**The Liturgy of the Hours**

*“Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” ~ 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18*

You are invited to join us at St. Bernard’s Parish for Lauds/Morning Prayer! Also known as *The Liturgy of the Hours* and *The Divine Office*. Please keep reading to learn what the Liturgy of the Hours is and how you can join us in this sacred devotion!

This is being provided for you by a team-member from your local Eucharistic Revival team, Elizabeth Wavra ([emwavra@yahoo.com](mailto:emwavra@yahoo.com)). You may contact me with questions, suggestions, etc. Regarding the Liturgy of the Hours. I was a postulant and novice with The Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Clyde, MO for 3 years. This community prayed the *Liturgy of the Hours* daily and it is where I learned to love this prayer. Since returning home I have greatly desired to share it with the parish, I am very excited to offer this to all who wish to join.

***A (Very) Brief Intro: What is the Liturgy of the Hours?***

The *Liturgy of the Hours* consists of the body of believers chanting or reciting together the Psalms of the church found in the scriptures. It also unites the whole church in common prayer through the singing of hymns, the reading of scripture, prayers, and intercessions. The Liturgy (meaning the “work of the people”, including all of the works of the church) is a priestly action undertaken by the whole body of Christ, each according to their state in life. Through participating in the *Liturgy of the Hours*, we as a priestly people according to our baptism, participate in the priestly action of Christ. The *Liturgy of the Hours* takes place outside of Mass, but it flows to and from the Mass which is the source and summit of Christian worship. As an extension of the liturgy of the Mass, “it 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.” (SC 84)

For millennia, believers have tried to find ways to consecrate their whole day to God in attempting to keep prayer as a constant thread throughout their days. Over time this desire has taken various forms. Today the most common way to accomplish this is to pray the *Liturgy of the Hours*. This particular practice of prayer, although it technically predates them, was mostly developed in monasteries and was structured so as to enable to the monks to pray throughout their whole day. The faithful were also encouraged to participate in this prayer in whatever way they could, though the men and women religious were bound to do so in their vows and according to their community’s norms.

The “Hours” refer to different periods in one’s day, they are not 60 minutes long! Most of the *Hours* can be prayed within 20 minutes or less. There are seven total “Hours” to pray which are named for the periods in the day during which they are prayed; Matens/Vigils, Lauds, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline (*“Seven times a day I praise you”. Psalm 119: 164-165)*. These prayers are said throughout the day starting at 2:00 am! And after Morning Prayer until Compline, they occur every 2-3 hours in monasteries where the entire Office is prayed. The theme of the *Hours* varies according to the time of day, the liturgical season, or the feast being celebrated. The scriptural reading, and the readings from one of the Saints or Church Fathers are selected to help one to better understand the meaning of the psalms being prayed or the mystery/feast being celebrated and to give the faithful some words to meditate upon in silent prayer.

For the Laity, it is much more common to focus only on praying one or two of the hours since it would be impossible for most of us to pray all seven! The two “hinge hours” are Lauds and Vespers, or Morning and Evening Prayer. They are the hours on which most people’s days “hinge”. The beginning of the day and the end of the day. For our purposes, we will pray the Lauds, which is prayed in the morning. Lauds has a theme of praise during which we welcome the new day, give praise to God, and on Sundays we are also welcoming in the new week!

***Lauds/Morning Prayer at St. Bernard’s***

Please consider joining us for Lauds/Morning Prayer every Sunday morning.

* 9:30 am after the 8:30 Mass (Fall/Winter/Spring)
* 10:00 am after the 9:00 Mass (Summer)

Booklets will be provided for your use to pray along with. They will be located at the rear of the church on a table. This prayer may seem very complex, but we are more than willing to guide you through it, if needed. Or feel free to just follow along silently until you are comfortable joining in.

***How are the Liturgy of the Hours prayed?***

We will sing an opening hymn which may be different from the one in the booklet. We then recite the Psalms which is meant to be done in a way that seems “conversational”. We recite the stanzas in the psalms back and forth, divided by the center aisle in the church. The right side is the “Baptismal side” (B) and the left is the “Choir side” (C). This rule is also followed for the rest of the prayer where various parts will be labeled for one side or the other. Then we have a reading from scripture and time to meditate. Finally, we have intercessions, recite a canticle, sing the Our Father, and end with a closing prayer. The various bodily positions which are used throughout the prayer are also indicated in the booklets.

***Resources for the Liturgy of the Hours***

There are many resources to use in praying the *Liturgy of the Hours* and in learning how to do so. The simplest way is to join us on Sundays and familiarize yourself with how the prayer is structured and how it flows.

If you are interested in praying more of these prayers on your own, please see the following:

*\*\* A special note, the official translation of the* Liturgy of the Hours*, called the “Grail Translation”, is copy-righted material, therefore any free service you find, including those below, will provide an unofficial translation which may mean that some of the familiar psalms and prayers are worded differently than you are used to. To have the official translations, you will need to pay for a subscription, purchase materials, or pay a fee for an app. The unofficial translations are perfectly usable, but if you are bringing your own materials to a communal recitation of the Hours, you may find that the wording is not quite the same. Most sites and apps have this disclaimer in the fine print, and they will tell you whether you are using the official translation or not.*

Use your phone’s camera to scan the QR codes below, or type in the web addresses given.

**Websites**

**eBreviary:** The source for our booklets for Lauds! To download files to your device, please go to <https://www.ebreviary.com>.

**Universalis**: The Liturgy of the Hours is recited for the listener to pray with. [https://universalis.com](https://universalis.com/)

**Divine Office**: The Liturgy of the Hours has multiple people reciting the hours along with the hymns being sung. https://divineoffice.org

**Apps** (available on Google Play & Apple Store)



iBreviary Universalis

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Description automatically generated

Divine Office

In addition to the above sites and apps, there are other various YouTube channels, podcasts and companies which provide materials for the *Liturgy of the Hours* that you can pray along with or learn how to pray it. B

Below are some physical materials which can be used:

4-Volume Set: The Liturgy of the Hours

The full set of books for personal or communal recitation of the *Liturgy of the Hours*. They are beautiful, but a bit difficult for a beginner to navigate. If you have a set you’d like to learn, let me know.

https://shop.catholicsupply.com/store/p/19746-Liturgy-of-the-Hours-Set-of-4.aspx?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIpoDBxZnk\_gIVbQ6tBh2XkgnlEAQYBCABEgLSlPD\_BwE

Christian Prayer

A condensed and less expensive version of the *Liturgy of the Hours* which includes only Morning, Evening and Night Prayer as well as music for the hymns. Also, tricky to navigate for beginners.

<https://shop.catholicsupply.com/store/p/19727-Christian-Prayer-Regular-Edition.aspx>

Word On Fire: Liturgy of the Hours

Subscription based, $7/month. They send you a new book every month with Morning, Evening, and Night prayer included. Includes music for all of the hymns used in that month’s book. Very user and beginner friendly.

<https://www.wordonfire.org/pray/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIwKjmy5zk_gIVdtbjBx1b_QdiEAAYASAAEgLfUvD_BwE>

# The Divine Office for Dodos: A Step-By-Step Guide to Praying the Liturgy of the Hours

A book that I have used to learn this prayer. There are others available now days if you search in your internet browser.

<https://www.amazon.com/Divine-Office-Madeline-Pecora-Nugent/dp/0899424821?source=ps-sl-shoppingads-lpcontext&ref_=fplfs&psc=1&smid=ATVPDKIKX0DER>