



Praying the Rhythms of the Day as Sisters of the Good Samaritan

Celebrating the Hours (Work of God) – Primary Source of Good Samaritan Spirituality

Embraced in our commitment to a life-long seeking of God and service of our neighbour is the celebration of the Work of God, 'valuing it as a necessary framework for a life of sustained prayerfulness and as a practical schooling in gospel values' (Constitutions 4:15). This liturgical prayer is a primary source of our spirituality as we gather in community day after day, morning and evening, season by season, celebrating with the whole church, life at its deepest level of mystery and meaning. This prayer offers us a means of transformation into the fullness of Christ. May it also serve as a channel from which flows transforming and compassionate action for peace and justice in our world.

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Making Time Holy – at dawn, at dusk, at night

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Zimmerman, J Morning and Evening, A Parish Celebration. LTP 1996

Day and night demonstrate resurrection.
Night passes into day.
Day departs and night returns.

Clement of Rome to the Church in Corinth

"I cannot live without this prayer."

Sr Paul Kontista sgs on the Liturgy of the Hours.

The Ecclesial and Communal Dimension of the Work of God

In our Benedictine tradition, first place has always been given to the Work of God. 'Let nothing be preferred to the Work of God (RB 43:3). By the very act of coming together to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours – our first work – we pray as an ecclesial people. Thus our communal prayer at morning and evening is not a pooling of private prayers of individual members of the community, but it is a means by which the assembled community truly constitutes in a special way, the *church at prayer*. As one of the central elements of our Good Samaritan prayer life and spirituality, the Liturgy of the Hours is a recurring and integral sign of the community's unity in Christ and of our common life. We assemble in order to pray in one another's presence, to pray in forms and in language that we hold in common, and to be open to the needs of the other and of our world.

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The Liturgy of the Hours is a Memorial Like the Eucharist

The Work of God, like the Eucharist, is intended to be an act of thanksgiving and praise to God for the wonderful things God has done out of love for us. In the Work of God we try to enter into the strong moment of that symphony of praise to which God calls us in Christ.

The Work of God is a prayer that transcends every other kind of prayer. It is distinguished from them all because its specific character is the celebration of the mystery of Christ. It is a memorial like the Eucharist, with which it is intimately linked. It is not simply calling past events to mind; it is making present that saving history whose beginning, middle and end are Christ.

Field, Anne (ed) The Monastic Hours Liturgical Press 2000

With the Voice of Christ in the Name of the Church

Whoever prays the psalms in the Liturgy of the Hours does not pray them in his/her own name so much as in the name of the whole body of Christ, in fact in the person of Christ himself. In praying the psalms we pray with the voice of Christ. (General Instruction on the Liturgy of the hours #108.) This gives us some tips on how to handle those times when our own feelings differ from those expressed by the psalmist. We remember that we are not praying the psalms privately, but reciting them in the name of the Church.

Nowell, I "Lectio, our Daily Nourishment for Discernment" Benedictines xlix:1 1996

The Psalms – Core Element – Prayers of Deep Feeling

The psalms have always been a core element of the Liturgy of the Hours. The church has found in them a primer of prayer guiding the community to a relationship with God characterised by faith, openness and trust. The psalms give us words to bless God, to repent, to bear affliction with courage, to rejoice together. They translate the human desire and groping search for God into lyrical hymns of thanks, petulant cries for mercy, quiet utterances of trust, unrestrained bursts of joy. The psalms are clearly prayers of deep feeling.

Of Time Made Holy. Conference of American Benedictine Prioresses 1978

O Pilgrim of the Hours

Each morning
night's curtain
opens on a new day.
You are invited
to join the great opening.
Open your ears.
Open your heart.

Open your eyes
to the sacred path
you travel every day,
the path of the hours.

Greet the hours
with joyful awareness.
Greet the hours
with faithful presence.
Greet the hours
with a reverential bow.
Greet the hours
with a sacred pause.

Reverence each hour
as a small stepping stone
on your pilgrimage
through the day.
Receive the gift of seven sacred pauses.
Practice waking up
seven times a day.

Weiderkehr, M osb. Seven Sacred Pauses. Sorin Books. 2008

Allow the anointing rhythm of the hours to touch and teach you each day.

Weiderkehr, M osb