

MICAH 4:2; JOHN 4:25

Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob.

— He will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths.

The Messiah, who is called the Christ, is coming. When he comes, he will teach us everything.

— He will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths.

As with other similarly structured prayers, this can be prayed antiphonally.

Repeat the above instructions for the Second Reading, which is typically from the history of the Church or the writing of a saint.

TE DEUM

Were this a Sunday, feast or solemnity, you would now stand and say, sing or chant the "Te Deum," found in the Ordinary. Otherwise, proceed to the Concluding Prayer.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Now you might find an enigmatic text that reads "Prayer, as in Morning Prayer." This means that concluding prayer for the Office of Readings is found at the end of Morning Prayer, right after the second reading (probably one or two pages past your present place in the prayer book). While standing, begin by saying:

Let us pray...

On this day the prayer is:

Prayer

Lord our God,
help us to prepare
for the coming of Christ your Son.

May he find us waiting,
eager in joyful prayer.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your
Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

When celebrated communally, a final acclamation is added (found in the Ordinary):

Let us praise the Lord.

— And give him thanks.

This concludes the Office of Readings. Be sure to move your ribbon to the beginning of the next prayer for the day — probably on the same or following page — or next prayer you intend to pray.

MORNING PRAYER ORDER

stand

Invitatory or + "God, come to my assistance..."

Hymn*

sit

First Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

First Antiphon*, Silence* and Psalm-Prayer*

Second Antiphon, Old Testament Canticle and Doxology

Second Antiphon*

Third Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

Third Antiphon*, Silence* and Psalm-Prayer*

Scripture Reading

Silence* and Message*

Responsory*

stand

+ Antiphon, Canticle of Zechariah and Doxology

Canticle Antiphon*

Intercessions

Our Father

Concluding Prayer and + Blessing

MORNING PRAYER (LAUDS) TUTORIAL

(This tutorial section, though geared towards the four volume prayer book set, also includes notes for the one volume editions. If you have a one volume prayer book, make similar adaptations for Evening and Night Prayer.)

Morning Prayer is prayed in the morning, usually sometime between 7:00 and 9:00 A.M.

Morning Prayer is found, almost in its entirety, in the Psalter (during special seasons, feasts, memorials or the like, the second half of the prayer is in the Proper of the Seasons, the Proper of Saints or the Common). Find and turn to your Psalter now.

INTRODUCTORY PRAYERS

For this example, find the beginning of the section Monday, Week I, Morning Prayer in the Psalter of your prayer book. We will assume that it is the First Monday of Advent. Depending on your edition, it is found on the following page:

Shorter Christian Prayer; p 54

A Shorter Morning and Evening Prayer; p 44

One volume Christian Prayer; p 718

Four volume Liturgy of the Hours; p 702

It will begin with the words:

Morning Prayer

God, come to my assistance. Glory to the Father.
As it was in the beginning. Alleluia.

(If you just prayed the Invitatory, then skip these introductory prayers and go to the hymn, below.) As before, this is not the full text. It serves only as a reminder. The full text is in the Ordinary. Turn there now, keeping a finger (or a ribbon) on Monday, Week I, Morning Prayer. Depending on your book, the introductory prayers for Morning prayer are found in the Ordinary on these pages:

Shorter Christian Prayer; p 18 — NOTE: This version (correctly) incorporates the Invitatory into Morning Prayer, and does not have text for beginning Morning Prayer with 'God, come to my assistance.....

A Shorter Morning and Evening Prayer; p 20

One volume Christian Prayer; p 689

Four volume Liturgy of the Hours; p 653

Stand, make the sign of the cross and pray:

Morning Prayer

God, come to my assistance.

—Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Alleluia.

If there are two or more of you praying together, then one would pray the first line, while the other prays the second, and so on.

The "Alleluia" is omitted during Lent.

HYMN (OPTIONAL)

Turning back to the Psalter, the listed hymn begins:

Brightness of the Father's glory...

Some one volume prayer books do not show the hymn text, but include numbers referring to the hymns listed in the back of your book. It might also read 'Outside Ordinary Time, see Guide' and a page number. This refers to a seasonal list of hymns, so that you can select a hymn appropriate to the current season (for this example, you would choose a hymn from the Advent section).

The hymn is optional. It can be sung, chanted, read, substituted or omitted altogether. Sometimes the hymn won't be listed directly, or optional ones will be included. If you include the hymn, it is usually sung standing.

PSALMODY

Be seated for the psalmody, which consists of a psalm, an Old Testament Canticle, and another psalm along with their associated antiphons. For the First Monday of Advent the antiphon is:

I lift up my heart to you, O Lord, and you will
hear my morning prayer.

Go ahead and pray it now. Shorter prayer books may list alternative antiphons for special

seasons immediately under the standard one. For example, Shorter Christian Prayer lists the following antiphon for Easter directly under the standard antiphon:

All those who love your name will rejoice in you.
Alleluia.

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 I lift up my heart to you, O Lord, and you will hear my morning prayer.

Psalm 5:2-10, 12-13

A morning prayer asking for help

Those who welcome the Word as the guest of their hearts will have abiding joy.

To my words give ear, O Lord,
give heed to my groaning.
Attend to the sound of my cries,

...

There is text in italics before the psalm. Do not say this aloud. Merely reflect upon it for a moment. When the prayer is said (and not sung or chanted) some groups prefer to pray the text in black italics in place of the antiphon.

Then Psalm 5:2-10,12-13 is said, while seated. If praying with others, it is common to alternate the praying of individual verses. Unless noted otherwise, the following is recited after every psalm and canticle:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

Many books will show an optional "psalm-prayer" immediately following the psalm. However, this does not appear to be the intended order of LOTH. Rather, after the Doxology ("Glory to the Father..."), repeat the antiphon for the first psalm a final time, then pray the psalm-prayer.

Psalm-prayer

Lord, all justice and all goodness come from you; you hate evil and abhor lies. Lead us, your servants, in the path of your justice, so that all who hope in you may rejoice with the Church and in Christ.

Ant. 1 I lift up my heart to you, O Lord, and you will hear my morning prayer.

Observe a brief period of reflective silence. Repeat the above pattern two more times, with the appropriate psalms and antiphons as found in your prayer book. Note that there is not a "psalm-prayer" after the canticle.

READINGS

During Ordinary Time you will generally proceed straight through to the Scripture Reading. But because it is Advent (for the sake of the tutorial), it gets a little tricky. For the Scripture Reading we will turn to a different section in the prayer books to complete Morning Prayer:

Shorter Christian Prayer; p 362

A Shorter Morning and Evening Prayer; p 381

One Volume Christian Prayer; p 47

Four Volume Liturgy of the Hours; p 153

The reading for the First Monday of Advent is Isaiah 2:3 (some will have Isaiah 2:3-4):

Morning Prayer

READING

ISAIAH 2:3

Come, let us climb the Lord's mountain,
to the house of God of Jacob. . .

Allow a short time of silence following the reading. A brief message or reflection may even be prepared. Normally, a priest or deacon would preach in such a situation, but in their absence, a prepared layperson may give a message.

RESPONSORY (OPTIONAL)

The Responsory is sometimes omitted or adapted in private recitation. If you choose to say the Responsory or are praying in a group, then say:

RESPONSORY

Your light will come, Jerusalem; the Lord will dawn on you in radiant beauty.

— Your light will come, Jerusalem; the Lord will dawn on you in radiant beauty.

You will see his glory within you;

— The Lord will dawn on you in radiant beauty.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

— Your light will come, Jerusalem; the Lord will dawn on you in radiant beauty.

In groups, either a leader or half of the group recites one line, then the remainder say the line beginning with the dash.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

The antiphon for the canticle will be found right after the Responsory. Stand, make the sign of the cross, and recite the antiphon:

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

Ant Lift up your eyes, Jerusalem, and see the great power of your King; your Savior comes to set you free.

But where is the canticle, itself? It's in the Ordinary. Hold this page with your finger and flip to the Ordinary. Look for the section on Morning Prayer and you will find the Canticle of Zechariah. Now pray the canticle following the same form as the psalms.

After reciting the canticle, say:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

And then repeat the antiphon.

INTERCESSIONS

Now return to the Proper of the Seasons.

INTERCESSIONS

Christ the Lord, Son of the living God, light from light, leads us into the light and reveals his holiness. With confidence let us make our prayer:
Come, Lord Jesus

Light that never fades, dispel the mists about us,
— awaken our faith from sleep.

Guard us from all harm today,
— may your glory fill us with joy.

Give us unfailing gentleness at all times,
— toward everyone we meet.

Come to create a new earth for us,
— where there will be justice and peace.

The intercessions are also said while standing after the same pattern as the responsory, and lead directly into the Lord's Prayer, which may be preceded by a brief invitation such as:

And now let us pray as Christ taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven...

The concluding "Amen" that you instinctively wish to say is omitted.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

The concluding prayer follows immediately without any prefatory words. While standing, say:

Prayer

Lord our God,
help us to prepare
for the coming of Christ your Son.

May he find us waiting,
eager in joyful prayer.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Sometimes alternative concluding prayers are provided. Pray whichever one you wish.

In individual recitation or when prayed communally without any clergy present, Morning Prayer concludes by making the sign of the cross while praying:

May the Lord bless us,
protect us from all evil
and bring us to everlasting life.

— Amen.

Make sure the ribbons get placed correctly for your next prayers, and you are finished. The other step-by-step tutorial sections are for the four volume prayer book set. If you have a smaller edition, make adaptations similar to those mentioned in this tutorial section.

DAYTIME PRAYER ORDER

stand

+ "God, come to my assistance..."

Hymn*

sit

First Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

First Antiphon*, Silence* and Psalm-Prayer*

Second Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

Second Antiphon*, Silence* and Psalm-Prayer*

Third Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

Third Antiphon*, Silence* and Psalm-Prayer*

Scripture Reading and Responsory

stand

Concluding Prayer

DAYTIME PRAYER TUTORIAL

Daytime Prayer (also called Mid-Day Prayer) is prayed between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM. The text is found only in the larger prayer volumes.

Daytime Prayer is found, almost in its entirety, in the Psalter (during special seasons, feasts, memorials or the like, the second half of the prayer is in the Proper of the Seasons, the Proper of Saints or the Common). Go ahead and turn to the Psalter now.

INTRODUCTORY PRAYERS

For this example, find the beginning of the section Monday, Week I, Daytime Prayer in the Psalter of your prayer book. We will assume that it is the First Monday of Advent. It will begin with the words:

Daytime Prayer

God, come to my assistance. Glory to the Father.
As it was in the beginning. Alleluia.

Hymn, as in the Ordinary, 658.

As before, this is not the full text. It serves only as a reminder. The full text is found in the Ordinary. Turn there now, keeping a finger (or a ribbon) on Monday, Week I, Daytime Prayer.

While standing, make the sign of the cross and pray:

Daytime Prayer

God, come to my assistance.
—Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen. Alleluia.

If there are two or more of you praying together, then one would pray the first line, while the other prays the second, and so on.

The "Alleluia" is omitted during Lent.

HYMN (OPTIONAL)

The Psalter referred to the hymn in the Ordinary. There are three sets to choose from; midmorning, midday and midafternoon. Simply choose the hymn most appropriate to your time of day.

The hymn is entirely optional. It can be sung, chanted, read, substituted or omitted altogether. If you include the hymn, it is usually sung standing.

PSALMODY

PSALMODY

Antiphon, as in the Proper of Seasons

Psalm 19B

Praise of God who gave us the law of love

You must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:48).

The law of the Lord is perfect,
it revives the soul.

The rule of the Lord is to be trusted,
it gives wisdom to the simple.

...

Be seated as you turn back to the Psalter for the psalmody, which consists of three psalms. Note that the antiphon is missing. The red lettering indicates that the antiphon is in the Proper of Seasons. Turning to the Proper of Seasons, we find that the antiphon, like the hymn, varies depending on the time of day; midmorning, midday or midafternoon. Let us assume it is midday, around noon. Go ahead and recite the antiphon:

Ant. The angel Gabriel said to Mary in greeting: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women.

Notice the text in italics before the psalm. Do not say this aloud. Merely reflect upon it for a moment. When the prayer is said (and not sung or chanted) some groups prefer to pray the text in black italics in place of the antiphon.

Then Psalm 19B is said, while seated. If praying with another, it is common to take turns reading/chanting individual verses.

It might not be listed in your book, but the following is recited after *every* psalm and canticle:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

Some books will show a “psalm-prayer” immediately following the psalm. However, this does not appear to be the intended order of LOTH. Rather, after the Doxology (“Glory to the Father...”), repeat the antiphon for the first psalm a final time, then pray the psalm-prayer.

Psalm-prayer

May our words in praise of your commandments find favor with you, Lord. May our faith prove we are not slaves, but sons, not so much subjected to your law as sharing your power.

Repeat the above pattern two more times, with the appropriate psalms and antiphons as found in your prayer book. Antiphon patterns vary for different seasons. In Advent, for example, there appears one antiphon for the entire set of Daytime Prayer psalm readings. Some people choose to recite this antiphon once at the beginning, and then again only after the conclusion of *all* of the psalm readings. Others still recite the antiphon between each reading. Feel free to proceed as you and your group desire.

READINGS AND RESPONSORY

Turn again to the Proper of the Seasons to continue. The reading for the First Monday of Advent, Midday, is Isaiah 10:24a, 27:

READING

ISAIAH 10:24A, 27

Thus says the Lord, the God of hosts:
O my people, who dwell in Zion,
do not fear.
On that day,
The burden shall be taken from your shoulder,
and the yoke shattered from your neck.
Remember us, Lord, because of the love you have
for your people.
—Come and bring us your salvation.

Notice that the reading included a brief responsory. Observe a short time of silence following the reading, before the responsory. After the time

of silence, recite the responsory — ‘Remember us, Lord...’ — then let your eyes follow past the other Daytime readings. Note the text at the end:

Prayer, as in Morning Prayer.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

The concluding prayer from Morning Prayer is one page back in the Proper of Seasons. Turn back to the prayer, stand, and without any prefatory words say:

Prayer

Lord our God, help us to prepare for the coming of Christ your Son.

May he find us waiting, eager in joyful prayer.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

When prayed communally, Daytime Prayer concludes with:

Let us praise the Lord.
— And give him thanks.

If you now make sure your ribbons are placed where you left off (in the Proper, Ordinary and Psalter) then you will be able to resume prayer easily later.

Some individuals and groups pray multiple daytime prayers on a single day. However, only one set of psalms and readings are provided for a given day. Groups that pray multiple daytime prayers generally supplement the psalms and readings by utilizing materials from other daytime prayers or Complimentary Psalmody.

EVENING PRAYER ORDER

stand

+ "God, come to my assistance..."

Hymn*

sit

First Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

First Antiphon*, Silence* and Psalm-Prayer*

Second Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

Second Antiphon*, Silence* and Psalm-Prayer*

Third Antiphon, New Testament Canticle and Doxology

Third Antiphon*

Scripture Reading

Silence* and Message*

Responsory*

stand

+ Antiphon, Canticle of Mary and Doxology

Canticle Antiphon*

Intercessions

Our Father

Concluding Prayer and + Blessing

EVENING PRAYER (VESPERS) TUTORIAL

Evening Prayer is usually prayed between 4:00 and 7:00 PM. It is found, almost in its entirety, in the Psalter (during special seasons, feasts, memorials or the like, the second half of the prayer is in the Proper of the Seasons, the Proper of Saints or the Common). Go ahead and turn to the Psalter now.

If you have a condensed prayer book, see the tutorial for Morning Prayer for details specific to your edition.

INTRODUCTORY PRAYERS

For this example, find the beginning of the section Monday, Week I, Evening Prayer in the Psalter of your prayer book. We will assume that it is the First Monday of Advent. It begins with the words:

Evening Prayer

God, come to my assistance. Glory to the Father.
As it was in the beginning. Alleluia.

This is not the full text. It serves only as a reminder. The full text is found in the Ordinary. Turn there now, keeping a finger (or a ribbon) on Monday, Week I, Evening Prayer. While standing, make the sign of the cross and pray:

Evening Prayer

God, come to my assistance.
—Lord, make haste to help me.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
Alleluia.

If there are two or more of you praying together, then one would pray the first line, while the other prays the second, and so on.

The "Alleluia" is omitted during Lent.

HYMN (OPTIONAL)

The listed hymn begins:

Lord Jesus Christ, abide with us...

The hymn is entirely optional. It can be sung, chanted, read, substituted or omitted altogether. Sometimes the hymn won't be listed directly, or optional ones will be included. If you include the hymn, it is usually sung standing.

PSALMODY

Be seated for the psalmody, which consists of two psalms and a New Testament Canticle along with their associated antiphons. For the First Monday of Advent, the antiphon is:

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 The Lord looks tenderly on those who are poor.

Psalm 11

God is the unfailing support of the just

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice; for they shall be satisfied (Matthew 5:6)

In the Lord I have taken my refuge.
How can you say to my soul:
"Fly like a bird to its mountain. . . ."

Go ahead and pray the antiphon now. Shorter prayer books may list alternative antiphons for special seasons immediately under the standard one. For example, Shorter Christian Prayer lists the following antiphon for Easter directly under the standard antiphon:

Have courage; I have overcome the world. Alleluia.

Notice the text in italics before the psalm. Do not say this aloud. Merely reflect upon it for a moment. When the prayer is said (and not sung or chanted) some groups prefer to pray the text in black italics in place of the antiphon. Then Psalm 11 is said, while seated. If praying with another, it is common to take turns reading/chanting individual verses.

It might not be listed in your book, but the following is recited after every psalm and canticle:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Some books will show a "psalm-prayer" immediately following the psalm. However, this does not appear to be the intended order of LOTH.

Rather, after the Doxology ("Glory to the Father..."), repeat the antiphon for the first psalm a final time, then pray the psalm-prayer.

Psalm-prayer

Lord God, you search the hearts of all, both the good and the wicked. May those who are in danger for love of you find security in you now, and, in the day of judgment, may they rejoice in seeing you face to face.

Ant. 1 The Lord looks tenderly on those who are poor.

Repeat the above pattern two more times, with the appropriate psalms and antiphons as found in your prayer book. Note that there is not a "psalm-prayer" after the canticle.

READINGS

If you are using a larger volume, it probably now instructs you to turn to the Proper of the Seasons to continue. In some books, a standard reading will follow immediately. However, since this is Advent (for the sake of the tutorial), turn to the Proper of the Seasons, First Week of Advent, Monday, Evening Prayer. (Shorter prayer books may have just a single week of readings for Advent. If this is your situation, just use the one for Monday.)

The reading for the First Monday of Advent is Philippians 3:20-21:

Evening Prayer

READING PHILIPPIANS 3:20B-21

We eagerly await the coming of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

Observe a short time of silence following the reading. A short message or reflection may even be prepared. Normally, a priest or deacon would preach in such a situation, but in their absence, laity may give a message.

RESPONSORY (OPTIONAL)

The Responsory is sometimes omitted in private recitation. As with other similarly structured prayers, this can be prayed antiphonally.

RESPONSORY

Come and set us free, Lord God of power and might.
— Come and set us free, Lord God of power and might.

Let your face shine upon us and we shall be saved,
— Lord God of power and might.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
— Come and set us free, Lord God of power and might.

CANTICLE OF MARY

The antiphon for the canticle is found right after the Responsory. Stand and pray it now while making the sign of the cross.

CANTICLE OF MARY

Ant The angel of the Lord brought God's message to Mary, and she conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, alleluia.

But where is the canticle? It's in the Ordinary.

Mark this page with your finger and flip to the Ordinary. Look for Evening Prayer and you should soon find the Canticle of Mary. Stand, make the sign of the cross, recite the antiphon, the recite the canticle, following the same form as the psalms.

After reciting the canticle, say:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

And then repeat the antiphon and return to the Proper of the Seasons to continue with the Intercessions.

INTERCESSIONS

This concludes Evening Prayer.

INTERCESSIONS

We cry to the Lord, who will come to bring us salvation.

Come, Lord, and save us.

Lord Jesus Christ, our God, Savior of all,
— come swiftly and save us.

Lord, by your coming into this world,
— free us from the sin of the world.

You came from the Father,
— show us the path that leads to him.

You were conceived by the Holy Spirit,
— by your word renew the same spirit in our hearts.

You became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
— free our bodies from corruption.

Lord, be mindful of all men,
— who from the beginning of time have placed their trust in you.

The intercessions are said while standing, and lead directly into the Lord's Prayer, which may be preceded by a brief invitation such as:

And now let us pray as Christ taught us:
Our Father, who art in heaven...

The concluding "Amen" is omitted.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

The concluding prayer follows immediately without any prefatory words. While standing, say:

Prayer

Lord our God, help us to prepare for the coming of Christ your Son.

May he find us waiting, eager in joyful prayer.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

In individual recitation or when prayed communally without any priest present, Evening Prayer ends with making the sign of the cross while praying:

May the Lord bless us,
protect us from all evil
and bring us to everlasting life.
— Amen.

NIGHT PRAYER ORDER

stand

+ "God, come to my assistance..."

Examination of Conscience

Hymn*

sit

First Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

First Antiphon*

Second Antiphon, Psalm and Doxology

Second Antiphon*

Scripture Reading

Silence*

Responsory*

stand

+ Antiphon, Canticle of Simeon and Doxology

Canticle Antiphon*

Prayer

Conclusion

Antiphon in Honor of the Blessed Virgin

NIGHT PRAYER (COMPLINE) TUTORIAL

Night Prayer is prayed shortly before bedtime. It has only a one-week cycle, and is its own section near the middle of most books. Go ahead and turn to Night Prayer now.

INTRODUCTORY PRAYERS

Assuming that it is the First Monday of Advent, find the Night Prayer for Monday. The first thing we are instructed to do is to turn to the Ordinary, where we see that Night Prayer begins with:

Night Prayer

God, come to my assistance.
—Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Alleluia.

If there are two or more of you praying together, then one would pray the first line, while the other prays the second, and so on. These introductory prayers are prayed while standing.

The "Alleluia" is omitted during Lent.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Take a moment to think back through the day and recall those areas where you failed to love others as Christ has loved us. Offer these to God, seeking his forgiveness.

In communal prayer, some will also use the penitential prayer from the Mass ('Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy').

HYMN (OPTIONAL)

The Ordinary instructs us to turn to a different part of the Psalter to find the hymn. This is actually a collection of hymns. Feel free to select one you like.

The hymn is entirely optional. It can be sung, chanted, read, substituted or omitted altogether. Sometimes the hymn won't be listed directly, or optional ones will be included. If you include the hymn, it is usually sung standing.

PSALMODY

Be seated for the psalmody, which consists of one or two psalms with their associated antiphons. In this case the antiphon is:

Ant. O Lord, our God, unwearied is your love for us.

Go ahead and pray the antiphon.

PSALMODY

Ant. O Lord, our God, unwearied is your love for us.

Psalm 86
Poor man's prayer in trouble

Blessed be God who comforts us in all our trials (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4).

Turn your ear, O Lord, and give answer for I am poor and needy.
Preserve my life, for I am faithful:
save the servant who trusts in you. . . .

Notice the italic text before the psalm. Do not say this aloud. Merely reflect upon it for a moment. When the prayer is said (and not sung or chanted) some groups prefer to pray the text in black italics in place of the antiphon.

Then Psalm 5:2-10,12-13 is said while seated. If praying with another, it is common to take turns reading/chanting individual verses.

It might not be listed in your book, but the following is recited after every psalm and canticle:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

Repeat the antiphon for the first psalm a final time.

READINGS

The reading for the Monday is 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10:

READING **1 THESSALONIANS 5:9-10**

God has destined us for acquiring salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us, that all of us, whether awake or asleep, together might live with him.

It is not uncommon to have a short time of silence following the reading.

RESPONSORY (OPTIONAL)

In individual recitation, people often say only the first line of each couplet from the responsory. Feel free to pray it as is appropriate to your group:

RESPONSORY

Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.
—Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.

You have redeemed us, Lord God of truth.
—I commend my spirit.

Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
—Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.

CANTICLE OF SIMEON (GOSPEL CANTICLE)

The antiphon for the canticle will be found right after the Responsory. Stand, make the sign of the cross and say:

Ant. Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep, that awake, we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, rest in his peace.

Then pray the canticle:

GOSPEL CANTICLE **LUKE 2:29-32**

Christ is the light of the nations and the glory of Israel

Lord, now you let your servant go in peace;
your word has been fulfilled:

my own eyes have seen the salvation which you
have prepared in the sight of every people:

a light to reveal you to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.

After reciting the canticle, say:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

And then repeat the antiphon.

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

The concluding prayer follows immediately without any prefatory words. While standing, say:

Lord,
give our bodies restful sleep
and let the work we have done today
bear fruit in eternal life.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

— Amen.

... and then ...

May the all-powerful Lord grant us a restful night and a peaceful death.

—Amen.

ANTIPHON IN HONOR OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

The last part of Night Prayer is a brief antiphon in honor of Mary. Whether you are following from the Ordinary or from the Night Prayer section, it will usually direct you to another page that has a list of short prayers.

Choose from any of those provided in your prayer book. They are read, chanted, and sometimes sung.

SEASONS, MEMORIALS, FEASTS AND SOLEMNITIES

The easiest way to become familiar with the Liturgy of the Hours is to simply pray the prayers straight through as found in the Psalter. This is how the prayers are *usually* prayed during the 'Ordinary Time' of the year. It requires little or no page flipping and is not difficult to follow. We encourage you to become familiar with the general order of prayer through practice before attempting to integrate the *complete* calendar.

In the Church's calendar there are seasons in addition to Ordinary Time: Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter. There are also specific celebrations of historical events and individuals recognized on particular days. The purpose of these seasons and days is to remind us throughout the entire year of Christ's life, death and resurrection, and to call to mind particular people and events that best exemplify his transforming grace.

Feast Days, or Holy Days, are days which are celebrated in commemoration of the sacred mysteries and events recorded in the history of our redemption, in memory of the Virgin Mother of Christ, or of His apostles, martyrs, and saints, by special services and rest from work. A feast not only commemorates an event or person, but also serves to excite the spiritual life by reminding us of the event it commemorates. At certain hours Jesus Christ invites us to His vineyard (Matt., xx, 1-15); He is born in our hearts at Christmas; on Good Friday we nail ourselves to the cross with Him; at Easter we rise from the tomb of sin; and at Pentecost we receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Every religion has its feasts, but none has such a rich and judiciously constructed system of festive seasons as the Catholic Church. The succession of these seasons form the ecclesiastical year, in which the feasts of Our Lord form the ground and framework, the feasts of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints the ornamental tracery. (New Catholic Encyclopedia)

These particular celebrations are collectively called feasts or feast days, and are categorized in terms of their centrality to the faith and, well, 'pomp' from least to greatest as memorials, feasts or solemnities (there are additional divisions and categorizations, but for the sake of simplicity we will leave it at this). Though even the smallest prayer books have a few alternative prayers and antiphons for special seasons, Sundays and solemnities, only the larger prayer books have comprehensive prayers for specific memorials, feasts and

solemnities. The prayers and readings during these special seasons and days are adjusted to relate to the celebration and help us to meditate upon it.

There are three questions in regard to following the calendar; knowing which seasonal or feast day it is, finding the prayers for the day in question, and what to do when multiple feasts fall on the same day.

AN EXAMPLE

Let us assume it is January 31, 2004, and we would like to pray Morning Prayer. If we are not aware that January 31 is a memorial day (or we don't have a prayer book that includes memorials, anyway), we might just pray the prayers for Saturday of the third week of Ordinary Time. By checking a Church calendar, the Proper of the Saints, or the little help calendar provided at our web site we see that January 31 is the memorial of John Bosco. So how does this memorial affect our prayers for this day?

Prior to beginning our prayers, page through the prayers in the Proper of the Saints for January 31. There is a short introduction to John Bosco, and then some text that reads (from the four-volume set):

From the common of pastors, 1728, or of holy men: teachers, 1871.

Following the above text is a supplementary (replacement, actually) second reading for the Office of Readings.

In general, any prayer elements specific to a feast day replace the same elements in the standard prayer. Antiphons replace antiphons, readings replace readings, intercessions replace intercessions, etc. This all means that instead of praying the standard prayers found in the Psalter, we are being directed to substitute some different prayers for this particular day, and are being provided a special second reading should we choose to pray the Office of Readings.

We could use either set of recommended prayers — the Common of Pastors or Common of Holy Men, Teachers — but not both. If we turn to 1728, we then skip forward several pages until we come to Morning Prayer where we find an abbreviated entry that includes a hymn, antiphons

and other partial elements of Morning Prayer. These are *substitutionary* elements to the standard Morning Prayer for the day. So we pray from the Psalter for Saturday of Ordinary Time, Week 3 as we normally would, but we substitute different antiphons and other elements from the Common of Pastors.

Had we arbitrarily decided to turn to 1871, 'For Teachers,' we would find only a substitution for the antiphon to the Gospel Canticle and a concluding prayer in the Morning Prayer entry. Otherwise, everything remains the same as the regular prayer for the day.

If you examine the prayers for a feast or solemnity, you will find a similar pattern, but usually with more substitutionary text.

SOLEMNITIES ARE SPECIAL

Solemnities require more forethought than feasts and memorials. Solemnities actually begin on the evening prior to the date for the solemnity, itself — on the vigil. Let's review the Solemnity of Peter and Paul, Apostles, which falls on June 29.

Turning to June 29 in the Proper of the Saints, the first prayer listed is Evening Prayer I. Just like a Sunday, the Evening Prayer I is Evening Prayer for the *night before* the day in question. So observance of the Solemnity of Peter and Paul, Apostles, actually begins on the evening of June 28. If you waited until June 29 to figure this out, you were late to the party!

Like our previous example with the memorial of John Bosco, the Proper of the Saints provides elements that substitute for the antiphons and other portions of the standard prayers beginning with Evening Prayer for June 28, and proceeding through the Evening Prayer for June 29.

BUT WAIT... THERE'S MORE....

Solemnities (and a few other celebrations) can sneak up on you not only by beginning their observance earlier than you might have suspected, but also in that they don't always fall on the same day. For example, let's look to the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, which is on June 10 of 2004. If you look for this in the Proper of the Saints, you won't find it. There is no entry for June 10. The reason for this is that *some* celebrations are set not for the same date each year, but for a day *in relation to another key date like Easter or Christmas* (also,

this is a "seasonal" solemnity, not a solemnity for a saint). These date-relative celebrations are usually found near the end of the Proper of the Seasons, not in the Proper of the Saints.

This can make it all a little confusing at times, but an easy solution is to consult a liturgical calendar prior to beginning your prayers for any given day, looking not only at the prayers for today, but checking to see if tomorrow is a solemnity.

Solemnities are not merely days to observe when praying the Liturgy of the Hours, but they are also usually Holy Days of Obligation, so be sure to get to Mass! (In some cases a diocese or national conference suppresses them or moves their observance to the nearest Sunday. Check with your local parish or diocese for information specific to your area.)

SOLEMNITIES AND SMALLER PRAYER BOOKS

Smaller prayer books contain sections with alternative antiphons, readings, etc., not only for special seasons and particular solemnities, but also for Sundays in Ordinary Time. So during special seasons, solemnities, Sundays (and even some feasts), look to the supplemental sections of your prayer books for alternative prayer elements.

DO I HAVE TO DO ALL OF THIS?

Thankfully, no. Remember, laity are encouraged to pray *part* of the Liturgy of the Hours or an adaptation thereof. You local priest is strongly encouraged to make at least Evening Prayer publicly available once a week at the parish, which is a useful indicator of the Church's expectations regarding lay participation. Sometimes we will draw some satisfaction from praying it fully or 'accurately,' but most laity do not find themselves in a state of life that allows for one or two hours of prayer each day.

Different religious orders, dioceses and national conferences have different regulations regarding the observance of particular feasts and which prayers are required to be prayed, when. Some are quite rigorous. In general, permanent deacons and some in religious orders are obligated to pray Morning and Evening prayer daily. Priests, bishops, and most religious orders vow to pray all of the daily prayers in their entirety. Some orders even

pray additional prayers that were removed from the daily schedule for historical reasons. Those who are *obligated* to pray the Hours are to do so properly, following the calendar of seasons and feasts.

WHEN FEASTS COLLIDE...

If you wish to accurately follow the calendar of feasts (and have a book with the appropriate sections to do so), the rules are detailed in the General Instruction. In summary, if there is no feast for a particular day, then you just pray the regular prayers for the day. If there is an optional memorial on the day, then *you* choose between the regular prayers and the optional memorial. If there is a regular memorial, feast or solemnity, then you pray the associated prayers. Most calendars use capitalization to indicate the kind of feast day:

- SOLEMNITY (all capitals)
- FEAST (small capitals)
- Memorial (regular text)
- *Optional Memorial* (italics)

Sometimes multiple feasts will fall on the same day. See the 'Table of Liturgical Days' in the General Instruction for the specifics on which celebrations take precedence when multiple ones fall on the same day. Though there are some exceptions, in *general* the order of precedence is:

1. Major seasonal liturgical days and solemnities like Easter Triduum and Octave of Easter, Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension, Pentecost, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, etc.
2. Other solemnities including Sundays
3. Feasts
4. Obligatory memorials
5. 'Standard' readings or optional memorials, if desired

If multiple celebrations fall on the same day, you simply pick the highest from the list. Suppose, for example, that it is January 4, 2004. Several available prayers intersect on this day; Epiphany (a solemnity and liturgical day), Sunday (always a solemnity) in Christmas season, and the obligatory memorial of Elizabeth Ann Seton (in the Americas), or even just the general prayers for week II of the Psalter. If you have the four-volume set, prayers are available therein to observe

any of these celebrations. Which one would you celebrate?

According to the above table, Epiphany takes precedence over the other celebrations, so you would look to the Proper of the Seasons for Epiphany, and follow the prayers found therein.

Our calendar includes information on feast days that fall on Sunday and on days with greater feasts for informative purposes only. Some calendars purposefully and rightly omit feast and memorials from the calendar when they fall on a Sunday or on the same day on which a greater feast is observed. This is because we are to observe only one feast on a given day, the most solemn one of the day in question. Obviously, the Lord's Day always takes precedence over feasts and memorials (and most other solemnities). Therefore, on Sundays we will almost always be praying the prayers for that Sunday, not the prayers for a feast or memorial that happened to fall on Sunday. And on days with multiple feasts we pray the most important feast for that day. In outline form, we follow this pattern when preparing to pray:

1. Determine the current season and any special feast that should be observed today (including 'Sunday' observances). We use our own little calendar for this. You can also use the calendars provided by many parishes.
2. See if your prayer book has special materials for today's celebration, if any. All of the prayer books have supplementary sections for the seasons of Advent/Christmas, Lent and Easter; also Sundays of Ordinary Time, and major solemnities. Some include a few feasts. The four volume edition includes optional and obligatory memorials. The changes may be as small as a different antiphon for the Gospel Canticle or a different concluding prayer, or as complete as a nearly total replacement of the standard readings (or anything in between).
3. Begin the prayer, incorporating the special amendments due to the season or feast. If there is no special season or feast, or our prayer book does not include the relevant information (or we just can't find it at the moment), then we just pray the standard prayers for the day.

HYMNS, SINGING AND CHANT

HYMNS

Each prayer includes a hymn near the beginning. Some have several from which to choose. In the 4-volume set, the hymn text is included with the prayer text. In other versions, hymn numbers are included that refer a hymn section near the back of the book. Christian Prayer (the large, one volume edition) includes a melody line with the hymn verses, useful to those who can sight read music. Other editions have only the text for the hymns, useful to those who already know the melodies.

If you wish to sing the hymns — especially if you would like to play organ or piano with the hymns — we recommend a supplementary book. [Hymnal for the Hours](#) (GIA Publications) includes complete music for the English hymns found in the Liturgy of the Hours. It also includes tones for common psalms and antiphons. Hymns can be looked up by first line or common titles; composers, authors and sources; even by metric number in the hymnal.

(Following is a transcript of the audio CD included with this booklet. You are encouraged to follow along here while listening to the CD. If you downloaded the electronic version of the booklet, you will need to purchase the CD to hear the sample chants. The audio file is too large at 30MB to make available electronically.)

SINGING AND CHANT

As is the case with many prayers, the Liturgy of the Hours — and the Psalms in particular — are intended to be sung. The exact method of singing prayers varies with time, place, ability, culture and context. A method of singing prayer common to the Catholic Church is chant (also known as plainchant or plainsong). Like almost any genre of music, chant can be as difficult or easy as one chooses, and there are many different styles, but we're going to keep it simple; you don't need to be able to read music, play an instrument, or even sing well to participate in and enjoy chant.

We are maintaining this level of simplicity for several reasons. First, for some reason that escapes us, the editors of almost all English publications of the Liturgy of the Hours omitted any notation marks that might help someone learn to chant

the Psalms. Most people cannot sight-read modern music notation, are not familiar with chant, and do not have voice training (the author included). Consequently, simplicity is not only good, but it is a necessity.

The good news is that sung prayer can help a person worship in ways not always accessible by spoken prayer alone. But many people feel a little uncomfortable, self-conscious or perhaps embarrassed about singing. Though we hope you will try chanting the prayers for awhile, if after a week or so you find it continues to distract you from the prayers, go back to reading them. It may be that chant just isn't right for you, or perhaps the time and place make it inconvenient. It is also possible that a more comprehensive introduction to chant would make it more interesting. If you seek additional chanting examples and formation, we recommend *Liber Usualis*, reprinted by St. Bonaventure Publications. The Adoremus Hymnal, published by Ignatius Press, also has some helpful examples of chant, but both it and *Liber Usualis* assume a significant mastery of music, including the ability to read plainchant and modern music notation.

In our commitment to simplicity we will teach by hearing and doing, rather than by reading. We are also going to avoid the decorative and beautiful but difficult additional notes of 'full-on' Gregorian chant.

WHY CHANT AT ALL?

As is often the case, the Church and her saints have already answered this question better than the author can, so let us refer to an excerpt from the Preface to the Vatican Edition of Roman Chant:

Holy Mother the Church has received from God the charge of training the souls of the faithful in all holiness, and for this noble end has ever made a happy use of the help of the sacred Liturgy. Wherein — in order that men's minds may not be sundered by differences, but that, on the contrary, the unity which gives vigour and beauty to the mystical body of Christ might flourish unimpaired — she has been zealous to keep the traditions of our forefathers, ever trying diligently to discover and boldly to restore any which might have been forgotten in the course of the ages.

Now among those things which most nearly touch the sacred Liturgy, being as it were interwoven therein and giving it splendour and impressiveness, the first place must be assigned to the Sacred Chant. We have, indeed, all learnt from experience that it gives a certain breadth to divine worship and uplifts the mind in wondrous wise to heavenly things. Wherefore the Church has never ceased to recommend the use of the Chant, and has striven with the greatest assiduity and diligence to prevent its decline from its pristine dignity.

To this end liturgical music must possess those characteristics which make it preeminently sacred and adapted to the good of souls. It must surely emphasize above all else the dignity of divine worship, and at the same time be able to express pleasantly and truly the sentiments of the christian soul. It must also be catholic, answering to the needs of every people, country and age, and combine simplicity with artistic perfection....

If anyone is now feeling a little shortchanged by the quality of the music at his parish, here is your chance to benefit from the Church's rich musical heritage in your private prayer life. Who knows, maybe your parish's music group would like to learn, too.

INTRODUCING PSALM TONES

In modern music we are used to a beat, tempo or rhythm. We break and stretch words and syllables so that they fit a metered form, and usually some kind of rhyming pattern. Consider the children's song, "Mary had a Little Lamb." Each syllable is broken so that it falls on a beat:

Ma - ry had a lit - tle lamb....

In chant, the rhythm is the words, themselves. It isn't a regular, clock-like beat as much as an organic movement, like waves on a shore. Simple chant, like that we will practice, is almost identical to speaking except that one speaks the words at a constant pitch. For our main example, turn to the first Psalm for Week I, Monday, Morning Prayer:

To my words give ear, O Lord,
give heed to my groaning....

Without any effort, one can chant these same words at a particular pitch:

To my words give ear, O Lord,
give heed to my groaning....

Notice that it was chanted at nearly the same speed as the spoken version, without imposing a beat upon it. Try it with me:

To my words give ear, O Lord,
give heed to my groaning....

The exact pitch is not important as long as you can stay fairly level, and almost anyone can with little practice and effort. If you are praying with others, it also needs to be in a range that the others can match; not too high or too low. Extremes can make the prayer feel (and sound) strained and unpleasant. Pick your normal talking voice, and go up *a little*.

It is common to chant more slowly than the same words would be spoken, especially the final word in a sentence, but don't chant more quickly than you would speak the same words to a group (and this is usually about half the speed at which we read silently). If praying with others, you may have to slow down a little more so that everyone can stay together, but not too much. Some people slow *way* down when singing and chanting; don't do that in group prayer. It is okay for private recitation, but in groups it turns the prayers into a bit of a marathon grind.

Breathe as necessary. For our purposes, the exact point at which you inhale is not very important and will come naturally, usually at the end of a line or after a punctuation.

The next step is to add a change in pitch on the second line:

To my words give ear, O Lord,
give heed to my groaning....

Go ahead and try it:

To my words give ear, O Lord,
give heed to my groaning....

Most Psalms in LOTH are arranged into four line verses, but this isn't always the case. Some have one, two, three, five or even six lines. We'll cover how to handle these variations later, but for now, let's look at how to chant a complete verse. Just repeat the same tone pattern.

To my words give ear, O Lord,
give heed to my groaning.
Attend to the sound of my cries,
my King and my God.

In conversational English, thoughts are generally concluded with a slight drop in pitch. It is

similar in chant. Conclude the verse by dropping down in pitch on the final word, "God."

To my words give ear, O Lord,
give heed to my groaning.
Attend to the sound of my cries,
my King and my God.

Now let's go through the entire Psalm together:

To my words give ear, O Lord,
give heed to my groaning.
Attend to the sound of my cries,
my King and my God.

It is you whom I invoke, O Lord.
In the morning you hear me;
in the morning I offer you my prayer,
watching and waiting.

You are no God who loves evil;
no sinner is your guest.
The boastful shall not stand their ground
before your face.

You hate all who do evil:
you destroy all who lie.
The deceitful and bloodthirsty man
the Lord detests.

But I through the greatness of your love
have access to your house.
I bow down before your holy temple,
filled with awe.

Lead me, Lord, in your justice,
because of those who lie in wait;
make clear your way before me.

No truth can be found in their mouths,
their heart is all mischief,
their throat a wide-open grave,
all honey their speech.

All those you protect shall be glad
and ring out their joy.
You shelter them; in you they rejoice,
those who love your name.

It is you who bless the just man, Lord:
you surround him with favor as with a shield.

Notice how we handled the verse with only three lines.

Lead me, Lord, in your justice,
because of those who lie in wait;
make clear your way before me.

Any verse with an odd number of lines can be handled in the same way. Just use the same pitch on the last line as on the next to last.

ANTIPHONS

The antiphon is, among other things, the opportunity to announce the tone for the entire Psalm. In this example, we could have chanted the antiphon as:

I lift up my heart to you, O Lord, and you will hear my morning prayer.

If chanting with others, a common way to proceed is for a single person to chant the antiphon, which the group repeats. He then chants the first verse of the psalm. The group copies the tone for the second verse. They alternate verses. This is not the only way to proceed — other methods are mentioned earlier in the tutorial — but merely a suggestion for when the group is first learning to chant.

EXAMPLE 2: CANTICLE

Incorporating some of the above points, let's chant together the Canticle for Week I, Monday, Morning Prayer.

(ant) We praise your glorious name, O Lord, our God.

(repeated) We praise your glorious name, O Lord, our God.

Blessed may you be, O Lord,
God of Israel our father,
from eternity to eternity.

Yours, O Lord, are grandeur and power,
majesty, splendor and glory.

For all in heaven and on earth is yours;
yours, O Lord, is the sovereignty:
you are exalted as head over all.

Riches and honor are from you,
and you have dominion over all.
In your hand are power and might;
it is yours to give grandeur and strength to all.

Therefore, our God, we give you thanks
and we praise the majesty of your name.

(ant) We praise your glorious name, O Lord, our God

COMMON VARIATIONS

Opening and closing tone variations

Rather than praying an entire line on one tone then the second line on a different tone, it can be nice to adjust the tone to the new pitch on the last word of the first line. This is more difficult to explain than it is to demonstrate. Instead of:

Yours, O Lord, are grandeur and power,
majesty, splendor and glory.

try:

Yours, O Lord, are grandeur and power,
majesty, splendor and glory.

As another tone variation to single words, it is common to have the first word/syllable or two start one or two steps below the tone for the line. For example:

Yours, O Lord, are grandeur and power,
majesty, splendor and glory.

Extending the tones

Instead of alternating the tone on each line or each pair of lines, you can extend a tone across an entire verse. For example, instead of chanting:

Yours, O Lord, are grandeur and power,
majesty, splendor and glory.

you could extend the tone from the first line over both lines:

Yours, O Lord, are grandeur and power,
majesty, splendor and glory.

Psalm tone pattern changes

As you have certainly guessed by now, the simple tone pattern we've been using is only one of the thousands of possibilities. There is no reason that you could not try different tonal patterns. Sticking with the same tone day in and day out can become tiresome (or 'monotonous'); some variation can improve attentiveness while praying.

In Gregorian Chant there are eight standard modes. A chant's 'mode' is *similar* to our use of 'key' in modern music. Where we might say 'the key of E minor' or 'the key of G', in chant one refers to 'tone 1,' 'Murray tone 3,' or the like.

A confusing point is that 'tone' can refer not only to the key in which something is sung or chanted, but to the particular melody. In modern use, we use these two terms quite distinctly, but not so in *general* chanting.

Due to their complexity it is highly unlikely that you will be able to chant all of these modes and tones with others in a small prayer group without extensive preparation and practice. However, nothing would prevent you from praying these or similar modes in private:

Mode 1: O God, give your judgment to the king,
to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice
and your poor in right judgment.

Mode 2: May the mountains bring forth peace for the
people and the hills, justice.
May he defend the poor of the people
and save the children of the needy
and crush the oppressor.

Mode 3: He shall endure like the sun and the moon
from age to age.
He shall descend like rain on the meadow,
like raindrops on the earth.

Mode 4: In his days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon fails.
He shall rule from sea to sea,
from the Great River to earth's bounds.

Mode 5: Before him his enemies shall fall,
his foes lick the dust.
The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts
shall pay him tribute.

Mode 6: The kings of Sheba and Seba
shall bring him gifts.
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,
all nations shall serve him.

Mode 7: For he shall save the poor when they cry
and the needy who are helpless.
He will have pity on the weak
and save the lives of the poor.

Mode 8: From the oppression he will rescue their lives,
to him their blood is dear.
Long may he live,
may the gold of Sheba be given him.
They shall pray for him without ceasing
and bless him all the day.

EXAMPLE 3: PSALM 29 FROM WEEK I, MONDAY, MORNING PRAYER

Now, using a simple tone, we will incorporate some of the variations from above. We do not intend that you start chanting at this level of complexity. Though this will hardly be difficult for someone with musical training, for those of us who do not have such training, it might seem distracting and frustrating. Remember, the key is to actually *pray*. Find the "level" of chanting that helps you pray most sincerely. This will vary from person to person and time to time. A nice thing about chant is that, in groups, some people can be chanting more complicated tone patterns around the simple ones, and it can sound quite beautiful.

(ant) Adore the Lord in his holy court.
(repeat when praying with others)

O give the Lord, you sons of God,
give the Lord glory and power;
give the Lord the glory of his name.
Adore the Lord in his holy court.

The Lord's voice resounding on the waters,
the Lord on the immensity of the waters;
the voice of the Lord, full of power,
the voice of the Lord, full of splendor.

The Lord's voice shattering the cedars,
the Lord shatters the cedars of Lebanon;
he makes Lebanon leap like a calf
and Sirion like a young wild-ox.

The Lord's voice flashes flames of fire.

The Lord's voice shaking the wilderness,
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh;
the Lord's voice rending the oak tree
and stripping the forest bare.

The God of glory thunders.
In his temple they all cry: "Glory!"
The Lord sat enthroned over the flood;
the Lord sits as king for ever.

The Lord will give strength to his people,
the Lord will bless his people with peace.

(ant) Adore the Lord in his holy court.

CANTICLES

The Canticles of Zechariah and Mary are also likely to be sung or chanted. Most psalm tones are suitable to either, but it is common to have tones specific to the Canticles.

(The CD contains examples.)

INCORPORATING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Historically, the organ is the instrument most likely to complement chant. In modern, "casual" prayer guitar and piano accompaniment are not uncommon, especially as the organ has fallen into relative disuse. An instrument can help people stay on key, but there are a few complications. First, shifting to and from an instrument during the prayer can be distracting and disrupt the natural rhythm of the prayer. A modern-trained musician often attempts to impose a meter upon the chant that is not naturally there. There is a difference between playing, performing and praying; even a very skilled musician can be a distraction to prayer if he plays in a way that detracts from the prayer rather than leads people to deeper prayer. Finally, we are accustomed to

hearing music in pretty basic modes — major and minor. Most classic psalm tones do not exactly fit these modes, and attempting to impose a musical key onto them — usually in the form of major or minor chords — can distort chant's unique nature.

If you wish to incorporate musical instruments, one might do so on special feasts, or for particular parts of the prayer.

LITURGICAL INTEGRATION

As you might have guessed, the context within which chant is natural (and intended) is the Mass. Indeed, the Second Vatican Council and subsequent documents on music and the reform of the Mass continue to hold forth chant as the preferred method of sung prayer, though not to the exclusion of other styles. Strangely, most English speaking parishes seem to have incorporated other music to the exclusion of traditional chant.

The obvious point at which to implement chant is the responsorial psalm after the first reading. However, one must be careful not to juxtapose non-complementary styles of music in the Mass, especially one right after the other. Consequently, one is encouraged to select the music for other Mass parts such that they and chant are able to "harmonize." In the many instances where multiple Masses are offered over a weekend, it is common to have each Mass have a significantly different musical style, such that people of all walks of life are welcomed and assisted in their prayer and worship efforts.

In any event, if you are a music leader who wishes to incorporate chant in the Mass, we recommend that you do so very gradually and with sensitivity to the needs, abilities and comfort of the congregants.

Keep it simple.

PRAYING PERFECTLY

Please remember this: It is important that you pray perfectly, not sing, chant, or perform perfectly. This is a vital distinction. Contrary to popular belief, your "perfection" is not to do all things without error, but to become fully who you are meant to be, or to engage in something as fully as you are able. To pray perfectly, then, does not mean that you do so with precision, dead-on pitch and exact articulation, but in such a way that it truly involves your entire self, offering your heart,

mind and body to God. Singing and chanting prayer is but one way to move towards this goal.

PRAYING IN LATIN

The Church encourages us to learn and pray its traditional prayers in Latin. When read, spoken and understood in their original languages, these prayers bring new insights into the faith. The very short, concluding prayer from Night Prayer is an excellent (and mostly harmless) example:

In the American English edition: "May the all-powerful Lord grant us a restful night and a peaceful death. Amen."

In Latin: *Noctem quietam et finem perfectum concedat nobis Dominus omnipotens. Amen.*

This prayer is offered just before entering bed by those who pray Compline. The first thing to recognize is that the English is supposed to be a translation/adaptation of the original Latin, which is the language in which almost all authoritative or "source" texts are written for the Western Church. The second thing to notice — if you know or can even guess at any Latin — is that the English translation is considerably lacking in meaning explicit or implied in the Latin source. A rough, literal transliteration of the Latin would read close to: "A night of quiet peace and an end in perfection (or a 'perfect end') grant us, Lord almighty. So be it."

The Latin word *perfectum* does not mean peaceful, but this is how the editors have translated it for prayer in English speaking countries. Rather, it indicates a sense that one's life had led to its proper fulfilment, its genuine 'end' or purpose. This meaning is entirely absent in the English translation. If you were attempting to simplify it so that it could be understood by children, perhaps this would be the right thing to do, but the English is simply not an accurate translation of the meaning of the Latin source. And so it is in much translation.

Of course, praying at all is better than not praying. And it is not my intent or action to pick at nits or accuse any translator, editor or committee of purposefully altering the words and meanings of the Church's prayers (though many do). It is just a reality of the translation process that certain compromises are made, and these compromises do sometimes include so changing the text that elements of the original meaning can be entirely lost. Whether these changes are made out of linguistic necessity, or because the translators

just liked their novel prayers better is anyone's guess. Whatever the reason, I believe that Christ guides the Church, and that it is best for my soul to try to understand the faith as the Church understands, practices and teaches it. For this and other reasons I have undertaken the task in my own life to attempt to learn some Latin so that I can plunge deeper into Christ's teachings as they come to us through the Church.

However, while many of Church's prayers find their origins in Latin, many do not. Learning the Church's prayers that are originally or traditionally in Latin serves a useful purpose. But I'm not certain that much is served in learning to read the Scriptures in Latin (unless one is doing so simply to learn Latin), when the Latin version is, itself, a translation from other languages. I am more likely to inject misunderstandings in such a case, given my own lack of expertise in Latin, than if I read something that was translated directly from Greek, Hebrew or Aramaic into English. For example, I try to pray the shorter prayers and canticles in Latin, and the longer Scripture passages and readings in English.

PRONUNCIATION

There are two general modern approaches to Latin pronunciation; classical and ecclesial. They are similar, but ecclesial Latin is more soft and complex. For a thorough understanding of pronunciation (and grammar), Wheelock's Latin is the standard reference. There are also good audio CDs available.

That being said, the pronunciation is not a great deal different from English, but with these points for ecclesial Latin (from *Liber Usualis*):

Most syllables begin with consonants and end with vowels. There are exceptions of course, most notably words that begin with vowels or end with consonants.

Most vowels are close to their short counterparts in English. There are no silent vowels, but there are complex vowel combinations (see Wheelock's for details of classical pronunciation).

A as in the father, not can.

E as in red, men or met.

I as in feet. Same for Y.

O as in for.

U as in moon.

An apostrophe (') over a vowel in ecclesial Latin usually indicates an emphasized syllable, not a change in the pronunciation of the vowel.

In general, two vowels together are pronounced as separate syllables. Ae and oe are exceptions, and are pronounced like e. Other exceptions include u-other vowel combinations preceded by q or ng; and au, eu and ay, all of which are spoken as single syllables.

C is usually hard as in cat. When before e, ae, oe, i or y it is soft like ch in church. CC before the same vowels is T-ch. SC before the same vowels is like sh in shed.

CH is always hard, like k.

V is spoken like a w as in water.

G is hard as in golf, except when followed by e, ae, oe i or y.

GN is pronounced like ny (e.g. monsignor).

H is usually silent.

J is usually written as I and pronounced like the vowel Y (and so sounds like "ee").

R is slightly rolled.

S is usually hard. Somewhat softened when between two vowels.

TI before a vowel and following any letter except S, X or T is pronounced tsee. Otherwise it is just like the English t.

Th is always pronounced like the English t.

X is ks, slightly softened when between two vowels. XC before e, ae, oe i, and y is pronounced k-sh. Before other vowels it is ks-c.

Z is dz.

Double consonants are each clearly sounded.

All else is similar to English

Lord, open my lips.

And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Dómine, lábia mea apéries.

Et os meum annuntiábit laudem tuam.

God, come to my assistance.

Lord, make haste to help me.

Deus, in adiutórium meum inténde.

Dómine, ad adiuvándum me festína.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glória Patri, et Fílio, et Spirítui Sancto.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.

Sicut erat in princípío, et nunc et semper, et in saecula saeculórum.

Our Father...

Pater noster, qui es in caelis:

sanctificétur nomen tuum;

advéniat regnum tuum;

fiat volúntas tua, sicut in caelo et in terra.

Panem nostrum cotidiánum da nobis hodie;

et dimítte nobis débita nostra,

sicut et nos dimíttimus debitóribus nostris;

et ne nos indúcas in tentatiónem;

sed líbera nos a malo.

Hail Mary...

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum. Bene-

dicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus

ventris tui, Iesus.

Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccato-

ribus, nunc, et in hora mortis nostrae.

These and many more Latin prayers are listed in *Liber Usualis* along with psalm tones for chanting. However, the simplified instruction for chant from the prior section can be applied to the Latin prayers, as well.

A FEW PRAYERS

Following are a few of the common Catholic prayers in Latin. If you would like to learn the Liturgy of the Hours in Latin, we have the complete set available direct from the Vatican Publishing House. It is called *Liturgia Horarum*, and is the source for these prayers.

CHANT, REVISITED

By now perhaps you've tried simple chant, and even a little of the common Latin prayers, and it has occurred to you: "Hey! I'll bet that these go together!"

Yes, they do. It is the Church's express wish that we chant/sing most liturgical prayers, and preferably in the language of the Church, Latin.

This chapter presents the minimal basics of actual chant notation for each of the eight traditional psalm tones, how to chant the preceding common Latin prayers, and how to adapt simple Gregorian chant to the English breviary (the thought of which will cause purists to shudder). We'll revisit the topics covered in the two previous chapters, but with a little more depth. This is not an attempt to comprehensively, accurately introduce the Church's rich chant heritage and every fine nuance of proper chant. There are multiple texts over 1000 pages long dedicated to such efforts. This is just the basics.

The first quarter of this chapter covers theoretical topics such as the technical relationships between music notation, scales, and physical frequencies. You don't need to know this to learn to chant, but it might help. It then shows how these relate to the historical notation used for chanting, along with the names for the different symbols. It leads you step-by-step through chanting part of evening prayer in Latin and in English, and then provides a reference page of various chant tones.

This chapter assumes that you have a piano or some other instrument on which you can play a major scale such as C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C. In addition, this symbol () indicates content for which there is a musical sample on the CD identified by track number. If you are viewing the electronic version of this text, you can click the symbol to hear the sample.

IN BRIEF

Modern music notation is complex, precise and absolute; it covers a huge range of notes for dozens of instruments. It specifies nearly every possible variable; speed, pitch, duration, tempo, volume, etc.

Chant music notation is relative and less precise. Its only instrument is the human voice. Simple chant melodies, called psalm tones, rarely

span a range greater than three or four pitches. Chant does not have a set tempo or absolute pitch. Words are chanted at approximately the speed they would otherwise be spoken, and at a pitch that is comfortable to those chanting.

Chanting revolves around an apparently-universal musical scale called the major or diatonic scale ("do re mi fa so la ti do"). However, the chant feels different depending on where one starts and ends in that scale, and which notes are emphasized. These different personalities are called modes.

Similar to how there are many different songs written for modern major key music, there are many different psalm tones for each mode. However, there are eight conventional psalm tones, each corresponding to a different mode.

For more detail on the above matters, continue with the next section. To proceed immediately to learning chant notation and to begin chanting, skip ahead to the section titled Staves and Clefs.

GENERAL MUSIC NOTATION AND SCALES

Music is a kind of language. Music notation is a tool to record an expression in a way that it can be reliably read and repeated by others. It has evolved throughout history to accommodate different cultures, instruments and musical styles. Modern music notation is precise and objective in terms of meter, speed, pitch, duration, volume and other relevant variables. But it is also flexible and comprehensive enough to cover many different instruments and ranges. Among other things, with the assistance of flat and sharp symbols it can express every pitch of the chromatic scale from the lowest organ foot pedal at about 8Hz to the highest note from a piccolo, ~4500Hz. ("Hz" is short for Hertz, which is a unit that stands for beats per second. Low hertz notes are low notes. High hertz notes are high notes.) That range is about 9 octaves, or over 100 individual notes. For the sake of comparison, the average person talks over a range of just a few notes, and can comfortably sing across a little more than one octave.

Let's zoom in on one of those octaves and learn about how these notes are related to each other. Starting at C4, or middle C on your piano, you'll depress 13 keys to go up to C5 (C5 refers to the C above middle C).

The pitches of these notes are mathematically-related to each other, and, if your piano is properly tuned, to a standard reference. The frequency of the next higher note is roughly 1.0595 x the frequency of the current one. If A is 440Hz, then B b, the next note up is 440 x 1.0595, or 466Hz. B is B b x 1.0595, and so on. (This is only an approximation. There are different tuning methods, and for the sake of simplicity I'm presenting the 12th-root system. It is called this because the frequencies are related by the twelfth root of two, which is 1.0595.)

In musical terms, the "distance" between two different notes is spoken of using a unit called a step (also sometimes a tone or interval). The table, below, shows the note letters, frequencies and steps. Moving from one row to the next is a half step. There are 12 half steps from C4 to C5. If you play all of those notes in sequence, it is called a chromatic scale. (◀ 10)

Half-steps	Note Letter	Frequency
0 (starting point)	C4	262
1	C #	277
2	D	294
3	E b	311
4	E	330
5	F	349
6	F #	370
7	G	392
8	A b	415
9	A	440
10	B b	466
11	B	494
12	C5	523

But the most common scale is not the chromatic scale; it is the major or diatonic scale. It omits some of the notes from the chromatic scale. To go from C4 to C5 using the diatonic scale, you will play 8 notes — hence the term "octave" — skipping half steps here and there. For example, to go from C4 to D, skipping the C# between them is two half-steps, or a full step. The grey lines indicate notes that are skipped, and happen to correspond to the black keys on a piano. (◀ 11)

Number	Note Letter	Frequency
0 (starting point)	C4	262
1 (skip)	C#	277

2	D	294
3 (skip)	E b	311
4	E	330
5	F	349
6 (skip)	F#	370
7	G	392
8 (skip)	A b	415
9	A	440
10 (skip)	B b	466
11	B	494
12	C5	523

There is nothing magical about the letter C, or it being assigned to a frequency of 262Hz. That is merely the present convention. In modern music these rules hold true, but in ancient music there does not appear to be a standard frequency or universal notation system that relates notes to objective pitches.

There is a sense in which the frequency of the first tone does not matter. What matters is that, collectively, the employed tones are in the proper relationship to each other. In other words, pick any frequency for N, and if you create tones at the proper multiples of that frequency, you will create a diatonic scale. Consider the same scale chart, but without letter notes or references to absolute frequencies:

Half Steps	Tone Name	Relative Pitch
0	Do	N
1		
2	Re	$N * 1.0595^2$
3		
4	Mi	$N * 1.0595^4$
5	Fa	$N * 1.0595^5$
6		
7	So	$N * 1.0595^7$
8		
9	La	$N * 1.0595^9$
10		
11	Ti	$N * 1.0595^{11}$
12	Do(2)	$N * 2$

This begs a question, but one which may be difficult to answer: Why *these* notes? There are different theories as to why this particular series of relational frequencies (or a subset thereof) are almost universally recognized by human beings as musical. My own theory is that we are simply de-

signed to recognize and respond to these relationships.

The relationships in question are called harmonics. When a note is sounded in a real instrument, the result is not only one frequency. There are overtones, harmonic frequencies, sounding simultaneously at a lower volume. Some harmonics are pleasing and others are not. Without harmonics, an A on a guitar would sound the same as an A from a piano, organ, clarinet or any other instrument; we wouldn't be able to tell the differences between people's voices. Harmonics are what give depth to sound.

Harmonics generally occur at multiples of the fundamental frequency (and they diminish in amplitude rapidly). The first harmonic is at twice the fundamental frequency. The next at three times. The next at four times, and so on. (This isn't precisely true, because the physical matter of the string, vibrating air and instrument body subtly affect the harmonic frequencies, but it is close enough for our demonstration). So if we begin with middle C4 at approximately 262Hz, for example, it produces harmonics at its multiples; 524Hz and 786Hz. To see where these fall in a scale, let us extend our table from before.

524Hz is just another C, but an octave higher. 786Hz corresponds with a G. It turns out that if we play Cs and Gs together, they usually sound pleasing. In fact, if you play C4 loudly and G5 quietly, a unsuspecting listener might not be able to tell that a separate G was played at all. If we go a little higher with the harmonics, we'll arrive at ~1310Hz, less than 1% from a mathematical E. This is starting to get interesting, because the notes C, E and G are what make up the C major chord. So starting from a

Note Letter	Frequency
C5	523
C sharp	554
D	587
E flat	622
E	659
F	699
F sharp	740
G	784
A flat	831
A	880
B flat	932
B	988
C6	1047
C sharp	1108
D	1175
E flat	1245
E	1319
F	1397
F sharp	1480
G	1568
A flat	1661
A	1760
B flat	1865
B	1976
C6	2093

single note, we've found two others that naturally occur with it. Let's have these be elements of our starting scale: C - E - G.

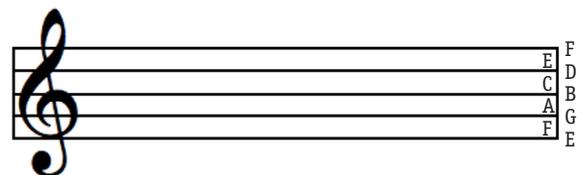
Continue this process, but start now with the G. If we perform the same iteration beginning with a G4, we'll find that the strongest harmonic for the G (apart from other Gs) is 1175Hz, a D, and 1960Hz, very close to a B. As with the C, these three notes make up a G major chord. Our growing scale now includes: C - D - E - G - B.

We're moving away from the C, so let's hop back and consider what note might have the C as its strongest harmonic? Take C6 at 1047Hz and divide it by 3 to get 349Hz, an F. F has A as a higher harmonic. Our scale is now C - D - E - F - G - A - B.

Of course, this isn't the only possible result. If we start at a different frequency, we'll end up with different notes in the scale, but they'll have the right relationship to each other so as to result in a diatonic scale. Some cultures arrived at shorter, pentatonic scales (C-D-E-G-B), leaving out some of these notes. My only purpose here is to show that there is a kind of connectedness between these frequency relationships and our human recognition of them as musically pleasing. When you discover that (1) something is aesthetically pleasing to most people, (2) it has an underlying mathematical connection, and (3) a physical connection, it is safe to assume that it isn't just someone's arbitrary opinion or invention — there is some kind of design at play. Now back to the current state of affairs....

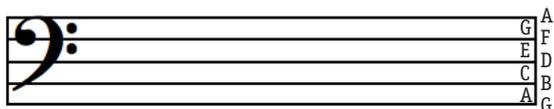
STAVES AND CLEFS

In modern music the combination of clef and lines is a system for identifying specific note letters and frequencies. The set of five lines is called a staff. The clef mark is the key that tells you what each of the lines and spaces stand for. For example, the most common clef, the treble clef, tells us that the lines and spaces stand for the notes of the diatonic scale beginning at the bottom with E4 at 330Hz.



The modern staff communicates individual note letters as they correspond to specific frequencies. For example, the A above middle C, the second space from the bottom in a treble clef staff, is a tone with a frequency of 440Hz. If you play a note of a different frequency — if you go to the piano and depress any key other than the A above middle C — then you are playing the wrong note.

Different clef symbols indicate that the lines of the staff represent a series of notes starting at a different letter/frequency. For example, the lowest line of the bass clef staff represents the G note. Each line and space still represents one of the notes from a diatonic scale, in order, but the specific clef tells the musician that the lines stand for different notes than on the treble staff.



Go back and note the central swirl of the treble clef. It is centered over the line representing the G note. In the bass clef there are two dots centered over the F. These are the reference points for these clefs.

This isn't generally done with the treble or bass clefs, but imagine for a moment that you could move the clef up or down a little, and that doing so would shift the position of G or F on the lines with the clefs. All of the other notes would shift, as well. That would make for some very confused musicians, so it isn't usually done with treble or bass clefs. But it is done with some others, and something much like it is done in chant notation.

But why do something like that in the first place? Because it is easier to read a note's location within the staff, especially if it is close to the clef reference point, than if it is outside of the clef. That is one of the reasons that, in modern music, we have both bass and treble clefs. Notes that are too high to appear in the bass clef staff are shown in the treble clef staff. And notes that are too low for the treble clef staff are shown in the bass clef staff.

Chant notation concerns itself with the articulation of sung prayer, and consists of a staff of four lines and three spaces, two different clefs, a variety of note symbols (or neums), other refer-

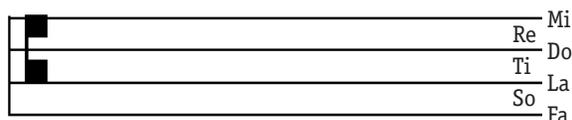
ence marks, and the words to be chanted. Sometimes breath marks are added.

Unlike modern music notation, it generally does not specify speed, objective pitch or volume, or precise note duration. It isn't concerned with being able to communicate 100 different pitches over nine octaves for dozens of different instruments playing in concert, but only the pitches within which people naturally chant — about one octave. And usually only a few of the available pitches within that range.

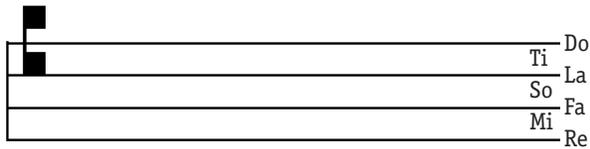
Like the modern staff, the lines and spaces of a chant staff correspond to the steps or intervals between musical notes from the diatonic scale. However, unlike modern notation, these notes are not bound to specific frequencies. Each line and space does not represent a specific letter note or pitch. Rather, the clef indicates one of the notes of a major scale; "do re mi fa so la ti do." And the scale may be in any pitch/range that you can comfortably chant or sing.

Vertical bars in chant notation do not serve the purpose of measuring out time as they do in modern music, but indicate breathing points and rests. Short vertical lines are for short breaths and short rests, longer bars for longer ones.

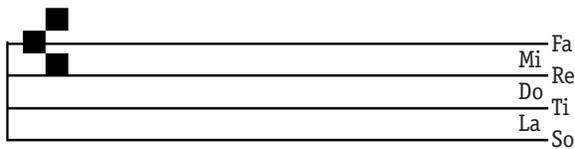
The most common chant clef is the C or Do clef. It looks kind of like a C and is centered over the line that represents not a specific frequency, but the root note of a diatonic scale. The fact that it is called a C clef does not mean that any note on that line must correspond to the C pitch (~263Hz) from a properly tuned piano or any other instrument. The other notes are related to that one by the intervals — the half and full steps — of the diatonic scale, as shown on the table on a previous page.



In the above example the C clef appears on the second to top line. But it is also often found on the top line, in which case the note relationships shift accordingly:



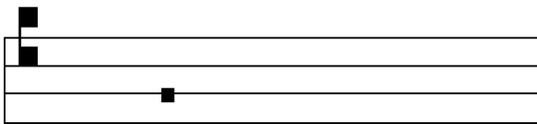
The F or Fa clef is less common. It identifies the line on which one sings the Fa pitch from a "Do Re Mi" scale. The "Do" pitch occurs two spaces below the fa line. (The three black squares are supposed to approximate the appearance of an F when written in script with a calligrapher's pen).



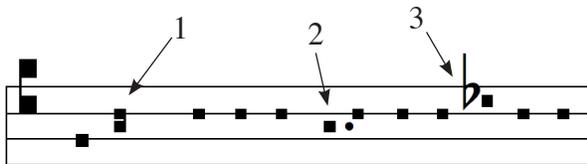
Like the Do/C clef, it is sometimes located on different lines. Also, both clefs are more ornate in some music books. Our notation software, Harmony Assistant, has a very simple, blocky font for chant. It isn't pretty, but it gets the job done.

NOTES AND NEUMES

Notes in modern notation are small solid or hollow ovals. Stems, flags and other decorations are used to indicate duration, volume, vibrato, etc. The note symbols for chant are called neumes (which means "note"), the most basic of which is simply a little square called a punctum.



There are variations and combinations for punctum, but for our purposes there are really only a few rules to remember. They are all demonstrated on the following excerpt from psalm tone 1: (♩ 12)



- 1) You generally chant the tones in the order in which they appear. But when two punctum are stacked vertically, the lower one is

sung first. This combination of two punctum is called a podatum.

- 2) A punctum followed by a dot is held longer — about twice the duration of a normal punctum.
- 3) One of the eight common psalm tones has a neum variation called a flat. This is identical in function to the flat in modern music notation. When the ♭ symbol is placed before a note, that note's pitch goes down by one half step. Any future occurrences of that note are treated the same unless the flat is cancelled by a natural symbol (♮). We won't actually teach the psalm tone in question until later — we will start with more simple ones — but are just listing it here so that it doesn't come as a surprise.
- 4) Each isolated punctum, each note, corresponds to one or more syllables. When the punctum are connected by a line, like the podatum, then both tones are sounded on a single syllable, but each tone is given roughly the same duration as any other punctum.

The terms note, pitch, and tone can be confusing. If someone says play an A note on your piano, you'd go and depress a particular key that corresponds to an A pitch (220, 440, 880 or some related frequency). In this sense, the words note and pitch are interchangeable. However, when it comes to actual written notation, a "note" generally describes pitch, duration, and may have a dynamic/volume variable as well; it describes a discrete item on the page. Pitch refers to a sound corresponding to a line or space on the staff.

This gets a little weird when we talk about a neum, which can be a combination of several notes. The word "tone" also has a double meaning. It can refer to a pitch, but in chant it can refer to an entire set of pitches making up a "psalm tone."

Because of these ambiguities, I will tend to use the word pitch to refer to relative notes and frequencies of the chant. I'll use terms like the "do pitch," or "re pitch," or "go up (or down) one pitch." When I use the word note, I'll be referring to a mark — a neum, more precisely — on the music staff that has a particular pitch.

AN IMPORTANT MENTAL TOOL

It will help immensely to learn to chant the "do-re-mi" scale upward and downward (e.g. do ti la so fa mi re do ♪13). That way, if you are working with a C/Do clef — usually situated above the range of the actual chant — start with a high but singable "do" and chant backwards to the starting note. In the above example, the introductory chant note starts on fa. I chanted backwards from do to get there, "do ti la so fa." By doing this you establish in your mind the proper intervals before even beginning the chant.

MODES AND TONES

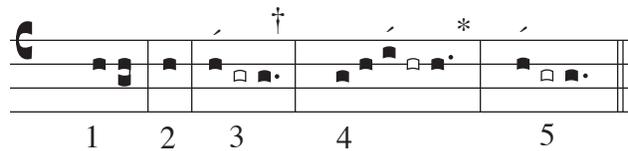
The term "mode" is rarely used in modern music. Instead, we ask "what key is this in?" The reply will usually consist of a letter code and a scale type (e.g. "E-minor"). The phrase "e-minor" tells the musician what notes and chords are likely to appear in the music, and what notes will probably be the common theme. For example, music in the key of C (major) will usually resolve around a C note. C is the "tonic" or fundamental note.

In modern music there are two general modes; major and minor. However, there are several traditional Gregorian modes. Each mode has its own unique personality that is brought about by the combination of chanted tones.

There are many more psalm tones than there are modes. Psalm tones are typically identified by name or number. There are eight traditional psalm tones, each corresponding to a different mode. Each psalm tone has several parts, and most have variations. I'm going to teach a simple psalm tone *thoroughly*, and then leave it to you to apply the same rules to the others.

My recommendation to you is to learn only one psalm tone to begin. When it becomes tedious, learn another, and so on. Eventually you'll know eight or more.

If we think of chant as a language, we can speak of it having sentences, each with a beginning, a general tone, a mid-point of some kind, and an end. Here is an abbreviated version of psalm tone 4. This isn't the complete line of music as you would chant it with a psalm. Rather, it is a kind of five part key:



Don't panic! It is easier than it looks, but there is some vocabulary to learn. The solid vertical lines separate the sections as follows:

1. Introduction / Intonation
2. Reciting Note / Tenor
3. Flex
4. Mediant Cadence
5. Final Cadence / Termination

1. Intonation

The intonation consists of two to four notes and is applied at the beginning of an antiphon, the first verse of the psalm, and each verse of canticles like the Magnificat. It is simply a lead in to the tenor. Otherwise, the intonation notes are omitted and one begins with the tenor.

2. Tenor

The tenor is the fundamental chanting pitch for the psalm. Most books will show at least three notes in a row on the same line as the tenor. In our key we show only a single note (why show three when one will do?).

3. Flex

Most psalms are arranged as two-line sets (couplets), and include at least the tenor, mediant and termination. Longer verses sometimes include a flex. This is noted by a special symbol (†). The syllables immediately preceding the † follow the pattern of the flex tones, after which they return to the tenor pitch. The flex is usually seen at the end of the first line in chants of three lines or more. Quite often, the flex is implemented by doing nothing more than dropping the last syllable just before the † by one pitch, sometimes two.

One usually takes a small breath after the flex.

4. Mediant

Almost all chant sentences, except very short ones, include the mediant. This is usually noted by an asterisk (*). In the absence of such notation, it generally takes place at the end of the next to last line of the chant. Like the flex, the pitches

immediately preceding the * follow the pattern of the mediant, after which the pitch returns to the tenor note.

One usually takes a small breath after the mediant.

5. Termination

At the end of a chant sentence, often noted by a period (.), one follows the tones indicated by the termination.

There is usually a short pause and a moment for a breath after a termination.

Apostrophes and Hollow Neumes

Latin, like English, has strong and weak syllables. The apostrophes (´) over the notes indicate where the emphasized syllables should ideally fall. Some Latin texts clearly indicate this in the psalms with their own apostrophes and even bold text on the strong syllables. For example, from the *Liber Usualis*:

Dí-xit Dóminus Dómino **mé**-o: * Séde a *dé*xtris **mé**-is.

In this line we have all kinds of great clues to help us chant well. The apostrophes show all of the emphasized syllables. The italics show where to begin the cadence changes. And the bold syllables show the peak of the cadences. For reasons explained later, this kind of detail is not and cannot be found in the modern prayer books.

In most cases the strong syllable is followed by a single, weaker syllable for the final note. But not always. The hollow note (◻) is just an indicator of the tone on which syllables between the strong and final ones should be chanted. In this example they happen to be the same pitch as the final syllable, so it may seem to be an unnecessary notation. However, there are a handful of terminations where the intermediate termination syllables fall on a different pitch.

Breathing

As mentioned elsewhere, the speed and tempo should approximate normal conversation. Take a breath before beginning, chant the sentence, then breath and repeat. Short breaths are often taken right after the flex and mediant, as well. Breath marks in chant notation are vertical lines in the staff (|). The larger the line, the longer the pause.

A very short line indicates a recommended breath point at which there should be practically no break in the sentence. A breath is sometimes also signified by an apostrophe that is not over a neum (as in modern notation).

TIME TO CHANT

Now you know the difference between flex and mediant, neum and podatum, and you are ready to go, right? Okay, maybe not. Let's apply your learning, first to the Latin text from the *Liturgia Horarum* — the official Liturgy of the Hours — and then to the same text in English. We'll use the prayers from Lent, Week 1, Friday Vespers. See the prior chapter for pronunciation helps. Lauds begins with:

Deus, in adiutórium meum inténde.

Dómine, ad adiuvándum me festína.

Glória Patri, et Fílio, et Spirítui Sancto.

Sicut erat in princípío, et nunc et semper, et in saecula saeculórum.

Then the psalms appear in the book as:

Antiphona 1

Sana, Dómine, ánimam meam, quia peccávi tibi.

Psalmus 40 (41)

Beatus qui intellegit de egeno, *

in die mala liberabit eum Dominus.

Dominus servabit eum et vivificabit eum †

et beatum faciat eum in terra *

et non tradat eum in animam inimicorum eius.

Dominus opem ferat illi super lectum doloris eius; *

universum stratum eius versabis

in infirmitate eius.

Ego dixi: « Domine miserere mei; *

sana animam meam, quia peccavi tibi ».

Inimici mei dixerunt mala mihi: *

« Quando morietur, et peribit nomen eius? ».

Et si ingrediebatur ut visitaret, vana loquebatur; †

cor eius congregabat iniquitatem sibi, *

egrediebatur foras et detrahebat.

Simul adversum me susurrabant

omnes inimici mei; *

adversum me cogitabant mala mihi:

« Malefícium effusum est in eo; *

et, qui decumbit, non adiciet ut resurgat ».

Sed et homo pacis meae, in quo speravi, *

qui edebat panem meum,

levavit contra me calcaneum.

Tu autem, Domine, miserere mei *
et resuscita me, et retribuam eis.

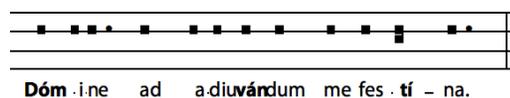
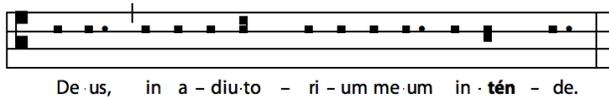
In hoc cognovi quoniam voluisti me, *
quia non gaudebit inimicus meus super me;
me autem propter innocentiam suscepisti *
et statuisti me in conspectu tuo in aeternum.

Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel *
a saeculo et usque in saeculum. Fiat, fiat.

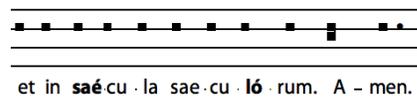
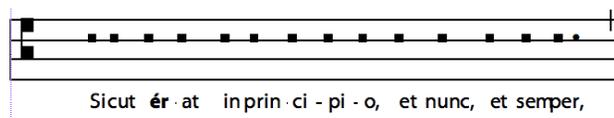
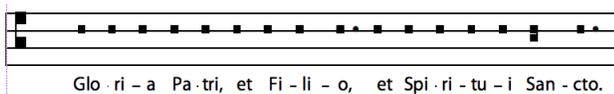
Several things to note about the Latin text:

1. It is arranged in verses of 2-3 lines — couplets and triplets — grouped into paragraphs. The pattern of lead and indented lines shows the starting points for each chant phrase.
2. It includes the † and * marks to help us identify the flex and mediant points.
3. The antiphon does not include assisting notation.
4. There is a new mark, usually called a chevron (« or »). This corresponds to quotations in English. It does not affect our chanting.

There are very simple, traditional tones specifically for the common prayers like Deus, in adiutorium, etc. Liber Usualis also lists more complex versions of Gloria Patri for use with each of the eight common psalm tones. Here is the chant for Deus, in adiutorium for vespers. I list other versions of this and other common prayers after the tutorial. (▶ 14)



This is the *Gloria Patri* chant that corresponds to the above *Deus, in adiutorium*. Other options are listed after the tutorial. (▶ 15)



Note that the above chants are almost completely monotone except for an occasional movement off of the "do" note up to "re" or down to "ti."

In individual prayer you will then chant the antiphon once, then go straight through the psalm, chant the gloria, then repeat the antiphon. But there is a great deal of variation with groups:

Antiphon with Groups

1. Chanted once by the leader/cantor, then repeated by the group entire.
2. Chanted by one half of the group, then repeated by the other half.
3. Chanted once by all.
4. First half chanted by cantor or half of the group, then remainder chanted by all.

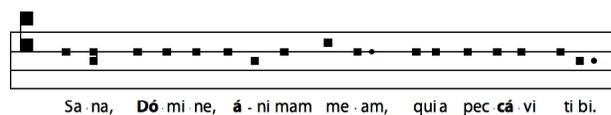
Psalm

1. Chanted only by the cantor, with the group repeating the antiphon between paragraphs (rare today, but some psalms will even specify this pattern).
2. Alternate with half of the group chanting one 2-3 line verse, the other half chanting the next, etc., regardless of paragraph breaks.
3. Alternate complete paragraphs with half of the group chanting all of the lines of the first paragraph, the other half chanting the next, etc.

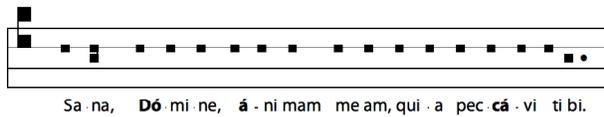
Back to the antiphon. It is short enough that one could omit the flex and mediant. We're going to include a mediant, and treat the antiphon as if it was written out as:

Sana, Dómine, ánimam meam,*
quia peccávi tibi.

We then chant it like this: (▶ 16)



If we choose to omit the mediant, then it is like this: (▶ 17)

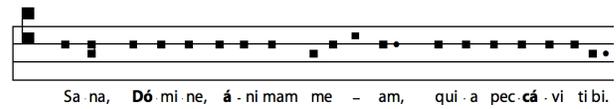


The ideal is to include the mediant in the antiphon; the antiphon establishes the tone pattern for the upcoming psalm. But you can probably already see a formidable complication: Proper implementation of the mediant (and flex and termination), requires you to either have very well noted psalms, exceptional chanting skill, or the ability to look ahead and count syllables leading to the mark so that you know when to start the mediant change. We had to count back four syllables from the * to know where to begin the mediant. How else would you know to begin the mediant on "ni" of animam? None of these expectations are realistic given the current books, our skills or the time we have to dedicate to this practice. Besides, the purpose of chanting is to assist your life of prayer, not to turn it into an intellectual test.

Older prayer books have fewer psalms and printed each of them at least eight times with notation specific to each psalm tone. As seen in an earlier example, italic and bold text was used to help. Our modern breviaries have almost the entire psalmody. They are already about three times the size of the prior breviary, and that is with the psalms printed only once. Simple practicality requires that a different approach is taken. To this end I strongly recommend an adaptation that allows us to retain the traditional psalm tones and their beauty, but adapt them to the current psalmody without harming either.

Flexes, mediants and terminations — which I will refer to collectively as cadences from this point forward — consist of one or more neums that differ from the tenor. When there is a single neum, whether that is one punctum or a combination, we have a *very* easy situation on our hands; we merely change the tone of the final cadence syllable to match the neum. Our termination in the present example is, effectively, a single neum one pitch below the tenor. Even two neums is not too bad. But many tones have three or more (there are four neums in the mediant of our current psalm tone). My recommended adaptation is to apply the final neum to the last syllable, *and stack all other cadence neums, if there are any, on the second to last syllable*. This eliminates the mental anguish and distraction of having to try to count

syllables in advance, while keeping the integrity of the psalm tone. So in this case, our chant becomes: (🔊 18)



It might also be noted as:

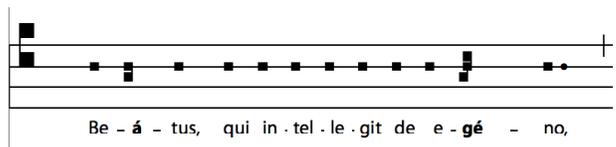


The three punctum stacked as shown are called a scandicus. Simply sound the tones in order from the bottom to top.

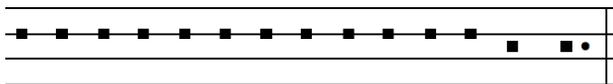
Tempo

The instruction given in the introduction to chant regarding speed and beat holds true here. The chanting should not follow a rigid beat as does most western music. Rather, it should sound natural, organic. Like breath or a heartbeat, not an outside, mechanical metronome. Any rhythm is provided by the syllables of the spoken words, themselves. Approximately equal length is given to each punctum/syllable. An exception to this is when multiple tones fall upon a single syllable, or the punctum is followed by a dot. In the former case, the syllable is extended so that the multiple tones can be clearly and unhurriedly sounded. In the latter, the syllable is given a duration roughly twice that of the common syllables.

Continuing with our example psalm, we are now on the first verse. Chant as follows: (🔊 19)

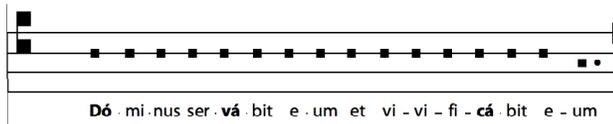


This is the first line of the psalm, so we are including the intonation at the beginning. Then we use the tenor to chant the bulk of the words. As we approach the end of the line, we see an * after the word *egenó*, so we know to apply the tones of the mediant to the final syllables. In keeping with our adaptation, we stack the mediant tones on the next to last syllable, and end on the final mediant tone. If you'd rather, you could instead distribute the tones across several syllables, beginning with *de*. Take a short breath, and continue with the next line. (🔊 20)



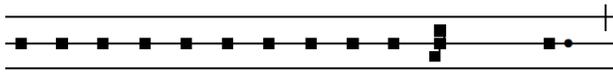
in di - e ma - la li - be - rá - bit e - um Dó - mi - nus.

We are at the end of this couplet, so we use the termination. The strong syllable of *Dominus* falls conveniently such that we end up utilizing the hollow/optional neum from the termination for *mi*. The solid line indicates a longer pause before beginning the next verse. (🔊 21)



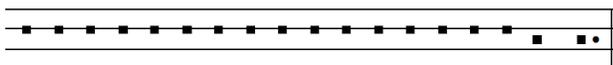
Dó - mi - nus ser - vá - bit e - um et vi - ví - fi - cá - bit e - um

Because we are now starting a second (or later) verse, we do not include the intonation tones, but go directly to the tenor. After *eum* is a †, noting that we use the flex. The emphasized syllable *ca* of *vivifica* is a little far from the †, so we will not utilize it as a key point for the flex tonal shift, and instead just drop down on the final syllable of the line. Take a short breath, and continue on. (🔊 22)



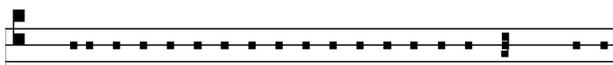
et be - á - tum fá - ci - et e - um in ter - ra

After *terra* is the mediant mark (*). As before, we stake the three tones on the second to last syllable, and the final mediant tone on the last syllable. Then a short breath and on to the final line of the verse. (🔊 23)



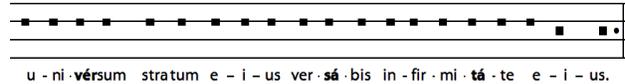
et non tra - det e - um In á - ni - mam I - ni - mí - có - rum e - i - us.

We chant the tenor tone, and then the termination. It isn't marked, but the *e* in *eius* can be an emphasized syllable, so I have used the optional neum in the termination on the *i*. We take a breath, and continue with the next verse. (🔊 24)



Dó - mi - nus op - em fe - ret il - li su - per - lectum do - lór - is e - i - us.

As before, we begin the verse with the tenor tone. At the mediant I've stacked the notes on the *e* in *eius*. Then a short breath, and on to the last half of the verse. (🔊 25)



u - ni - vérs - um stratum e - i - us ver - sá - bis in - fir - mí - tá - te e - i - us.

Got it now? Chant the tenor tone, then shift to the termination at the end. As before, I've applied the optional termination neum to the *i* since the *e* is an emphasized syllable.

At this point we've completed the first paragraph of the psalm. Apply your learning from the above examples to the remaining verses of the psalm. When complete, chant the *Gloria Patri* according to your current psalm tone: (🔊 26)

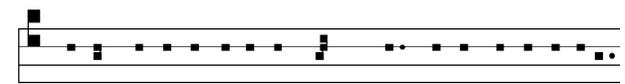
Glória Patri, et Fílio, *

et Spirítui Sancto.

Sicut erat in princípío, et nunc et semper, *

et in saecula saeculórum.

Then repeat the antiphon:



Sa - na, Dó - mi - ne, á - ni - mam me - am, qui - a pec - cá - viti - bi.

LATIN OR ENGLISH?

Trying to learn chant while reciting prayers in a foreign, unfamiliar language may be a bit much for some people. If so, here is a repeat of the above tutorial, but with the prayers as they appear in the American/English breviary. We will use the same psalm tones, but adapt them to the language and structures found in the vernacular breviaries.

Almost all traditional, ecclesial styles of chant developed within the context of the Latin language. When a different language is used for the words, even if the tones are the same, the tempo and the overall character are necessarily different. This is, in part, because Latin contains an inherent system of syllabic emphasis that makes it sound almost musical on its own. English lacks this characteristic. Consequently, the chants will have a very different timbre to them.

Another element is architecture. Chant developed within a certain kind of architecture and musical technology. Today we have sound-absorbing rooms with as little reflection as possible, microphones, equalizers and amplification systems. None of this existed during the period in which chant flourished. Instead, singing typically took place in either small rooms, or large open spaces with a lot of echo and reverberation. Words and tones washed together. Chant evolved within that

They come to visit me and speak empty words,*
 their hearts full of malice, they spread it
 abroad.

My enemies whisper together against me. *
 They all weigh up the evil which is on me.
 "Some deadly thing has fastened upon him,*
 he will not rise again from where he lies."
 Thus even my friend, in whom I trusted, *
 who ate my bread, has turned against me.

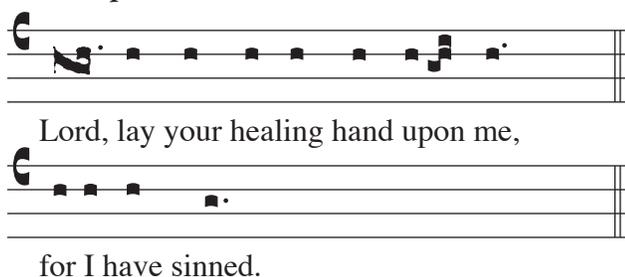
But you, O Lord, have mercy on me. *
 Let me rise once more and I will repay them.
 By this I shall know that you are my friend, *
 if my foes do not shout in triumph over me.
 If you uphold me I shall be unharmed *
 and set in your presence for ever more.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel *
 from age to age. Amen. Amen.

Now, as with the Latin chant tutorial, let's go through a few verses with the full chant notation. I introduce a new neum symbol in this set. It is intoned as three pitches; one starting at the top left of the sweep, one at the lower right, and then the punctum on the top right. It allows us to combine the tree tones of the intonation on the one syllable of "Lord." This three-tone neum is called a *porrectus*: 

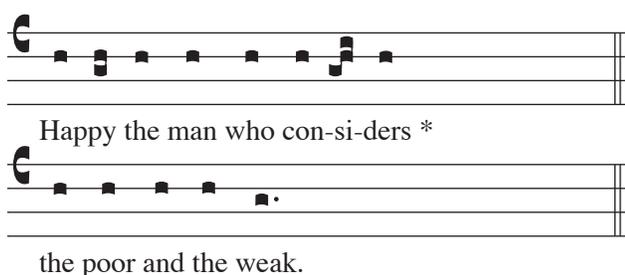
(♩ 28)

The Antiphon

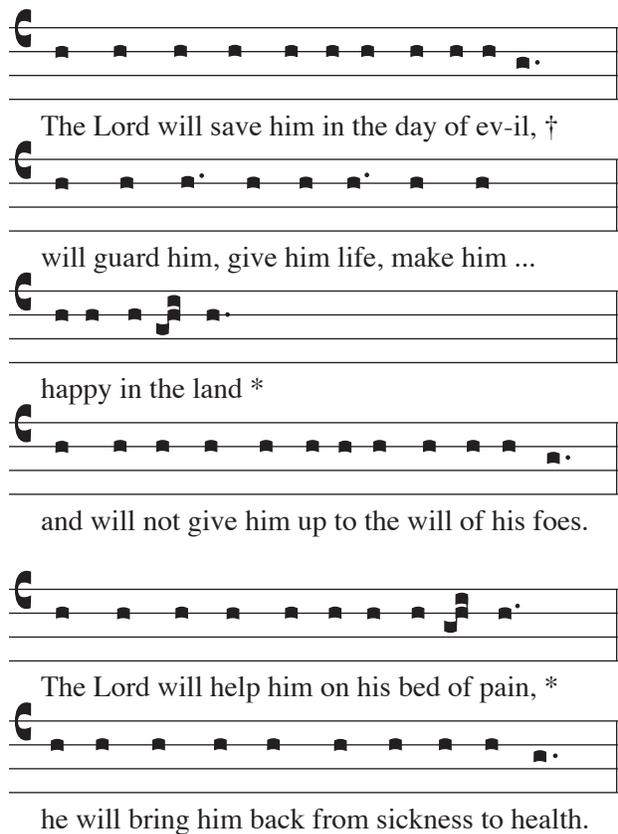


Lord, lay your healing hand upon me,
 for I have sinned.

The Psalm



Happy the man who con-si-ders *
 the poor and the weak.



The Lord will save him in the day of ev-il, †
 will guard him, give him life, make him ...
 happy in the land *
 and will not give him up to the will of his foes.
 The Lord will help him on his bed of pain, *
 he will bring him back from sickness to health.

Given the lack of markings, this is not the only way to do this. You might decide to incorporate more or fewer cadences (or more or less complex ones), depending on your tastes and chanting skill.

Take note of the line that ends with "in the land." The tradition in Latin is to have the cadence peak on an emphasized syllable. "The" is not an interesting word musically (or in perhaps any other way). To emphasize "the" is just silly. Nothing would be wrong with chanting the tenor on "the" and moving all four neums to "land." Of course, if you start making a lot of various exceptions, it will be hard to keep track of them all, let alone chant them with others. Use your best judgment.

Then repeat the Glory to the Father using the same tone. The form is:

Glory to the Father, to the Son, *
 and to the Holy Spirit.
 As it was in the beginning, is now, *
 and will be forever. Amen.

And then repeat the antiphon. A brief rest. Then you are on to the next psalm.

FINDING A BALANCE

I enjoy chanted prayer, but sometimes I'll just read/recite the prayers. Sometimes I incorporate the Latin prayers. Other times I do only English. It all depends on my mental/emotional state, available time and energy, surroundings and whether I am praying with others.

There is a right balance that you must find in chanting. There are times and places when it is better not to chant. When chanting, if everything is oversimplified to one tone — monotone — it can become tedious and boring. It is honestly almost painful. On the other hand, it is easy to get mired down in tones that are too complex, and that distract you from praying by virtue of their difficulty. You need to find the mix that is right for you.

OPTIONAL CADENCES

One last complication (did you want more?). Most psalm tones have a variety of mediants and terminations from which to choose, ranging from very simple to complex. Psalm tones are generally identified by name or number, followed by the letter representing the pitch on which it terminates (where "do" = C). In the psalm tone reference on the next page, the various terminations have a letter over them. If you were going to use psalm tone 1 with the first termination, you would call it "tone 1D."

SUPPLEMENTAL PAMPHLET

Included with our printed tutorial, and available as a free separate download, is an 8-page pamphlet that will fit neatly into the prayer books. It contains a complete outline of all of the prayers of the Liturgy of the Hours, common prayers in English and Latin, psalm tones, and the needed markings to chant the prayers according to the instructions and adaptations given in this chapter.

PSALM TONES

The key for each tone is arranged as: Intonation | Tenor | Flex † | Mediant * | Termination. Each section is separated by a solid vertical line. Some tones have multiple, optional mediants and terminations. Where this is the case, the options are separated by a dashed vertical line.

BENEDICTUS

Follow the psalm tone of your choosing, but include the intonation on each verse or paragraph. Each line is one verse; intonation, tenor, mediant, tenor, termination.

*Benedíctus Dóminus Deus Israel, * quia visitávit et fecit redemptiónem plebi suæ et eréxit cornu salutis nobis * in domo David púeri sui, sicut locútus est per os sanctórum, * qui a sæculo sunt, prophetarum eius, salutem ex inimícis nostris * et de manu ómnium, qui odérunt nos; ad faciéndam misericórdiam cum pátribus nostris * et memorári testaménti sui sancti, iusiurándum, quod iurávit ad Abraham patrem nostrum, * datúrum se nobis, ut sine timóre, de manu inimicórum liberáti, * serviámus illi in sanctitáte et iustítia coram ípso * ómnibus diébus nostris. Et tu, puer, prophéta Altissimi vocáberis: * præíbis enim ante fáciem Dómini paráre vias eius, ad dandam sciéntiam salutis plebi eius * in remissiónem peccatórum eórum, per víscera misericórdiae Dei nostri, * in quibus visitábit nos óriens ex alto, inlumináre his qui in ténebris et in umbra mortis sedent * ad dirigéndo pedes nostros in viam pacis.*

MAGNIFICAT

Follow the psalm tone of your choosing, but include the intonation on each verse or paragraph. Each line is one verse; intonation, tenor, mediant, tenor, termination.

*Magnificat * ánima mea Dóminum,
et exultávit spíritus meus * in Deo salvatóre meo,
quia respéxit humilitátem ancíllae suæ. * Ecce enim ex hoc beátam me
dicent omnes generatiónes,
quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est, * et sanctum nomen eius,
et misericórdia eius in progénies et progénies * tíméntibus eum.
Fecit poténtiam in bráchio suo, * dispérsit supérbos mente cordis sui;
depósuit poténtes de sede * et exaltávit húmiles;
esuriéntes implévit bonis * et dívites dimísit inánes.
Suscépit Israel púerum suum, * recordátus misericórdiæ,
sicut locútus est ad patres nostros, * Abraham et sémini eius in sæcula.*

NUNC DIMITTIS

Follow the psalm tone of your choosing, but include the intonation on each verse or paragraph. Each line is one verse; intonation, tenor, mediant, tenor, termination.

*Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Dómine, * secúndum verbum tuum in pace,
Quia vidérunt óculi mei * salutáre tuum,
quod parásti * ante fáciem ómnium populórum,
lumen ad revelatiónem géntium, * et glóriam plebis tuæ Israel.*

SUPPLEMENTAL PAMPHLET

The next four pages contain plates for making a pamphlet you can conveniently keep in your prayer book. It is an outline for all hours, common prayers in English and Latin, and psalm tones. The prayers have been marked according to the chanting instructions and adaptations in this tutorial. Otherwise, they follow the format from the prayer books. To make your pamphlet, either photocopy these pages onto cardstock, or cut them directly from the book. Then trim, center fold and staple them.

5) INTERCESSIONS AND OUR FATHER.... (MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER)

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name. Thy
kingdom come, thy will be
done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses, as
we forgive those who trespass
against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

*Pater noster, qui es in caelis: sancti-
factor nomen tuum; adveniat
regnum tuum; fiat voluntas tua,
sicut in caelo et in terra.*

*Panem nostrum cotidianum da
nobis hodie; et dimitte nobis
debita nostra, sicut et nos
dimittimus debitoribus nostris;
et ne nos inducas in tentationem;
sed libera nos a malo.*

8) CONCLUDING PRAYER

Night Prayer: *Varies for others.*

May the all-powerful Lord grant
us a restful night and a peaceful
death.

*Noctem quietam et finem
perfectum concedat nobis
Dominus omnipotens.*

R. Amen.

R. Amen.

9) BLESSING (MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER)

Recited when prayed in the absence of a priest or deacon

May the Lord bless us, protect
us from all evil and bring us to
everlasting life.

*Dominus nos benedicat, et ab
omni malo defendat, et ad vitam
perducatur aeternam.*

R. Amen.

R. Amen.

10) ANTIIPHON IN HONOR OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN (NIGHT PRAYER ONLY)

*There are several from which to choose. The most common is the Hail
Mary prayer...*

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord
is with thee. Blessed art thou
among women and blessed is
the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

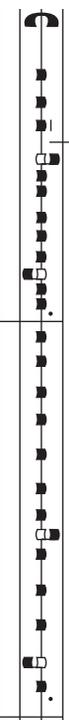
*Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in
mulieribus, et benedictus fructus
ventris tui, Jesus.*

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray
for us sinners now and at the
hour of our death.

*Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro
nobis peccatoribus, nunc, et in
hora mortis nostrae.*

General Outline for the Liturgy of the Hours

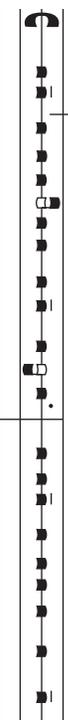
1A) STAND FOR THE INVITATORY...



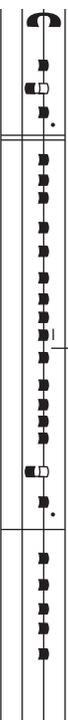
+ ♯. *Domine, labia mea aperies.* R. *Et os meum annuntiet laudem tuam.*
Lord, open my lips. And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Proceed to the seasonal antiphon and Invitatory Psalm

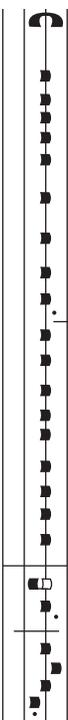
1B) OR STAND AND PRAY...



+ ♯. *Deus, in adiutorium meum intende.* R. *Domine, ad adiuvandum me*
God, come to my assistance. Lord, make haste to



festina. Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in
to help me. Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was



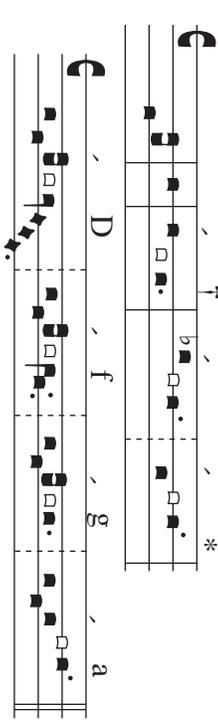
principio, et nunc et semper, et in secula seculorum. Amen. Alleluia.
in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Alleluia.

2) HYMN

3) SIT FOR THE PSALMODY

Pattern: Antiphon, Psalm or Canticle, Doxology, Antiphon.

Tone 1:



Tone 2:

Tone 3:

Tone 4:

Tone 5:

Tone 6:

Tone 7:

He has shown the strength of **his** arm, *
 he has scattered the proud in their **conceit**.
 He has cast down the mighty from **their** thrones, *
 and has lifted up the **lowly**.

He has filled the hungry with **good** things, *
 and the rich he has sent away **empty**.

He has come to the help of his servant **Israel** *
 for he has remembered his promise of **mercy**,
 the promise he made to our **fathers**, *
 to Abraham and his children for ever.

*Magnificat * anima mea Dóminum,
 et exultávit spíritus meus * in Deo salvatóre meo,
 quia respéxit humilitátem ancillae suae. * Ecce enim ex hoc beátam me
 dicent omnes generatiónes,*

*quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est, * et sanctum nomen eius,
 et misericórdia eius in progénies et progénies * tíménéibus eum.*

*Fecit poténtiam in bráchio suo, * dispérsit supérbos mente cordis sui;
 depósuit poténtes de sede * et exaltávit humíles;
 esurientes implevit bonis * et dívites dimisit inánés.*

*Suscépit Israel puerum suum, * recordátus misericórdiae,
 sicut locútus est ad patres nostros, * Abraham et sémini eius in saecula.*

Canticle of Simeon / Nunc Dimittis

Ant.: Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep; that
 awake, we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, rest in his peace.

Lord, now you let your servant go in **peace**; *
 your word has been **fulfilled**:

my own eyes have seen the salvation *
 which you have prepared in the sight of every **people**:
 a light to reveal you to the **nations** *
 and the glory of your people **Israel**.

Ant.: *Sala nos, Dómine, vigilátes, custódi nos dormiéntes, ut vigilemus
 cum Christo et requiescámus in pace.*

*Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Dómine, * secúndum verbum tuum in pace,
 Quia vidévunt oculi mei * salutare tuum,
 quod parásti * ante fáciem omnium populórum,
 lumen ad revelatiónem gentium, * et glóriam plebis tue Israel.*

free to worship him without fear, †
holy and righteous in his sight *
all the days of **our** life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the **Most High**, *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare **his** way,
to give his people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of **their** sins.

In the tender compassion of **our** God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

*Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel, * quia visitavit et fecit redemptionem plebi suae*

*et erexit cornu salutis nobis * in domo David pueri sui,
sicut locutus est per os sanctorum, * qui a seculo sunt, prophetarum eius,
salutem ex inimicis nostris * et de manu omnium, qui oderunt nos;
ad faciendam misericordiam cum patribus nostris * et memorari
testamenti sui sancti,
iusurandum, quod iuravit ad Abraham patrem nostrum, * daturum se nobis,
ut sine timore, de manu inimicorum liberati, * serviamus illi
in sanctitate et iustitia coram ipso * omnibus diebus nostris.*

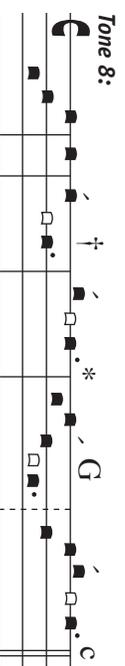
*Et tu, puer, propheta Altissimi vocaberis: * praebis enim ante faciem Domini parare vias eius,
ad dandam scientiam salutis plebi eius * in remissionem peccatorum eorum,
per viscera misericordiae Dei nostri, * in quibus visitabit nos oriens ex alto,
inluminare his qui in tenebris et in umbra mortis sedent * ad dirigendos pedes nostros in viam pacis.*

Canticle of Mary / Magnificat

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, †
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me **bleased**: †
the Almighty has done great **things** for me, *
and holy is **his** Name.

He has mercy on those who **fear** him *
in every **generation**.



*Gloria Patri, et Filio, * et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper, * et in secula seculorum.
Amen. (Alleluia.)*

4) READINGS AND RESPONSORIES

Most readings and responsories vary with the season, week and particular day. Stand afterwards.

Common Responsory after the Reading for Night Prayer

Into your hands, Lord, I *℞. In manus tuas, Domine, **
commend my spirit. *Commendo spiritum meum.*
— Into your hands, Lord, I *In manus tuas, Domine, * Commendo*
commend my spirit. *spiritum meum.*

You have redeemed us, Lord *℞. Redemisti nos, Domine Deus*
God of truth. *veritatis. * Commendo spiritum*
— I commend my spirit. *meum.*

Glory to the Father, to the *Gloria Patri, et Filio, * et Spiritui*
Son, and to the Holy Spirit. *Sancto.*
— Into your hands, Lord, I *In manus tuas, Domine, * Commendo*
commend my spirit. *spiritum meum.*

4) CANTICLE (ALL HOURS EXCEPT MID-DAY)

+ Antiphon (varies, except for Night Prayer), Canticle, Doxology, Antiphon

Office of Readings: Te Deum

Recited on Sundays, solemnities and other feasts.

You are God: we **praise** you; *
You are the Lord: we **acclaim** you;
You are the eternal Father: *
All creation **worships** you.

To you all angels, all the powers of heaven, *
Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in **endless** praise:
Holy, * holy, * holy, * Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your **glory**.

The glorious company of apostles **praise** you. †
The noble fellowship of prophets **praise** you. *
The white-robed army of martyrs **praise** you.

Throughout the world the holy Church **acclaims** you: *
Father, of majesty **unbounded**,
your true and only Son, worthy of all **worship**, *
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and **guide**.

You, Christ, are the King of **glory**, *
the eternal Son * of the **Father**.

When you became man to set us **free** *
you did not spurn the **Virgin's** womb.

You overcame the sting of **death**, *
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all **believers**.

You are seated at God's right hand in **glory**. *

We believe that you will come, and be **our** judge.

Come then, Lord, and help your **people**, *
bought with the price of your **own** blood,
and bring us with **your** saints *
to glory **everlasting**.

Ÿ. Save your people, Lord, and bless your **inheritance** *

R. Govern and uphold them now and **always**.

Ÿ. Day by day we **bless** you. *

R. We praise your name for **ever**.

Ÿ. Keep us today, Lord, from **all** sin. *

R. Have mercy on us, Lord, have **mercy**.

Ÿ. Lord, show us your love and **mercy**; *

R. for we put our **trust** in you.

Ÿ. In you, Lord, is our **hope**: *

R. and we shall never **hope** in vain.

*Te Deum laudamus: * te Dóminum confitemur.*

*Te ætérnum Patrem, * omnis terra veneráthur.*

*Tibi omnes ángeli, * tibi celi et univérsæ potestátes:*

*tibi chérubim et séraphim * incessábilí voce proclamánt:*

*Sáncтус, * Sáncтус, * Sáncтус, * Dóminus Deus Sábaoth.*

*Pleni sunt celi et terra * maiestátis glóriæ tue.*

*Te glóriósus * apostolorum chorus,*

*te propheetárum * laudábilis nímerus,*

*te máryrum candidátus * laudat exércitus.*

*Te per orbem terrárum * sancta confitétur Ecclésia,*

*Patrem * imménsæ maiestátis;*

*venerándum tuum verum * et únicum Fílium;*

*Sáncctum quoque * Paráclitum Spíritum.*

*Tu rex glóriæ, * Chríste.*

*Tu Pátris * sempitérnus es Fílius.*

*Tu, ad liberándum susceptúrus hóminem, * non horrúisti Virgínis úterum.*

*Tu, devicto mortis acúleo, * aperúisti credéntibus regna celórum.*

*Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes, * in glória Patris.*

*Iudex créderis * esse ventúrus.*

*Te ergo quésumus, tuis fámulis síbveni, * quos pretiósó sáanguine redemísti.*

*Ætérna fac cum sanctis tuis * in glória numerári.*

*Salvem fac pópulum tuum, Dómine, * et bénedic hereditáti tue.*

*Et rege eos, * et extolle illos usque in ætérnum.*

*Per singulos díes * benedicimus te;*

*et laudámus nomen tuum in sáeculum, * et in sáeculum sáeculi.*

*Dignáre, Dómine, dic isto * sine peccáto nos custodíre.*

*Miserére nostri, Dómine, * miserére nostri.*

*Fiat misericórdia tua, Dómine, super nos, * quemádmódum sperávimus in te.*

*In te, Dómine, sperávi: * non confundar in ætérnum.*

Canticle of Zechariah / Benedictus

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; *

he has come to his people and set them **free**.

He has raised up for us a mighty **savior**, *

born of the house of his servant **David**.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old †

that he would save us from our **enemies**, *

from the hands of all who **hate** us.

He promised to show mercy to our **fathers** *

and to remember his holy **covenant**.

This was the oath he swore to our father **Abraham**: *
to set us free from the hands of our **enemies**,

STARTING A PRAYER GROUP

Starting or joining a prayer group in your area is not difficult. Following is a step-by-step guide on how to do so:

1. TO START OR JOIN?

First things first: Do a little research to see if there is already a *LOTH* prayer group in your area that meets at a time and place convenient to you.

- Check the prayer group directory at <http://prayer.rosaryshop.com/>.
- Call your local parish, or talk with other Catholics in your work or neighborhood.
- If there is a convent or monastery nearby, they might be able to meet your needs.

If you discover a prayer group not listed at the apostolate's web site, please add it using the group registration page. Joining an already-existing group is obviously the easiest way to become involved in a richer prayer life.

However, you might not find any other groups in your area, maybe those that exist do not meet at a time or place convenient to you, or perhaps there is something about the group that does not suit your personality. In such cases, it may be time to start one.

2. FIND INTERESTED OTHERS

The first step, assuming that you are already familiar with *LOTH*, is to find a handful of other people who are interested in praying together. This may not be easy at first, but consider your immediate social group. Are there people in your peer group — family, neighbors, co-workers, friends — who might be interested and who have a schedule similar to your own? Probably.

If so, simply ask a few of them if they would be interested in spending twenty minutes a week growing closer to God through prayer. Some may be too busy or not understand what you are asking. Some may say yes, but then not show.

It is important to correct a common confusion at this point; the difference between prayer and Bible study groups. The two are quite different! A decent Bible study requires special texts, home-reading, and lots of preparation on the part of one or more group leaders — it can be a *very* good

thing. Many people will immediately assume that you are asking them to join a Bible study and may hesitate based on their assumptions about what it may require, or because of poor past experiences with Bible study groups. Another source of hesitation will come from wondering what, exactly, the purpose of the prayer group will be, or from unfamiliarity with prayer groups in general. If there is already a Bible study taking place, people may wonder what the point is of a prayer group (some might even suspect that you are making a subtle statement about the inadequacy of the Bible study). Finally, there is the unfortunate human inclination to simply avoid prayer.

See the appendix or apostolate web site for a brief, explanatory invitation flyer. You are free to print, copy and distribute it. It addresses most of these questions.

3. GET YOUR MATERIALS

Order this book and a prayer book for each person who is interested in participating. You may want to purchase a couple extra prayer books, as people may begin to drop in on the prayer meetings unexpectedly. Ideally, your core group will pool their money for this initial purchase. By making the purchase first, you are becoming invested in the idea and are more likely to fulfill the commitment.

4. ARRANGE A LOCATION AND WEEKLY TIME

It is important that the place be free of distractions, not be disruptive to others, and not cause a conflict with the management. Some possibilities include:

- Someone's home
- Local parks or trails (weather willing)
- Library or private office meeting rooms
- Unused classrooms
- Local churches and chapels (perhaps even non-Catholic ones, under certain circumstances)

You should be able to find a location that does not cost anything. If the room or building you are using is not your own, it is important that the meeting first be cleared with the building manager, and that the prayer meeting not interfere with other people's work.

The meeting location and lifestyle of your core group members will dictate the timing of the meetings. Common times include:

- Before work (Morning Prayer or Office of Readings)
- Morning, lunch or afternoon break (Day-time Prayer)
- After work (Evening Prayer)
- Mid- or Late-evening (Night Prayer)
- Or any other time of day that is convenient

If you can meet together more frequently than once a week, that is fine, but be sure not to attempt too much at the beginning. Doing so may cause people to drop from the group who would otherwise benefit greatly from praying together.

Write down the meeting times in your personal calendar!

5. APPOINT A PRAYER LEADER

It is important that your prayer group have the “right” leader for the first few times together. This person will likely be the one who is initiating the group, perhaps you. In any case, the prayer leader should be especially familiar with *LOTH*, but also be a good and personable teacher. He or she will help people follow the prayers in the right order.

Once your group is generally familiar with *LOTH*, rather than have a single person lead the group, it is common for the group to divide into two halves. Then the “halves” alternate verses, prayers, readings, etc., throughout the prayer. Still, a single person should remain responsible for coordinating the group and initiating many of the prayers. It is recommended that this responsibility be rotated among the regular attendees, but don’t push leadership responsibility on anyone who does not want it.

6. BEGIN PRAYING TOGETHER

Remind each person in your core group of the prayer meeting a day or two ahead of time, especially for the first couple months. Individually or as a group, go through the tutorial(s) that apply to your prayer meeting. Make a personal commitment to stick with it for at least one month.

Make sure that all pagers and cell phones are turned off during the prayer time. Otherwise, they

will surely ring, beep, play annoying tunes or vibrate at the most inopportune moments.

Always be respectful of other people’s time. Start and end promptly, but be courteous and welcoming to those who might arrive late (e.g., make a place to sit for them, someone show them where you are in the prayers, etc.).

Questions will arise in the process of learning the prayers. Try to work through these as best you can, remembering that the efficacy of the prayer is not a factor of how perfectly you pray, or what gestures or postures are assumed, but of what God wants to do in your lives and how open you are to it. We offer this book as a neutral reference to settle such disputes. If this book does not cover the question, please submit the question to the web site.

7. REGISTER YOUR GROUP

Please register your prayer group with the apostolate’s web site. This allows others in your area to find your group and helps the apostolate to support you with special messages from time to time.

The Apostolate of Prayer invites and welcomes registration by any Liturgy of the Hours prayer group — one need not be an apostolate member to be listed.

8. INVITE OTHERS TO JOIN

Once your core group is comfortable with the prayers, it is time to open the group up to others. There is an unfortunate tendency in small groups for them to become rather introverted and inhospitable to new participants. One way to avoid this is to take a brief moment before prayer to welcome newcomers, and then minimize social discussion during your prayer meetings. Participants should commit themselves to making others feel welcome and to helping others learn and participate in the prayers.

9. GROUP GROWTH

Healthy prayer groups will grow and multiply. Unhealthy ones will stagnate, fracture and eventually fall apart. As your group grows, you may find that you are outgrowing your facilities, or that another time and place have become convenient for part of the group.

Do not be afraid of starting new group times and locations. Participants should feel free to shift from group to group, as all such prayer is participation in the universal prayer of the Church. The need for additional meeting times and locations is a very good sign.

You may also find that, due to any number of factors, a particular meeting time is no longer convenient to the group, and participation will drop. If the reason for the lack of participation is the time or location, then do change so as to accommodate people's schedules. However, if there is another reason for the low participation, try to honestly discern what that is and address it.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Following are some issues that most groups may encounter at one time or another.

Employee Programs

Some companies have special programs for non-work-related employee-groups. If your company has such programs, this may be a unique opportunity to communicate information about your prayer group to others in the company. On the other end of the spectrum, some companies may be openly hostile to such groups, especially ones that have any religious connections. Sometimes both situations will exist in the same company.

Employer Relations

If your prayer group is meeting on company property, or if employees are leaving the company site to pray, it is imperative that the prayer time present absolutely no conflict with normal company business. No company materials or time should be used to promote your prayer group. Any company posting, communications or e-mails should be approved in advance.

It may come about that other company groups or the company as a whole will become polarized against the group. Such polarization frequently stems from misunderstandings about the group's nature, hostility towards individuals in the group, or other mysterious sources. Insofar as is possible, make sure that the group focusses only on praying together, and not on engaging in other activities as a group or on behalf of the group. Don't draw unnecessary attention to the group. Encourage all participants to maintain exemplary work and life-style habits.

A strange and unhealthy dynamic can be created in the group if participation is encouraged or looked upon with favor by company management. It is a *very* positive (and unusual) sign for the management to encourage employees towards prayer, but this can lead to a situation in which employees may join the group unwittingly (or wittingly) attempting to please management. The situation is compounded if high-level managers are participating, especially if they are doing so in any kind of leadership capacity. To avoid this destructive dynamic, company management that would otherwise encourage group participation *must* commit itself to the following:

- Never mandate group participation
- Never include group participation in any kind of employee review or evaluation
- Never take a leadership role in the prayer group
- Never give preference to the group or group participants

Ecumenism

In modern use, *ecumenism* refers to the dialog and relationship between Christian communities who hold differing doctrinal-beliefs, or who have been theologically separated to varying degrees by some historical event. The ultimate purpose of ecumenism is unity. It is perfectly acceptable for Christians not in full-communication with Catholicism to pray *LOTH* together. This is a singular opportunity to share with separated brothers and sisters the christocentric nature of Catholicism and Catholic prayer. It is highly unlikely that one would object to the group or the prayers.

However, it should be clearly explained to any separated Christians that *LOTH* is the prayer of the Catholic Church. In it are found writings not only from Scripture, but saints and the Church as well. For example, certain Christian groups might raise objections to the Marian prayers found in Night Prayer. Be prepared for this if you are praying Night Prayer in an ecumenical setting. There is a separate handout in the appendix for this purpose.

Interfaith Participation

"Interfaith" refers to relationships between distinct religions; Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, etc. The Liturgy of the Hours assumes

that the participant is Catholic, and though separated Christians would still be able to relate to and participate in it, *LOTH* will rarely be appropriate for interfaith meetings. The disparity of belief is simply too great.

Charisms of the Spirit

Many Catholics and some Christian groups are particularly blessed by charisms of the Spirit like “tongues,” in which they pray in an unknown language. In general, such activity is not appropriate to a liturgical service. However, if the group is open to it, there is not necessarily anything wrong with a short time of such prayer as part of your prayer group meeting before, during or after the Liturgy of the Hours.

The Inevitable Opposition

Prayer is a very good thing, so anticipate opposition. When it is time to gather to pray, your mind will suddenly discover a thousand other things it needs or wants to do. Distractions and temptations will pop up like weeds. This can happen before prayer, or even during prayer. It is important in such circumstances to remember that there is really nothing more important than prayer, and that it is only 20 minutes out of your week (or day). Almost any distraction can wait 20 minutes.

Sometimes the opposition to prayer will come from within your own group. People who are willing to take time out of their day to pray together are frequently sincere and intense, sometimes to the point of making others feel a little uncomfortable. It may be that disagreements arise about how particular parts of *LOTH* should be prayed, or what postures and gestures are appropriate. In such cases, the group should be reminded that, for laity, the entire prayer is optional. Laity are free to adapt it to their needs. However, it is good to follow the General Instruction, and in those areas where the instruction is ambiguous, the group is encouraged to internally agree on a norm or submit the question to the Apostolate of Prayer for an impartial resolution. In any event, there are few concrete rules about how laity should (or should not) pray the Liturgy of the Hours. Make every effort to remain charitable and avoid conflict within the group.

Finally, people are instinctively attracted to those things that will improve them. We are all interiorly hungering for conversion. But people bring with them a variety of baggage. It may happen that a very disordered person joins the group. Do whatever you can to help the person. Be welcoming, charitable, compassionate. Perhaps it is through your group or some people in the group that God intends to bring about that person’s conversion. Perhaps he is there to bring needed insight and conversion to others, maybe even yourself. But if it comes to a point that the group is self-destructing as a consequence of his presence, one person should gently confront him. If it doesn’t help, then a small handful of group leaders might do so together. Finally, failing all else, the group may be forced, sadly, to ask him to leave.

You are invited to pray with us

When? _____ to _____

Where? _____

We will be praying the “Liturgy of the Hours,” a traditional Christian Prayer based on passages from the Bible and spiritual meditations of great Christians throughout history.

All materials will be provided.

Please contact _____ at _____ if you wish to attend.

There is no commitment necessary to participate.

PRAYING WITH THE SAINTS

Throughout christian history people have believed that those who die at peace with God go to heaven to be with him. Though all christians can be called saints, the word especially applies to those who are already in heaven with Jesus.

A person's love for us doesn't end when they go to heaven, but becomes even more intense, and so we know that these people who loved us while on earth continue to love and care for us from heaven, where they continually commune with, praise and pray to God.

In Catholicism and some other christian religions it is believed that we can speak to these friends in heaven, and just as we might ask a someone on earth to pray for us to God, we can make the same request of the saints. And so the practice of "praying with" or "praying to" the saints has ex-

isted in Christianity for many, many centuries.

Some christians, unfamiliar with the history or reasons for this practice, find it troubling. They believe that prayer is a form of worship and, as such, should only be reserved to God. But communication with the saints — asking them to pray to God on our behalf — is obviously not a form of worship, so Catholics and other christians who pray to saints rightly see no conflict or problem with the practice.

If you have additional questions about prayer or the Catholic faith, we encourage you to talk with your prayer group organizer, a local Catholic priest, or to contact the Apostolate of Prayer at <http://prayer.rosaryshop.com/>.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

PRINT ITEMS

(Many are available via the Apostolate of Prayer web site)

Books

The Art of Praying, Msgr. Romano Guardini, Sophia Institute Press, 1995, 192 pages. ISBN 0918477344

Cantors, Cambridge University Press, 1979. ISBN 0521221498

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd Ed., Hardcover, Our Sunday Visitor, 2000, 928 pages. ISBN 0879739770

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd Ed., Softcover, Our Sunday Visitor, 2000, 928 pages. ISBN 0879739762

Christian Prayer, Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1999. ISBN 0899424066

Christian Prayer (Large Print Edition), Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1986. ISBN 0899424074

From Breviary to Liturgy of the Hours: The Structural Reform of the Roman Office 1964-1971, Stanislaus Campbell, Pueblo Publishing Company, 1995, 384 pages. ISBN 0814661335

Hymnal for the Hours, GIA Publications Inc, 1989. ISBN 0941050203

Jubilate Deo, GIA Publications Inc.

The Liturgy of the Hours: Complete Set, Leather Cover, Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1999. ISBN 0899424112

The Liturgy of the Hours: Complete Set, Vinyl Cover, Moshy Brothers Publishing Company, 1980. ISBN 0899424090

The Liturgy of the Hours: Advent and Christmas, Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1980. ISBN 0899424015

The Liturgy of the Hours: Lent and Easter, Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1980. ISBN 0899424023

The Liturgy of the Hours: Ordinary Time Weeks 1 to 17, Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1980. ISBN 0899424031

The Liturgy of the Hours: Ordinary Time Weeks 18 to 36, Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1980. ISBN 089942404X

Shorter Morning and Evening Prayer, John Brook, Liturgical Press, 1994, 562 pages. ISBN 0814619398

Shorter Christian Prayer, Hard Cover, Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1999. ISBN 0899424082

Shorter Christian Prayer, Leather Cover, Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1999. ISBN 0899424236

Related Church Documents

Apostolicam Actuositatem

Christifideles Laici

Gaudium et Spes

Sacrosanctum Concilium

INTERNET RESOURCES

Apostolate of Prayer Web Site

<http://prayer.rosaryshop.com/>

Source for this and related resources.

Liturgy of the Hours Web Site

<http://www.liturgyhours.org/>

Daily distributes The Liturgy of the Hours in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF).

Magnificat Web Site

<http://www.magnificat.net/>

Monthly publication contains Mass readings and adapted Morning and Evening Prayers.

Universalis Web Site

<http://www.universalis.com/>

Has daily readings from The Liturgy of the Hours.

OTHER RESOURCES

St. Thomas More House of Prayer

<http://www.liturgyofthehours.org/>

Retreat house dedicated to teach LOTH.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Seth Murray was born and raised in Oregon, USA. He received a Bachelor of Science in Physics and Engineering from Seattle Pacific University in 1992 and Master of Theological Studies from University of Dallas Institute for Religious and Pastoral Studies in 1998 (now headquartered at Ave Maria University).

He has worked for the City of Seattle, Intel Corporation, the Archdiocese of Portland (Assistant Director for Ministry Formation), Evergreen Aviation Museum (Vice President). He is actively engaged in business technology consulting and, with his wife Tyra, owns and operates The Rosary Shop (<http://www.rosaryshop.com/>).

He and Tyra married in 1991. They now have four beautiful children; Sophia, Isaiah, Margaret Ruth and Joseph.

Raised in various Protestant Denominations, he turned in his Church of the Nazarene local minister license in 1994 and, with his wife, entered into full communion with the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

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