

PRAY THE DAY

PRAISE when you wake
Give thanks to God for the day.

PRESENCE beginning the day
Ask God to be present today.

TURNING lunchtime
Pray for the world.

CALM mid-afternoon break
Take three deep breaths.

PAUSE late afternoon
Be reminded of God's Spirit sustaining you.

REFLECT bedtime
Reflect on your day.

ABOUT

PRAY THE DAY

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.

-1 Thessalonians 5:17

One of the hallmarks of monastic life is praying the hours. The community gathers seven times a day to read scripture, sing and pray. The number of times they gather is based on **Psalm 119:164—Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous ordinances.**

To start the habit, you can set alarms on your phone for the various times. You can also set one of the lock screens on your phone with the overview image. Use this booklet or a digital version to guide you through the prayers.

On page 6 you'll find the original names for the hours of prayer. The times of prayer in this booklet, while not exactly like what a monastic community does, serve to align your day with God.

This guide seeks to make the hours as accessible and meaningful as possible in our modern context. There are six main times of prayer, and an optional seventh time, Quiet, is available if you find yourself awake in the middle of the night.

Feel free to continue to adapt the prayers to fit your needs and circumstances.

Pray the Day is based on praying the hours as found in St. Benedict on the Freeway: *A Rule of Life for the 21st Century* by Corinne Ware. Abingdon Press, 2001.

PRAISE

WHEN YOU WAKE

Give thanks to God for a new day.

If possible, spend some time in silence (5-20 minutes), opening your heart to God. This is also a good time for scripture reading to ground your day. You can close your time with a doxology or psalm.

Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore.
-Neil Weatherhogg

PRESENCE

BEGINNING THE DAY'S WORK

Ask God to be present with you throughout the day.

If you have times you know will be especially difficult, ask for God's wisdom and guidance.

Psalm 84:1-4

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.

Even the sparrow finds a home and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise.

TURNING LUNCHTIME

**Turn your focus outward and pray for the world.
Use the guide below, or pray in your own way.**

| | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| Monday | Local community |
| Tuesday | State |
| Wednesday | Nation |
| Thursday | North America + Europe |
| Friday | South America |
| Saturday | Africa |
| Sunday | Asia + Oceania |

Psalm 27: 1, 4-5, 13-14

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall
I be afraid?

One thing I asked of the Lord; this I seek: to live in the house
of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the
Lord, and to inquire in the temple.

For God will hide me in the shelter in the day of trouble; God
will conceal me under the cover of his tent; God will set me
high on a rock.

I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land
of the living.

Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the Lord!

CALM

MID-AFTERNOON

Take three deep breaths to anchor you to the present moment.

On your first breath, release any swirling thoughts in your head. Let your mind be open, curious, and spacious.

On your second breath, bring your awareness to your body, and let yourself become grounded. Feel your energy renewed as you connect to the Creator.

On your third breath, open your heart to love and compassion - both for yourself and others. Place your hand on your heart and feel it warm with God's love.

Bring your grounded presence to all you do. Feel free to repeat it when needed throughout the day.

Adapted from Second Breath, "Three Deep Breaths": secondbreathcenter.com

Psalm 62:5-8

For God alone my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from God.

The Lord alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress;
I shall not be shaken.

On God rests my deliverance and my honor;
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.

Trust in God at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before the Lord; God is a refuge for us.

PAUSE

LATE AFTERNOON

Be reminded of God's Spirit sustaining you.

Ask God for what you need in the final hours of your day.

Psalm 28:7-8

The Lord is my strength and my shield;
in God my heart trusts;

so I am helped, and my heart exults,
and with my song I give thanks to God.

The Lord is the strength of the people;
God is the saving refuge of God's anointed.

THE HOURS OF PRAYER

Though the hours of prayer were already being followed before he wrote his Rule of Life in 530, St. Benedict named the times of prayer and shaped them into what we recognize today.

The seven hours are:

Matins and Lauds, in the middle of the night (combined)

Prime, at sunrise

Terce, 9 a.m.

Sext, noon

None, 3 p.m.

Vespers, sunset

Compline, bedtime

Meaning of the Hours

Lauds :: praise

Prime :: first hour

Terce :: third hour

Sext :: sixth hour

None :: ninth hour

Vespers :: shadows

Compline :: completed

REFLECT

BEDTIME

Ask God to guide you as you review your day. Be in conversation with God throughout this process.

Give thanks for the day, asking God to show you that day's blessings.

Review the day, lingering on the significant moments. Continue thanking God for the gifts you find. **Pause on the difficult moments, and stop to ask forgiveness from God.** Sense God's healing mercy washing over you.

With what you've learned in this time, **ask God to show you new ways to respond tomorrow.**

Ask God's blessing on the day that happened and on your rest throughout the night.

Based on the Ignatian Examen as found in Reimagining the Ignatian Examen by Mark E. Thibodeaux, SJ.

Psalm 119:10-16

With my whole heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commandments. I treasure your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against you.

Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes. With my lips I declare all the ordinances of your mouth.

I delight in the way of your decrees as much as in all riches. I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.

I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.

QUIET

MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Use this time of prayer if you awake in the middle of the night.

Be aware of and present with God. Know that you are not alone in your wakefulness.

Psalm 63:1-4

O God, you are my God; I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.

Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.

So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name.