

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The three Benedictine tools complement the three vows of Obedience, Stability and Conversion of Life. Prayer is the second of the three tools, and it connects with the spiritual aspect of our lives.

Prayer for the Benedictine monk or nun means going into the chapel seven times a day to recite and sing the Divine Office. Each of the offices is a compilation of psalms, Scripture readings and prayers. The monastic day is punctuated with prayer so that the monk or nun learns eventually to “pray without ceasing.” (I Thess 5:16-18)

We are not living in monasteries in the sixth century in Italy. However, the principle of punctuating our day with prayer is still possible.

Here’s how it could work:

1. Begin your day with the Morning Offering or the Lord’s Prayer
2. Take time to offer thanks over your breakfast
3. Make sure you have a morning quiet time with Scripture, the Divine Office or daily Mass
4. Take a moment of quiet prayer (more than just a hurried grace) before lunch or a mid day snack
5. Take a break mid afternoon for some spiritual reading—a book of quotes or Bible passages
6. Have an evening prayer time—the rosary or Vespers/Evening Office
7. An examination of conscience and night prayer before bed.

Prayer connects us with the Lord. Along with our Sunday Mass obligations it helps to purify our mind, put our priorities right and keep us on the right path.

Prayer gives spiritual energy, light and power to our work and our study so the three tools work together to help us on the path to obedience, stability and conversion of life.

It requires discipline and focus, but all this, as St. Benedict says, so that we may eventually, “Run in the path of God’s commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love”.

Your Pastor,  
Fr. Longenecker