



OUR DAILY PRAYERS

Advent 2025



Archdiocese of Omaha

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INTRODUCTION

The Liturgy of the Hours – sometimes called The Divine Office – honors the scriptural call to “offer God an unceasing sacrifice of praise” (Heb 15:15). Jesus and the Apostles prayed Psalms daily, according to ancient Jewish custom. From their era to our own, the Church has always attended to this sanctification of time in various ways. Over the centuries, services centered on the Psalms punctuated daily religious observance at a regular cadence, from morning until night. Even now, priests and professed religious are duty-bound to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. When Saint Benedict wrote of the *opus Dei* (the “work of God”) he indeed meant the hefty commitment of such a routine!

Nevertheless, the Second Vatican Council saw a great opportunity here for everyone, especially now the laity. Just as the reforms of the Mass opened up new modes of participation and greatly expanded the amount of Sacred Scripture that we encounter in the readings, so too did the Council invite the whole People of God to receive the riches of the Liturgy of the Hours in a greater way. Major services of “Morning Prayer” and “Evening Prayer” highlight those parts of the day. However, the day itself is ultimately bookended by the **Invitatory Psalm**, before “Morning Prayer,” and “Night Prayer,” also called **Compline**, to finish the day.

This booklet is designed as a straightforward resource to help you pray with the Church according to this ancient tradition. We invite you to pray these two parts of the Liturgy of the Hours each day throughout Advent.

Pray the **Invitatory** first thing in the morning, if possible.

Pray **Compline** last thing before bedtime.

Early in the prayer there is an examination of conscience, similar to the Penitential Act near the beginning of Mass. If you wish, in this private recitation of Night Prayer, to reflect more deeply on your day with some guideposts, an Ignatian **Examen** is included. This is a way of praying that comes from the Jesuit tradition. Rather than bracketing the mundane and minute things of the day, this prayer invites us to gratitude and seeing God at work in all things, great and small.

The **Invitatory** and **Compline** bring us full-circle: we fix our eyes on the Lord, just as they open in the morning, and we ultimately refocus our gaze on Him at day's end. This is also the spirit of Advent. It begins the Church Year, even as our calendar year approaches its conclusion. As the short days darken, we approach the celebration of the coming of the Light of the World. Advent is a season of preparation, like Lent, but the character is also different. Advent is a season of quickening expectation. As the priest's prayer after the Our Father says at Mass: "we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ."

Each Advent we prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ in time, his Incarnation at Bethlehem. We also thank God for his grace-ful coming to us in Sacrament. We finally look forward to that last day when we will meet him and he will "come again in glory to judge the living and the dead." At the end of Compline we indeed pray "may the all-powerful Lord grant us a restful night and a peaceful death." **Compline**, like Advent, turns our eyes toward the Radiant Dawn. He alone dispels the darkness of sin and death. He alone, who has come and is coming, brings peace into our hearts and to our weary world.

Lord Jesus, come when you are ready and make me ready for you when you come!

Thank you for trying something new. If you're interested in praying more of the Liturgy of the Hours, there are several good resources, including the app iBreviary.

Have a blessed Advent!

Dr. Michael Emmerich
Archdiocese of Omaha – Office of Worship

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INVITATORY

Prayed first thing in the morning

This versicle is prayed every day while tracing the sign of the cross on the lips.

+ Lord, open my lips.
And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

The following antiphons may be prayed at the beginning and end of Psalm 100 or between each verse as well.

From the First Sunday of Advent through December 16:
Come, let us worship the Lord, the King who is to come.

From December 17 to December 23:
The Lord is close at hand; come, let us worship him.

December 24:
Today you will know the Lord is coming,
and in the morning you will see his glory.

Psalm 100

Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before him, singing for joy.

Know that he, the Lord, is God.
He made us, we belong to him,
we are his people, the sheep of his flock.

Go within his gates, giving thanks.
Enter his courts with songs of praise.
Give thanks to him and bless his name.

Indeed, how good is the Lord,
eternal his merciful love.
He is faithful from age to age.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

COMPLINE

Night Prayer

While making the sign of the Cross:

God, come to my assistance.

— Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

— as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

A brief examination of conscience may be made. If you would like, the fuller Examen prayer can be found on the back cover.

HYMN

The King shall come when morning dawns
and light triumphant breaks,
when beauty gilds the eastern hills
and life to joy awakes.

Not as of old a little child,
to bear, and fight, and die,
but crowned with glory like the sun
that lights the morning sky.

O brighter than that glorious morn
shall this fair morning be,
when Christ, our King, in beauty comes,
and we His face shall see.

The King shall come when morning dawns
and earth's dark night is past;
O haste the rising of that morn,
the day that aye shall last.

The King shall come when morning dawns,
and light and beauty brings;
"Hail, Christ the Lord!" Thy people pray,
come quickly, King of kings!

Tune: CONSOLATION, CM; John Wyeth, 1770-1858. Text: John Brownlie, 1857-1925

PSALMODY

The antiphon is recited at the beginning and end of the psalm.

Antiphon. Night holds no terrors for me sleeping under God's wings.

Psalm 91

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
and abides in the shade of the Almighty
says to the Lord: "My refuge,
my stronghold, my God in whom I trust!"

It is he who will free you from the snare
of the fowler who seeks to destroy you;
he will conceal you with his pinions
and under his wings you will find refuge.

You will not fear the terror of the night
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the plague that prowls in the darkness
nor the scourge that lays waste at noon.

A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand fall at your right,
you, it will never approach;
his faithfulness is buckler and shield.

Your eyes have only to look
to see how the wicked are repaid,
you who have said: "Lord, my refuge!"
and have made the Most High your dwelling.

Upon you no evil shall fall,
no plague approach where you dwell.
For you has he commanded his angels,
to keep you in all your ways.

They shall bear you upon their hands
lest you strike your foot against a stone.
On the lion and the viper you will tread
and trample the young lion and the dragon.

Since he clings to me in love, I will free him;
protect him for he knows my name.
When he calls I shall answer: "I am with you,"
I will save him in distress and give him glory.

With length of life I will content him;
I shall let him see my saving power.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

Antiphon. Night holds no terrors for me sleeping under God's wings.

READING

Revelation 22:4-5

They shall see the Lord face to face and bear his name on their foreheads.
The night shall be no more. They will need no light from lamps or the sun,
for the Lord God shall give them light, and they shall reign forever.

RESPONSORY

Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.
— Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.
You have redeemed us, Lord God of truth.
— I commend my spirit.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
— Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.

GOSPEL CANTICLE

Antiphon. Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep,
that awake, we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, rest in his peace.

While making the sign of the cross:
Lord, + now you let your servant go in peace;
Your word has been fulfilled:

my own eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared in the sight of every people:

a light to reveal you to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen.

Antiphon. Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep,
that awake, we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, rest in his peace.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord,
give our bodies restful sleep
and let the work we have done today bear fruit in eternal life.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
— Amen.

BLESSING

While making the sign of the cross:
May the all-powerful Lord grant us a restful night and a peaceful death.
— Amen.

MARIAN ANTIPHON

Loving mother of the Redeemer,
gate of heaven, star of the sea,
assist your people who have fallen
yet strive to rise again,
To the wonderment of nature you bore your Creator,
yet remained a virgin after as before.
You who received Gabriel's joyful greeting,
have pity on us poor sinners.

Text: Alma Redemptoris Mater (Antiphon for Advent and Christmas)

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EXAMEN

Transition

I become aware that I am in God's holy presence. He is gazing upon me. He knew me before I was born. In his love He created me. He has been all around me at every moment of my life. He has been with me today too.

Step One: Gratitude

All that I experienced today has been part of God's holy will. Christ's birth in Bethlehem was a world-changing gift. Even now, he comes to us in our Sacraments. Their grace is a life-saving gift. I thank God for all that he has given me today.

Step Two: Petition

God's final gift will be his return in glory. He has come, but, yet we live in the mysterious and marvelous "meanwhile" until he comes again. I ask for the grace of the Holy Spirit to see my life today, as he does – in the necessary "now" that is his gift.

Step Three: Review

In my mind's eye, I walk through my day. Some experiences were routine and some things may have surprised me. Some events were small and, perhaps, some big. Sometimes I felt in control and, at others, being led or, even lost. In each case, where were my thoughts? What kinds and intensity of emotion came over me? Was my heart stirred? Did I sense God's presence in that moment? Do I see it now, in hindsight? I examine my responses. Some came from God. I can see his delight in those life-giving moments.

Step Four: Forgiveness

Some responses came from the prompting of the enemy. Jesus pointed to the prophets: "what you see and hear." However, at times I looked to and listened to other voices today. I did not contribute to the Kingdom of Peace. My patience flagged and there were gaps in my charity. Like even Joseph, I perhaps doubted God's presence and will. I own these things – both what I have done and failed to do. I ask the Lord to "remove the things that hinder me from receiving Christ with joy" so that I may be one with Him.

Step Five: Renewal

With God's forgiveness and lovingkindness, I am filled with hope. His love and grace – these are enough for me! I look forward to the new day that follows this night. I await to meet him tomorrow and every day, especially when we celebrate his coming at Christmas. I resolve to discern his will for me tomorrow so that I may see him face to face in the end.