

**INTRODUCTION TO THE
BOOK OF HOURS**

AND A

**BRIEF HISTORY OF THE
RUTHENIAN RECENSION**

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INTRODUCTION

The Book of Hours (Horologion, Ὡρολόγιον, Časoslov, Часословъ) is a liturgical book containing the psalms and prayers of the canonical hours of the daily cycle of prayer for the Byzantine-Constantinopolitan rite. The Small Book of Hours contains only the hours of the daily cycle of prayer, while the Great Book of Hours, in addition to the daily cycle, contains the prayers for the weekly, monthly, and yearly cycles. The contents of the Great Book of Hours can also contain additional texts.

At present, the oldest extant books from the Holy Land indicate that the horologion's origins are to be found as a variant of the psalter in which the psalms and the prayers appointed to be prayed at the various hours of the day are arranged.

The God Who created us has placed us on a planet that revolves daily while in an orbit around the sun. At the same time this world has a satellite moon orbiting the planet earth. Thus, we live in time marked by the light of day alternating with the darkness of night, a weekly and monthly progression, a succession of seasons, and a year marked by one revolution of the earth around the sun.

The Lord Jesus instructed the disciples to pray without ceasing (Luke 18:1), and this command was faithfully handed down by St. Paul the Apostle (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

The human response to the commandment of ceaseless prayer was observed by following and marking the temporal periods of time of daybreak and sunset

established by God in the creation of the earth, moon, and sun in the God-prescribed times for prayer at morning and evening in the scripture, and at the hours of the day at which our salvation was worked, namely, at the third, sixth, and ninth hours.

Praying at these intervals of time is the way by which faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ obey His command and through which the disciples fulfill the words of the inspired prophet and king David in the Bible:

“Praise Him, sun and moon, praise Him, shining stars” (Psalm 148:3).

The three young men in the flames of the furnace, were inspired by the Spirit to exclaim:

Sun and moon, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

*Stars of heaven, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all
forever...*

Nights and days, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever.

*Light and darkness, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all
forever.*

(Daniel 3:62-63, 71-72)

It is certainly acknowledged that the sun, earth, moon, stars, and the whole celestial creation praise God simply by being. Their existence itself proclaims God’s praise in a constant, silent hymn of praise; however, this praise is given voice through us as we observe and mark with prayer the patterns of time of the celestial order by the order set forth in the horologion.

THE CONTENTS

The first section of the Book of Hours, then, observes prayer following the daily rotation of the earth. The next section, the Canonicon, follows the measure of a week, while the weekly Octoechos, the Fasting Triodion and Flowering Triodion observes the weekly progression of the year. The Menologion of saints and feasts observes the progression of months.

The contents of this English translation of the typical edition of the Book of Hours (Časoslov, Часословъ) contains the order of prayer and the variable hymnody so that the person utilizing this book can pray the Divine Praises for most days of the year. It includes the First, Third, Sixth, and Ninth Hours of prayer, Compline, and the Midnight Service, excepting certain feasts and days of the Fasting, or of the Flowering Triodion such as the special form of the Little Hours of Royal Hours of the Paramony of Nativity of our Lord, Royal Hours of the vigil eve of Theophany of our Lord.

It also contains the special form of the Hours for Bright Week which appear in this volume on p. 593.

The evening and morning times of prayer that God ordered to be sanctified in the Bible can be observed by praying the Morning and Evening Prayers as part of the personal rule of prayer, or by Matins and Vespers. The texts for the kathismata and the hymns proper for these services each day are not found in this volume but must be accessed in the psalter and the proper tropologion—the Octoechos, the Fasting or Flowering Triodion, and the

books of the Menaia. However, if these volumes are not available, the Book of Hours provides common texts in its Canonicon for Vespers and Matins for each day of the week.

Some general points can be noted.

- The typical edition of the Часословъ (Časoslov) does not have detailed rubrics for the priest-celebrant. These are found exactly where one would expect, the Літургіконъ сієсть Служєбникъ (Liturgikon sijest' Služebnik), Rome, 1952. In that volume are found the rubrics for the priest-celebrant for all the services of the Divine Office, including the special forms of Vespers and Matins for the Great Fast, Great and Holy Week, and Pascha. Indications for Sunday and Festal Matins and Vespers which allow for the ministry of a deacon are also included.
- Another source for rubrics, specifically for Sunday and Festal Vespers and Matins, are found in the *Ordo Celebrationis*, Rome, 1944 (English edition by Eastern Christian Publications, 1996).
- When the Book of Hours directs that a prayer or hymn be “said”, this is to be understood that the text is chanted or read aloud in tone.
- This English language translation of the Часословъ (Časoslov) follows the pattern established in the typical edition regarding the red-letter incipit at the beginning of psalms, the priestly prayers, and the initial sticheron of the weekday services of the

Canonicon, the Service to Archangels and Angels. Additionally, the Church Slavonic edition also uses a red-letter incipit for certain psalm verses of the Polyeleos of Sunday and Festal Matins and also for the First Kathisma at Vespers. Its usage in those places is to indicate how those psalms may be abbreviated, such that only the verse beginning with the red-letter incipit may be chanted in the abbreviated form.

- It should be noted that the typical edition of the Часословъ (Časoslov) varies in the usage of the prayers commonly called the “Usual Beginning Prayers,” Начало Обычное (Načalo obyčnoje). In some cases, they are presented completely, while in other places the prayers are only referenced in abbreviated form in the rubrics, prescribing that the prayers be prayed in full. In yet other cases, the order of prayer begins with the invitatory, “Come, let us worship” such as for the First Hour. In the latter instance, the Часословъ (Časoslov) expects that the First Hour would follow immediately at the completion of Matins and thus the Usual Beginning Prayers would be omitted. However, if the First Hour is prayed separately instead of immediately following Matins, the Usual Beginning Prayers should be prayed in their entirety. Another variation is seen in Parakleisis, where the rubric indicates that following the priestly blessing, “Blessed is our God,” Psalm 142 is prayed, yet the Usual Beginning Prayers are expected to be prayed before Psalm 142.

THE BOOK OF HOURS

While the weekly collection of hymns of the eight tones, the Octoechos, begins with Vespers, since the first day of creation began with evening (cf. Genesis 1:5), the Book of Hours follows the horologia of the Holy Land and begins with the Midnight Service.

The following points may be helpful to utilize the section titled The Book of Hours.

The Midnight Service.

- The Midnight Service is not customarily observed in parish churches, with the possible exception of the Midnight Service of Great Saturday night (Наробное, Nahrobnoje).
- Since the Acts of the Holy Apostles records that Paul and Silas were praying at midnight (Acts 16:25), a person may pray this hour privately. If so, the Mutual Forgiveness and petitions are omitted.
- The order of the Midnight Service for Saturday and Sunday varies from the weekday structure. The Ninth Kathisma is appointed on Saturday as well as the prayer of Saint Eustratius that he prayed, it is said, as he was being led to martyrdom. The Sunday Service appoints a canon to the Holy Trinity chanted. The Book of Hours offers a form of this canon composed from all eight tones.

Morning Prayers

- Morning Prayers are arranged in a pattern like Matins.

Matins

- The Royal Service (pp 85-88) is prayed only in a nation having a Christian sovereign. Otherwise, Matins begins on p. 88.
- The Six Psalms are chanted by a single reader.
- The Scriptural Canticles the rubrics mention on p 117 and on p. 155 are not included in the edition of the Časoslov (Часословъ) from which this translation was made. The Scriptural canticles are in the Časoslov, 1950, that is an expanded version of this edition, published by the Congregation of the Eastern Churches according to the Ruthenian Recension also.

The Little Hours

- The Little Hours consist of three psalms and three prayers. As stated previously, the First Hour is usually joined to the conclusion of Matins. If prayed as a separate hour, it begins with the Usual Beginning Prayers

Compline

- If Compline is prayed privately, Mutual Forgiveness and the petitions that follow are omitted.

Prayers before Sleep

- The Prayers before Sleep are loosely patterned after Vespers, with a collection of eight prayers reflecting that there are eight priestly Prayers of Light at Vespers. These are followed by prayers to the Guardian Angel and to the Theotokos.

THE CANONICON

- The Services (Služba, Служба) for each day of the week are provided in the typical edition in case the hymns from the proper liturgical books are unavailable.
- Please note that The Service to the Holy Cross is prayed on Wednesdays and Fridays. However, on Wednesdays, the Canon to the Hodegetria Mother of God is sung at Matins instead of the Canon to the Holy Cross which is only sung on Fridays.
- The Prayers at the conclusion of each Service are provided in the typical edition for use at the conclusion of a moleben to the particular angel or saint.

TROPARIA AND KONTAKIA

- The Typicon directs the proper selection of hymns from these sections for the daily services of the Book of Hours for the liturgical year.

MENOLOGION

- The Typicon directs the proper selection of hymns from these sections for the daily services of the Book of Hours for the saints for each day of the year.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RUTHENIAN RECENSION

After World War I, Metropolitan Andrej Sheptytsky, Matropolitan Archbishop of L'viv, discovered that the liturgicon used by Ukrainian Catholics was one obstacle to the effectiveness of efforts of dialogue with Orthodox. According to Father Cyril Korolevsky, the issue came to the fore when Bishop Josaphat Kotsylovsky of Peremyshl' gave his approbation to the Basilian fathers' edition of the *Trebnyk* published at Žovkva in 1926 but then had reservations about approving the liturgical books without submitting it to the Holy See for approval.

Metropolitan Andrej Sheptytsky invited all the bishops to L'viv on November 29 and 30, 1927. The bishops agreed to edit a typical edition of the Liturgicon, purged of any error, which would be submitted to the Holy See for approval and which would then be followed by all. A liturgical commission was formed consisting of four bishops with the Metropolitan presiding. Two years later, October 21, 1929, a second meeting of the bishops was held, this time at the Jesuit Retreat House in Rome. The Episcopal Liturgical Commission had proven impractical. Instead, the bishops agreed to form an inter-eparchial

liturgical commission composed of appointees of each bishop.

Eventually, the inter-eparchial commission consisted of Msgr. John Bucko, president; Reverend Fr. Theodore Haluscynsky, OSBM for the bishop of Canada; Reverend Fr. Plato Martyniak, OSBM for the bishops of Peremysl' and the Exarchate of Philadelphia; Reverend Dr. Tito Mysovsky for the bishop of Mukachevo; Reverend Dr. Stephen Rud for the apostolic administrator of Prešov; Reverend Fr. Demetrius Vladimir Sadovsky for the Metropolitan of L'viv; Msgr. John Lutsyk for the bishop of Stanislaviv; Reverend Dr. Kostelnik a substitute for the bishop of Krizevski; Reverend Father Clement Sheptytsky for the Exarchate of Pittsburgh; and Reverend Dr. Stephen Reshetylo, OSBM as substitute for the bishop of Canada.

The issues which transpired following this meeting are carefully detailed elsewhere. The disagreements were such that after the 1932 episcopal meeting the bishops agreed to submit the entire issue to the Holy See, beseeching it to produce typical editions of all the liturgical books.

In a series of prompt moves, the Congregation of the Eastern Churches sent a questionnaire in 1933 to the bishops of Galicia concerning fourteen liturgical problems. The Congregation appointed Reverend Father John Hudacek, C.S.S.R. as Apostolic Visitator to three Galician eparchies. It submitted the entire question to consultants expert in canon law, Church Slavonic, and Liturgy. On January 10, 1938, the plenary session of Cardinals for the Eastern Congregation determined the criteria to serve as the

basis for the revision. Pope Pius XI approved these at his audience of January 15, 1938.

A special commission was appointed presided over by the Cardinal Secretary of the Congregation, Eugene Cardinal Tisserant. After sixty-one sessions, the Liturgicon was produced in December 1940, and promulgated September 10, 1941. The working process was that a concordance of all texts prior to 1650 would be produced. Where the witness of the various editions was consistent and unanimous the Kievan usage was chosen; otherwise, the Moscow text was selected. From this procedure the typical editions were composed.

From that time, the Congregation issued typical editions at intervals until the final text was issued in 1975.

BOOKS OF THE RUTHENIAN RECENSION (AS REPRINTED IN CHURCH SLAVONIC BY ECP)

Book I: Evangelion – The Holy Gospel

The Gospel According to Saint Matthew

The Gospel According to Saint Mark

The Gospel According to Saint Luke.

The Gospel According to Saint John.

Appendix

Book II and III: Apostol – The Apostle

Readings from Acts and Universal Letters

Reading from Letters of Saint Paul.

Propers and Apostolic readings.

Book IV: Archieratikon – Book of the Hierarchical Services

Liturgies

Ordinations

Blessings

Books V and VI: Služebnik – Book of the Priest and Deacon

The Order of Vespers

Compline and Midnight Service

The Order of Orthros

The Order of the Liturgy

Various Prayers and Blessings

The Menologion

Propers

Books VII and VIII: Časoslov – The Book of Hours

The Order of the Midnight Service

The Order of Orthros

The Order of the Hours

The Order of Vespers

The Order of Compline

Canonicon

Troparia, Kontakia and Theotokia for the Year

Troparia, Kontakia of the Triodion

Menologion

The Order of Holy Communion

Books IX, X and XI: Trebnik – Book of Sacraments and Blessings

Order of Holy Baptism and Chrismation
Order of Confession
Lifting of a Penance
Order of Crowning
Order for a Second Marriage
Order of Small Anointing of the Sick
Order of Holy Communion to the Sick
Funeral of an Adult
Funeral for a Secular Priest
Funeral of a Child
Prayers and Blessings

Book XII: Moleben – Book of Prayer Services

New Year
Civil Holidays
Time of War
Holy Spirit before Good Work
Thanksgiving
Beginning of School
Those Who Are Ill
Travel by Land or Air
Travel by Sea
In Time of Drought
In Time of Excessive Rainfall
Holy Spirit before a Church Council
Holy Spirit before a Meeting
Various Litanies and Prayer Vigils
Various Prayers



Meeting at Saint George Cathedral, L'viv, November 29-30, 1927. Metropolitan Archbishop Andrej Sheptytsky is sitting front center. The Carpatho-Ruthenian bishops in the photograph are the following. First on the left, seated, is Bishop Dionysius Nyaradyi, Bishop of Krizevtsi, who, when this photograph was taken, had recently resigned as Apostolic Administrator of Prešov. In the back row, second from left is Bishop Basil Takach, bishop of the Ruthenian Exarchate of Pittsburgh. Third from left is Bishop Peter Gebej, Bishop of Mukachevo. Fifth from left is Blessed Bishop martyr Paul Gojdich, O.S.B.M, Bishop of Prešov, Czechoslovakia. Among the Ukrainian Greek Catholic bishops are the following. Seated, second from left is Blessed Bishop martyr Hryhory Khomyshyn, Bishop of Stanislaviv, and second most influential Ukrainian Catholic bishop after the Venerable Metropolitan Sheptytsky. Bishop Khomyshyn was not in support of attempts to remove latinizations. Fourth from left seated is Blessed Bishop Nykyta Budka, who was then Bishop of Ukrainians in Canada although he was transferred to Ukraine where he would be martyred in 1949. On the extreme right seated is Blessed Bishop martyr Josaphat Kotsylovsky, O.S.B.M. the Bishop of Peremyśl.

Eastern Christian Publications
PO Box 146
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