

The *Liturgy of the Hours* for Laity: Selecting a Book to Buy

Comments: One can find a variety of resources available both online and in print which allow a person to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. Those resources include both the current “official” version as well as other versions. For more on these resources see the end of this document.

The current “official” English version consists of the following:

The official text is a translation of the *first typical edition* in Latin © 1971. The second typical edition in *Latin* © 1985 has **not been translated into English** by ICEL and is available only in Africa! If a text is not straight from the Bible itself then the prayers of the current “official” edition of the *Liturgy of the Hours* in the USA is therefore the translation last © 1976 by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy [aka: ICEL]. This includes special translations of parts like Invitatory Psalm 95 and the Gospel Canticles *Benedictus* and *Magnificat*. [Incidentally, the concluding prayers are taken from the *first edition* of the Roman Missal (now replaced in 2011)].

The **Psalms** used in the *Psalter* of the current official edition are the **1963 *Grail*** translation. The next official edition of the *Hours*, which is not yet even on the horizon, will use the already confirmed *2010 Revised Grail* translation.

Depending on when the edition was published, the **other biblical texts** including the Canticles and Readings throughout the Psalter are taken from **various editions** of the *New American Bible* all of which have now been updated since 1985 with the translation found in the new © 2011 *New American Bible Revised Edition* [aka NABRE].

Generally speaking editions of these books which are first published in the 1970s contain the *first edition* of the *NAB New Testament* while those published in the 1980s (*Shorter Christian Prayer*) often contain the *second* edition of the NT. [For common prayer this means there is some variation in the *readings* between copies of the books listed below, depending on *which edition of the NAB NT they use*.] No currently published edition contains the *second edition* of the **NAB Old Testament** © 2011.

Available editions:

The following “official” editions of Morning and Evening Prayer are available from Catholic Book Publishing: <http://www.catholicbookpublishing.com/index.php>

Recommended for the beginner:

Shorter Christian Prayer from Catholic Book Publishing is an **abbreviated version** of the official text of the *Liturgy of the Hours* containing all of Morning

and Evening Prayer from the Four-Week Psalter but only *selections from the proper texts for those hours (MP-EP)* for the Seasons and Major Feasts of the year. Printed in two colors, *Shorter Christian Prayer* includes a handy ribbon marker and is bound in flexible maroon simulated leather. Its handy, practical size is 4 3/8" x 6 3/4", but it is **much thinner** than the edition listed below. Features: Readable 10 pt. Type. Printed in Two Colors. Includes Ribbon Marker. Page Edging Indicates Pages of the Four-Week Psalter. Available with flexible maroon cover (Product Code 408/10 978-0-89-942408-8). Also available bound in black bonded leather with zipper (Product Code: 408/13 978-0-89-942423-1) and in a **large type** edition (Product Code: 418/10 978-0-89-942453-8).

Comments: *This basic little book gives the beginner an edition that is sufficiently abbreviated to make it easy to use for anyone with no prior experience. You are likely to quickly outgrow it because it **lacks** most of the **variable** "proper texts" for seasons like Advent, Lent, Christmas, Easter and the feasts of most of the saints. However, **it is completely compatible** to use in a group with those using the editions listed below because **the Psalter is the same (and complete) in all editions** even when the readings are from different versions of the NAB NT.*

Recommended for the comfortable user:

Christian Prayer from Catholic Book Publishing is the **one-volume edition** of Morning and Evening Prayer from the *Liturgy of the Hours*. This regular edition of Christian Prayer contains the current **complete "official" texts of Morning and Evening Prayer for the entire year** plus some extras like selected portions of other hours. With its readable 10-pt. type, ribbon markers for easy location of texts, and beautiful two-color printing, this handy little one-volume simplifies praying the official Prayer of the Church, the *Liturgy of the Hours*, for today's busy Catholic. Features: Readable 10 pt. Type. Printed in Two Colors. Includes Ribbon Markers with Stained Page Edging. In the back is the musical notation for the hymns. Available with flexible maroon cover (Product Code 406/10 ISBN:978-0-89-942406-4). Also available bound in black bonded leather with zipper (Product Code: 406/23 ISBN:978-0-89-942424-8) and large type (Product Code 407/10 ISBN:978-0-89-942407-1, see below).

*Comments: This convenient **one-volume** edition has **everything** you need to pray **Morning and Evening Prayer** throughout the year. These are the two "main" hours of the Liturgy—which actually includes 7 hours in all. In addition to Morning and Evening Prayer three of the full seven hours are collectively referred to as "Daytime Prayer" which is divided, in the usage of some monastic communities, into **midmorning, midday** and **midafternoon**. These are rounded out with **Night Prayer** and the Office of **Readings**. This one-volume edition*

contains only **selections** from *Daytime Prayer, Night Prayer and the Office of Readings*. Think of this book as equivalent to the “Readers Digest version” of a book for its club.

*Incidentally, the somewhat **different** version of this book published by the Daughters of St Paul is **no longer in print**. When buying a used copy be sure you know the difference because these editors have made different choices!*

Recommended for its **large print**:

The **Large Type Edition of Christian Prayer** from Catholic Book Publishing is also the **one-volume** edition of the Liturgy of the Hours. This version of Christian Prayer also contains the complete texts of Morning and Evening Prayer for the entire year (that is, the contents of the regular edition of Christian Prayer) *except that it does not contain music notation for the hymns or the Office of Readings*. However, the lyrics of the hymns are printed in the back so you at least have the text, if not the notation. Printed in **one color** in large, easy-to-read **14-pt. type**, the Large Type Edition of Christian Prayer includes handy ribbon markers and is bound in flexible maroon simulated leather. *Not available in leather binding.*

*Comments: This edition makes it possible for those whose eyesight needs a **larger print** to pray the hours but because it lacks the musical notation of the hymns found in the regular edition it does not completely facilitate the **full** participation in **common** recitation. It is also missing the Office of Readings selections which are in the regular edition. Other than that, it is just a bigger size version of the regular version listed above.*

The complete version (four volumes):

In the USA, Catholic Book Publishing is the authorized printer of the official version of the complete **four-volume** *Liturgy of the Hours*. This edition is available in imitation leather copies of the regular size as well as the bonded leather edition of the regular size and the large print size (color bonded leather). **There is a lot of duplication in the contents here because each volume is a complete book for use at a certain time of year:** 1) Advent/Christmas and 2) Lent/Easter and 3-4) Ordinary Time in 2 vols. *What varies from the one-volume is primarily the complete contents of **all** of the hours—which means **all the variable proper texts** for different seasons—but it also means the complete Office of Readings.* The full “Readings” hour includes daily longer readings from the Bible as well as **daily selections from the Fathers of the Church**.

Product Codes (4 vols): 401/10; ISBN:978-0-89-942401-9; 402/10
ISBN:978-0-89-942402-6; 403/10 ISBN:978-0-89-942403-3; 404/10

ISBN:978-0-89-942404-0

Online resources:

DivineOffice.org <http://divineoffice.org/>

- the complete “official” version published online daily
- **smartphone apps** are available

Twitter: <http://Twitter.com/DivineOffice>

Facebook: <http://Facebook.com/DivineOffice>

Feedback and Support http://Getsatisfaction/Divine_Office

Universalis <http://universalis.com/-800/index.htm>

- on the home page click at left on a link to an *online version* in English
using their own translations