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PREFACE

In the Holy Spirit Christ carries out through the Church “the work of human redemption and God’s perfect glorification,” not only when the Eucharist is celebrated and the sacraments are administered but also in other ways, and especially when *The Liturgy of the Hours* is celebrated. In it Christ himself is present, in the assembled community, in the proclamation of God’s word, “in the prayer and song of the Church.”

The sanctification of human beings is accomplished, and worship offered to God, in *The Liturgy of the Hours* in an exchange or dialogue between God and human beings in which “God speaks to his people . . . and his people reply to him in song and prayer.”

Those taking part in *The Liturgy of the Hours* have access to holiness of the richest kind through the life-giving word of God, to which it gives such great importance. The readings are drawn from Sacred Scripture, God’s words in the psalms are sung in his presence, and the intercessions, prayers, and hymns are steeped in the inspired language of Scripture.

The Liturgy of the Hours is the prayer of the entire Church. The Liturgical renewal of Vatican II has endeavored to make it accessible to all Catholics by a simplification of structure. The Church desires that wherever possible at least the celebration of Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer in public worship services should be encouraged.

The Liturgy of the Hours, distributed over various periods of each day, is intended to sanctify time and work. It is also a perfect means for putting into prac-

tice the word of Jesus “about the necessity of praying always without growing weary” (Luke 18:1). Contact with the riches of this liturgical prayer, which is pervaded by Sacred Scripture, will give Christians authentic spiritual food, encourage them to do good, and unite them closer to the Church of God throughout the world.

This shorter edition of *Christian Prayer* (which is the one-volume edition of *The Liturgy of the Hours*) has been drawn up precisely for this purpose. It presents a selection of material for Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer in a format that is easier for the lay person to use than the complete *Christian Prayer* or the four-volume *Liturgy of the Hours*.

It contains the complete Four-Week Psalter; material from the Proper of Seasons and the Proper of Saints; Night Prayer; Office for the Dead; Memorial of the Blessed Virgin; and the complete series of hymns found in the regular edition of *Christian Prayer*. The whole volume is printed in two colors on Bible paper and is a very handy pocket-size Office Book.

Thus, this *Shorter Christian Prayer* is ideal for parish use as well as private use. It may also be of help to clergy who are traveling or otherwise unable to utilize the complete edition of *The Liturgy of the Hours*.

It is the firm hope of the publishers that this aid will serve to nourish the spirit of prayer and to make *The Liturgy of the Hours* truly the prayer of the whole Church of God.



WEEK II

SUNDAY

Evening Prayer I

God, come to my assistance. Glory to the Father. As it was in the beginning. Alleluia.

HYMN, no. 39 or 33. Outside Ordinary Time, see Guide, 578.

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 Your word, O Lord, is the lantern to light our way, alleluia.

Advent: New city of Zion, let your heart sing for joy; see how humbly your King comes to save you.

Lent, 2nd Sunday: Jesus took Peter, James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain. There he was transfigured before them.

Lent, Passion (Palm) Sunday: Day after day I sat teaching you in the temple and you did not lay hands on me. Now you come to scourge me and lead me to the cross.

Easter, 6th Sunday: The man of truth welcomes the light, alleluia.

Psalm 119:105-112

XIV (Nun)

A meditation on God's law

This is my commandment: that you should love one another (John 15:12).

Your word is a lamp for my steps
and a light for my path.

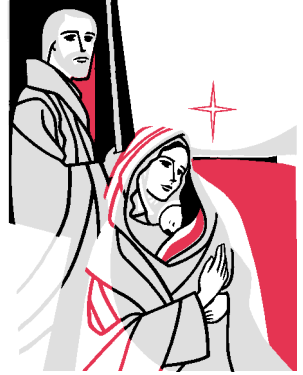
I have sworn and have made up my mind
to obey your decrees.

**Sunday in the Octave
of Christmas**

Psalter, Week I

HOLY FAMILY

Feast



When Christmas occurs on Sunday, the feast of the Holy Family is celebrated on December 30 and there is no Evening Prayer I.

Evening Prayer I

CANTICLE OF MARY

Ant. The child Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and his parents did not know it. They thought he was in the group of travelers and looked for him among their relatives and friends.

Invitatory

Ant. Come, let us worship Christ, the Son of God, who was obedient to Mary and Joseph.

Invitatory psalm, as in the Ordinary, 22.

Morning Prayer

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

Ant. Lord, give us light through the example of your family and guide our feet into the way of peace.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Father,
help us to live as the holy family,
united in respect and love.
Bring us to the joy and peace of your eternal home.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Alternative Prayer

Father in heaven, creator of all, you ordered the earth to bring forth life and crowned its goodness by creating the family of man.

In history's moment when all was ready, you sent your Son to dwell in time, obedient to the laws of life in our world. Teach us the sanctity of human love, show us the value of family life, and help us to live in peace with all men that we may share in your life for ever.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Evening Prayer II

CANTICLE OF MARY

Ant. Son, why have you done this to us? Think what anguish your father and I have endured looking for you. But why did you look for me? Did you not know that I had to be in my Father's house?

WEEKDAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS

Invitatory

Ant. Christ is born for us; come, let us adore him.

Invitatory psalm, as in the Ordinary, 22.

Morning Prayer

Hymn, antiphons, psalms and canticle, as in Morning Prayer of Christmas, 384.