LEX ORANDI

An Ordo for the Divine Office
based on the Rule of St. Benedict
and the Book of Common Prayer

Edited by
J. Barrett Lee
Dedication

To Father Jude Bell OSB

In gratitude for his life-saving advice to me during my first visit to St. Gregory’s Abbey:

“Maybe just rest...”
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Introduction

“Indeed, nothing is to be preferred to the Work of God.”

The Rule of St Benedict
Chapter 43

One of the most amazing things about the Benedictine monastic tradition is how it saved western European civilization by accident. During the so-called “Dark Ages”, while Europe was afflicted with plague and violence, the monasteries were known to be places of refuge. Kings and Popes were educated within their walls, wandering strangers were housed and healed as if they were Christ himself, and cultural treasures were preserved.

Yet none of these is the Benedictine raison d’être. Saving the world (as they knew it) was a fringe benefit for the early Benedictines. The work to which they are given is the work of prayer. Everything else they do is for the sake of this singular goal.

About This Book

Lex Orandi is a guide to prayer for those who have been inspired by the Benedictine vision and seek to embody its pattern of prayer in their lives. The base text for this ordo is the Daily Office (Rite II) as laid out in the Episcopal Church’s Book of Common Prayer. The order of Psalms is adapted from the original schema outlined in the Rule of St Benedict.

Since it is impractical for most people who live outside a monastery to pray the entire Liturgy of the Hours in the way that St Benedict instructs, this ordo is offered as a simplified pattern for praying the Office that keeps one’s personal prayers in harmony with the Benedictine spirit.

Using this ordo, one may recite as many as six offices each day or as few as four. Matins and Lauds are combined into a single office. The Little Hours (i.e. Terce, Sext, and None) may be recited each day, or as a single midday office on a three-week rotating cycle.
Additional Resources

*Lex Orandi* does not stand on its own like a traditional breviary. To make use of it, one will need a Bible (any translation with Apocrypha), a prayer book, and a hymnal.

Any hymnal or prayer book may be used, but this *ordo* was specifically designed with *The Book of Common Prayer* and *The Hymnal 1982* in mind. An index of plainsong (Gregorian) and other pre-Reformation hymns and tunes from that hymnal is placed at the back of this booklet for reference.

Other recommended resources are listed on page 35.

Acknowledgements

The editor is most grateful to the community of St. Gregory’s Abbey, Three Rivers, whose practice of the Divine Office has directly inspired and shaped this *ordo*.

To Abbot Andrew Marr, Prior Aelred Glidden, Fr. Jude Bell, Fr. William Forrest, Br. Martin Dally, & Br. Abraham Newsom, along with our oblates and members of the Confraternity: Thank you for your friendship, hospitality, guidance, and permission to reprint portions of your Liturgy of the Hours.

Disclaimer

The brothers wish it to be known that *Lex Orandi* is **not** an official publication of St. Gregory’s Abbey, Three Rivers. The views, opinions, interpretations, and adaptations set forth herein are those of the editor alone and are in no way endorsed by St. Gregory’s Abbey. The use of this *ordo* by monks, oblates, or members of the Confraternity at St. Gregory’s Abbey is neither required nor expected.

Pax,

J. Barrett Lee, editor

13 August 2015

Memorial of St Hippolytus
Matins & Lauds

Preces (p. 80 BCP, S 33 Hymnal)
Psalm 3 (p. 587 BCP)
Invitatory – Psalm 95 (p. 724 BCP, S 34 Hymnal) with Antiphon (p. 80-82 BCP, S 294 Hymnal, Accom. Ed.) or Psalm 67 (p. 675 BCP).

Hymn
A hymn suitable to the time of day or season is sung.

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*From the* Daily Office Lectionary (p. 934-1001 BCP).

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Laudate Psalm

One or more of Psalms 148-150 (p. 805-807 BCP) is sung or said.

Reading

From the Daily Office Lectionary (p. 934-1001 BCP).

*Benedictus* (p. 92 BCP, S 248 Hymnal)

*Kyrie Eleison* (S 304 Hym. Accom. Ed.)

*Our Father…* (p. 97 BCP, S 51 or S 149 Hymnal)

The Collect

The Officiant sings or says the Collect of the Day (p. 211-261 BCP) or another suitable Collect (p. 98-101 BCP).

*Benedicamus* (S 54 Hymnal or S 55 Hymnal in Easter)

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. *Amen.*

V. May the divine help remain with us always.

R. And with our absent brethren. *Amen.*
**Terce, Sext, & None**

**Preces** (p. 103 BCP, S 58 Hymnal, S 296 Hym. Accom. Ed.)

**Hymn**

*A hymn suitable to the time of day is sung.*

**Psalmody**

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Reading
*A suitable passage of Scripture* (p. 105-106 BCP) is read.

The Collect
*The Officiant sings or says the* Collect of the Day or another suitable Collect (p. 107 BCP).

V. May the divine help remain with us always.
R. And with our absent brethren. Amen.
Vespers

Preces (p. 117 BCP, S 58 Hymnal)

Hymn
Phos Hilaron (p. 118 BCP, S 27 or S 59 Hymnal), or another hymn suitable to the time of day or season, is sung.

Psalmody

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Reading
*From the* Daily Office Lectionary (p. 934-1001 BCP).

Magnificat (p. 119 BCP, S 242 Hymnal)
Kyrie Eleison (S 304 Hym. Accom. Ed.)
Our Father… (p. 121 BCP, S 62 or S 149 Hymnal)

The Collect
*The Officiant sings or says the* Collect of the Day or another suitable Collect (p. 98-101 BCP).

Benedicamus (S 54 Hymnal or S 55 Hymnal *in Easter*)

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. *Amen.*

V. May the divine help remain with us always.
R. And with our absent brethren. *Amen.*
Compline

A Reading
From the Early Church, the Lives of the Saints, the Rule of St. Benedict, or some other suitable devotion.

Confraternity Prayers
Let us pray:
For those in pain or sorrow,
   *Mother of Jesus, pray.*
For those in doubt or fear,
   *Mother of Jesus, pray.*
For all bishops, priests, and other ministers,
   *Mother of Jesus, pray.*
For all monks, nuns, and other religious,
   *Mother of Jesus, pray.*
For all the members of our Confraternity,
   *Mother of Jesus, pray.*
May all who honor you,
   *Know the power of your prayer.*
Holy Benedict, Father of monks,
   *Pray for us.*
God of hosts, bring us back;
   *Let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.*

Let us pray.
Stir up, O Lord, in your Church the Spirit which our blessed father and abbot Benedict served; that we, being filled with the same Spirit, may learn to love what he loved and put into practice what he taught.
Grant us, O Lord, we ask you, to be steadfast in the service of your will, that your servants may grow in number and in holiness; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*
 Silence for examination of conscience is kept.

**A Corporate Confession and Absolution**

I confess to Almighty God, to all the saints in heaven, and to you, my brothers, that I have sinned exceedingly, in thought, word, and deed, through my own fault. Therefore I ask the Blessed Virgin Mary, all the angels and saints, and you, my brothers, to pray for me to the Lord, our God.

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to life everlasting. May the almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, absolution, and remission of our sins. *Amen.*

**Preces** *(p. 128 BCP, S 58 Hymnal, S 321 Hym. Accom. Ed.)*

**Hymn**

*A hymn suitable to the time of day is sung.*

**Psalmody**

Psalm 4, 91, *or* 134 *(p. 128-131 BCP) is sung or said.*

**Reading**

*A suitable passage of Scripture *(p. 131-132 BCP) is read.*

**V.** Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit *(Alleluia).*

**R.** It is you who will redeem me, Lord *(Alleluia).*

*Alleluia is added during Easter.*

**The Collect**

*A suitable Collect *(p. 133-134 BCP) is said.*

**Benedicamus** *(S 65 Hymnal or S 66 Hymnal in Easter)*

**Blessing** *(p. 135 BCP)*
Additional Resources

The following resources are needed to use this *Ordo*…


*The Hymnal 1982.* (Church Publishing, 1982).

The following resources are recommended…


Bibliography

*Divine Office at St. Gregory’s Abbey, Three Rivers, MI. [Printed Booklet.]*

*Joan Chittister OSB. The Rule of Benedict: Spirituality for the 21st Century. (Crossroads: 2010).*


*Martin Dally OSB. Seven Times A Day I Praise You: Prayer Books for Daily Use. [Printed Booklet.]*


*Andrew Marr OSB. St. Gregory’s Abbey and Benedictine Monasticism. [Printed Booklet.]*

Index of Plainsong Hymns in the Hymnal 1982
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