

On Sunday

by St. Benedict of Nursia

St. Benedict outlines the structure and significance of the Night Office on Sunday, emphasizing discipline and reverence in worship.

Scripture: Psalm 95:6, Psalm 119:164, Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Topics: "Worship Order", "Liturgical Prayer"

Description

St. Benedict of Nursia emphasizes the importance of maintaining a structured and reverent Night Office on Sundays, consisting of Psalms, lessons, responsories, canticles, and hymns, all to be conducted with order and devotion. The prescribed order includes the singing of Psalms, reading of lessons, chanting of canticles, and concluding with readings from the Gospels, all while standing in reverence before God. St. Benedict stresses the significance of following this order year-round, with provisions for adjustments if necessary due to unforeseen circumstances.

Transcript

On Sunday the hour of rising for the Night Office should be earlier. In that Office let the measure already prescribed be kept, namely the singing of six Psalms and a verse. Then let all be seated on the benches in their proper order while the lessons and their responsories are read from the book, as we said above. These shall be four in number, with the chanter saying the "Glory be to the Father" in the fourth responsory only, and all rising reverently as soon as he begins it.

After these lessons let six more Psalms with antiphons follow in order, as before, and a verse; and then let four more lessons be read with their responsories in the same way as the former. After these let there be three canticles from the book of the Prophets, as the Abbot shall appoint, and let these canticles be chanted with "Alleluia." Then when the verse has been said and the Abbot has given the blessing, let four more lessons be read, from the New Testament, in the manner prescribed above.

After the fourth responsory let the Abbot begin the hymn "We praise You, O God." When this is finished the Abbot shall read the lesson from the book of the Gospels, while all stand in reverence and awe. At the end let all answer "Amen," and let the Abbot proceed at once to the hymn "To You be praise." After the blessing has been given, let them begin the Morning Office. This order for the Night Office on Sunday shall be observed the year around, both summer and winter; unless it should happen (which God forbid) that the brethren be late in rising, in which case the lessons or the responsories will have to be shortened somewhat. Let every precaution be taken, however, against such an occurrence; but if it does happen,

then the one through whose neglect it has come about should make due satisfaction to God in the oratory.

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