

The Divine Hours

Have you experienced the effects of your Quiet Time have often evaporated by mid-morning? Many do. Here's a remedy.

The Divine Hours were created by St. Benedict for ordinary 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 abide & pray without ceasing. (1 Thess. 5:16-18)

I have pasted each of the Divine Hours into a free app on my phone, 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 these seven 60-second breaks to become attentive to God's presence. Sometimes I just cancel a reminder if I'm engaged in something more important. Sometimes I pause to read / pray that Divine Hours prayer together with those I'm with.

LAUDS (Greeting the day)

- "This is the day which the LORD has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it." Ps 118:24
- Good morning, Lord. Please help me to remember anything You were saying to me in the night. Come Holy Spirit, fill me again and again today and I'll say "Yes! Lord, Yes!"
- "Each day is a gift, no doubt, mysteriously place in your waking hand or set upon your forehead moments before you open your eyes." (Billy Collins in "Days")

PRIME (Greeting the workday)

- "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 reaching up to take Your hand as we cross over into the work ahead. Please help me to stay in step with You. Teach me to "pray the work" as Mother Theresa did.
- Thank you for life. Thank you for my life. Thank You for what You are doing to do.

TERCE (The 3rd hour, midmorning)

- "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things." Lk 10:41b

- Yes, Lord, I pause to open my hands to receive Your blessing. Please open my eyes to see Your presence and open my ears to hear your quiet voice and promptings.

SEXT (The 6th hour, midday)

- "Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth." Ps 46:10
- I pause to breathe & renounce striving, to renounce spiritual dullness to receive Your grace & peace.

NONE (The 9th hour, mid-afternoon)

- "How blessed is the man whose strength is in You, in whose heart are the highways to Zion!" Ps 84:5
- Oh Lord, I lift my eyes to You. Please open my eyes to see your presence and open my ears to hear Your voice. Oh my soul, why are you anxious? Remember Who it is that gets things done.

VESPERS (As work is finished and evening comes)

- "Return to your rest, O my soul, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you." Ps 116:7
- You said, "It is finished" because it was time to let go. Help me to leave it all quietly with You as we "take a walk in the cool of the evening" in any way that You would like. Help me to prompt fellowship by asking what was good or hard today and taking initiative to bless with words and touch.

COMPLINE (When the day is complete, and sleep begins)

- "In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety." Ps 4:8
- For what moments in this day am I most thankful? For what moments am 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. I also invite You to speak to me as I sleep. This night belongs to You, Oh Lord...

VIGILS or Nocturn (At any wakeful moment in the night, often 3 AM)

- "When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches." Ps 63:6
- Oh Lord, thank You for being here with me, hovering over me in Your love.