

The Divine Hours

Have you experienced the effects of your Quiet Time have often evaporated by mid-morning? Many do. The Divine Hours were created by St. Benedict for people who want a lifestyle of following Christ throughout the day every day. They have been a widespread practice of The Church through the centuries, an attentive path, a gentle reminder through the day to stay tuned, a practical path to pray without ceasing. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

I have cut & pasted an abbreviated version of the Divine Hours into a free app called Alarmed to periodically jab me awake at about 6 & 9 AM, 12, 3, 6 & 9 PM. I feel the difference in my day flowing from those 30-second breaks to become attentive to God's presence.

The Divine Hours by their historic Latin names are:

1. VIGILS (About 3 AM, also called matins or nocturns). Filling wakeful moments with God's presence
2. LAUDS (Greeting the beginning of the day). My waking prayer before I get out of bed.
3. PRIME (The start of the day's work). The drum roll of the day as I begin work, resisting rushing in without waiting on God
4. TERCE (The 3rd hour, midmorning). Pausing to receive a mid-morning blessing
5. SEXT (The 6th hour, midday). A spiritual interlude... A remedy for S.A.D.D. (Spiritual Attention Deficit Disorder)... A time to renounce acedia (spiritual sluggishness)... A pause to "Ruthlessly eliminate hurry." (Dallas Willard)
6. NONE (The 9th hour, mid-afternoon). A break to pay attention to what you are feeling and to let God's glory through
7. VESPER (As the day is over & evening comes). Pausing long enough for restlessness to turn to restfulness
8. COMPLINE (When the day is complete, and sleep begins). Bringing the day to a proper close.

Divine Hours Bookmark

LAUDS: *This is the day which the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24). Good morning, Lord. Please help me to remember anything that You were saying to me during the night. Come Holy Spirit, fill me again and again today and I'll say, "Yes! Lord, Yes!"*

PRIME: *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (John 15:7). Yes, Papa, I'm pausing to look both ways before we cross over into the work ahead. Please take my hand and help me to stay in step with You. Teach me to pray the work, as Your servant Mother Theresa did.*

TERCE: *Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things. Luke 10:41 Yes, Lord, I pause to open my hands to receive Your blessing. Please open my eyes to see Your presence within me and around me and open my ears to hear Your quiet voice and promptings.*

SEXT: *Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. (Isaiah 46:10). I pause to take a deep breath and renounce striving. I slow down and look up to You. I renounce spiritual dullness to receive Your grace and peace.*

NONE: *How blessed is the man whose strength is in You, in whose heart are the highways to Zion! (Psalm 84:5). Oh, my soul, why are you anxious? Remember Who it is that gets things done. Oh Lord, please open my eyes to see your presence and open my ears to hear Your voice.*

VESPER: *Return to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you. (Psalm 116:7). You said, "It is finished" because it was time to let go. Help me to leave it all quietly to You. Tonight, I am available to take a walk with You in the cool of the evening in any way that You would like.*

COMPLINE: *In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O Lord, make me to dwell in safety. (Psalm 4:8). For what moment am I most thankful? For what moment am I least thankful? Where did I see You or hear Your voice? Where did I miss noticing Your presence? I offer myself to You as I go to sleep. I am Yours. Please give sleep to Your beloved, but I also invite You to speak to be about today or tomorrow as I sleep and as I wake, for Your servant is listening. This night belongs to You, O Lord.*