

1. What

- a. "This liturgy of the hours or divine office, enriched by readings, is principally a prayer of praise and petition. Indeed, it is the prayer of the Church with Christ and to Christ" (General Instruction Liturgy of the Hours (GILH), 2)
- b. Christ prayed many times in the gospels and at differing times.
- c. Christ has commanded us to pray, we are to follow his example.
- d. "Prayer directed to God must be linked with Christ, the Lord of all, the one Mediator [47] through whom alone we have access to God.[48] He unites to himself the whole human community [49] in such a way that there is an intimate bond between the prayer of Christ and the prayer of all humanity." (GILH, 6)
- e. "The unity of the Church at prayer is brought about by the Holy Spirit, who is the same in Christ, [52] in the whole Church, and in every baptized person. It is this Spirit who "helps us in our weakness" and "intercedes for us with longings too deep for words" (Rom 8:26). There can be therefore no Christian prayer without the action of the Holy Spirit, who unites the whole Church and leads it through the Son to the Father. " (GILH, 8)
- f. "It follows that the example and precept of our Lord and the apostles in regard to constant and persevering prayer are not to be seen as a purely legal regulation. They belong to the very essence of the Church itself, which is a community and which in prayer must express its nature as a community." (GILH, 9)
- g. "Though prayer in private and in seclusion [54] is always necessary and to be encouraged [55] and is practiced by the members of the Church through Christ in the Holy Spirit, there is a special excellence in the prayer of the community. Christ himself has said: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in their midst" (Mt 18:20). " (GILH, 9)
- h. "By ancient Christian tradition what distinguishes the liturgy of the hours from other liturgical services is that it consecrates to God the whole cycle of the day and the night. " (GILH, 10)

2. Why

- a. "The purpose of the liturgy of the hours is to sanctify the day and the whole range of human activity. Therefore its structure has been revised in such a way as to make each hour once more correspond as nearly as possible to natural time and to take account of the circumstances of life today. " (GILH, 11)
- b. "Hence, not only when those things are read "that are written for our instruction" (Rom 15:4), but also when the Church prays or sings, faith is deepened for those who take part and their minds are lifted up to God, in order to offer him their worship as intelligent beings and to receive his grace more plentifully. " (GILH, 14)
- c. "But besides the praise of God, the Church in the liturgy of the hours expresses the prayers and desires of all the faithful; indeed, it prays to Christ, and through him to the Father, for the salvation of the whole world " (GILH, 17)

3. Who

- a. "Those in holy orders or with a special canonical mission [96] have the responsibility of initiating and directing the prayer of the community; "they should expend every effort so that those entrusted to their care may become of one mind in prayer." [97] " (GILH, 23)
- b. "Lay groups gathering for prayer, apostolic work, or any other reason are encouraged to fulfill the Church's duty, [103] by celebrating part of the liturgy of the hours. The laity must learn above all how in the liturgy they are adoring God the Father in spirit and in truth; [104] they should bear in mind that through public worship and prayer they reach all humanity and can contribute significantly to the salvation of the whole world. [105] " (GILH, 26)

- c. “Finally, it is of great advantage for the family, the domestic sanctuary of the Church, not only to pray together to God but also to celebrate some parts of the liturgy of the hours as occasion offers, in order to enter more deeply into the life of the Church. [106] “ (GILH, 26)
- d. “Sacred ministers have the liturgy of the hours entrusted to them in such a particular way that even when the faithful are not present they are to pray it themselves with the adaptations necessary under these circumstances.” (GILH, 28)
- e. “they are not only to find a source of devotion and a strengthening of personal prayer, [113] but must also nourish and foster pastoral missionary activity as the fruit of their contemplation to gladden the whole Church of God. [114] “ (GILH, 28)
- f. “Hence bishops, priests, and other sacred ministers, who have received from the Church the mandate to celebrate the liturgy of the hours (see no. 17), should recite the full sequence of hours each day, observing as far as possible the true time of day.” (GILH, 29)

4. How – General

- a. “The structure of the liturgy of the hours follows laws of its own and incorporates in its own way elements found in other Christian celebrations. Thus it is so constructed that, after a hymn, there is always psalmody, then a long or short reading of sacred Scripture, and finally prayer of petition. “ (GILH, 33)
- b. Terminology
 - i. Propers are those things assigned to the specific day
 - ii. Commons are those things for more generic things like Common of the Apostles
 - iii. Weekday is from the Four Week Psalter.
 - iv. Ordinary is what is done typically and how to say the prayers. Found before the Four Week Psalter.
- c. Procedure to determine what to say
 - i. Look at the Proper of the Season(It may have requirements, follow them)
 - ii. If nothing in Proper of the Season, look at the Proper of the Saints
 - 1. Optional memorials don’t have red Memorial under them (You can do them if you like)
 - 2. Obligatory memorials have red under them (Do the things in the section(Proper) , the common’s are optional or you can do the Psalter)
 - 3. Sundays/Solemnities/Feasts are to be done. (Follow what is written)
 - iii. If nothing in Proper of Season or Proper of Saints, go to the Ordinary
- d. Look at the table of Liturgical days and the order of procedure in the front of office. (Sundays, Solemnities(over some Sundays), Feasts, Obligatory Memorials, Optional Memorial(Obligatory and Optional memorials are Commemorations during Lent)
- e. Sundays and Solemnities
 - i. Evening Prayer I and II
 - ii. Proper(never omit and first) or Sunday (follow book)
- f. Feasts
 - i. May have Evening Prayer I or II
 - ii. Proper (never omit and first) then rest Common (follow book)
- g. Obligatory Memorials
 - i. Proper(never omit) then Common or weekday
 - ii. Psalms always from the weekday
- h. Optional Memorials – same as obligatory memorials
- i. Night Prayer just follows the day, except for Solemnities which follow Sunday Night Prayer 1 on vigil and Sunday Night Prayer II on the day.

5. How - Hours

- a. **Invitatory** – Starts the office and “consists in the verse, Lord, open my lips. And my mouth will proclaim your praise, and Ps 95.” (GILH, 34)
- b. **Morning and Evening Prayer**
 - i. Introductory verse, God come to my assistance. Lord, make haste to help me. There follows the Glory to the Father, with As it was in the beginning and Alleluia (omitted in Lent). The introduction is omitted at morning prayer when the invitatory immediately precedes it
 - ii. Hymn is sung immediately. (purpose is to set the tone)
 - iii. Psalmody
 1. The psalmody of morning prayer consists of one morning psalm, then a canticle from the Old Testament and, finally, a second psalm of praise, following the tradition of the Church) (GILH, 43)
 2. The psalmody of evening prayer consists of two psalms (or two parts of a longer psalm) suited to the hour and to celebration with a congregation and a canticle from the letters of the apostles or from the Book of Revelation. (GILH, 43)
 - iv. A short of longer reading (Short to fit the day or a longer can be done if many people and homily and silence can follow)
 - v. Responsorial “As a response to the word of God, a responsorial, chant or short responsory is provided; this may be omitted. Other chants with the same purpose and character may also be substituted in its place “ (GILH, 49)
 - vi. The gospel canticle with its antiphon, that is, the Canticle of Zechariah at morning prayer and the Canticle of Mary at evening prayer. Sanctioned by age-old popular usage in the Roman Church, these canticles are expressions of praise and thanksgiving for our redemption. The antiphon for each canticle is indicated, according to the character of the day, the season, or the feast. (GILH, 50)
 - vii. The petitions for the consecration of the day and its work to God and at evening prayer, the intercessions (GILH, 51)
 - viii. The Lord’s prayer
 - ix. The concluding prayer, which for weekdays in Ordinary Time is found in the psalter and for other days in the proper. (GILH, 53)
 - x. “If a priest or deacon is presiding, he dismisses the congregation with the greeting, The Lord be with you, and the blessing as at Mass. He adds the invitation, Go in peace. R. Thanks be to God. In the absence of a priest or deacon the celebration concludes with May the Lord bless us, etc.” (GILH, 54)
- c. **Office of Readings**
 - i. “Without prejudice to the regulations just given, the office of readings may be recited at any hour of the day, even during the night hours of the previous day, after evening prayer has been said “ (GILH, 59)
 - ii. “If the office of readings is said before morning prayer, the invitatory precedes it, as noted (nos. 34-36). Otherwise it begins with the verse, God, come to my assistance with the Glory to the Father, As it was in the beginning, and the Alleluia (omitted in Lent)” (GILH, 60)
 - iii. Hymn
 - iv. The psalmody follows and consists of three psalms (or parts in the case of longer psalms). (GILH, 62)
 - v. “Between the psalmody and the readings there is, as a rule, a verse, marking a transition in the prayer from psalmody to listening “ (GILH, 63)

- vi. "There are two readings: the first is from the Scriptures, the second is from the writings of the Fathers or church writers, or else is a reading connected with the saints." (GILH, 64)
- vii. After each reading there is a responsory
- viii. "On Sundays outside Lent, on days within the octaves of Easter and Christmas, and on solemnities and feasts the Te Deum is said after the second reading with its responsory but is omitted on memorials and weekdays." (GILH, 68)
- ix. "The office of readings normally concludes with the prayer proper to the day and, at least in recitation in common, with the acclamation, Let us praise the Lord. R. And give him thanks." (GILH, 69).

d. Daytime

- i. "The daytime hours begin with the introductory verse, God come to my assistance with the Glory to the Father, As it was in the beginning, and the Alleluia (omitted in Lent)." (GILH, 79)
- ii. "Then a hymn appropriate to the hour is sung." (GILH, 79)
- iii. "The psalmody is next, then the reading, followed by the verse." (GILH, 79)
- iv. "The hour concludes with the prayer and, at least in recitation in common, with the acclamation, Let us praise the Lord. R. And give him thanks." (GILH, 79)
- v. "Two psalmodies are provided: the current psalmody and the complementary psalmody. Those who pray one hour should use the current psalmody. Those who pray more than one hour should use the current psalmody at one hour and the complementary psalmody at the others" (GILH, 81)
- vi. "The current psalmody consists of three psalms (or parts in the case of longer psalms) from the psalter, with their antiphons, unless directions are given to the contrary" (GILH, 82)

e. Night Prayer

- i. "Night prayer is the last prayer of the day, said before retiring, even if that is after midnight." (GILH, 84)
- ii. "Night prayer begins like the other hours, with the verse, God, come to my assistance, the Glory to the Father, As it was in the beginning, and the Alleluia (omitted in Lent)." (GILH, 85)
- iii. "It is a laudable practice to have next an examination of conscience; in a celebration in common this takes place in silence or as part of a penitential rite based on the formularies in the Roman Missal." (GILH, 86)
- iv. Appropriate Hymn
- v. "After evening prayer I of Sunday the psalmody consists of Ps 4 and Ps 134; after evening prayer II of Sunday it consists of Ps 91.... On the other days psalms are chosen that are full of confidence in the Lord; it is permissible to use the Sunday psalms instead, especially for the convenience of those who may wish to pray night prayer from memory." (GILH, 88)
- vi. "After the psalmody there is a reading, followed by the responsory, Into your hands. Then, as a climax to the whole hour, the Canticle of Simeon, Lord, now you let your servant go in peace follows, with its antiphon." (GILH, 89)
- vii. "The concluding prayer then follows, as it appears in the psalter." (GILH, 90)
- viii. "After the prayer the blessing, May the all-powerful Lord is used, even in private recitation." (GILH, 91)
- ix. "Finally, one of the antiphons in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary is said. In the Easter season this is always to be the Regina caeli." (GILH, 92)

- f. **Vigils** - "As with the Easter Vigil, it was customary to begin certain solemnities (different in different Churches) with a vigil. Among these solemnities Christmas and Pentecost are preeminent." (GILH, 71)

