



Creation

Daily Prayers
for Ordinary Time





How to pray the Liturgy of the Hours

The eight “hours” in this prayer booklet follow the Benedictine Liturgy of the Hours, a pattern of prayer that allows for eight opportunities to rest and pray during the day. Each hour has a name that dates back to early Christian monastic history. The selection of scripture, meditations, and prayers that make up each office in this booklet are from *Daily Prayer for All Seasons* by Church Publishing. The committee that put together that book assigned each hour a theme: praise for daybreak (*lauds*), discernment for early morning (*prime*), wisdom for later morning (*terce*), perseverance and renewal for midday (*sext*), love for afternoon (*none*), forgiveness for early evening (*vespers*), trust for bedtime (*compline*), and watch for late night (*vigil*).

Do not feel obligated to stick to the hour designated for a particular time of day, though that's certainly an option and holy pursuit! These are here merely as starting points. You might find that the theme of discernment is better suited for you or your family when you gather together for a meal in the evening rather than the early morning. Or perhaps wisdom makes more sense later in the day as you enjoy an afternoon pick-me-up espresso and sweet treat.

Here are some suggestions for how you might use this booklet:

- ❧ The small size of this booklet is intentional. Pack it in a purse or backpack, and pull it out in the car on road trips, gathered around a picnic table, on a long plane trip, or in the morning before the family disperses and goes their way for the day. Lauds is particularly short and sweet and therefore a good choice when time is limited.
- ❧ End the day with compline before everyone heads to bed. Lauds and compline make excellent bookends to the day. These hours remind us how each day of life is a holy gift.
- ❧ Discuss with your family or friends the meditation questions. Pause for a moment or two to allow thoughts and ideas to creep into consciousness, then answer the questions individually, either aloud or in your heart.
- ❧ Use the form that you most like (or mix and match) every day for the summer to teach a particular prayer (such as the Lord's Prayer) to children. When they ask the tough questions, ponder them and reply with honesty: "I don't know," is an acceptable answer. Personally, I believe there's value in letting

children see that adults don't have all the answers. Mystery is at the heart of our faith. Not knowing is not the same as not wanting to know. Rather, we can be stirred to awe and marvel at the incredible love and creative power of God.

- ❖ Practice having older children lead the prayers when you're gathered together. Let them choose the office, despite the time of day. Have them ask each member of the family to respond to the meditation questions.
- ❖ When you cannot sleep or find yourself awake at an absurdly late or early hour, pray the office of vigil and enjoy the stillness of this time of day.

The most important thing to remember is that you should not get too caught up in a bunch of *should's*. Rather, as a wise spiritual director once told me, consider the *could's*. Do not fret if you are unable to open this prayer booklet more than a couple of times this summer. Or, if the only time to pray that works for you is while sipping a refreshing beverage pool side. These are all holy moments when you invite the presence of the Holy Spirit. Rejoice in them.

—Meghan Murphy-Gill (July 2019)

E Praise

OPENING

This is the day that the Lord has made;
I will rejoice and be glad in it.

SCRIPTURE

O Lord, how manifold are your works!
(*Psalm 104:27*)

MEDITATION

*How will I use the gift of this new day?
How will I notice the glory of creation?*

PRAYER

Many and great, O God, are thy works,
maker of earth and sky;
thy hands have set the heavens with stars;
thy fingers spread the mountains and plains.
Lo, at thy word the waters were formed;
deep seas obey thy voice.

Grant unto us communion with thee,
thou star-abiding one;
come unto us and dwell with us;
with thee are found the gifts of life.
Bless us with life that has no end,
eternal life with thee.

GOING OUT

This is the day that the Lord has made;
I will rejoice and be glad in it.

Lauds



DAWN

*Laudate
omnes, genes,
laudate
Dominum!
Sing praises,
all people,
sing praises to
the Lord!*

*The ancient
name for this
hour, Lauds,
means praise.
We greet the
new day by
praising the
Creator.*

Piscernment

OPENING

Holy God, you are always with us.
Open our eyes to your presence.

PRAYER

God of faithful surprises, throughout the ages you have made known your love and power in unexpected ways and places: May we daily perceive the joy and wonder of your abiding presence and offer our lives in gratitude for our redemption.
Amen.

PRAISE

Benedicite Omnia Opera

All you works of God, bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Prime



MORNING

*As we begin
the day, we
focus on our
calling to live
faithfully, for
who knows
what today
holds?*

Let the wide earth bless the creator;
let the arching heavens bless the creator;
let the whole body of God bless the creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

You returning daylight, bless your creator;
twilight and shadows, bless your creator;
embracing darkness, bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Let all who live and grow and breathe
bless our creator,
praise her and glorify her for ever.
—Janet Morely

SCRIPTURE

I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit because, apart from me, you can do nothing. You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.

John 15:5, 16a

MEDITATION

People say that walking on water is a miracle, but to me, walking peacefully on the earth is the real miracle.

—Thich Nhat Hanh

How will we walk in peace today?

AFFIRMATION

We believe in God, the creator of all life and beauty, who blesses our journey.

We believe in Jesus Christ,
who lived as a friend and savior to all he met
as he traveled,
and who ate and laughed, wept and celebrated
with them in love.

We believe in the Holy Spirit
who rides on the gentle breeze,
who strengthens our bindings, and
who offers hope eternal.

We believe in the church,
which stands open to all travelers,
and bears witness to the everlasting love of God.

PRAYERS

As we turn to the tasks before us this day,

Fill us, gracious Lord.

In making faithful choices, great and small,

Guide us, gracious Lord.

As we seek to notice and serve those in need,

Teach us, gracious Lord.

Here, you may add personal intercessions or thanksgivings.

As we offer our lives to you,

Hear us, gracious Lord.

With our hearts ready to serve,

Accompany us, gracious Lord.

LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER

Generous Giver, you pour forth your extravagant bounty without measure upon your whole creation: Teach us such generosity, that the fruits of our spirits and the works of our hands may build your commonwealth of blessing. **Amen.**

GOING OUT

Holy God, you are always with us.

Open our eyes to your presence.



OPENING

Let all who desire wisdom
walk in love.

PRAYER

Holy Lord, giver of all wisdom: Set for us this day the banquet of your word; invite us to feast on the genius and beauty all around us. Then, turn us in humility toward the poor, the oppressed and the weak; we ask this in the name of Jesus, who is Wisdom for ever and ever. **Amen.**

PRAISE

A Song of Pilgrimage (Ecclesiasticus 51: 13–16, 20b–22)

Before I ventured forth, even while I was very young, *
I sought wisdom openly in my prayer.
In the forecourts of the temple I asked for her, *
and I will seek her to the end.
From first blossom to early fruit, *
she has been the delight of my heart.
My foot has kept firmly to the true path, *
diligently from my youth have I pursued her.
I inclined my ear a little and received her; *
I found for myself much wisdom and became adept in her.
To the one who gives me wisdom I will give glory, *
for I have resolved to live according to her way.
From the beginning I gained courage from her; *
therefore I will not be forsaken.
In my inmost being, I have been stirred to seek her; *
therefore have I gained a good possession.
As my reward, the Almighty has given me the gift of
language,*
and with it will I offer praise to God.

Terce



MID-
MORNING

*Having asked
for direction
and guidance,
we pray now to
equip ourselves
properly for the
journey ahead.*

*The work of
this hour is
wisdom.*

SCRIPTURE

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

James 3:17-18

MEDITATION

Focus on Wisdom and do not be distracted. Watch the patterns of creation, and you will awaken to grace and tranquility.

Proverbs 3:19-22

How will we remain focused today so as to receive wisdom from creation?

PRAYERS

O God, in peace, you have prepared our path for today.

Help us trace it in peace.

If we speak,

Remove lies from our lips.

If we are hungry,

Rid us of complaint.

If we have plenty,

Flatten the pride in us.

We offer these prayers of our hearts to your wise guidance:

Here, you may add personal intercessions or thanksgivings.

May we pass through the day, calling on you,

O Lord, who knows no other Lord. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER

Holy One, in love you created us and called it good: Grant us the deep wisdom of your love that, wherever this day leads, our lives may remain rooted in your goodness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

GOING OUT

Let all who desire wisdom
walk in love.

Everseverance & Renewal

OPENING

God's power, working in us,
does more than we imagine: Glory to God!

PRAYER

Creating God, your reign of love makes all things new: Plant seeds of confidence and gladness in our hearts so that, trusting in your word, we may live no longer for ourselves but for him who died and was raised for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

PRAISE

For the Beauty of the Earth

(Music, if desired, may be found in the Hymnal 1982, #416)

Sext



For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies:
Christ our God, to thee we raise
This our sacrifice of praise

MIDDAY

*As we pause
to feed our
bodies in the
middle of
the day, we
pause also to
feed our
souls by
vowing
again to live
faithfully.*

For the beauty of each hour,
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flower,
Sun and moon and stars of light:
Christ, our God, to thee we raise
This our sacrifice of praise.

Words: Folliot Sandford Pierpont (1835-1917)

SCRIPTURE

So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest-time if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

Galatians 6:9–10

MEDITATION

“Care . . . rests upon genuine religion. Care allows creatures to escape our explanations into their actual presence and their essential mystery. In taking care of our fellow creatures, we acknowledge that they are not ours; we acknowledge that they belong to an order and harmony of which we ourselves are parts. To answer to the perpetual crisis of our presence in this abounding and dangerous world, we have only the perpetual obligation of care.”

—Wendell Berry

At this hour, how is God calling us to care for creation?

PRAYERS

O God, whose spirit moved upon the waters, we remember those who live in lands of drought or flood, whose harvest is not-enough or not-at-all.

Today, they sow in tears:

soon, may they reap with shouts of joy.

We remember those whose water supply is polluted by negligence or need, those to whom water brings disease, poisoning or radiation, whose gift of life is cursed by death.

Today, they sow in tears:

soon, may they reap with shouts of joy.

We remember ourselves:

We devastate the waters and the fruits of the earth, and we are unwilling to form one circle with our brothers and sisters around the world.

Here, you may add personal intercessions or thanksgivings.

And we ask, Merciful Creator,
to shed their tears
that soon we may all reap with shouts of joy. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER

Source of life and blessing,
of garden, orchard, field:
Root us in obedience to you
and nourish us by your ever-flowing Spirit
that, perceiving only the good we might do,
our lives may be fruitful,
our labor productive,
and our service useful,
in communion with Jesus, our brother. **Amen.**

GOING OUT

God's power, working in us,
does more than we imagine: Glory to God!



OPENING

As you have loved us,
may we love one another.

PRAYER

O Tree of Calvary, send your roots deep into my soul.
Gather together my frailties—my soiled heart, my sandy
instability, and my muddy desires—and entwine them with
the strong roots of your arboreal love. **Amen.**

PRAISE

Lord God, we praise you for those riches of our creation
that we will never see:

For stars whose light will never reach the earth;
For species of living things that were born, that flourished
and perished before humankind appeared in the world;
For patterns and colors in the flowers, which only insect
eyes are able to see;
For strange, high music that humans can never hear.
Lord God, you see everything that you have made
and behold that it is very good.

—Anonymous

SCRIPTURE

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.
Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.
By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you
have love for one another.

John 13:34–35

None



AFTER-
NOON

*As shadows
lengthen, we
are filled by
the day's
encounters;
now, more
than ever, we
accept the
depth and
breadth of
God's grace.*

MEDITATION

“Isn’t that what friendship is all about: giving to each other the gift of our belovedness?

Henri Nouwen

Where do we need to offer and receive the gift of our belovedness?

How can we treat the earth as beloved?

PRAYERS

As the day lengthens, O Christ,

Teach us to walk in your love.

While we strive to be faithful in word and deed,

Teach us to love one another.

While we live as part of your creation,

Teach us to love this good earth.

While we offer our prayers this hour:

Here, you may add personal intercessions or thanksgivings.

With grateful hearts,

Teach us to trust in your love.

LORD’S PRAYER

PRAYER

Gracious Lord, the air sings with songs of glory, water flashes silver with creation, and the forests bloom with leaves for healing nations: May your light and love fill our hearts and souls and minds, that we may share your love with the world.

Amen.

GOING OUT

As you have loved us,

may we love one another.

Forgiveness

OPENING

If anyone is in Christ,
there is a new creation.

PRAYER

Creating God, your reign of love makes all things new: Plant seeds of confidence and gladness in our hearts, so that, trusting your word, we may live no longer for ourselves but for him who died and was raised for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PRAISE

Doxology

May none of God's wonderful works keep silence, night or morning.

Bright stars, high mountains, the depths of the seas, sources of rushing rivers:

May all these break into song as we sing to Creator, Savior and Holy Spirit.

May all the angels in the heavens reply:

Amen! Amen! Amen!

Power, praise, honor and eternal glory to God,
the only giver of grace.

Amen! Amen! Amen!

—*Anonymous (3rd century)*

Vespers



EVENING

*As we turn on
lamps at dusk,
we greet the
evening by
welcoming
God to abide
with us anew.*

SCRIPTURE

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:17–18

MEDITATION

“We should be clear about what happens when we destroy the living forms of this planet. The first consequence is that we destroy modes of divine presence.”

—Thomas Berry

What will we do today to preserve God's work in creation?

CONFESSION

We confess

that we have considered the earth to be our own, believing God gave us dominion and, thus, absolute control over it.

We affirm that “the earth is the LORD’s and all that is in it, for he has founded it on the seas and established it on the rivers.” (Psalm 24:1–2)

We repent.

We know we need to change our understanding of creation, taking our share of responsibility for its care and protection.

We believe
that the Spirit, God’s recreating power,
is active in us and in the world.

God, Creator of all,
may humankind be freed from greed, which is
destroying the earth;
and may your courageous churches take up cause
against the forces
that threaten life.

Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us by the measure of our failings.
As fast as the distance from one end of creation to
another,
God's love for us is even greater.
As far as east is from west,
from greater than this distance does God remove
our sin from us.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS

Holy One, we praise you for the wonders of your
creation:

Make us joyful and faithful stewards.
As the day grows long,
Bless us with the gift of laying down our burdens.
And not ours only:
Help us lift the weights we have placed on others
and on your creation.
We offer these prayers of our hearts:

Here, you may add personal intercessions or thanksgivings.

Create in us, again and always, your heart of grace.

May we rest on the sure foundation of your love.

LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER

Give us strength to understand and eyes to see;
teach us to walk the soft earth as related to all that lives.
Amen.

GOING OUT

If anyone is in Christ,
there is a new creation.



OPENING

The Lord almighty grant us a peaceful night
and a perfect end. **Amen.**

Compline



NIGHT

Compline, the “bedtime prayers” of the church, is the last prayer of the day and sums up all that went before. We examine our conscience and offer the actions of the day to God. The work of this hour is trust.

PRAISE

Lifetime Psalm

Praise my soul, our good Lord.

Sing songs to God’s name,
for God has brought my life
into fresh waters when I was thirsty.
God has fed me with the Bread of Life
when I was starving.

God has sustained me along all my days
and never has put me to shame.

Praise my soul, our good Lord,
for such abundant goodness.

SCRIPTURE

Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought, it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.

Jeremiah 17:7–8

MEDITATION

“Fish cannot drown in water, birds cannot sink in air, gold cannot perish in the refiner’s fire. This has God given to all creatures: to foster and seek their own nature.”

—Mechthild of Magdeburg (13th century)

What has God given us today to help us be more fully ourselves?

PRAYER

Creator God, you call us to love and serve you with body, mind, and spirit through loving your creation and our sisters and brothers. Open our hearts in compassion and receive these petitions on behalf of the needs of the church and the world.

Here, you may add personal intercessions or thanksgivings.

LORD’S PRAYER

PRAYER

Holy One, you planted us by living water, that we might be rooted in righteousness. You call us to be holy as you are holy. Assured of your love, help us cast aside all fear, so that we may love our neighbors as ourselves. **Amen.**

GOING OUT

The Lord almighty grant us a peaceful night
and a perfect end. Amen.



OPENING

All creation longs for grace:
I wait in hope.

Vigil



LATE
NIGHT

*In the middle
of the night,
monks in the
monastery
would rise for
prayers. In
our time, we
may find
ourselves up
in the dark
hour, a
perfect time
to seek and
listen for
God's call in
the stillness.
The work of
this hour is
watchfulness.*

SCRIPTURE

Be still, then, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations;
I will be exalted in the earth.

Psalm 46:11 (BCP)

MEDITATION

How will I be still and trusting this night?

PRAYERS

Hidden God, ever present to me,
may I now be present to you,
attentive to your every word,
attuned to your inspirations,
alert to your touch.
Empty me that I may be filled with you alone.

Amen.

CLOSING

All creation longs for grace:
I wait in hope.

