

CONTENTS

Introduction	7
Most Used Prayers	11
Angelus.....	11
Queen of Heaven.....	12
Blessing before Meals.....	12
Grace after Meals.....	12
Invocations.....	13
Morning and Evening Prayers (Psalter Week I)	15
Sunday Evening I.....	15
Sunday Morning.....	23
Sunday Evening II.....	31
Monday Morning.....	39
Monday Evening	47
Tuesday Morning.....	55
Tuesday Evening	64
Wednesday Morning.....	71
Wednesday Evening.....	79
Thursday Morning	87
Thursday Evening	95
Friday Morning.....	104
Friday Evening	112
Saturday Morning.....	120
Common Prayers.....	126
Invitatory Psalm	126
Alternative Invitatory Psalms.....	128
Canticle of Zechariah (Music)	131
Canticle of Mary (Music).....	132
Dismissal.....	133
Helps for Prayer	135

6 CONTENTS

Readings, Prayers, and Devotions on the Mysteries of Christ.....	139
Advent	139
Christmas Season	143
Lent.....	151
Stations of the Cross.....	153
Holy Week.....	165
Easter Season.....	170
Ascension	174
Pentecost.....	177
Holy Trinity.....	180
Readings, Prayers, and Devotions in Honor of the Holy Eucharist.....	183
Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament...187	
Visit to the Blessed Sacrament.....	190
The Morning Offering	191
Readings and Prayers in Honor of Mary, the Mother of God.....	193
In Praise of Mary, Mother of God	193
Prayers to Our Lady	194
The Rosary.....	199
Prayer Service in Honor of Our Mother of Perpetual Help	206
Readings and Prayers from the Saints and Spiritual Writers.....	211
Readings.....	211
Prayers.....	235
Penitential Services.....	245
Dates of Retreats.....	256

INTRODUCTION

THE most important prayer of the Church is the Mass. No one doubts that, but what is the second most important prayer of the Church? Benediction? The Rosary? Stations of the Cross? No, the second most important prayer of the Church is the Breviary or the Liturgy of the Hours, also called the Divine Office.

Praying the Breviary used to be the exclusive prayer of priests and religious, but it truly belongs to all the Church. Many Catholics are discovering the richness and beauty of praying the Liturgy of the Hours. It has regained its proper place as the public prayer of all the Church.

This prayer book proudly contains a slightly abridged form of Morning and Evening prayer from the first week of the Breviary. The Church heartily recommends Morning and Evening prayer for all believers as the two most important hours in the Liturgy of the Hours. Praying the Breviary can be particularly helpful to people who find prayer difficult.

The Church designed the Liturgy of the Hours to be prayed with others. The document to introduce the Breviary emphasizes the importance of praying as a community. "Like the other Liturgical actions, the Liturgy of the Hours is not a private action but pertains to the whole Body of the Church. It manifests the Church and has an effect upon it."

The family is the domestic church, and praying the Liturgy of the Hours together can add so much to your life as a family. In many families today, finding time to pray together is so difficult. Praying the Liturgy of the Hours together can transform your entire family life. You will become more focused on the place of God in your family and can set a spiritual tone for everyone. Prayer is also a terrific way to teach your children the importance of faith and prayer. Decide for your own good to pray Morning and Evening prayer together every day. It gives your family regular time together, free from so many distractions.

This is especially true of married couples. In any marriage, the husband and wife are called to help each other become more Christ-like and show each other they are keeping Christ present and alive in their lives. This is difficult to do without praying together as a couple. Praying the Breviary together can be a powerful tool to strengthen the communication. The Breviary takes communicating to a deeper, spiritual level. It commits you, not just to a healthy marriage, but to a healthy spiritual life. Just as the family that prays together, stays together, so too, the couple that prays together has a better chance of staying together.

Even when praying your office alone, unite yourselves with Christians in every land as they also pray their Morning and Evening prayer. Unite your minds and voices with millions of

men and women throughout the world who also pray the Breviary.

The Psalms are the heart of the Divine Office. Morning and Evening prayer begins with singing God's praises. Every Psalm includes an Antiphon that should be recited at the start of the Psalm and repeated at the Psalm's conclusion. Also, end each Psalm by praying the *Glory Be*. When we pray with someone else, alternate the reading of the verses of the different Psalms.

The Liturgy of the Hours is made up almost entirely from the Bible. After praying the Psalms, we read a short passage from Scriptures. Allow God to speak to you through your prayerful and meditative reading of the Scriptures. But rather than read every week the same reading selected in this prayer book, allow for more variety. Pick a book from the Bible that appeals to you and read from it every day. When you have finished one book, start another. If you pray the Breviary with someone else, after the reading, share your own thoughts and reflections on what you have heard.

Then we pray together a Gospel canticle, the *Canticle of Zechariah* at Morning prayer and the *Canticle of Mary* at Evening prayer.

The Church includes specific intercessions, to which we should add our own prayers for our family and other concerns. I would also suggest that you write on an index card any intentions that are close to your heart. Then include them at

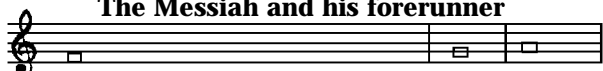
this time every day. Never be afraid of asking God for His grace in prayer. The persistent, consistent person will grow in faith and the Holy Spirit.

We conclude our Morning and Evening prayer with an *Our Father* and a closing prayer.

Sanctify your whole day by beginning the day with Morning prayer and ending the day with Evening prayer. Become one with believers throughout the world in praying this ancient form of Christian prayer.

Father John Murray, C.Ss.R.

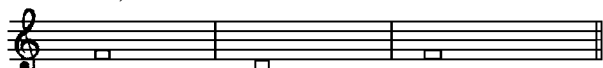
**Canticle of Zechariah
The Messiah and his forerunner**



1. Blessed be the Lord, the God _____ of Israel;
2. He has raised up for us a might - y savior,
3. Through his holy prophets he promised of old
4. He promised to show mercy to _____ our fathers
5. This was the oath he swore to our fa - ther Abraham:
6. Free to worship him with - out fear,
7. You, my child, shall be called the
prophet of the Most High;
8. To give his people knowledge of _____ sal - vation
9. In the tender compassion of _____ our God
10. To shine on those who dwell in
darkness and the shadow of death,
11. Glory to the Father, and to _____ the Son,
12. As it was in the _____ be - ginning,



1. he has come to his _____ people and
2. born of the _____ house of his
3. that he would save us from our enemies, from the hands of
4. and to re - member his
5. to set us _____ free from the hands
6. holy and righteous in his _____ sight all the days
7. for you will go before the _____ Lord to pre -
8. by the for - giveness
9. the dawn from on _____ high shall
10. and to guide our _____ feet into the
11. and to _____ the
12. is now, and _____ will



1. set them free.
2. ser - vant David.
3. all who hate us.
4. ho - ly covenant.
5. of our enemies,
6. of our life.
7. pare his way,
8. of their sins.
9. break up - on us,
10. way of peace.
11. Hol - ly Spirit:
12. be for ever. Amen.