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TIMELY PRAYERS: THE SCHEDULE OF THE HOURS IN ELEVENTH CENTURY BENEDICTINE PRACTICE

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Abstract

This thesis considers the interplay between planned, scheduled "quantitative" time and "qualitative" determinations for "the right time" in Benedictine practice. Taking Lanfranc of Canterbury's *Monastic Constitutions* as a case study, it seeks to flesh out the theological significance of the daily horarium by reference to classic texts a late eleventh and twelfth century monk might have reference to, as well as contemporary monastic literature. It considers the congruence between theory and practice, and finds that the Benedictine schedule at times intentionally scheduled "the right time" in alignment with cosmological events such as the sunrise and the night. However, as a schedule, its primary aim was to cultivate a prayerful discipline, which could (and should) be affirmed as right more intentionally by, for example, reflections upon Biblical concordances with this hour, and through the exercise of the virtue of obedience. The Rule of Benedict and Lanfranc's customary give moral value to the quantitative rule of time by integrating it as a central tenet of the monastery's social order. This monastic discipline hopes that praying regularly, in a human order, proactively and not spontaneously, will allow, sometimes, alignment with God's "qualitative" time.

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Table of contents

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction to the Question

The originating idea for this thesis has been a comparison between clock time and medieval monastic time. This is, obviously, anachronistic, and this is also the point. Technological difference is entangled with mindset; and it has even been argued that the mindset from which clock technology was born was a monastic one. In the Divine Office, medieval monasticism approaches a "use" of time as measured, predictable, organizable, and implementable – a use of time which stands out markedly from constructions of pre-modern time as being "task-oriented", structured by natural rhythms of exigency, un-abstracted from its context and content, most particularly at the level of the hour.[1] In a striking phrase, Lewis Mumford deemed the "iron discipline" of the monastery to be the originating point for the kind of mechanical regularity that the later invention of the clock fulfilled upon.[2] This shift in time sense toward quantifying the hours of the day – broadly, from "qualitative" to "quantitative" time - has been treated primarily as an economic and technological phenomenon by Max Weber, Lewis Mumford, Jacques Le Goff, and E.P. Thompson, among others.[3] However, I would like to follow the cue of Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum in his *History of the Hour* to protest against the positioning of monastic time-observance as a teleological step towards a modern capitalist temporality.[4] The avowed motivations for time ordering were religious ones, in a monastery. I would like to take this seriously, and elucidate how the social institution of time

[1] See E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past & Present*, no. 38 (1967): 56–97.

[2] Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization* (George Routledge and Sons, London, 1947), 13, http://archive.org/details/dli.ernet.543881.

[3] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, 2nd ed. Reprint, Routledge Classics (London: Routledge, 2010); Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (University of Chicago Press, 1980); Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*; Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism."

[4] Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), http://archive.org/details/historyofhourclo0000dohr.

attention in a religious context and the institution of time attention as an economic means, treated in these later studies, are significantly different phenomena. By the need for discipline, both employed something approximating "clock-time": abstract, measured regularity. However, I would like to explore how the religious dimension of pre-modern monastic temporality marks its evident "quantitativeness" as unique, especially in its entanglements with qualitative time.[5]

The crux of this interaction in monastic time, as I see it, is the difference between time ordered into a rule, and time which is reflexive, spontaneous - time which is felt to be "the right time" (or, possibly, the "wrong" time). Quantitative time roughly corresponds to the former: time is quantified in the attempt to order it. Annals and chronological ordering present one example of this. So too do the numbered hours of Terce, Sext, and Nones. It is not necessary, however, that numbers be specifically attached to these times. Reading the course of the night by the position of constellations is not linked to number, but it constitutes a "measured" time which extends uniformly and can be predicted. These notations are an order imposed over time as a thing which simply goes on, neutrally.

"Qualitative" time, on the other hand, is, as it were, time with color. It is the *right* time. It does not actively organize an order – it receives its content from the specificity of the moment. The "quality" of the night does not change all that much from the movement of the stars from the field of one night's sky to another; it does, however, change qualitatively when it ceases to be night. The sun rising and setting is a paradigmatic case of a daily, cosmological "qualitative" time. The sun's presence or absence is self-evident, and does much to dictate the type of activity

[5] For an excellently thorough review of sociological literature on "monastic time", see Jiří Šubrt, "The Monastery as a Pattern for the Management of Time: A Contribution to the Historical Sociology of Modernization Processes," *RUDN Journal of Sociology*, no. 2 (2014), https://www.academia.edu/69038690/The_monastery_as_a_pattern_for_the_management_of_time_a_contribution_to_the_historical_sociology_of_modernization_processes.

humans engage in, unless contravened intentionally. The sun does not indicate the time because of a measurement; instead, the measurement comes in an attempt to predict such a moment.

Monastic life oriented itself in many ways to "plan" what would come to be felt as "the right time". This happened both self-consciously, in compliance with age-old tradition, Benedict's Rule, and contemporary customaries; but it happened also as an effect of communal life. Social rhythms revolved around these planned "right times", so that with practice they might to a degree be felt as such, qualitatively. This is no great claim; quantitative time can be felt as qualitative time in our own clock-populated world. When elementary school friends are leaving recess because the teacher called everyone at 12:30, it becomes "the right time" to stop playing now, because you now will have no one to play with. Social coordination is a major component for both the initial quantitative organization to time and the experience of it as qualitative.

Much of what I am interested in, however, is why and how the ordering of time as an abstract (quantitative) rule could be deemed important in a religious context the first place. It is most proximately needful in order to coordinate everyone to undertake their task of prayer together. Even deeper than this, though: the type of task monks are engaged in is a unique one. In rural life outside the monastery, tasks present themselves via communal environmental circumstances: the hay is ripe, we need to harvest now; it is raining, we will not do laundry now; the cow is calving, we must attend to it. If the task at hand is not linked to an external "right time" (perhaps, sewing linens for a future dowry), one can decide to do it when one feels – a "qualitative time", even if it is still viewed as a chore.

Not so in a monastery. One can neither do a task whenever one might decide, nor does one's task to pray at eight hours of the day present itself from the environment - unless this belongs to the social environment that monasteries construct and uphold. The task, prayer, is

intangible. There are conscious attempts to associate it with the material environment: prayers at sunrise and sunset as the backbone of age-long cathedral and monastic service is the most notable testament to this.[6] However, there is nothing about the angle of sunlight at Terce that makes that hour perfect for prayers. Nor, very often, in quotidian daily life, is anything changed about the environment after having completed prayers at this certain time, and because of punctuality. The significance of the timeliness lies in the reasons the community provides for it. This ranges from explicit – this hour is good because it is the hour darkness fell over the earth at Christ's death – to deeper but perhaps not yet subconcious: timeliness is an expression of willingness or zeal; of fraternity; of obedience to God. But these justifications beg still further: why is it good to pray? Why is it good to pray in this manner?

Theologians, believers, and thinkers from the first centuries of Christianity to the Middle Ages and well beyond, from Augustine to Gregory the Great to Jean Leclercq to Rachel Fulton Brown have provided extensive reasons for "why it is good to pray in this manner" – this manner being: constantly. In Augustine's exposition on the Sermon on the Mount, he explains that prayer "renders [the heart] more capable of receiving the divine gifts which are poured upon us in a spiritual manner."[7] Prayer is a kind of a training, an education: It is a "turning of the heart" which "cleanses the inner eye".[8] This serves two purposes, one more surface level and one deeper. To keep oneself occupied in praying given verses – following a liturgy, for example – keeps a monk busy. It prevents his thoughts from wandering, whether from simply losing focus, being swayed into sinful thoughts, or falling into a depression of listlessness and purposelessness. The *Sayings of the Desert Fathers* and numerous passages in John Cassian's

[6] Robert F. Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: The Origins of the Divine Office and Its Meaning for Today* (Collegeville, MN : Liturgical Press, 1986), http://archive.org/details/liturgyofhoursin0000taft. Taft describes development and origins, obviously, in wonderful detail; for a short summary of origins as is relevant here, see pp. 28-29.
[7] Jonathan D. Teubner, *Prayer After Augustine: A Study in the Development of the Latin Tradition*, First Edition, Changing Paradigms in Historical and Systematic Theology (Oxford, United Kingdom ; New York, NY, United States of America: Oxford University Press, 2018), 62.
[8] Teubner, 62.

Institutes and *Conferences* address this theme.[9] Secondly, and deeper: it becomes experientially clear why it is good to pray as and after one has *done* it. The wisdom to value prayer comes with practice.[10] As Jean Leclercq explains Gregory the Great's theology of prayer, the glimmers of peace, even of ecstasy, which may sometimes – in special moments, of *compunctio*, for example – coincide with prayer or be effected by it, instill in the believer a further desire to experience such moments again: a motivation to pray. With this awakening and feeding or desire, then, the believer approaches already his goal. "He who with his whole soul desires God," writes Gregory the Great, "certainly already possesses the one he loves."[11]

The more prayer is practiced, the more skill is developed, the more intimate and nuanced the achievement of a connection to God, in peace or in ecstasy, fear or love.[12] As Rachel Fulton Brown has articulated in "Praying with Anselm at Admont", the Psalms and the contents of the liturgy sung daily in the *horarium* are learned almost as letters of the alphabet – conscious training by disciplined, quantitative time.[13] From this learned skill, the words of the Bible become a medium in which to express emotion, knowledge, connection to God. They become reflexive. Through such constancy of practice, a monk can become more open to, more receptive of, moments of "qualitative" time, in which God's presence can be felt beyond and outside the schedule – spontaneously, reflexively. Quantitative time serves qualitative time; it

[9] Cassian, for example: "It is inevitable that the mind which does not have a place to turn to or any stable base will undergo change from hour to hour and from minute to minute due to the variety of distractions, and by the things that come to it from outside it will be continually transformed into whatever occurs to it at any given moment." John Cassian, *John Cassian: The Conferences*, trans. Boniface Ramsey (New York : Paulist Press, 1997), 45, http://archive.org/details/johncassianconfe0000cass. See also, for example, Douglas Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 125–26. Burton-Christie emphasizes, significantly, that the act of will to recite Scripture, perhaps almost more than the words themselves, was what was effective and important.

[10] See, for example, Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert*, 150-154, 161-166, 221-230; also Bernard of Clairvaux, cited in Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture* (Fordham University Press, 1982), 5, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb01061.0001.001. "A canticle of this kind, fervor alone can teach; it can be learned only though experience. Those who have experienced it will recognize this. Those who have not experienced it, may they burn with desire not so much to know as to experience."

[11] Leclercq, 31.

[12] Rachel Fulton, "Praying with Anselm at Admont: A Meditation on Practice," *Speculum* 81, no. 3 (2006): 733.

[13] Fulton, 711.

is a training that takes seriously the ideal in which a practitioner finds it always the right time to pray.

It is necessary, thus, to translate this theological (and phenomenological) reasoning into practical discipline, in a kind of schedule – a Rule. Benedict's Rule, and the monastic customaries which explain how the Rule should be followed in a particular community, represent this discipline of quantitative time: a conscious regimen, with lines drawn for how it should and should not be followed – and, *when*. The strictness of the rule of time is one answer to the seriousness with which such self-discipline was taken, and how a belief in liturgical prayer as not only good, but *necessary,* could be socially upheld and reified in institutional organization. It skips the question "why is it good to pray?" to answer in a wholesale affirmation, in practice. Holding this ideal already at root, these texts go forth to detail how this should be done.

The particular "institutional organization" that I root my investigation in is Lanfranc of Canterbury's late eleventh century *Monastic Constitutions*. Contained within it are sometimes minute accounts of when things should be done, from the order of a procedure to the prayers of the day to the holidays of the season. I supplement this with a text called "The Instruction of Novices According to the Custom of the Church of Canterbury", closely in accord with Lanfranc's customary in a surviving thirteenth century collection.[14] I ask and consider, in my analysis, how a disciplined schedule might contribute to religiosity; what the consequences for lateness might be; when the completion of a prayer, tout court, might matter more than the moment at which it is said, or if it is possible to miss the moment; if spontaneity in prayer held special value; with what indicators – whose – and on whose authority – "the right time" might

[14] This text is included in the 2002 edition of the *Constitutions*. Knowles thinks that it closely follows Lanfranc's customary, and comes from close to the same time. David Knowles, "Introduction," in *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, ed. Christopher N. L. Brooke (New York : Oxford University Press, 2002), http://archive.org/details/monasticconstitu0000lanf_u3w1. p. liii.

be determined. What is the upshot of this belief in the necessity to pray?[15] How is it carried out in an institution designed to fulfill this ideal? This customary provides me a central touchstone to investigate, and an imaginative home base (eleventh to twelfth century Norman and English monasticism) for exploring what resources a practicing monk might have for thinking about the rule he is enlisted to follow.

Considerations for primary source

Lanfranc's customary has been dated to sometime in the 1070s.[16] It seems certainly to have been written by Lanfranc, and designed for use at Christ Church, his monastery, as well as at other locations where the text may have been brought, notably at St. Albans, where Lanfranc's nephew Paul was made abbot in 1077. Copies also exist at Battle Abbey, where Prior Henry went on to become abbot, Saint Augustine's, located in the very same town of Canterbury, and Dover, a dependent priory. At least six good manuscripts survive since before 1200, with more created afterwards. It seems to have enjoyed a modest popularity; there is even an early thirteenth-century translation of it into Norwegian. [17]

Much of the other considerations as to date, intent, and usage concern the connection of these customs with a program of monastic reform, whether internal or external, by Lanfranc. He had come from Norman France upon William the Conqueror's request, to be appointed as archbishop of Canterbury in 1070.[18] He had insisted, against the opinions of his bishop-

[15] I am much enamoured of several pragmatist texts I have read. Especially, here, from Charles Sanders Peirce: "The *final* upshot of thinking is the exercise of volition, and of this thought no longer forms a part; but belief is only a stadium of mental action, an effect upon our nature due to thought, which will influence future thinking." Charles Sanders Peirce, "How To Make Our Ideas Clear," in *Pragmatism: A Reader*, ed. Louis Menand (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 33. I think this is beautiful.

[16] Christopher N. L. Brooke, "Audience, Date, and Sources," in *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, by Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, trans. David Knowles (New York : Oxford University Press, 2002), xxviii–xlii, http://archive.org/details/monasticconstitu0000lanf_u3w1. Xxviii.

[17] For these considerations in detail, see Brooke's "Audience, Date, and Sources", ibid.

[18] This customary has also been a touchpoint for investigations into the interaction of English and Norman monasticism. The general trend, both in broad overviews of the monastic order in England by Frank Barlow and Dom David Knowles, and targeted analyses like Margaret Gibson's biography of Lanfranc and Helen Gittos' analysis of liturgical texts around his time at Canterbury, has been to conclude that Lanfranc did not aim for

colleagues and his king, that a monastery be maintained at the cathedral campus.[19] The monastery there was, indeed, still active, though perhaps on the wane.[20] It is possible that Lanfranc wrote these Constitutions early in his office[21]; the dating tends circumstantially to focus on the later 1070s, which may have provided opportunities for the introduction of fresh customs upon the reconsecration of the rebuilt Cathedral (destroyed by fire in 1067) and a shameful public incident with one of the monks which may have acted as a pretext for reform.[22] It could be, also, that Lanfranc decided to write up customs in time to send them with Paul to St. Albans. This way, in writing Lanfranc could offer instructions to aid in the proper administration of a new house and at the same time act as a pretext to consolidate and clarify the standards that were to be held to at home. There is little indication that Lanfranc intended them strictly to be implemented as a broader program of standardization for English monasteries under the new Norman king and archbishopric.[23] On the contrary, Lanfranc's preface emphasizes that both he and other houses should reserve the right to adjust the customs as need arises. This passage is worth quoting at length:

> "We send you written out the customs of our monastic life which we have compiled from the customs of those monasteries which in our day have the greatest prestige in the monastic order. We have added a few details, and have made certain changes, particularly in the ceremonies of certain feasts, considering that they should be kept with greater solemnity in our church by reason of the primatial see which is there. In this we do no prejudice to our own freedom or that of those who come after us; we are all free to add or to take away or to make changes if we think alteration to be an advantage, following right

wholesale transformative action on this front of monastic customs. He seems to have intended here to bring up to date standards which were intelligible on both sides of the Channel. Frank Barlow, *The English Church, 1066-1154 : A History of the Anglo-Norman Church* (London; New York: Longman, 1979), 177–89, http://archive.org/details/englishchurch1060000barl. David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England: A History of Its Development from the Times of St. Dunstan to the Fourth Lateran Council, 940-1216* (Cambridge University Press, 1976), 57–144, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb01217.0001.001. Margaret Gibson, "Normans and Angevins," in *A History of Canterbury Cathedral*, ed. Patrick Collinson, Nigel Ramsay, and Margaret Sparks (Oxford University Press, 1995), 38–68; Helen Gittos, "Sources for the Liturgy of Canterbury Cathedral in the Central Middle Ages," in *Medieval Art, Architecture & Archaeology at Canterbury* (Routledge, 2013).

[19] H. E. J. Cowdrey, *Lanfranc: Scholar, Monk, Archbishop* (Oxford University Press, 2003), 149–50, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199259601.001.0001.

[20] Cowdrey, 149–50. Gibson, "Normans and Angevins," 44.

[21] For this argument, see Gibson, "Normans and Angevins," 41. Also Brooke, "Audience, Date, and Sources," xxx.

[22] Cowdrey, *Lanfranc: Scholar, Monk, Archbishop*, 151–52.

[23] Along with Brooke, "Audience, Date, and Sources," xxx, see Barlow, *The English Church, 1066-1154*, 183.

> reason or the judgement of those better informed; for however far a man advance, it is the worst of failings for him to suppose that he can go no further. An increase or decrease in the number of monks, conditions in different places and often occurring changes of circumstance, added to diversity of opinion shown in this or that way of thinking—all these often make for changes in matters which have long been unaltered. Hence it is that no one church can exactly imitate the practices of another. What we have to consider with the greatest care is that what is necessary for the soul's salvation should be safeguarded in every way: faith, that is, and contempt of the world, together with charity, chastity, humility, patience, obedience; penance for faults committed and a humble confession of them; frequent prayers; silence in fitting measure; and many other things of this kind. Where these are preserved it may truly be said that the Rule of St Benedict and the monastic order are kept, whatever variety there be in other matters which have been differently ordered in different monasteries."[24]

This passage from his preface is important for several reasons. First, it sets out the desire to keep up to date with "those monasteries which in our day have the greatest prestige in the monastic order". The unnamed referent here is almost undoubtedly Cluny. Dom David Knowles, 1951 translator of the *Constitutions*, notes how consistently and copiously Lanfranc borrows from a Cluny exemplar, identified by Knowles as Bernard's.[25] The parallels are substantial, but Christopher Brooke, the editor of the 2002 critical edition of the *Constitutions*, also amends that Lanfranc does not borrow so obediently as Knowles' footnotes sometimes make it seem. While some passages are notably similar, not every time does Lanfranc copy word for word, and indeed whole sections and organizational structure of the two texts differ.[26] These remarks seem well in line with the attitude communicated by Lanfranc himself here, bringing us to our next point of relevance, even greater than the first: Lanfranc emphasizes the

[24] Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, ed. Christopher N. L. Brooke, trans. David Knowles (New York : Oxford University Press, 2002), 3–5, http://archive.org/details/monasticconstitu0000lanf_u3w1.

[25] "Bernard of Cluny: Ordo Cluniacensis per Bernardum saeculi XI. scriptorem," in *Vetus disciplina monastica, seu collectio auctorum ordinis S. Benedicti maximam partem ineditorum qui ... de monastica disciplina tractarunt.*, by Marquardus Herrgott (Typis C. Osmont, 1726), 133–364, https://books.google.at/books/about/Vetus_disciplina_monastica_seu_Collectio.html?id=fGOfRphohhsC&redir_esc=y. This seemingly does not help to refine the date, as the copy of Bernard's that we have may have been a later edition, according to Brooke, "Audience", xl.

[26] Brooke, "Audience, Date, and Sources." Xli-xlii.

wisdom of practical adaptation. This tells us that the customary was intended to indeed be followed, not to exist as a floating ideal.

It can remain a question always to what extent the guidelines set out in customaries were, in fact, followed. Anselme Davril[27] has pointed out a possible three-type classification: 1) directive customaries, which fix a living custom in writing to ensure its continued maintenance[28]; 2) normative customaries, which establish a rule either at a new house or to reform an existing one[29]; and 3) descriptive customaries, which describe the usages of a monastery foreign to the house where the copy of the customary is located, but which are not necessarily intended for implementation. Isabelle Cochelin has also called these latter "inspirational" customaries.[30] The audience is a key component for this strategy of differentiation. Both "directive" and "descriptive" customaries describe what are, it seems, living customs – practices that were already the norm. They differ as to whether the document was intended for internal or external reference, and whether it was written for implementation. Both directive and normative customaries were intended for practical adherence, but the first remained within its own community while the second was exported.

[27] Anselme Davril, "Coutumiers directifs et coutumiers descriptifs d'Ulrich à Bernard de Cluny," in *From dead of night to end of day : the medieval customs of Cluny = Du cœur de la nuit à la fin du jour : les coutumes clunisiennes au Moyen Âge*, ed. Isabelle Cochelin and Susan Boynton, Disciplina Monastica 3 (Brepols, 2005), 23–28.

[28] Examples given by Davril include the customary of Bernard of Cluny, and those of Bec, Fleury, Eynsham, and Affligham. Davril, 23.

[29] Davril offers the decrees of the Synods of Aachen in 816-17, the *Regularis concordia* and the Cistercian *Ecclesiastica officia* as examples for this type. Davril, 24.

[30] The shining example of this type is the descriptive customary of Cluny written by Ulrich of Zell by request of his abbot, William of Hirsau. William of Hirsau did not adopt this descriptive customary for use at their abbey, but instead benefited from this account as a reference as he formulated his own (normative) customary. Isabelle Cochelin has written more extensively about this type, and also points out that a (in her eyes) notable majority of early customaries (before 1080) are of this type. See Isabelle Cochelin, "Customaries as Inspirational Sources," in *Consuetudines et Regulae*, vol. 10, Disciplina Monastica 10 (Brepols Publishers, 2014), 27–72, https://doi.org/10.1484/M.DM-EB.5.102134; Isabelle Cochelin, "Downplayed or Silenced: Authorial Voices Behind Customaries and Customs (Eighth to Eleventh Centuries)," in *Shaping Stability: The Normation and Formation of Religious Life in the Middle Ages*, by Krijn Pansters and Abraham Plunkett-Latimer, vol. 11, Disciplina Monastica 11 (Brepols Publishers, 2016), 153–73, https://doi.org/10.1484/M.DM-EB.5.108939; Isabelle Cochelin, "Évolution Des Coutumiers Monastiques Dessiné à Partir de l'ètude de Bernard," in *From Dead of Night to End of Day : The Medieval Customs of Cluny = Du Cœur de La Nuit à La Fin Du Jour : Les Coutumes Clunisiennes Au Moyen Âge*, ed. Isabelle Cochelin and Susan Boynton, vol. 3, Disciplina Monastica (Brepols, 2005).

It seems that, under this classification, Lanfranc's text would fit as a "normative" customary. It seems to have been intended for implementation at Christ Church itself as well as other monasteries, perhaps particularly St. Albans.[31] It might be asked whether it in fact served only as an "inspirational" source in some of the houses in which manuscripts have been located. However, his very emphasis on adaptability, here, seems to dissipate the relevance of the distinction. These were usages which he found to be good as a guide to monastic life as he knew it. Ideality is important for practice; it helps to give direction to actions or events which cannot always be circumscribed in a rule.[32] He believes that these concrete practices that he sets down contribute to cultivating the virtues that monastic life aspires to; he understands that, with these virtues in mind, other usages can be appropriate. I, thus, take him more or less at his word that these guidelines were followed as prudently as they could be. "Timeliness," meanwhile, does not present itself in this customary as a specific item on an agenda of correction. The time notations I work with surface only as a matter of course, and the casual conventionality with which they are used encourage me to take them as representative rather than unique. They are complicit in the broader intention for good observance. I value this text, including its ordering of time, as an expression of practical ideality.

This brings us to the final significant theme of Lanfranc's preface which I will cite. He allows adaptation not only pragmatically, but further, out of a privileging of the "spirit" over the "letter". Flexibility can be put to use not only for usages at other monasteries, not only for practical exigency, but for remaining receptive to a nuanced sensibility trained by religious life.

[31] Lanfranc consistently writes, for example, that decisions should be referred to *either* the abbot or the prior. At Canterbury, while Lanfranc was the abbot, his frequent absence to fulfill his office of archbishop meant that, in day to day life, the prior often acted in the abbot's role. That Lanfranc consistently alternates between these terms has been used as evidence that he had both internal and external use in mind. See Brooke, "Audience, Date, and Sources."

[32] I am much in agreement with Gert Melville's description of the "normative" nature of customaries (and many other texts of the religious life) as articulated in "Action, Text, and Validity: On Re-Examining Cluny's Consuetudines and Statutes," in *From Dead of Night to End of Day: The Medieval Customs of Cluny*, vol. 3, Disciplina Monastica 3 (Brepols Publishers, 2005), 77–80, https://doi.org/10.1484/M.DM-EB.3.474. These are norms rooted in practice, both deriving from and further facilitating values present in the community.

This points to the seemingly antipodal nature of spiritual rules, disciplined religiosity, and indeed quantitative and qualitative time itself. The letter preserves the spirit; but the spirit should transcend the letter.

Chronos and Kairos

A closely analogous distinction between what I have been calling "quantitative" and "qualitative" time has been made on the level of salvation history by 20th century theologians such as Oscar Cullmann[33], Paul Tillich[34], and Karl Rahner[35], between "chronos" and "kairos" time.[36] Chronos time is measured duration; it is the period in which humans wait out the unfolding of the divine plan. It does not have any specific content, per se; it is neutral. A kairos, however, is the irruption of God into time. These are significant moments: the Incarnation, the Final Resurrection. Humans can have nothing to do but to receive these moments. They wait; but they can, however, prepare in the meanwhile. Chronos time, quantitative time, is a device for both waiting and for preparation. Medieval annals present one example of chronos as waiting time.[37] However, with measurement there can also be planning. On the level of

[33] Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, trans. Floyd V. Filson (S.C.M. Press, 1971), http://archive.org/details/christtime0000cull.

[34] Paul Tillich, *The Interpretation of History*, trans. N.A. Rasetski and Elsa L. Talmey (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), 123–79, http://archive.org/details/interpretationof0000till_r8r5. See also Rowan Tepper, "Kairos - A Political Post-History of the Concept of Time," accessed May 28, 2025, https://www.academia.edu/1468890/Kairos_A_Political_Post_History_of_the_Concept_of_Time.

[35] Shannon Craigo-Snell, "Kairos in the Chronos: A Rahnerian View," *Philosophy and Theology* 23, no. 2 (2011): 301–15, https://doi.org/10.5840/philtheol201123217.

[36] Reference to Christian salvation history has become almost ubiquitous when treating these terms, even outside theology. For literary application (as well as snappy, appealing conceptualization) see Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending* (Oxford University Press, 2000). For an interesting review of their role in a series of Marxist thinkers including Walter Benjamin and Giorgio Agamben, see Roland Boer, "Revolution in the Event: The Problem of Kairós," *Theory, Culture & Society* 30, no. 2 (March 1, 2013): 116–34, https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276412456565. Oscar Cullmann's foundational (theological) contribution will be discussed below. It can be noted that James Barr presented a crushing philological refutation that these are consistently differentiated terms in the Septuagint, in James Barr, *Biblical Words for Time*, 2nd ed., Studies in Biblical Theology 33 (Napierville, Ill.: S.C.M. Press, 1969), http://archive.org/details/biblicalwordsfor0000barr_v3f5. For a flawless (for my purposes) definition of the pair as philosophical concepts, exactly synonymous with the distinction I wish to make, see John E. Smith's two articles, John E. Smith, "Time, Times, and the 'Right Time'; 'Chronos' and 'Kairos,'" *The Monist* 53, no. 1 (1969): 1–13; John E. Smith, "Time and Qualitative Time," *The Review of Metaphysics* 40, no. 1 (1986): 3–16.

[37] Hayden White's treatment of the *Annals of Saint Gall* in his article "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality" is a fascinating contribution here. The numbered list of years remains a constant, but not every year has an entry. Instead, entries corresponding to a year are only made when significant events arise.

centuries and of history, eschatological calculations demonstrate a chronos aiming at "practical use": to predict a kairos. Despite our inability to call down such a kairos ourselves, or be certain of our calculations for it, quantitative measurement in this millenarian sense acts as a tool to order our own motions, to make us ready and worthy at the kairos whenever it comes.

Oscar Cullmann made famous the use of "kairos" in analysis of salvation history, though he contrasted it with "aion" instead of "chronos".[38] He, however, noted and set aside instances of secular kairos as of a different type – merely trivial usage of the sense. If human considerations are the final word, we are no longer talking about the same thing. I recognize the prudence of this, and accept it provisionally. It seems important to reserve *kairos* for those times seemingly determined by God: the Incarnation, for example, yes, but also a change of wind, the occurrence of a miracle, the conditions of a season.[39] When Anselm writes, in one of his letters, that he must be briefer than he wishes because his messenger must leave, his "qualitative" time of writing to a friend is interrupted by a "quantified", measured judgement of how long a journey will take, with requisite rational planning of when it is necessary to leave. It might be harder to construe Anselm's letter writing as a "kairos" interrupted by a "chronos". The "rightness" of the moment is subject to Anselm's appraisal and Anselm's appraisal only, not conditioned by anything outside himself, and thereby cannot and should not act as binding on the situation: he, indeed, signs off quickly to let the messenger get on his way.[40]

Any given year does not automatically have significance except as an empty counter. Hayden White, "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality," *Critical Inquiry* 7, no. 1 (1980): 11–12.

[38] Cullmann, *Christ and Time*.

[39] Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8 ("a time to reap, and a time to sow…") is the quintessential Biblical expression of "kairos" time. I think it befits consideration, too, to extend the lines to 9-15 as well, where worldly times are set in the scope both of God's eternity and God's intent for man by ordaining such "right times". (Barr has however been able to undermine the real theological significance of the distinction between the two terms in the Septuagint's Greek, as mentioned above in footnote 37, *Biblical Words for Time*.)

[40] Letter 47, Saint Anselm of Canterbury, *The Letters of Saint Anselm of Canterbury*, trans. Walter Frölich, vol. 1 (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1990), 154, http://archive.org/details/lettersofsaintan0001anse.

However, I would like to keep *kairos* in mind when encountering times which fit the "qualitative" sense, and experiment with the blurring of the lines between God-ordained and human timeliness. In an almost-analogous scenario in Lanfranc's Constitutions, a monk departing on a journey is forbidden to leave the monastery if the bell sounds before he is out of the gate.[41] The "quality" of the task conflicting with his departure is, in this case, divine in content and intent, as well as social in practice; thus it must supersede the practical considerations that prevail over personal ones in Anselm's case. Yet what of the instance, as Goscelin du Saint Bertin writes a book of instruction to a young nun becoming a hermitess, where he records he had to interrupt his writing to flee to the chapel altar to pray about his grief at being separated from her?[42] This may be a stylized story; or it may actually have occurred. But, again, ideality is important for its implications for both what was understood as conceivable, and what was understood as good. Like Anselm, in this story he was interrupted; this interruption seems, like Anselm's, to be outside his own control – yet, unlike Anselm, the "uncontrollable" interruption is experienced internally, conditioned within himself. Most significantly, it leads him to seek comfort in and plead his case to God. This seems an exemplary case of spontaneous religiosity. Goscelin is not following any rule, but experiencing an urgent need and desire to pray. He is compelled to God, by something outside him. Could this, itself, be an act of God? A trial He throws upon Goscelin's path, to prompt a turning to Him?[43] An event of the same status, though smaller in scope, as an event in salvation history?

[41] Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 144–45.

[42] Monika C. Otter, trans., *Goscelin of St Bertin: The Book of Encouragement and Consolation [Liber Confortatorius]*, 1st ed. (Boydell and Brewer Limited, 2004), 22, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781846152641. He writes that he "called out again and again, as if buffeted and beaten by the Lord: Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy." I will return to this in my final chapter.

[43] Gregory the Great: "sometimes, even if strokes without should seem to have ceased, He inflicts wounds within, in that He strikes the hardness of the heart with the desire of Himself; yet in wounding He heals, in that when we are pierced with the dart of His dread, He recalls us to a right sense. For our hearts are not well sound, when they are wounded by no love of God, when they feel not the wofulness of their pilgrimage, when they do not go sorrowing with the least degree of feeling for the infirmity of their neighbour. But they are 'wounded,' that they may be 'healed,' in that God strikes unfeeling souls with the darts of His love, and straightway makes them full of feeling…" *Morals on the Book of Job*, trans. John Henry Parker, 1844. Vol. 1, pt. II, Book 6.42. https://www.lectionarycentral.com/GregoryMoralia/Book06.html

Determining what is or is not an act of grace troubles theologians already, and historians and anthropologists, perhaps less equipped, are on even shakier ground. Precisely that magical sense is what is important here, and the same reason it is elusive to the historian and anthropologist is the same reason it cannot be mandated in an administrative rule and the same reason why kairos should be used sparingly. Yet this question also asks to what extent human instincts of "the right time" may be aligned with God's judgements, God's order, God's intention. This has direct relevance for the qualitative moments in the daily horarium. Is the sunrise a daily intervention, prompting us to praise? Are the pleas for protection at night answered by him, from every evening to every cock-crow? It also has relevance for *unplanned* qualitative moments, those which occur outside and around my source, which might perhaps be cultivated in the believer by the regimen he follows. Perhaps, sometimes, the constancy of the office might be a reassurance of peace. Sometimes, what if it appears as an opportunity: to pray, to feel belonging, to rest from other work, to appreciate the beauty of the chant, to meditate.[44] This *chronos*-order is made purposely to effect some accordance with the divine, and it may sometimes succeed, both in predicted, planned, quantitative time, and the more reflective and reflexive ethos which ensues from such an environment.

The Narrow Way

The possibility – or desire – that God might be felt in one's daily horarium is especially relevant in a monastery, aiming to permeate all aspects of community and individual life with

[44] In *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Charles Taylor has pointed out how the communal and interpersonal relation aspect of institutional religion is one which is missed in William James' highly individualistic account, which is itself (in his appraisal) one very topical for how we practice and understand religiosity today – individualistically. He points out that some religious feelings can only be experiences, or can be immensely enhanced, by experiencing them in community. Lauren Mancia and Amy Hollywood have both pointed to this difference between modern individualistic experiential religiosity and a more disciplined approach in evidence from medieval monastic authors. Charles Taylor, *Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited*, Institute for Human Sciences Vienna Lecture Series (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002); Amy Hollywood, "Spiritual but Not Religious," Harvard Divinity Bulletin, 2010, https://bulletin.hds.harvard.edu/spiritual-but-not-religious/; Lauren Mancia, *Meditation and Prayer in the Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Monastery: Struggling Towards God*, Spirituality and Monasticism, East and West (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2023).

a sense of God's presence. It is equally important, however, that this permeation was sought *actively*. The very awareness of the difficulty to have each time be "qualitative", let alone a *kairos*, is why the hours were regulated in quantified time. The discipline required is a human one, aware of human limitation, instituted and guarded by human decisions. Just as chronos constitutes human time awaiting God's kairoi, so too is quantification a tool to fill lacunae, and to work as a training mechanism. As the "Instruction of Novices According to the Custom of the Church of Canterbury" writes, if certain forms of practice are "allowed to recur as often to the memory as they do in practice", "rough places will be changed into a high way and hard things will become easy."[45] Regulated apportioning forms prayer into a habit, not only dependent on instincts of the moment.

By necessity, then: the hard way must be enforced, and followed. To many monks, going every day of the rest of their lives to sing the Divine Office, "why is it good to pray in this manner" may have been unthought. Both the "goodness" and the "why" are irrelevant. Why is it good to wear a shirt when going out in public? Why do we conjugate a verb in this way and not that? A monk does this because this is what he does every day; a monk does this because this is what he is required to do.

Discipline, as an individual commitment, seems to involve some kind of motivation, and some kind of result. There should be a strong reason to embark upon such a discipline in the first place; and there should be reason to continue, whether the perseverer finds joy in the journey, or they catch glimpses of their "end" getting closer. When the discipline is imposed as an institutional requirement, however, and deviation from the discipline is anathema, such considerations about commitment might hold little weight. In the late eleventh and early twelfth century, where I focus my analysis, monasteries in both England and France held both adult

[45] Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 199.

conversi, who came to the cloister later in life by intentional decision, and child oblates, given by their parents to the monastery.[46] Many of these were bound to the profession by their parents, not by personal decision; and those who did later affirm the decision to stay did so with no knowledge of the outside world; no real sense of what they were renouncing. Motivation, as a reasoned commitment to the ideals of the institution, may thus have been missing in various ways from those who were brought up as child oblates. But inscrutability of intention is a historiographical and anthropological precept that extends to the adult conversi, too – their motivation may not have been, as we might say, strictly "religious" either. It could have been a means to be cared for in company, escape an intolerable situation outside, gain an education. Monastic life means many things. It entails the Divine Office as a central tenet; to refuse participation in the schedule of the monastery is to refuse participation in the life itself.

This is an extremely powerful reason to continue in such a discipline. This Rule structures a monk's social life; it reifies the negative consequences of disobedience; it provides a rubric in which he can practice virtue - in relation to his brothers in community, to wider society in the prayers he offers, and in relation to God. Even at the times where a monk might wish he could stay away from service, sleep a little longer, spend his time as he wants – it would be hard for him to escape, in the total context of a monastery, the sense that what he is engaged to do is what he *should* do; that it represents a higher good than personal self-will.[47] The cloister

[46] Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 417–21; James G. Clark, *The Benedictines in the Middle Ages*, Monastic Orders (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), 64–66. Isabelle Cochelin in her article "Downplayed or Silenced: Authorial Voices Behind Customaries and Customs (Eighth to Eleventh Centuries)" asserts that, prior to the late eleventh century, most monks had entered as child oblates, but around this time the number of adult *conversi* increased. The laxity of the year-probation (a year-long novitiate is not required in Lanfranc's Constitutions; the length is subject to the judgement of the abbot) may have been a manifestation of the scarcity of adult converts, and therefore a testament to the commitment they had in mind already in coming to the monastery. See Brooke/Knowles footnote 360 in Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 158.

[47] Erving Goffman has discussed monasteries as one example of a "total institution" in Erving Goffman, "On the Characteristics of Total Institutions," in *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*, by Erving Goffman (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1961), 1–124. (religious total institutions are interspersed within his discussion of other types).

is designed to affirm the discipline it commits itself to. The goods of the monastery order, in obedience and in fraternity, are aligned with the goods of obedience to and love of God.

These monks, furthermore, were engaged to reflect consciously upon these things: monastic life, their service, on prayer, on God. It could not always be an unthinking obedience in which God played no part; they were surrounded with answers – from role models, from the Rule, from Scripture, mediations, readings - why "quantitative" time is necessary; why it is good, each time, to pray. A sincere commitment to belief does not necessarily lead; it can follow. Religiosity is something that can be learned. The monastery schedule aims to teach it.

Background Belief

The question of how matter-of-fact medieval religious belief might be runs in the background of many modern encounters with vestiges of the medieval world, or conceptualizations of it. It has been taken up with vigor by scholars of secularism, as a counterpoint to how modern Westernized societies engage with religion today. "Never-secular" societies, as termed by Tanya Luhrmann, to take one example, are ones in which "religion" is not an option which can be added in or taken out of the course of ordinary life.[48] Charles Taylor elaborates on this theme of "options" in his book *A Secular Age*, and describes with eloquence how exclusive humanism could come to replace the need for fulfillment which religion once offered. Before such an avenue historically offered itself, however, he presents the possibility of a pre-secular "naive belief", in which God or gods might appear unproblematically as (the) underlying reality. He poses a pre-modern world in which there was "a condition of lived experience, where what we might call a construal of the moral/spiritual is lived not as such, but as immediate reality, like stones, rivers and mountains."[49] In this vision, sunrise could easily be

[48] T. M. Luhrmann, "A Hyperreal God and Modern Belief: Toward an Anthropological Theory of Mind," *Current Anthropology* 53, no. 4 (August 2012): 371–95, https://doi.org/10.1086/666529.
[49] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge (Mass.): Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 12.

a kairos – and kairoi might not be as rare as the magical "spontaneous religiosity" which I provisionally set aside. The medieval believer, it seems, understands that interventions of God are not to be unexpected. Perhaps the monk does, indeed, respond to His call in his *opus Dei*.

Taylor experiments, too, with what the world of "meanings" might look like before Descartes erected the wall of doubt between mind and the world, pondering that "meaning" might be conceived to exist objectively, independently of the human mind's conception of it.[50] It is good to pray – it is good to pray regardless of what reasons we may or may not give for it. The rectitude of *this* time, while it may appear as a determination made for the organizational, interpersonal, and psychological order of the monastery, might in fact accord, unconsciously at the moment of institution, with a wider order. The elders Cassian describes in his *Institutes* simply set down a rule; but authors later found Scriptural passages and Biblical events – Christ's Passion, Adam's time in paradise, the lives of the apostles - which align with these very times of the horarium. These "meanings", as Taylor describes them, happen upon human actors whether those actors were conscious of it intellectually in the moment or not.

Steven Justice, in his article "Did the Middle Ages Believe in Their Miracles", takes issue with Taylor's construal of "naïve" belief.[51] He adduces examples of miracle records where some miracles are clearly more legitimate than others – a sense that some miracles are included out of, perhaps, obligation, or suspension of disbelief. Only some rare ones *really* call for attention. These ones must be believed, because it could not be otherwise; the others, we acknowledge more out of a sense of general duty. Justice asserts above this that medieval people engaged themselves in faith as an *active* affirmation. They had to try. "We believe" is recited – routinely, consistently, on a schedule, as a ritual – not (necessarily, always) descriptively, but

[50] Taylor, 31–33.
[51] Steven Justice, "Did the Middle Ages Believe in Their Miracles?," *Representations* 103, no. 1 (2008): 1–29, https://doi.org/10.1525/rep.2008.103.1.1.

aspirationally. We commit ourselves to believe. It does not simply go on in the background. Faith is intentional, and effortful.

But it does not seem necessary that Taylor and Justice be at odds. To undertake the discipline implies a background belief in a larger goal. And this remains relevant on a social/sociological level. Though the child oblate did not commit himself, his parents did. Whatever their various, more proximate, more pragmatic reasons may have been, this act is articulated as a devotion to God. Outsiders like these parents pay for monastic intercession; they donate to the Church in the name of God; they invoke him in their own private prayers. When an adult decides to convert, it would be abjectly unjust not to consider God as a critical part of the equation. Even if we were to throw an analytical, sociological spin upon such a choice: the social goods of a virtuous company of brothers, of shelter from the chaotic earthly world, of entrance into knowledge and education, all may be, too, attributed to God.

The child oblate, himself brought to an environment designed to foster devotion not by his own choice, could not but have been carried along. Some of the greatest Benedictine intellectuals resulted from such a "carrying along": Hildegard of Bingen, Orderic Vitalis, Rupert of Deutz, Suger of Saint Denis, Eadmer of Canterbury, etc, etc, were all child oblates.[52] "Background" sincerity grows up with them, as they were given to commitment. They have lifetimes of possibility to learn, and to experience for themselves, the reasons why their devotion was right and good.[53]

The next chapter will delve into some of the resources that might have been available to a late eleventh and early twelfth century monk in providing "thinking" reasons. After taking

[52] Clark, *The Benedictines in the Middle Ages*, 65.
[53] If one definition of truth might be, as Richard Rorty supplies, what we will let each other get away with saying – or William James, "what is better for us to believe" - then citing God as a motivating reason and a guiding reference seems a strong contender for truth in many instances in medieval discourse. Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, 2nd print., with corrections, Princeton Paperbacks Philosophy (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1980), 174–76.

a small, technically necessary step aside to consider what an "hour" meant in monastic time reckoning, taking my cue from Bede's *De temporum ratione*, I will turn to a selection of texts which describe the institution of the Hours, in origin (John Cassian, Benedict), in execution (Hildemar of Corbie), and in theological significance (commentators such as Honorius Augustodunensis, as one example). This is a widely dispersed collection of texts; but I make this collection as a gathering of resources for thinking about the rule of time, with the sense that the ideas expressed in them were, together, present in and available to the scholarship of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. Benedict's Rule was ubiquitous, and Cassian a well-known author and authority. Goscelin du Saint Bertin, Honorius Augustodunensis, and Drogo Astiensis, from whom I draw some of the Biblical concordances adduced for the hours, represent thinkers from the late eleventh and twelfth centuries who are engaged in current theological interpretations of the horarium. Hildemar, a Carolingian commentator on the Rule, comes before this time, but offers a glimpse into how practical orientation to the rule may have looked under the Carolingian attempt at standardization, and thus represents another layer of inheritance and, at times, clarification. What I am interested to think about is less, here, what the day to day rules are – this will come in the chapter on Lanfranc's customary – but rather how binding the rule of time might be interpreted to be. This next chapter will present possible inheritances of theory; the third chapter will present one situation (Lanfranc's customary) of practice. What I am interested to do is to make a coherence of them: how the origins can be linked to the theology, and how both translate into practice in an institution.

Chapter Two: Benedict's Rule and the Observance of Time

The passage setting the Benedictine schedule of the hours comes in chapter 16, where Benedict writes:

> "As the Prophet says, "Seven times a day I have praised you." We will fulfill the sacred number of seven if we satisfy the duties of our service at the time of Matins, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline. For, of these Day Hours he said: "Seven times a day I have praised you." For the Prophet likewise says regarding the night Vigils: "In the middle of the night I rose to praise you." Therefore let us render praise to our Creator for the judgments of his justice at the following times: Matins, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, Compline and let us rise at night to praise him."[54]

However, this set formulation comes only after details for the observances of the offices have been already described in previous chapters – for example, "The Divine Office at Night" (RB 8), "The Celebration of Vigils on Sunday" (RB 11), or "The Celebration of the Solemnity of Lauds" (RB 12). RB 16 describes a practice which appears already in place. The numbering of the hours of the day, and referring to times by these numbers, had been conventional for centuries[55]: Terce, Sext, Nones are accounted for in this way, and various passages in the New Testament use numbered hours, and these particular ones with relative frequency. They may have been conventional prayer times in Jewish observance,[56] and in any case are especially important in the account of Christ's crucifixion and death. Lauds and Vespers refer to environmental conditions: first light of dawn, and evening. Prime and Compline, in complement to each other, refer to the first of the day and the completion of the day; and Vigils to the

[54] Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule: A Translation and Commentary*, trans. Terrence Kardong (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1996), 191.

[55] Richard J. A. Talbert, "Roman Concern to Know the Hour in Broader Historical Context," in *Homo Omnium Horarum: Collection of articles in honor of the 70th anniversary of A.V. Podosinov*, ed. A. V. Belousov and E. V. Pliushechkina (Moscow, 2020), 534–54.

[56] J. D. North, "Monastic Time," in *The Culture of Medieval English Monasticism*, ed. James G. Clark, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion (Boydell & Brewer, 2007), 208, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781846155307.012. North seems more certain than Taft does that Terce, Sext, and Nones were Jewish prayer times. Taft differentiates between temple sacrifices at morning and evening, and possible private prayer times at vague, undetermined, or unstandardized times within the day, which could have been Terce, Sext, and None. Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West*, 5–10.

wakefulness at night in prayer.[57] Quantitative and qualitative time are thus combined: there are both numbered measurements and reference to the conditions of activity.

This chapter will aim to focus on the interaction between human convention and temporal significance in texts from the Benedictine tradition which deal with observing time. I hope to examine how time might be appraised as important because *this* time, itself, is significant, or important because we have decided it is – time by its content, or time as a mathematical or conventional posit. I will begin with Bede's *De temporum ratione*, a textbook on computus which remained in use for centuries,[58] which will supply information as to the technical tradition of time observance. Then, I will move to the monastic hours as organized by Benedict. I will point out the differences between the temporal significance of the Little Hours and the morning and evening services, and his alterations to the running psalmody, so that the liturgy in part corresponds to significant times: night, daybreak, and the end of the day. In supplement, John Cassian's *Institutes* offers an account of how monastic life was organized at its origins in both Egypt and Palestine and Mesopotamia.[59] In describing origins it also justifies

[57] The terminology of the offices has been subject to variation from Benedict's time to medieval usage to modern monasticism. For consistency, I will use "Vigils" to denote the night office, while "Lauds" will serve as the term for the service singing the Laudate Psalms, between Vigils and Prime. This office of Lauds is sometimes called Matins (*laudes matutinas*, *laudes matutinae*, in Lanfranc) in medieval usage – this can be seen in Benedict's "matutino", as the word he uses to specify the first of the day hours. Modern monasticism, however, has taken to calling the night office Matins, which is confusing.

[58] See "Manuscripts, Glosses, Editions, And Principles Of Translation" in Faith Wallis, "Introduction," in *The Reckoning of Time*, Translated Texts for Historians, vol. 29 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2004), lxxxv-xcii. It was also heavily excerpted. Around our time period, Anselm asks Brother Maurice, at Christ Church, to send him a copy of Bede's *De temporibus*, a shorter version than the full *De temporum ratione*, to correct the copy at Bec. Letter 42, Saint Anselm of Canterbury, *The Letters of Saint Anselm of Canterbury*, 1:146.

[59] A "preliminary list" of manuscripts from Anglo-Saxon England shows Cassian's *Collationes* more frequently than it does the *Institutiones*, which I primarily employ here: see Helmut Gneuss, "A Preliminary List of Manuscripts Written or Owned in England up to 1100," *Anglo-Saxon England* 9 (1981): 1–60. However, a copy of the *Institutiones* has been traced to St. Augustine's at Canterbury from the second half of the tenth century: MS. Auct. D. inf. 2. 9 (Part 1), Bodleian. https://medieval.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/catalog/manuscript_519. Cassian's *Institutes* were also cited in Benedict of Aniane's *Concordia regularum*; Renie S. Choy, *Intercessory Prayer and the Monastic Ideal in the Time of the Carolingian Reforms* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 130. Chapter 9 of Hildemar of Corbie's commentary on the Rule quotes the *Institutes* extensively, and includes a discussion of Cassian's explanation of the introduction of a morning office. Hildemar of Corbie, "Chapter 9: How Many Psalms Should Be Said at the Night Offices," trans. Julian Hendrix, The Hildemar Project, 9, accessed May 19, 2025, http://hildemar.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23:chapter-9&catid=15:full-text&Itemid=102&highlight=WyJjYXNzaWFuIl0=. Cassian is a known and respected author; these are just to affirm. I do not necessarily mean to say that any given monk at Christ Church was familiar with his particular description of the origins of the hours; but the explanation he provides is present in the textual resources broadly

the schedule of prayer times which monks could identify in their own eleventh century daily routine. To his relatively artificially decided rule, later liturgical commentators such as Amalarius of Metz, Honorius Augustodunensis, William Durandus, and others built upon each other and on Cassian in adding theological significance. Even without these intellectual additions, however, the theme of obedient discipline emerges as vital to the monastic ethos which sustained such a schedule across centuries.

Measurement of the Hour - Bede, *Computus*, and Quantifying Time

Both "quantitative" and "qualitative" were estimated, in the daytime, by the sun, and in the night by the moon and the stars. Genesis recounts that God set the lights of the heavens to "be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and for years,"[60] and the Venerable Bede, in his *De temporum ratione*, links this creation of the luminaries on the fourth day, specifically, to the beginning of time.[61] In the three days before, he writes, since the stars were not yet made, there was no measurement of hours.[62]

Bede, a leading authority on time and *computus* (the calculation of the date of easter) defined the hour as the division of the day into twelve parts. He pairs this definition with a citation from John 11:9, where Jesus says, "Are there not twelve hours in a day?"[63]. Bede explains this as a metaphor for the relationship between Jesus and the twelve disciples, but

available to Benedictine monks, and either a peripheral awareness or proximate familiarity of his account of the hours is not, I think, outlandish.

[60] Genesis 1.14. All citations of the Bible which follow will use Vulgate numbering.

[61] « … multo utique peritius acturi, si tempus aequinoctii non primo diei quo lux, sed quarto quo luminaria sunt facta, potius adsignarent; ibi namque temporis initium statuit, qui luminaribus conditis dixit: Ut sint in signa, et tempora, et dies, et annos ». Bede, *De temporum ratione*, caput VI (PL 90, col. 0317A-B), ProQuest: https://www.proquest.com/books/de-temporum-ratione-c-s/docview/2684146259/se-2.

[62] Nam praecedens triduum, ut omnibus visum est, absque ullis horarum dimensionibus, utpote necdum factis sideribus, aequali lance lumen tenebrasque pendebat. Latin : Bede, *De temporum ratione*, caput VI (PL 90, col. 0317A-B), ProQuest: https://www.proquest.com/books/de-temporum-ratione-c-s/docview/2684146259/se-2. English: Bede, *The Reckoning of Time*, trans. Faith Wallis, Repr. with corr, Translated Texts for Historians, vol. 29 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2004), 24. Bede's interpretation is complicated by the fact that Genesis does refer to the creation of morning and evening as consequent to the creation of light and darkness on the first day. Gen. 1: 3-5: « Dixitque Deus: Fiat lux. Et facta est lux. Et vidit Deus lucem quod esset bona: et divisit lucem a tenebris. Appellavitque lucem Diem, et tenebras Noctem: factumque est vespere et mane, dies unus. »

[63] Bede, 14. Nonne duodecim sunt horae diei?

clarifies that Jesus "nonetheless defined the number of hours according to the usual manner of human computation."[64] Bede differentiated three types of time reckoning: by nature, by custom, and by authority. The course of the sun and moon are examples of natural time reckoning, while the length of a month at 30 days is by custom. Time divisions by authority can be either human or divine. The pattern of holding Olympics every four years, or a jubilee every fifty years, he cites, are examples of time by human authority. The measure of the week is credited to divine authority, in reference to Genesis and the command to observe the sabbath. The smallest segments of time seem to belong to custom, for convenience: *Non enim hae divisiones temporum naturales, sed videntur esse conductivae* – "These divisions of time are not natural, but apparently are agreed upon by convention."[65] As the order of measurements within an hour gets smaller and smaller, he notes that "although computists make a strict distinction [between these terms], many writers indiscriminately call that tiniest interval of time in which the lids of our eyes move when a blow is launched [against them], and which cannot be divided or distributed, either a momentum, a punctus or an atom."[66] He indeed casts out the atom from computistical vocabulary, being so small as to be of little consequence and, likely, in fact impossible to measure: better fitting for grammarians, simply to denote a unit which can be divided no more.

Computus had use of these more technical terms because of the difficulty presented by coordinating the solar, lunar, and weekly calendars to correctly assign the date of Easter: the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the vernal equinox.[67] Correlating the solar and lunar calendars could indeed come down to calculations of an hour: it was important to note

[64] Ubi quamvis allegorice se diem, discipulos vero qui a se illustrandi fuerant, horas appellaverit, solito tamen humanae computationis ordine numerum definivit horarum. Latin : Bede, *De temporum ratione*, caput III (PL 90, col. 303A), ProQuest. English : Bede, 14.
[65] Bede, *De temporum ratione*, caput III (PL 90, col. 303A), ProQuest https://www.proquest.com/books/de-temporum-ratione-c-s/docview/2684146259/se-2. English : Bede, 15.
[66] Bede, 16.
[67] Faith Wallis, "Introduction," in *The Reckoning of Time*, Repr. with corr, Translated Texts for Historians, vol. 29 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2004), xviii-xx.

that the moon's month is actually 12 hours less than 30 days,[68] that a natural solar year is 365 days and 6 hours,[69] that the sun crosses one zodiac division in 30 days and 10 1/2 hours.[70] Astronomy at this level requires mathematical precision, and for this the duration of an hour needed to be fixed as constant. Such an hour is called an equinoctial hour. In modern parlance, this is a clock hour of 60 minutes. To Bede, this meant an even 1/24th of a full rotation (from the point of view of the earth) of the sun. Using this kind of hour, Bede and his disciples across the centuries were able not only to extrapolate how to order their calendars to astronomical cycles, but were also able to note that the "number of hours in a day" – hours of sunlight – can range dramatically, from season to season and from region to region (demarcated by latitude).[71]

This technical, computistical, highly quantitative understanding of the hour was not, however, what Benedict meant when he spoke of an "hora". Even the "uulgus ignobile" knew that a day and night together make 24 hours[72]; but this was not a 24-fold division similar to the computist's 24. These conventional hours were "unequal" hours, which varied with the amount of sunlight in a day. These offered a different type of constancy: if you can estimate the portioning of the sky by the position of the sun, on any day, you can know what time it is by unequal hours.[73] Sundials could – and did – do this with more precision, but this unequal hour-measurement was far more accessible than the computist's mathematically-constant, equinoctial 1/24th. It is present, too, in the Vulgate: "going out about the third hour"[74], "he went out about the sixth and ninth hour"[75], "it was about the tenth hour"[76]. Even the dispute about

[68] Bede, *The Reckoning of Time*, 13–14.
[69] Bede, 107.
[70] Bede, 107.
[71] Ch. 31-33. Bede, 90–96.
[72] Bede, 108.
[73] Sara Schechner, "Astrolabes and Medieval Travel," in *The Art, Science, and Technology of Medieval Travel*, ed. Robert Bork and Andrea Kann, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2008), 14, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315241265. See also, for example, John A. North, *God's Clockmaker: Richard of Wallingford and the Invention of Time* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2007), 146–47.
[74] egressus circa horam tertiam, Matt. 20:3.
[75] exiit circa sextam et nonam horam, Matt. 20:5.
[76] hora autem erat quasi decima. John 1:39.

apportioning wages for those who came only at the eleventh hour[77] is a dispute concerning these "unequal" hours – unequal in duration from season to season, but equal to all those present and working (or supposed to be working) under the same sun.

The Institution of Monastic Hours

Benedict's Rule, too, uses these unequal hours, of course – but in his Rule, the canonical hours of Terce, Sext, and Nones are not even necessarily correlated to the daily numbered hours named as such. In RB 48, On Daily Manual Labor, Benedict notes that in the summer season, None should be recited not at the ninth (nona) hour, but "about the middle of the eighth".[78] Similarly, in the winter season, Terce is said at the second hour instead of the third which it is named after. His Rule 48 makes it clear that the demands of seasonal agricultural work can encroach upon the timing of the schedule. In this, he stresses the virtue of a monk who works by his own hands.[79] By allowing the schedule of Offices to deviate, Benedict departs from the injunctions of several ancient rules,[80] and, further, indicates that the time was less important than the fulfillment of eight liturgical sequences.[81]

However, the needs of manual labor figure significantly into these adjustments, and by the eleventh century, agricultural labor had waned as an item on the monastic agenda.[82] It had been replaced by other, more intellectual work, such as copying manuscripts, or saying extra

[77] Matt. 20:9-12.
[78] "agatur nona temperius mediante octava hora." Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 381–82.
[79] "If, however, the necessities of the place or poverty demand that they themselves work at the harvest, they should not be sad. For if they live by the work of their hands, then they are true monks, as were our Fathers and the apostles." Benedict of Nursia, 382.
[80] Indeed, Adalbert de Vogüé can find among various antique texts only Caesarius' *Regula virginum* which notes adjustments of the Little Hours to a different time of day: there, Terce may be said at *secunda* to shorten the length of reading time. Adalbert de Vogüé, *La Règle de S. Benoît, Commentaire Histoire et Critique (Parties IV-VI)*, vol. 5, Sources Chrétiennes 185 (Les Éditions du Cerf, 1971), 594–95. See Footnote 17.
[81] RB 50 prescribes that monks who are "working far away and cannot present themselves at the oratory at the due hour" – the abbot should judge the legitimacy of this excuse - should say the office to themselves, where they are. "Fratres qui omnino longe sunt in labore et non possunt occurrere hora competenti ad oratorium—et abbas hoc perpendet, quia ita est agant ibidem opus Dei, ubi operantur, cum tremore divino flectentes genua." RB 50, Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 410.
[82] Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 19.

masses for patrons and donors to the church. With more interior tasks, the demands of the seasons outside figure far less disruptively into the daily horarium. Instead, the schedule of time might be more strictly held to: Cluny, the exemplar of monasticism in this age (including for Lanfranc), is famous for the heavy liturgical requirements it placed upon its monks – Peter Damian commented in approval that Cluniac monks had barely half an hour of idleness in a day.[83] Services for patrons, the Office of the Virgin and for the Dead, extra masses, along with the regular Hours, booked the monks of this age very heavily, so that keeping to schedule was eminently necessary.[84] Terrence Kardong stresses that, at Cluny, nothing was put before the Divine Office.[85] Moreover, Hildemar of Corbie, a ninth century commentator on the Rule, is at pains in some instances to interpret Benedict's adjusted hours to occur still closer to the numbers they are named for: "when [Benedict] says Terce is to be said at the second hour, it is to be understood: accomplished, that is, at the third hour" – so that Terce is sung at the completion of the second hour and the beginning of the third.[86] In response to Benedict's special legislation for Lent that None should be said at the tenth hour, Hildemar urges that it be said "at the beginning and not at the end" of the tenth, to have time to say the afternoon Mass (which had been added to the horarium since Benedict's day) and then complete Vespers before dark as Benedict intended (RB 41).[87] He notes that "worldly" (*saeculares*) abbots who want to work

[83] Irven Resnick provides a thorough analysis of the plausibility of this claim, and affirms it as perhaps more likely than Leclercq, for example, construed it to be, by adjusting for unequal hours. See Irven Resnick, "Peter Damian on Cluny, Liturgy and Penance," *Journal of Religious History*, January 1, 1988, https://www.academia.edu/4665581/Peter_Damian_on_Cluny_Liturgy_and_Penance.

[84] Knowles provides an overview of the liturgical additions to the Benedictine Offices in his Introduction, p. xxii-xxiii. See also, for Carolingian additions, Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 27–28.

[85] Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 411.

[86] « Quod dicit hora secunda agatur tertia, subaudiendum est: transacta, hoc est, cum incipitur tertia, tunc canenda est tertia; nam rectitudo est, ut completa tertia canatur tertia, quia completa hora debet cani tertia sive sexta sive nona. » Hildemar of Corbie, "Chapter 48: On Daily Manual Work," trans. David Ganz, The Hildemar Project, 2014, http://hildemar.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=99&catid=15&Itemid=102. I take the second clause to be talking about the intervals between the hours: there should be three completed hours (duration) between these daytime offices.

[87] Hildemar of Corbie, ch. 48. For a note on two masses a day under the *Regularis concordia*, see Magdalena Charzyńska-Wójcik, "High Time to Talk About Noon," *Roczniki Humanistyczne* 63, no. 11 (2015): 43. Hildemar himself also acknowledges the change since Benedict's day. For Benedict on completing Vespers before dark: RB 41, Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 333. "But the Office of Vespers should be arranged so that they need not

can sometimes push the times back "so that part of the hour has been completed"; but – "the way spiritual abbots understand it [closer to the numbered hour] is better."[88]

This variation in the rule of time that Benedict allows has significant implications. It means that *this time*, itself, is not necessarily significant, but rather the way the monks approach it.[89] He uses the verb *currere*, to run, repeatedly in his Prologue, emphatically evoking the urgency of service to God and the need to haste to do one's service: he holds that "the days of this life are given us as a time of truce for the correction of our faults," and thus should be seized with alacrity.[90] When the summons is sounded, he hopes, a monk should take this as an opportunity to fulfill this debt. He consoles a community which might need to miss offices on account of poverty or urgent need at harvest: they should not be sad, for those who "live by the work of their hands" are true monks, too, after the models of the Fathers and the Apostles.[91] They might be sad because they cannot adhere in the "spiritual" way that Hildemar endorses; but Benedictine time makes due honor to Martha as well as to Mary.

Not all hours are created equal, however. The Little Hours, Terce, Sext, and Nones, in the middle of the day in an array around noon, seem perhaps the most arbitrary, and these are the ones which Benedict notes specifically can be shifted according to the work of the day and the season. Tertullian, who first attempted to find a basis for these three hours of observance in the Bible, straightforwardly admitted that they come from the usual (civil, secular) divisions of the day.[92] Their minimal temporal significance is endorsed by their liturgical content: they are

eat by lamplight. Everything should be completed by the light of day. At all times, whether for supper or the main meal, the hour should be set so that everything is done by daylight."

[88] Hildemar of Corbie, "Chapter 48: On Daily Manual Work." "Item abbates saeculares, qui volunt laborare, custodiunt ita, i. e. pene quarta intelligunt, quasi aliquid de quarta transactum…Ita etiam quasi sexta, intelligunt, hoc est, quasi aliquid de sexta transactum sit… Sed melior est sensus superior, sicut abbates spiritales intelligunt. »

[89] To have an echo of Bede from the last section: math is important because we need it to accurately arrive at a determination, not because 2 requires a certain attention which is different from 3.

[90] Kardong identifies "alacrity" as a significant theme in Prologue, RB 4.77, 5.8, 22.6, 27.5, 43.1, 53.3, 66.4, 73.2.

[91] RB 48. Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 382.

[92] Anscar J. Chupungco, *Liturgical Time and Space* (Liturgical Press, 2000), 14. Latin: *De ieiunio* 10: CCL 2, pg. 1267. English: Tertullian, *Tertullian Complete Works* (Delphi Classics, 2010), 1940–47, http://archive.org/details/tertullian-complete-works_202304. "Why should we not understand that, with absolutely

quite short, and from Tuesday through Saturday their three psalms each are set to be the same (respectively).[93] This constancy throughout the week, indeed, may have been supportive of Benedict's privileging of "*labora"* as well as "*ora*": if monks were working too far away from the oratory to get there for these services, or could not leave what they were doing, they were supposed to say the service themselves, where they were.[94] Though running through the same weekly schedule of psalmody for years might mean that any individual has the psalms for all the days of the week memorized, this repetition may have made it easier for absent monks to follow along the service independently.

John Cassian, in his *Institutes of the Monastic Life*, devotes much special attention to these three midday hours. He loads them with spiritual significance to show that it was "not without reason" that these times "have been assigned more specifically for religious services".[95] The third hour, Cassian and others cite, was the hour that the Holy Spirit descended into the Apostles at Pentecost[96]; the sixth hour was when Jesus was "offered to the Father" on the

perfect indifference, we must pray always, and everywhere, and at every time; yet still that these three hours, as being more marked in things human — (hours) which divide the day, which distinguish businesses, which re-echo in the public ear — have likewise ever been of special solemnity in divine prayers?" A little later: "hence, accordingly, I shall affirm that Peter too had been led rather by ancient usage to the observance of the ninth hour, praying at the third specific interval, (the interval) of final prayer." He does proceed to build up, for example, the ninth hour with special Christian significance, as the end of the darkness that overcame the day at Christ's Passion. In supplying this as a good reason (in this case, for deciding the hour to end the fast), he says, he is simply rebutting "conjectures by conjectures, and yet, as I believe, conjectures more worthy of a believer." These hours are not ordained, but come down to us shorthand as intervals for the day, which can be loaded with significance and deemed worthy as we see fit.

[93] RB 18. Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 199.

[94] RB 50. Benedict of Nursia, 411.

[95] John Cassian, *The Institutes*, trans. Boniface Ramsey, Ancient Christian Writers 58 (Paulist Press, 2000), 123.

[96] Acts 2:15. Cassian, 123.

cross,[97] as well as the hour at which Peter had a vision of the Gospels.[98] The ninth hour was when Christ penetrated hell and saved the holy ones who had been captive there,[99] as well as when Cornelius the centurion received a confirmation that his prayers had been received.[100] Cassian also notes that the Acts refers to the ninth hour as a time of prayer already in Jewish tradition.[101] These together all confirm the decisions of the "holy and apostolic men" who sanctified these hours as good prayer times.

In the intervening centuries, scholars such as Amalarius of Metz (9th c.), Drogo Astiensis (12th c.), Honorius Augustodunensis (12th c.), up to William Durandus (13th c.) - and more – presented litanies of Biblical events which happened at the various prayer times of the horarium.[102] These ranged from literal – Peter and John went to the temple to pray at the ninth

[97] The exact hour of Christ's crucifixion is not actually consistent between the evangelists, which as you might imagine is a notable point. Mark says explicitly that he was crucified at the third hour. Cassian seems to glide over this. In the other gospels the narrative implies that the darkness of the sixth hour is linked to his crucifixion. Amalarius of Metz interpreted this inconsistency by saying that the crucifixion can be said to have happened at the third hour according to the Jews, because this is when Christ was handed over to them; to the Romans, however, his crucifixion happened at the sixth hour because this was when he was put up on the cross. Peter Gavin Ferriby, "The Development of Liturgical Symbolism in the Early Works of Amalarius of Metz (ca. 775–ca. 850)" (Ph.D., United States -- New Jersey, Princeton Theological Seminary, 2000), 266–67, https://www.proquest.com/docview/304617508/abstract/7C8438158FA54930PQ/1. Drogo Cardinalis, in his own commentary on the hours, notes similarly that Jesus "endured a cruel sentence" (*crudelem sententiam sustinuit*) by the Jews at the third hour, for which reason the Evangelists say he was crucified at that very time (*Ipse enim crudelem sententiam sustinuit a Judaeis, qui et ob id eum hora ipsa crucifixisse ab Evangelistis dicuntur, clamantibus, Crucifige, Crufige eum (Joan. XIX)*). However, in Drogo's commentary, the third hour stands for when Christ was tried by Pilate, while the sixth hour stands for his actual crucifixion – mounting the cross. (*Testatur evangelicae veritatis historia quod salus nostra Christus hora sexta crucem ascenderit*). Drogo Astiensis Episcopus Cardinalis [1130-1138], *Liber De Divinis Officiis Seu Horis Canonicis* (PL v. 166, col. 1557 - 1564B). ProQuest : https://www.proquest.com/patrologialatina/books/drogonis-cardinalis-liber-de-divinis-officiis-seu/docview/2684147350/sem-2?accountid=15607.

[98] Cassian, *The Institutes*, 129.

[99] Cassian, 130.

[100] Cassian, 140.

[101] Cassian, 140.

[102] Timothy Matthew Thibodeau discusses how difficult it is to disentangle what sources Willian Durandus may have been using in his *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* because of the "homogeneity of the genre" and the apparent ubiquity of these interpretations of the significance of the hours. Timothy Matthew Thibodeau, "A Study of William Durand's (ca. 1230-1296) Commentary on the Divine Office in Book 5 of the 'Rationale Divinorum Officiorum'" (Ph.D., United States -- Indiana, University of Notre Dame, 1988), 120–28, https://www.proquest.com/docview/303585140/abstract/97BADD50C5AC4487PQ/1. On Amalarius of Metz, see Ferriby, "The Development of Liturgical Symbolism in the Early Works of Amalarius of Metz (ca. 775–ca. 850)." For Drogo Astiensis, see *Liber De Divinis Officiis Seu Horis Canonicis*. (PL v. 166, col. 1557 - 1564B). ProQuest : https://www.proquest.com/patrologialatina/books/drogonis-cardinalis-liber-de-divinis-officiis-seu/docview/2684147350/sem-2?accountid=15607. Honorius Augustodunensis, *Gemma Animae Sive De Divinis Officiis et Antiquo Ritu Missarum, Deque Horis Canonicis et Totius Annis Solemnitatibus*. (PL vol. 172, col. 0615C-0642C). ProQuest : https://www.proquest.com/books/gemma-animae-sive-de-divinis-officiis-et-

hour (Acts 2:15 Vulgate) - to conjectural: this time (Lauds) will be the time when those who are saved in the Final Judgement will awake to life in paradise.[103] Christ's Passion, Descent, and Resurrection is one of the primary timelines which the hours are made to correspond with, in part because of the detailed progression from moment to moment provided in the Gospels. However, Adam and Eve's time in Paradise can also run parallel to the Hours; the flight from Egypt, praise by Noah, Abraham, the prophets under the law all are moments linked to certain hours. These Biblical concordances constitute "spiritual" time – spiritualized time. A monk from these has numerous touchstones to reflect upon how the hand of God reached down to earth at this very hour of the day. Such attributions depict this time, indeed, as significant in itself. In an eleventh century monastery which took Cluny's interior life (after the pattern of Mary, and not Martha) as exemplary, keeping strictly to such spiritualized times may have constituted a very high-priority reason indeed why we pray at *these* times. In Liber Secundus, "On the Canonical Hours", of Honorius Augustodunensis's twelfth century liturgical textbook *Gemma Animae*,[104] Terce is said because (*idcirco*) Christ was flagellated at the third hour; we sing Sext because (*propterea*) Christ was crucified at the sixth hour; we sing Nones because (*ideo*) Nones was when he died. These justifications are expanded to all hours: in the middle of the night he was recognized for us (*apprehensus pro nobis*); at dawn he was deceived; Prime is when he was handed over to the heckling crowd; at Vespers he was taken down from the cross; at Compline he was buried. *Idcirco*, *ideo*, therefore.[105]

antiquo/docview/2684151938/se-2?accountid=15607. Guillaume Durand, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis 140 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995).

[103] Honorius Augustodunensis, *Gemma Animae*, lib. II, cap. XXXV (PL vol. 172, col. 0626B.)

[104] A manuscript located to twelfth century England exists here: MS 319, UK, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library, https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/xp413cf5125.

[105] "Per diurna quoque et nocturna officia celebrat Ecclesia Christi mysteria. In nocte est Christus pro nobis comprehensus, ideo in nocte nocturnum psallimus. Mane est illusus, ideo Matutinam canimus. Prima hora est gentibus traditus, ideo Primam cantamus. Tertia hora est flagellatus, idcirco Tertiam psallimus. Sexta hora est crucifixus, propterea Sextam canimus. Nona hora mortuus est, ideo Nonam cantamus. In vespere est de cruce depositus, idcirco Vesperam psallimus. In fine diei est sepultus, ideo completorium canimus. » Honorius Augustodunensis, "Liber Secundus: De horis canonicis," *Gemma Animae Sive De Divinis Officiis et Antiquo Ritu Missarum, Deque Horis Canonicis et Totius Annis Solemnitatibus*, PL 172, col. 0633D-0634A. ProQuest :

Yet, indeed, not all hours are created equal. Some emerge more clearly than others as an aspect of a monk's daily discipline, as when Compline is justified not so much as a time with a parallel in Christ's life, but as the end of day confession of sins and plea for protection in the night. Cassian goes so far as to defend the introduction of a new (at his time, in his text) morning service between night Vigils and Terce from practical disciplinary value without even any scriptural reference: sometimes, he explains, monks are inclined to prolong the sleep allowed to them after the night office, and not get up again until the next service – which, up until this office was instituted, had been Terce. Too much sleep into the morning can cause sluggishness, and it eats into the daylight hours when work may be done.[106] This beginning-of-the-morning hour was decided in his day, by diligent reasoning monks, as good practice to prevent this kind of slothfulness and to get the monks up again out of bed.[107]

The artificiality of the prayer times comes through quite straightforwardly in Cassian's account in the *Institutes*. He writes, in conclusion to not this new Hour but indeed after his Scriptural justifications for Terce, Sext, and Nones, that "unless we were compelled as it were by law to fulfill these duties of piety at least at fixed moments, [we] would spend the whole day in forgetfulness or idleness or consumed with activity, without any interval for prayer."[108] Therefore, "we too should observe these times, which holy and apostolic men not without reason consecrated by religious rites." None of the spiritual events he associates with the Little Hours necessarily *demand* prayerful observance at this specific time. They are instead confirmations of a human decision by the elders; affirmations adduced onto a more generalized, and more primary, commitment to stay active in service to God.

https://www.proquest.com/books/gemma-animae-sive-de-divinis-officiis-et-antiquo/docview/2684151938/se-2?accountid=15607.

[106] Cassian, *The Institutes*, 149.

[107] Cassian, 155.

[108] Cassian, 140.

The divine commandment which the monks should take it upon themselves to follow is to "pray unceasingly", as taught by the Apostle Paul. Some of the earliest monastic and anchoritic communities attempted indeed to "pray unceasingly", and for this reason objected to ordained hours of prayer. However, wise fathers recognized that this level of pious heroism was difficult both to maintain and to attain even for devoted and sincere aspirants.[109] The variation of activity was an important element to allow spiritual endurance, breaking up the day into solitary reading or prayer, work, and communal worship. Cassian sets down that his *Institutes* describe the "outer" methods of a life devoted to God: what garb he should wear, what he should eat, the content of his liturgy - and the hours of prayer. These things lay a "foundation" for "inner" devotion, the path towards achieving the "pinnacle" of prayer, both in unceasing constancy and in depth.[110] Outer practices such as these thus act as a training mechanism, and a safety net for constancy and propriety: it is good to submit oneself to practicing them, even if the feeling they should be expressive of does not come spontaneously or with ease.[111]

[109] See Cassian, *Institutes*, 100; also 160-161.

[110] In the preface to the first part of the *Conferences*, Cassian writes: "Consequently, let us proceed from the external and visible life of the monks, which we have summarized in the previous books, to the invisible character of the inner man, and from the practice of the canonical prayers let our discourse arise to the unceasing nature of that perpetual prayer which the Apostle commands." Cassian, *John Cassian: The Conferences*, 30. In the *Institutes*, similarly, he writes: "once we have sketched the activity of the outer man and as it were laid a kind of foundation for prayer (which we are doing now), we may with less effort later on, when we have begun to discuss the condition of the inner man, reach the pinnacle of his prayer." Cassian, *The Institutes*, 102. Taft demonstrates that Tertullian likewise assigned the prayer hours to "outer" practice: "Concerning the time[of prayer], however, the external observance of certain hours will not be unprofitable." From Tertullian, *On Prayer*, Chapter 25, qtd in Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West*, 17.

[111] Cassian writes in the Ninth Conference, On Prayer, XXX.1, for example: "There is a considerable difference between these tears [of genuine distress or other compunction], then, and those which are squeezed by a hardened heart from dry eyes. Although we believe that the latter are not utterly fruitless (for the attempt to shed them is done with a good will, particularly by persons who have not yet succeeded either in attaining to perfect knowledge or in being completely cleansed of the stains of past or present vices), nonetheless an outpouring of tears should never be forced in this way by those who have already acquired a virtuous disposition. Nor should the tears of the outer man be laboriously striven for; even if they have somehow been produced, they will never arrive at the abundance of spontaneous tears. For attempts at them will tend to drag down the mind of the person praying, to lower it, submerge it in human concerns, and displace it from that heavenly height whereon the awed mind of the one praying should be irremovably stationed, and they will compel it, once it had slackened the intensity of its prayers, to weaken in the face of sterile and forced tears." Cassian, *John Cassian: The Conferences*, 348–49. Note how the practice of it can be good because of the good will behind it; but this is an elementary stage. Once you have attained "knowledge" – I think it notable too that this is *knowledge*, not something more ephemeral and spiritual – it is only wise to see that excessively forcing the exercise weakens the force and intensity of your devotions – because, especially, it brings your mind back to yourself and your "outer" actions.

Benedict, thus, setting down the "law" that Cassian underscores as necessary, decides upon a number that will fulfill (*implebitur*) "the sacred number of seven"[112], and conform to David's example in Psalm 119:64, which he cites to underscore the rectitude of such a law. The number seven was understood widely to often simply denote "many", and Hildemar of Corbie, Benedict's Carolingian commentator, points out the literal interpretation which is employed here.[113] The number seven need not be binding, but Benedict (unexceptionally) takes David as a good example to emulate, and he slots these seven times into conventional demarcations of the day. He then adds a night prayer, citing David's example again. This template provides the rule of time – to pray "at least" at these hours whose sanctity can be justified.

The timing of the hours by Benedict, however, while seemingly arbitrary in some places (the moveability of Terce, Sext, and Nones), did much to cultivate an experiential qualitativeness to its Rule that went beyond intellectual justifications by Biblical concordances. The cosmological, environmentally-indicated, natural times of sunset[114], night, and sunrise, lend themselves easily to prayerful symbolism, and Benedict codifies the (qualitative) significance of these times in the very content of his liturgy. Many ascetic communities had, before, followed a simple running psalmody: chanting the Psalms in order until reaching the end, and starting over again.[115] Benedict, by contrast, arranged the psalmody around certain

[112] (*septenarius sacratus numerus a nobis sic implebitur*), Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 191.
[113] Hildemar of Corbie, "Chapter 16: How the Work of God Is to Be Performed During the Day," trans. Susan Boynton, The Hildemar Project, 2014, http://hildemar.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=99&catid=15&Itemid=102.
[114] Vespers follows only the running psalmody, and thus is not linked with "sunset" psalms in particular, like the other offices described here are; but it does have a temporal limit linked to daylight. In RB 41 he prescribes that the office of Vespers should be set so that the monks need not eat by lamplight. See Kardong, 337. Hildemar of Corbie specifies that the meal should take place before Vespers. Hildemar of Corbie, "Chapter 35: On the Weekly Servers of the Kitchen," trans. Kathryn Jasper, The Hildemar Project, 2014, http://hildemar.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=83&catid=15&Itemid=102. Vespers is also the service in which the observance of a feast begins. See, for example, Lanfranc 23. In the time notations I have been dealing with, however, mentions of Vespers as linked to sunset have been sparse; Compline emerges more clearly as a time of day. This is just only from what I have been able to do, however, and I am sure there is much more.
[115] Joseph Dyer, "Observations on the Divine Office in the Rule of the Master," in *The Divine Office in the Latin Middle Ages*, ed. Margot E. Fassler and Rebecca A. Baltzer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 76. Also

Psalms to be said at every service of certain hours[116]: Psalms 3 and 94 at night Vigils; Psalms 66, 50, and 148-150 at Lauds; and Psalms 4, 90, and 133 at Compline.[117] These hours have some of the most heavy temporal significance of the whole liturgical day. Vigils is the most elaborate of the Offices and carries great theological significance, as a time for anticipating the coming of the Lord,[118] memorializing the survival of the firstborn Israelites in Egypt,[119] or when Christ vanquished hell.[120] Sunday Vigils is also specifically assigned Psalms 118 (sections of) and Ps. 62, which evoke the Easter vigil which may have been the original idea for this service[121]: verse 18 of Ps 118 says, "I shall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord", and Ps 62:7 declares "through the watches of the night I will meditate on you."[122] Beyond resurrectional symbolism, prayer at this hour (Hour) fulfills the content of Psalm 118:62: "At midnight I rise to praise you", and it defies the natural still and quiet of night in calling the faithful to do service.[123] It defies, too, the darkness: here, the practical burden of needing nighttime lights is in no way allowed to impede a lengthy service. This is a notable counterpoint to the practice of adjusting the Little Hours according to the practical demands of the day. "*Ora*" ranks above "*labora*" here.

Marilyn Dunn, "Mastering Benedict: Monastic Rules and Their Authors in the Early Medieval West," *The English Historical Review* 105, no. 416 (1990): 581.

[116] This has been discussed extensively; for overview, see Kardong 213-215.

[117] The psalmody cursus is provided in RB 13 and RB 18. Can also reference Eric Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books from the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century* (Collegeville, Minn. : Liturgical Press, 1998), 124, http://archive.org/details/historyofliturgi0000pala. Also Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West*, 136.

[118] Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books from the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century*, 123.

[119] Drogo Astiensis, *Liber De Divinis Officiis Seu Horis Canonicis* (PL 166, col. 1557- 1564B).

[120] Honorius Augustodunensis, *Gemma Animae*, lib. II, cap. Xv (PL 172, col. 0620B-0620C).

[121] Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books from the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century*, 123.

[122] Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 184.

[123] From anonymous fourth-century tract *De poenitentia*, the midnight service is described as making "angels of men": "And at night all men are dominated by physical sleep and drawn into the depths, and David alone stands by, arousing all the servants of God to angelic vigils, turning earth into heaven and making angels of men." Joseph Dyer, "The Singing of Psalms in the Early-Medieval Office," *Speculum* 64, no. 3 (1989): 535, https://doi.org/10.2307/2854183. A man can transcend the natural course of the earthly world, the nightly rest, to give praise as the angels do, at all times.

At Lauds, the daybreak service, the assigned Psalms are suffuse with praise for God's new day[124] – Psalms 148-150 are known as the "Laudate" psalms after their initial word, "Praise!", and describe the heavens, the earth, and God's people exalting him together in symphony. Psalm 66 speaks of God "shining upon us" (*illuminet vultum suum super nos*), that we may know His way on the earth (*ut cognoscamus in terra viam tuam*). Meanwhile, the set Compline Psalms 4 and 90 ask for God's protection during the night, and Psalm 133 calls upon "all ye servants of the Lord, who by night stand in the house of the Lord," to bless God.

Chanting these specific psalms at these hours is an intentional choice on Benedict's part. Such a choice enhances the reality and relevance of the worship contained in the Bible - it demonstrates how the words being sung hook into this daily life; why they are relevant at this very time.[125] The daybreak service is the strictest hour to observe, whether in Benedict or in Lanfranc's *Constitutions*. In summer, when the nights are shorter, Lauds follows very soon after the conclusion of Vigils, with only a short pause in between.[126] On Sunday, Vigils are even more lengthy. This means that, if the brothers are awoken by the watchman late, the Vigils service might need to be shortened in order to sing Lauds on time with the rising of the sun.[127] This timing, then, is by no means simply obedience to an arbitrary rule as an end in itself. The sun will rise when it rises. Indeed, the first six verses of Laudate Psalm 148 praise the eternal

[124] Hildemar of Corbie collates how even the Psalms which change from day to day at Lauds all, too, have some reference to the morning. Hildemar of Corbie, "Chapter 13: How the Morning Office Is Celebrated on Weekdays," trans. Susan Boynton, The Hildemar Project, accessed May 19, 2025, http://hildemar.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=27&catid=15&Itemid=102.
[125] Taft, Dyer, and others note that Benedict is novel in that he combines the temporally-significant cathedral cursus (specific Psalms recited at sunrise and sunset) with the running monastic psalmody that had been common. Dyer, "Observations on the Divine Office in the Rule of the Master," 76. Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West*, 140.
[126] In Lanfranc's *Constitutions*, see pg. 13 and Knowles's footnote 28 on page 10. In Benedict's Rule, see RB 8, Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 169.
[127] RB 11. Benedict of Nursia, 181.

law of the heavens.[128] The community needs to conform itself to this rule - be on time to observe it.

The Summons

Benedict warns therefore that "all precautions should be taken" that the brethren should not arise late. "If it does happen," Benedict decides, "the one whose neglect caused it must make due satisfaction to God in the oratory."[129] One who causes such neglect, or who prevents it, is the person responsible for ringing the summons. In Benedict, the abbot himself is first named as directly responsible for calling the brothers to prayer, though this is tempered in the addition that he may also deputize as he chooses.[130] Benedict gives no sign as to how and who should ring the night summons. The Rule of the Master, a text which Benedict borrowed from and heavily edited[131], suggests that monks were appointed by twos on a rotating weekly basis to keep watch for the determined time. [132] They would then wake the abbot, who would call the others. This "determined time" might be, quite conceivably, more difficult to determine than the daytime hours, with no sun to judge by. There were, however, the stars, which, too, follow God's eternal law.[133] As we have seen already with Bede, monasteries were intellectual foci for learning and discerning such celestial laws.

Gregory of Tour's *De cursu stellarum* is an early (after 573 CE) text which details what constellations are visible at certain times of the year, and for how long they are visible – even approximating how many psalms can be sung in the time they are in the sky.[134] It is not the only

[128] Stephen C. McCluskey, "Gregory of Tours, Monastic Timekeeping, and Early Christian Attitudes to Astronomy," *Isis* 81, no. 1 (1990): 12. All credit goes to this article for pointing this out to me, I wish I had noticed this for myself – brilliant point!
[129] Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 180.
[130] RB 47. Benedict of Nursia, 378.
[131] C. H. Lawrence, "St. Benedict and His Rule," *History* 67, no. 220 (1982): 188–89.
[132] McCluskey, "Gregory of Tours, Monastic Timekeeping, and Early Christian Attitudes to Astronomy," 10.
[133] Ps. 148:6. "Statuit ea in aeternum, et in saeculum saeculi; praeceptum posuit, et non praeteribit. »
[134] McCluskey, "Gregory of Tours, Monastic Timekeeping, and Early Christian Attitudes to Astronomy," 16.

of its type: an anonymous manuscript from eleventh century France attests to determining the hours of the night by observing the position of different constellations in relation to the buildings of the monastery.[135] These techniques are eminently practical. They are reasoned, planned, and measured – but these measurements (for example, of how many psalms could be sung for a duration, or relational positions of stars and rooftops) – are not abstract. This is highly, as E. P. Thompson might say, "task-oriented" time.

Yet it only becomes qualitative time when the signal is rung. The stars, in their positions, do not wake the monks nor demand them to be woken. The endurance and importance of this timekeeping practice rests on the endurance of the commitment to rise at night to pray. This commitment, born of pious human intent, enshrined in monastic rules invoking scripture, endured for centuries. This was the demand that water clocks, alarms, and, later, clocks fulfilled. Even in the 10th or 11th century, a Catalonian manuscript gave instructions for a water-driven alarm mechanism to help prevent late-arising, and perhaps alleviating the appointed brother from keeping watch all night.[136] Precision was desirable for the sounding of the signal, and this is where technology came in.

Yet punctuality was not a matter of technology for most of the monks in the monastery. It was rather a moral virtue: demonstrative of one's obedience. When a monk hears the signal, he comes. Cassian tells the tale of monks not even finishing the letters of the text they are writing when they hear a summons to prayer or other work.[137] Benedict, perhaps borrowing from this, writes that the monks are to come *relictis omnibus quaelibet fuerint in manibus,*

[135] Rachael Poole, "A Monastic Star Time Table of the Eleventh Century," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 16, no. 61 (1914): 98–104.
[136] North, *God's Clockmaker*, 148.
[137] Book 4:XII. Cassian, *The Institutes*, 184–85.

summa cum festinatione curratur – "leaving behind whatever may be in their hands, to rush to the Office with the greatest haste."[138] Obedience is the virtue inherent in timeliness.

Obedience

Obedience to the summons can have two valences: one vertical, and one horizontal. The vertical is one's relation to God. The Divine Office is called the *opus Dei*, and observing it is one's service to Him, directly related to one's piety. However, obedience exists within a community. To evade service is not only to do insult to an individual duty, but also one's communal role. If someone is absent, others will notice. There may well be "murmuring" (*murmuratio*), as Benedict terms any instances of disgruntled objections, from fellow brothers: it is hard to avoid detection of negligence, even of camouflaged negligence, while living together for years in an enclosed monastery. The brothers should, indeed, be equal in service to God - "we are all one in Christ" (Gal 3:28), Benedict quotes.[139] The brothers keep a watch on each other, and hold each other accountable as participants in the shared community.[140]

However, the text of the Rule tends toward collapsing the horizontal into the vertical, both in terms of human hierarchy and divine submission. The appropriateness of certain tasks, certain readings, extra food, are submitted to the judgement of the abbot, according to fitting needs.[141] The authority of the abbot is paramount. The purpose of this, in the Rule, is to have a leader able to mediate order, adjudicate nuance, and administer special care against the standard rule. This includes both punishment and, even more, mercy. Benedict's second chapter, The Qualifications of an Abbot, stresses above all that the abbot adapt himself to the needs of the

[138] Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 350–51. Kardong notes the possible Cassian influence.
[139] RB 2:20: "For whether slave or free, we are all one in Christ. (Gal. 3:28), and under one Lord we bear the same yoke of service; 'with God there is no favoritism'. (Rom.2:11). Benedict of Nursia, 28.
[140] Juniors, for example, are allowed to correct seniors, when correction is needed. Hildemar of Corbie, RB 48. "Perhaps someone will say, 'Why should a junior correct his prior, since it is not right?' It should be replied to him that although he seems to be junior, yet he is senior to the other at that moment, because he does better than his senior."
[141] RB 34; RB 2; many more.

various temperaments of those entrusted to him. He is the one who has to deal with the consequences of disorganization and misrule. Indeed, his leadership has implications beyond simply a harmonious living-together[142]: a Benedictine abbot answers for not only his own faults and virtues at Judgement Day, but also the faults and virtues of each of the souls entrusted to his care.[143] He must thus be a man of great spiritual discretion, and a nuanced judge of character. He is directly likened to Christ: he cares for each of his flock as he discerns what is most needful for each of them, and as if his worth depended on the welfare of each one – for, it does.[144]

Reciprocally, Benedict is equally direct: "as soon as something is commanded by the superior, they waste no time in executing it as if it were divinely commanded."[145] The path of the monastic life is one of humble submission. A large part of the renunciation that a monk commits himself to is renunciation of self-will. The abbot's authority may be harsh, because the monastic life is an exacting one. It requires much disciplining of desires, and much that one's own personal "wisdom" may not be enough to discover or to consider. The abbot presides over the opportunities for each brother to fulfill his devotion in the harmony of communal life – and in many cases, devotion is honed in discipline and in the humility to accept a wisdom greater than one's own. For those who are as yet new in spiritual discipline, it is a necessary humility to follow the rule of another who has walked "the narrow path that leads to life"[146] himself. Even more: if sinful culpability is allocated on the basis of a personal, willful decision,

[142] Hildemar of Corbie's chapter 41, On What Times the Meals Should be Taken, discusses in further detail the possibility of "just" murmuring, in which monks have the right to complain if they are genuinely unfulfilled in some manner or another (and also remarks on the near impossibility that there ever not be murmuring). In many places in his own text Benedict sets down a rule with the addition that this is to be held in place so that there not be murmuring. This implies, indeed, that there would be, and that it was desirable for the abbot to heed it (of course). The onus is, as explained above, still much on the abbot to rule rightly. If he does, "murmuring" (objections) are sins on the part of the monks who are unjustly dissatisfied.
[143] RB 2, The Qualifications of an Abbot, Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 47.
[144] RB 2: The Qualifications of an Abbot. Benedict of Nursia, 47–49.
[145] RB 5:3-4. Benedict of Nursia, 103.
[146] Matt. 7:14. RB 5, Benedict of Nursia, 103. Matt.

obedience even to a wrong-headed leader is not your fault, but his. The abbot will answer for his flock.[147]

It remained customary down to Lanfranc's time that anyone nominated for the office of abbot should refuse the duty, in fearful respect for the full responsibility of the many self-willed – though hopefully religiously-guided – decisions he must make in such a position, and the errors inevitably arising from both well-intentioned mistakes and from lapses in virtue. [148] John Cassian sums up the attitude in advising that "no one is chosen to rule over a community of brothers unless, before he himself exercises authority, he has learned by obedience how he should command those who will be subject to him and has understood from the institutes of the elders what he should pass on to the young."[149] Obedience to tradition is the abbot's last guard against the pride of self-will when he becomes the leader of a community. If the abbot simply follows the good judgement of those who have gone before him – the rectitude of which has since been demonstrated amply in centuries of durable piety, and plethoras of scriptural justifications added onto the hours of prayer– then to obey his summons to this schedule of hours is the same as to obey the pious motivations of the most revered fathers of the monastic tradition. It is not doubted that their first commitment was to serve God, and that their wisdom worked for and was enlightened by Him. The abbot obeys this sanctified tradition; the monks

[147] For more on both sides of this, see Fulbert of Chartres, citing Pope Gregory: "Listen to what the blessed Pope Gregory says concerning this: 'Whether a pastor binds a sin justly or unjustly, his flock should still stand in awe of his judgement, for otherwise a subject who is perhaps unjustly bound may deserve to be bound by the same sentences as a result of committing another sin. So let the pastor stand in fear of making a mistake in absolving or binding a sin; and let him who is under the pastor's power be afraid of being bound, even unjustly, and let him not take it on himself to reprove the pastor's judgement, for fear that even though there was no reason for him to be bound, yet as a result of his being so swollen with pride as to reprove his pastor he commits a sin where he had not committed one before.'" Fulbert of Chartres, *The Letters and Poems of Fulbert of Chartres* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1976), 123–25, http://archive.org/details/letterspoemsoffu0000fulb.

[148] Letter 61, Anselm to Fulk, Abbot-Elect: "We know, in fact, that it is safer for a man to flee such a burden as much as possible, fearing his weakness, than lightly to take it on his shoulders, trusting in his strength. But since it is written: 'No one lives for himself, and no one dies for himself" but 'whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's' (Rom. 14:7); thus we ought so to walk in the path of righteousness between the fear of our own weakness and obedience to the Lord's will that we are seen to disregard neither. First of all, therefore, commend yourself by pure affection of mind to divine Mercy, that he may arrange your life according to his good will." Saint Anselm of Canterbury, *The Letters of Saint Anselm of Canterbury*, 1:174. See also

[149] Book 3: III.3. Cassian, *The Institutes*, 95.

obey the abbot. They come at his signal "as if it were divinely commanded." Their obedience to him translates into their obedience to God.

This is a discipline put in place in order to fulfill one's debt of praise and thanksgiving to God "at least at fixed moments", so that time on earth may not wither away in negligence – but a discipline which is affirmed by Scriptural justification at all hours and in even the number of prayers.[150] There are many reasons why these hours are the right times in theory; but practically speaking, Benedict allows adjustments according to pressing utilitarian need. Timeliness is most stringent in relation to the rising of the sun and the darkness of night, as prayers at these hours are especially weighted with cosmological relevance. Some times, thus, are significant because we say they are; we fulfill one of our seven offices, at this time. Some times are overridingly significant because something happens; the sun prompts us to praise. This schedule is scaffolded in both inherited intellectual tradition and in personal daily experience, which mutually hold in place the monastic commitment to disciplined and constant prayer. Having thus been established, timeliness becomes a virtue of obedience, discipline, and zeal.

As, now, a normal practice, the schedule needs no justification. It represents both a norm and reality of daily life in the cloister. These origin stories and defining rules, as contained in texts reaching broad audiences from antiquity (Benedict, Cassian) and texts designed for broad audiences more contemporary to Lanfranc's customary (Honorius' *Gemma Animae*), were available in inherited tradition to practicing monks, and Benedict's Rule in particular formed the groundwork on which monastic customaries were based. Origins are not usually terribly relevant to daily practice; however, the ethos and the intentions that they convey could be,

[150] Honorius Augustodunensis provides a numerological explanation in *Gemma Animae*, lib. II, cap. XXVIII, XLVI (PL 172); Cassian relates that the decision of twelve Psalms for Vigils was given by an angel who visited a conference of the fathers deliberating on a proper number. Book II, IV-VI, Cassian, 97–100.

especially in the contemplative life where these texts were also studied in free time. What becomes perhaps slightly more relevant than providing a justificatory "defense" of the inherited norm is rather what variations might be acceptable in following it. The next chapter delves into how Lanfranc's Constitutions guarded the self-disciplined rule of time. With the canonical hours now centuries in place, it will consider how the schedule of the monks' day arranged itself around these - where they were maintained as a final limit, where adjusted, and what they were adjusted to, in daily life. The monastery was created to make its schedule of prayerful discipline not only central, but also sustainable. It would be hard, on the one hand, to predict needful intrusions, as the interiority of the monastery was designed to minimize these; but preparations were laid in order. Lanfranc's Christ Church customary addresses the possibility of lateness, schedule variation, and urgent need, and the stance which it takes towards these irruptive moments in the even schedule demonstrates the theoretical orientation of Benedictine timeliness in practice.

Chapter Three: Lanfranc's Constitutions

The Sacrist at "Daybreak"

In Lanfranc's Constitutions, the person charged with ringing the bell to call the brothers to prayer was not the abbot himself, but the sacrist. This person, along with this duty to keep the horarium, was also charged with caring for the utensils and furnishings of the church and preparing the hosts for communion. [151] It is acknowledged in the customary that this office is "manifold and complicated", and therefore should be entrusted to many, with one to keep charge over the rest.[152] The privilege of the abbot or, if he was absent, the prior (it was common for Lanfranc, the abbot, to be absent, because he, as the archbishop also, had to travel frequently), to signal the correct time is still reserved in multiple places. The abbot tells the prior when to give the signal to go to chapter, and for when there may be talking in the cloister afterwards.[153] The prior similarly signals when the monks should prostrate before the altars during the course of a service.[154] These appear, thus, as the judgement of the abbot appears in Benedict's Rule, as means for adjudicating nuance - to judge "the right time" within the order of the day or quite simply the flow of the ceremony.

The prior himself is also sometimes the one designated to determine when the children should be woken to go out and read in the cloister in the early morning,[155] after the post-Vigils return to the dormitory which happens in winter.[156] However, the masters of the children themselves also judge "the fitting hour" at which they should wake the children[157]; in

[151] Archbishop of Canterbury Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, trans. David Knowles and Christopher N. L. Brooke, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford University Press, 2002), 121–24.
[152] Lanfranc, 125–26.
[153] Lanfranc, 8–9.
[154] David Knowles, trans., "The Instruction of Novices," in *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc* (New York : Oxford University Press, 2002), 202–3, http://archive.org/details/monasticconstitu0000lanf_u3w1.
[155] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 171.
[156] Lanfranc, 5 (October), 11 (winter season after Nov. 1st); see also Knowles' footnote 28 on p. 10. There is also a note on this for Rogation Days, p. 75. For return to sleep/dormitory in Benedict's Rule, see de Vogüé, *La Règle de S. Benoît, Commentaire Histoire et Critique (Parties IV-VI)*, 5:419–31.
[157] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 75.

another passage, if they "see that the hour is passing at which the signal is wont to be given by the prior, he should rise and rouse the children as quietly as may be".[158] Such a judgement might come by sunlight; or it might also come with a learned familiarity of the durations of scheduled time. Unsurprisingly, these can occur together.

As in Benedict, the most fixed referent for one of the hours of prayer is the beginning of light at Lauds, and the strictest injunction to the sacrist for keeping time occurs in relation to Lauds in Lanfranc's customary:

> "If morning Lauds is beyond measure and indecently late, the sacristan who will have been entrusted the care of this will prostrate himself before the step in choir where penance is done until the collect with *Benedicamus Domino* is finished; this begun, he will retire without awaiting permission, and without making the double bow. Let him make satisfaction in this way, on whatever day negligence of this kind may happen, and hence afterwards in another chapter he does not ask pardon."[159]
>
> "Que matutine Laudes, si ultra modum et indecenter tardauerint, secretarius cui huius rei cura tunc commissa erit, ante gradum satisfactionum prosternatur, quousque ipsa collecta usque ad *Benedicamus Domino* finiatur ; quo incepto nulla expectata licentia recedat, et ante et retro non faciat. Hoc modo satisfaciat, quacunque die huiusmodi neglegentia eueniat, et inde postea in capitulo aliam ueniam non petat. »[160]

This passage speaks of a "measure" for a decent time; but the word "modus" is also used to denote, more qualitatively, "*due* measure", or simply, "manner". Immediately both qualitative and quantitative time are brought into view. This variability in meaning between measure and manner for this word speaks to the variability in time-reckoning by estimation. The sacristan's penance for such a failing in estimation is relatively minimal – he makes a small penance immediately, and is exempt from asking further pardon. "Indecenter", however, implies that others can see and would care when a certain expected threshold has been passed. Daybreak is a natural phenomenon whose occurrence is evident to everyone, and

[158] Lanfranc, 111. Also Lanfranc, 171: 'Tali hora prior mane ad excitandos fratres sonitum debet facere, ut pueri factis solitis orationibus, in claustro ualeant legere; qui cum legere inchoant, alte aliquandiu legant. »
[159] My translation.
[160] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 124–27.

chapter 8 of Benedict's Rule, on "The Divine Office at Night", states explicitly that, for the summer season, Lauds is to be said "at the beginning of light" – *incipiente lux*. However, the temporal window of this "*incipiente lux*" is subject to much nuance. A long list of terminology was provided by Bede, quoting Isidore, to mark the gradations from night to day: *crepusculum* is dusk, the time when light becomes "*creperum*" (murky) and "*dubium*", eventide is *vesperum* (when the evening star appears), the first hush of the night is *conticinium*, the dead of night is *intempestum*, cock-crow is *gallicinium*, *matutinum* is the time between the withdrawing of darkness and the coming of dawn (*inter abcessum tenebrarum et aurorae adventum*), and *diluculum* is the beginning of a little light, and including the dawn (*quasi jam incipiens parva lux diei; haec et aurora, pertingens usque ad solis exortum*).[161] Lanfranc, in his customary, uses none of these terms except *vesperum* and *matutinum*, along with *mane* and *nox*. *Laudes matutinae* (or simply *laudes* or simply *matutinae*) refers to this office in the *Constitutions*.

There is variation through the course of the year on how early this "beginning of light", and therefore this office, is to be reckoned. In October, Lanfranc says, at least, and, as Knowles determines, likely the summer season, it must certainly be well before *diluculum*, for at these times there is an interval after Lauds in which the brethren return to the dormitory. [162] Then, when day (really?) lightens (*illuscente die*), they are summoned at a bell to go forth and say Prime. [163] Lauds as a "daybreak" service when there is a return to the dormitory

[161]« Noctis sane partes sunt VII… Crepusculum est dubia lux; nam creperum dubium dicimus: hoc est, inter lucem et tenebras. Vesperum, apparente stella ejusdem nominis, de qua poeta: "Ante diem clauso componet Vesper olympo." Conticinium, quando omnia conticescunt, id est, silent. Intempestum, media nox, quando omnibus sopore quietis nihil operandi tempus est. Gallicinium, quando galli cantum levant. Matutinum inter abscessum tenebrarum et aurorae adventum. Diluculum, quasi jam incipiens parva lux diei; haec et aurora, pertingens usque ad solis exortum. » Bede, *De temporum ratione*, cap. VII (PL vol. 90, col. 0325A-0326A). ProQuest: https://www.proquest.com/books/de-temporum-ratione-c-s/docview/2684146259/se-2?accountid=15607.

[162] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 5. This is Knowles' educated guess – see "Introduction," xxiii-xxiv, and, with more surety, footnote 28, p. 10. Lanfranc is clear that the brothers go back to bed after Lauds in the month of October explicitly. He also mentions this for special occasions: Christmas night, pp. 20-23, and the octave of the Circumcision, pp. 22-23.

[163] Lanfranc, 4–7. "illucescente autem die pulsetur a custode ecclesie paruulum signum modice."/"when day is breaking the small bell shall be sounded lightly by the warden of the church." (Translation Knowles)

afterwards might denote when the night sky just begins to lighten to morning but well before the sun actually comes up. But: after the feast of All Saints, for the winter season: "the sacrist should however see to it carefully that Lauds begin so that full daylight has come when the whole [of Lauds, with a commemoration of saints] is over."[164] If full daylight has not yet arrived ("Si autem aliqua dubietate deluditur, et aliquid noctis post letaniam fuerit"/"if he makes a mistake and it is still night when the litany ends…"[165]), the brothers are to sit in the church quietly until daylight comes, at which point they may leave the church and sit in the cloister.[166]

We have here an indication of the possibility of the sacrist's being too early, the indication for "too" (no or not enough daylight at the end of the service) and the solution for it (sit and wait in church). If Lauds were to be called late by the sacrist, however: in October and possibly the summer season this would curtail their interval before the "full daylight"[167] of Prime. This slippage could conceivably be perceptible during the office of Lauds (where it seems the sacrist's penance would be done), due to the amount of light having dawned already. The judgement of the right time to ring the summons could here derive from the possibility or impossibility of having enough time to return to the dormitory. In winter, however, where the arrival of full sunlight by the end of the service is of special note, the right time could more straightforwardly accord with environmental symbolism. The "*ultra modum et indecenter*" lateness here might prove obvious if sunlight is full before the service has been begun.

It is possible that Lanfranc's model for Lauds was applied for lateness in any other Hour; he writes "in this manner shall the one responsible for negligence of this kind on any

[164] Lanfranc, 12–13. "Secretario autem sollicite prouidendum est, ut tali hora matutinas laudes faciat incipere, quatenus omnia luce clarescente finiantur. »
[165] Lanfranc, 12–13. Translation Knowles.
[166] Lanfranc, 12–13.
[167] Knowles, "Introduction," xxiii; Lanfranc, Again, something to be checked; just because sometimes I find it hard to see it in the customary. But: I could and should check again more in other places in the customary!!

day do penance"[168] (*hoc modo satisfaciat, quacunque die huiusmodi neglegentia eueniat*). Other hours could well constitute "negligence of this kind". However, it was Lauds which was important enough to serve as the example. God set the heavens in motion, after all, and is the direct author of the rising of the sun. Lateness matters here in part because of the symbolic implications. If the Lauds service is to praise the Lord for a new day, and the monastery missed the dawning of it, perhaps the monastery is not really showing due diligence to the actions of God in the world.

"Fixed" Schedule

Other hours too, however, even without such environmental symbolism, were relatively fixed, albeit with a window of permissible variation. The *Constitutions* demonstrates an interplay between a task-oriented necessity to alter schedule and the strict adherence to fixed times in describing the procedure for shaving. "On the day the brethren are to be shaved," Lanfranc writes,

> "the bell for Prime (or for Terce, if Terce is to be said before chapter that day) shall be rung more rapidly than usual. They shall not sit long in chapter but when all necessary business has been done they shall rise, and when the board has been struck and *Benedicite* said they shall go out into the cloister."[169]

There, a long regimen of psalms and prayers shall be said, after which the brothers help each other to shave. "If," Lanfranc notes, "the bell for one of the hours sound while a brother is being shaved, and his beard be either still untouched or wholly shaved, he shall put on his cowl over his tunic and go into choir; otherwise he shall stay away."[170]

In this example, on the one hand, the bell for Prime (or Terce) is rushed to make time. On the other hand, the next hour, whether Terce or Sext, will not be pushed back to ensure that everyone has finished. Haste is made in chapter to finish the daily business quickly. If a

[168] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 126–27.
[169] Lanfranc, 136–37.
[170] Lanfranc, 138–39.

brother has only been partly shaved when the bell sounds for the next hour, he shall not go in. Shaving is described meticulously in this passage as a group activity, something that the whole community, down to the littlest children who cannot wash their hair for themselves, is engaged in. The bell is not a signal necessary to gather everyone together; they are, already, here. The liturgy begins not when everyone is finished, but at the time the sacrist knows to ring the bell on every other day. Here the bell is not a tool of social coordination, but rather keeps the community to its abstract rule regardless of whatever activities are filling the time.

This excerpt also hints at the procedural kind of time that is prominent in Lanfranc's *Constitutions*. The customary details the steps to each ceremony: do this, then this, then this. Once this is finished, this happens next, dictates delivered in the ablative absolute: *finitis vesperis*,[171] *celebrata missa,*[172] *his ita expletis*,[173] *hoc facto*.[174] This kind of notation comprises steps internal to the service itself as well as the schedule of the day, including the liturgical hours and the ceremonies which happen around them. In the daily schedule, the hours remain fixed; but they are fixed also in that they are bookended between the whole rest of the sequence of the day.[175] On shaving day, the bell for Prime or Terce is rung "more rapidly than usual" in order to complete the office, so that chapter can be held quickly, so that they can finish shaving, so that they can make it in time for the next Hourly bell. The slight variation – coming early to an hour – is made on the front end, to ensure that the opposite, coming late to the next hour, may be avoided. The next hour will take place at its requisite time whether everyone is ready for it or not. They act as the nodes around which other activities may be scheduled.

[171] Lanfranc, 12.
[172] Lanfranc, 20.
[173] Lanfranc, 20.
[174] Lanfranc, 56.
[175] This bookendedness echoes the note by Peter Damian that the Cluny liturgy is so full that there is barely half an hour of idleness. By no means do I claim that the same was the case at Christ Church; but the need to stay on track to complete the lengthy liturgy can be demonstrated here. See Resnick, "Peter Damian on Cluny, Liturgy and Penance."

On the Dying

One of the most extreme examples of the fixity of schedule comes in the case of a dying monk. "If a sick man should seem to be tending towards death rather than towards recovery, and should ask to be anointed," Lanfranc writes, such an announcement should be made in chapter, the community meeting which occurs after the morning mass.[176] If it cannot wait until next chapter, it may be announced before any of the Hours. Even in this case, however, the community will complete the service before going to see him and conducting the anointment ceremony.[177] For the last case of immediate imminence, two guidelines are given, in two separate places in the section. First, delivered directly as last in the sequence of increasing urgency: "But if it is impossible even to delay till after an hour has been chanted, then the abbot or prior is to arrange things as seems best to him, for necessity knows no law."[178]

This course of action heeds an unpredicted qualitative time: it demonstrates a flexibility in response to the circumstances and grants the abbot the freedom to deal with the case as he sees fit. This, theoretically, might mean that the hours could be interrupted. There is a second time notation, however, a little later. The next portion in the passage cites the prayers that should be said for a sick man who is not yet dead, with the implication that he may yet recover. Then, it moves to the scenario that recovery seems improbable: brothers will be designated in pairs to stay with him, read to him, and recite the regular hours. Once his senses fail, the Psalter is to be recited over him continuously. Then, "when he [a brother designated to watch over him] sees him now in the agony of passing," Lanfranc writes,

> "he shall take the board in his hand and run to the door of the cloister and beat the board there with sharp and rapid blows until he is sure the community have heard. When they hear the sound, if they are at the High or Low Mass or a regular

[176] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 179–80.
[177] For a study on Farfa's death ritual, see Susan Boynton, "A Monastic Death Ritual from the Imperial Abbey of Farfa," *Traditio* 64 (2009): 57–84.
[178] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 180–81.

> hour, a few brethren shall be told to remain in choir with the children and their masters, while all the rest run to the sick man, reciting the *Credo* in an ordinary tone of voice as they go. The brethren who remain, when they have finished the office, shall run in like manner, chanting the *Credo*, to the dying man. Wheresoever else they may be, and whatsoever they are doing when the sound of the alarm reaches them, they shall make no pretext for delay but run to the sick man, chanting the *Credo*."[179]

This is an immediate, spontaneous, and very compassionate urgency. Here, however, there is a notable specification of what kind of decision the abbot or prior in charge is left to make: he must designate some brothers to stay behind and finish the Hour. It is imperative that the service still be completed, even in the case of an immediately imminent death.

It is possible that the imperative to complete the Hour is implicit and left unsaid in the first case. It is important to point out additionally that these two are likely theoretically though perhaps not practically separate instances.[180] The first procedure, left simply to the abbot's discretion, is the anointment of the sick. This can be delivered with hope of a recovery, as Lanfranc implies by the sequence of his instructions. It had long been posed, however, as more specifically a service for the dying sick,[181] delivered with the procedures of confession and viaticum (last communion), as here. "When all this is done," Lanfranc writes – not, necessarily, when the man has died – "the community shall return to the cloister."[182] There may indeed be a significant interval between this ceremony and the actual death. Lanfranc even outlines what daily prayers should be said for him in the interval between this ceremony and convalescence or death.[183]

[179] Lanfranc, 180–83.
[180] The differences are even more evident in the customary of Farfa, which has other phrases very similar to Lanfranc's – the procession with holy water, candlesticks, the cross, and incense, while chanting the seven penitential psalms – and yet distinguishes more clearly (temporally) between the ceremony of anointing the sick and then the later prayers. The dying monk approaching his death, and after the anointment ceremony, should still receive communion again, even if he had received it already on the same day, "because the communion will be his help in the resurrection of the righteous, and will raise him up on the new day." (quia communio erit ei adiutorium in resurrectione iustorum, et resuscitabit eum in nouissimo die). Boynton, "A Monastic Death Ritual from the Imperial Abbey of Farfa," 69.
[181] Frederick S. Paxton, *Christianizing Death: The Creation of a Ritual Process in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1990), 166–67, http://archive.org/details/christianizingde0000paxt. Paxton notes it as first acknowledged in "official" doctrine at the Council of Mains in 847.
[182] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 180–81.
[183] Lanfranc, 180–81.

The second announcement of death, then, summons the community to return after having conducted this first ceremony, now to pray over him in his very last moments. Lanfranc prescribes a series of prayers, and notes that the litany can be expanded as need be if his soul is still with him. If they come to the end and he is still alive, a few brethren, "as ordered", will remain behind to recite the Psalter from the beginning. "When the time comes for the community to be recalled, they shall be called and shall come as above."[184]

The first case possesses an official urgency because of the theological and doctrinal necessity to deliver last rites for a dying Christian. As a duty of their faith, the abbot or prior is given all latitude to fulfill it - "necessity knows no law",[185] in Lanfranc's very own words. It is possible that the second announcement of death, where it is specified that some must remain to pray the hour, carries slightly lower ritual priority. The presence of the community here is a comfort of compassion, rather than part of the community ceremony for a necessary sacrament – though the social, communal import of this final attendance in the last moments cannot, I think, be stressed enough.

Though theoretically different rituals, these two may quite realistically occur together. In either case, a reverential strictness for the Hours is shown even in light of the great and grave compassion for death. The anointment of the sick is scheduled around the hours, even around daily chapter. This schedule is only interrupted, at the abbot's discretion, in cases of extreme urgency. In such cases, however, it is likely that the last rites and the communal prayers of the last moments will occur together. This means that, practically, the abbot's discretion in the first case would very likely include appointing some brothers to remain and finish the liturgy, as specified only for the second case. What this amounts to is that even in the qualitative urgency of the last moments of a brother's life, the order of the hours must be kept just as attentively. The Divine Office is a necessity that remains as important as this.

[184] Lanfranc, 182–83.
[185] Lanfranc, 180–81.

Travel

The Divine Office as a necessity emerges starkly again in the case of travel by a monk outside his monastery. The schedule of the Hours is kept rigorously before he departs, even in conflict with practicality. The monk who is about to depart and stay away from the monastery for more than two nights shall receive the blessing of departure at any hour except for Vespers or Compline.[186] If he be still in the cloister when the bell for the next hour sounds, "he shall go into choir with the others, and when the hour has been said shall go on his journey."[187] If it is the case that he is outside the cloister but not yet outside the gate when the bell sounds, "he shall return to the church and say the hour without going into choir, and afterwards go on his journey."[188] By way of explanation, perhaps, Lanfranc adds that one should never enter the cloister "gaitered or girded for the road, or wearing a cape."[189] In any case, it is better that the journey should be delayed than that the monk miss a service he has the chance to attend.

Inside the monastery, the schedule holds fast even at odds with departure times. Outside the monastery, however, the schedule fades while the necessity of completion demonstrates its significance. "They shall say all the office which it is not convenient for them to say at night whilst they are on horseback on the road," Lanfranc writes,[190] thereby acknowledging the upending of schedule. Despite it not being "convenient" to say the night hours at their customary time, these hours still must be said, even amid all the exigencies of travel. Thus, he will fill his other free times with the required prayers. Lanfranc is quite aware that there may be interruptions – but he specifies that, if it become necessary to speak while the monk is saying the psalms, he shall respond as needed, then begin the hour again. A monk abroad is also enjoined not to speak at all after having said Compline, until "the hour of

[186] The assumption, I can only conjecture, is that these are not good times to set out on a journey.
[187] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 145.
[188] Lanfranc, 145.
[189] Lanfranc, 145.
[190] Lanfranc, 144–45. "Cunctam psalmodiam quam in nocte eis dicere commodum non est, equitantes per uiam dicant…"

Lauds".[191] Again, if he must, he should speak, resay the hour, and again keep silence until morning.

In these observances there is an admixture of allowances made for the unpredictabilities of travel, and a great attention to maintaining the proper reverence for the monk's *opus Dei*. These prayers are solemn tasks that need to be completed, with all due reverence. Redoing interrupted prayers and preserving the silence after Compline help to retain some ceremonial respect. In the extreme case of being outside of his monastery, however, the schedule can be overthrown, prayers filled in for when, at other times, it may be impossible to make an opportunity. This underscores how the rule of the hours in the monastery is a conscious construction of such opportunities. Within the walls of the monastery, the world can be arranged to work around and on the schedule of the hours.

Lateness[192]

Within such a community, lateness is a failing in part due to the irreverent interruption of ceremony. If a monk should arrive to a service after "the first psalm or at least its Gloria", he should enter by a different door (one "close to the prior"), make a short act of penance before the altar, then go to his stall at a signal from whoever is presiding after making a bow. This is the general rule for all hours in the "Instruction of Novices" for Christ Church observance[193], although more leniency is granted for arriving to Vigils after the first psalm, as "they shall enter just as they come because they arrive from their beds at random as chance

[191] Lanfranc, 145.
[192] This section derives mostly from "The Instruction of Novices According to the Custom of Canterbury", a text "based upon a directory derived from Lanfranc's Constitutions," which Knowles assesses to be a good illustration of Lanfranc's customary in action, and highly likely of the same period (it survives from a thirteenth century manuscript). Because I am less interested in Lanfranc specifically and more in a vision of monastic practice, this text is very much to the point for me.
[193] Though it is noted that, at Lauds, the psalm after which penance must be done is *Deus misereatur*. Knowles, "The Instruction of Novices," 208–9.

has it."[194] This is not an open-ended rule, however: if a monk should come to arrive after the fifth psalm of Vigils, "he shall not enter, but shall say [Vigils] alone or with others before the crucifix," and answer for it in chapter.[195] There is, after all, a sounding of the bell to awake for Vigils - it is not totally "random, as chance has it", because it should not be missed. However, there is built in here an acknowledgement of the difficulties of getting up in the dark of night. Benedict too makes note that the beginning of Vigils should be sung "drawn out", slowly, so that all may arrive (*propter hoc omnino subtrahendo et morose volumus dici*).[196] For Lauds, none should enter after *Laudate Dominum de celis*.[197] If other hours have their own no-entry points, they are left unstated.[198]

When coming in late, the "Instruction" says, the brother should take care to enter near the end of the current psalm or hymn. This is because the community makes a bow upon finishing the hymn or psalm. The community also makes a bow, coincidentally, when someone passes down the choir. For a latecomer to enter, and force the others to bow at his late arrival, would be "as it were, a mockery".[199] If the truant times it so that he enters at the end of a psalm or hymn, it will be clear that the bow is part of the ceremony of the service, and not an acknowledgement to him.[200] Other details press the aim to be unobtrusive: a latecomer should enter by a different door, near the prior; he should make a "short" act of penance; when dismissed, he should go to his desk by the shortest way.[201] However, there is no avoiding the publicness of the short penance, at which he waits for the signal of the one presiding in choir in order to be dismissed to his desk. The monk should do as little as he can

[194] Knowles, 208–9. "Hoc uero in uigilia prima habet exceptionem; tunc enim passim ueniunt, quia de lectis sine prouisione ueniunt. »
[195] Knowles, 208–9.
[196] RB 43. Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 351. Also RB 13; Benedict of Nursia, 186.
[197] Knowles, "The Instruction of Novices," 208–9.
[198] Knowles, 208–9.
[199] Knowles, 208–9.
[200] Knowles, 208–9.
[201] Knowles, 208–9.

to interrupt the community at service; but the whole community is very well aware of a fault such as this.

Excusal of the Sick

This penance is, in fact, to be done "for any reason of negligence or other excusable or inexcusable circumstance".[202] It is to preserve the sanctity of the service that has begun, not necessarily or exclusively to punish culpability – because it is incumbent upon even those who are not culpable. Excused absences of the sick, too, reflect the sacrosanct attitude towards the Offices that they should be fulfilled by each brother regardless of valid, approved reasons why he might miss. A monk who finds himself unable to follow the daily rounds prostrates himself in chapter and confesses/admits this (*fateatur*).[203] The abbot grants the sick brother his discretion in staying away from the services. When he has recovered enough to return to the daily rounds, he shall again prostrate himself, in the place customary for it, and ask pardon.[204] The words of his pardon are as follows "or similar"[205]:

> (Knowles) "My Lord, I have been long in the infirmary borne down by sickness; I have offended in matters of food and drink and much else, and I have acted against our established discipline, and for this I beg of you absolution."[206]
>
> (Latin) « Domine, infirmitate mea grauatus in domo infirmorum diu fui; in cibo et potu et aliis multis offendi, et contra ordinem nostrum feci, et inde peto absolutionem uestram. »[207]

The "offense in matters of food and drink" likely refers to the possibility that a sick monk may have been granted permission to eat meat, otherwise forbidden by the rule, in order to regain strength during his sickness.[208] The implication that he may have been a burden to

[202] Knowles, 208–9.
[203] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 177.
[204] Lanfranc, 176–77. "Ingressus capitulum, cum indictum fuerit de ordine loqui, primus surgat, et in loco ubi consuetudo est prostratus ueniam petat."
[205] Lanfranc, 176–77.
[206] Lanfranc, 177.
[207] Lanfranc, 176.
[208] Lanfranc, 177.

the community is evident here, too; he ate and drank while contributing nothing (though it is unlikely he would otherwise be engaged in providing for his and others' food). This plea in fact invokes both the spirit of community and his personal duty: "*I* acted against the rule," he admits, and asks pardon for this, for himself, as much as for any inconvenience caused for the monastery.

This example does not deal directly with adherence to times; but it does powerfully invoke the Divine Office as the *opus Dei* which a monk commits himself to upon his profession. He is not culpable for his sickness, and is excused from the daily rounds by the abbot; but he is still dedicated to God's service. His penance, in this sense, derives not from his own moral failing, but from the objective greatness represented by observing the hours. It is the contrast between his own mortal weakness, on the one hand, and the divine worthiness of the liturgy that requires the sick monk's penance.

Conclusion

The very beginning of the "Instruction of Novices", a text following Christ Church observance,[209] indicates the rivalry between custom and nature that the monastic profession grapples with, a contest that could well be likened to the contrast between ordered quantitative and reflexive and reactive qualitative time. The text unites "long use and ancient custom" to "nature" in depicting the habits that predominate outside the monastery, so much so that the monastic rule seems to undertake to change nature herself in imposing its own custom. The duty to pray the schedule of liturgical hours is no more naturally evident than it is customarily evident in the ordinary and uncommitted life of a farmer, townsman, or lord. This new custom must be learned, over the "second nature" already formed by commonplace socialization in the world outside the monastery. By recalling these rules to memory, however, "by practice

[209] See Knowles, "Introduction," p. liii and footnote 182 above.

and by force of habit", "rough places will be changed into a high way and hard things will become easy." The monastery purposefully structures its own rule to make the *opus Dei* "second nature", and it does this in no small part by its integration of quantitative with qualitative time.

In the customary as described above, there have been a variety of indications on timeliness. First, environmentally indicated time, in two senses: significant symbolism (sunrise) and more commonplace numbering of hours by portioning the sunlight (uneven hours). Secondly, we see the liturgical hours as "fixed", with other activities absolutely scheduled around them (shaving day, death, departure). The shaving day example complicates the image of "fixed" hours, though, in that the first bell is rung "more rapidly than usual". The examples of designating brothers to stay behind to say the Office while another brother is dying, the pardon asked for a sick leave from the daily rounds, and the example of shifting around the schedule of prayers while a monk is on the road, all indicate what comes down to a fundamental necessity to complete the prayers. Outside the world of the monastery, where the Rule is not omnipotent and universally applicable, the monk's duty to fulfill his agenda of prayer (literally, *to be done*) still stands, but is loosed from the requisite times. The important thing is that he complete the prayers, less so when he completes them. However, the decorum around lateness shows that, when the prayers are completed within the monastery's realm of control, its own particular schedule should be respected ceremoniously. The bells, the gathering of the community, the public penance done for lateness, all formulate each Hour as a qualitative time in a social sense, as being demonstratively and evidently "the right time". The canonical hours are then experienced both as professionally necessary and as a social fact. The monastery's very organization and internal autonomy reifies the necessity and the gravity of these scheduled prayers.

Religious Time

If these are the standards for the rightness of time in a customary – what can this tell about religiosity?

Lateness has the clearest personal moral hue. Here is where the discipline of time acts as a test for individual discipline and devotion. The ideal of personal commitment is to respond qualitatively to the summons; the "natural" response should be to come quickly, when called. Layering this further, a monk should develop a "natural" consciousness for when the Offices will be, so that he can think ahead enough to plan his tasks so that he is indeed able to come on time. The ethos the monastery, in its rules and its administrative requirements, seeks to foster, is one in which the monk puts nothing before the work of God.

The case of the sick brother retains an obligation to personal discipline: it could act, also, as a warning against taking sick leave in vain. But ones who truly are sick are, demonstrably, not always culpable. Even moral spirits suffer from affliction from time to time. Anselm's advice to his esteemed, sick friend Maurice, in a letter, was not moral improvement but medicine. Yet the sick still owe an apology for the time they not only lost, but did not give.

The necessity to complete the Office even in the extreme situation of the imminent death of one of the brothers is the most impressive indication of the Office liturgy as an objective, rather than just a subjective, good. Task completion is not only for the pious perseverance and keeping-busy of the individual brother: it is necessary that the office be completed as a contribution to the broader world. To miss an Office is to devolve from your monastic duty to pray on behalf not only of yourself but of your benefactors, your king and Queen, for earthly welfare: the *psalmi familiares*, the offices for the dead, the special prayers made for patrons and saints.

Prayers offered as an objective good might easily occur as a bit of propaganda to draw monastic patronage; it certainly helped to fulfill that function. But if this was good advertising, it is accompanied by the implication that people who patronized monasteries did believe, to the point of donating their wealth and their children, that intercessory prayer would be important. Internally, the stringency of the schedule to observe and uphold such a regimen of prayers within and by the institution indicates a belief which goes beyond a facile platitude.

Monks themselves reproduce this belief reflexively in writing to and for each other, formally and informally. Renie Choy, in her article "Seeking Meaning Behind Epistolary Clichés: Intercessory Prayer Clauses in Christian Letters", draws together numerous instances in which the power of a friend's prayer is invoked in letter exchanges: men would both ask for and offer their prayers as a means to smooth the path of the friend they were writing to. She points out that this existed as a literary cliché for a reason: it demonstrates a pattern of thought and a social convention far beyond just an epistolary formula – a "socio-theological logic".[210] This "socio-theological logic" pervades hagiographies and histories, and though it may be stylized and exaggerated in these forms, again, indications of normative ideality give direction to how people do, in fact, decide to conduct their business, and how people do what they do gives substance and material to representations of what should be the case. The prayers that monks offer are treated as necessary, for the monks; good, for the outside world.[211] Does this mean prayers can be effective? What, really, can they do? Why are the Offices so important that even the death of a brother must not be allowed to interfere with reciting them? Why should prayer be marshalled into a discipline which is necessary regardless of result?

[210] Renie Choy, "Seeking Meaning Behind Epistolary Clichés: Intercessory Prayer Clauses in Christian Letters," *Studies in Church History* 48 (January 2012): 11, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0424208400001200.
[211] Choy delves into this much further, for a slightly earlier time period, in her book, Choy, *Intercessory Prayer and the Monastic Ideal in the Time of the Carolingian Reforms*.

Gilbert Crispin, in his *Vita Herluini*, offers an example, around an anecdote about our own Lanfranc himself, and it has much to do with hope. At one point when Lanfranc was prior at Bec, he got into a spat with Duke William.[212] William ordered Lanfranc banished from his monastery. Upon notice of this, the brethren "were [constant] in prayer according to the word of the prophet Jeremiah, 'Waiting in silence for the salvation of the Lord.'"[213] Lanfranc, as ordered, left - on a lame nag. Having not gone very far, he fortuitously encountered Duke William on the road, and joked that the duke had better provide Lanfranc a better horse with which to execute his own sentence of banishment. Crispin writes: "Commending the settlement of his cause to him who hath made eloquent the tongues of babes, and with the active assistance of the monks who were praying to God for him, he so successfully pleaded his cause that in a short while he brought it to the desired conclusion." Lanfranc and William made friends again, and the beloved prior Lanfranc was restored to his abbey.

The prayers of his fellow monks are credited in part with the successful conclusion of this escapade – God, Lanfranc, and the monks are all contributing factors. However, God is the only sufficient one, and the monks could not construe their prayers as necessary. They themselves were not confident in their efficacy: the good abbot Herluin "could hardly credit the unexpected issue of events."[214] Prayers were not bound to work; but they could be effective, if God deemed it right. They could only hope that their sense of justice was that which God, too, would ordain; and in this hope they prayed without the surety that he would answer.

There are two important considerations here. First is the content of "right". How can this be determined? The agency of God and man are layered onto and into one another,

[212] For full scholarly consideration of this anecdote, see H. E. J. Cowdrey, "Service Outside the Cloister, c.1042–1070," in *Lanfranc: Scholar, Monk, Archbishop* (Oxford University Press, 2003), 32–34, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199259601.003.0003. The primary source is Gilbert Crispin, *Vita Herluini*. David C. Douglas and G.W. Greenaway, eds., *English Historical Documents, 1042-1189* (Oxford University Press, 1988), 673–74, http://archive.org/details/englishhistorica0011davi.
[213] David C. Douglas and G.W. Greenaway, *English Historical Documents, 1042-1189*, 673. Lamentations 3:26.
[214] David C. Douglas and G.W. Greenaway, 674.

sometimes: at, perhaps, significant times. Second: prayers *could be* effective? Isn't a conditional quite a demanding premise to hinge a committed lifetime of hours upon hours of scheduled prayers upon? I will return in the next chapter to the idea of "the right time", and the issue, discussed in the different views presented by Charles Taylor and Steven Justice, of belief.

Chapter Four: Chronos, Kairos, Belief

I would like to return now to the possible distinction between quantitative-qualitative, and chronos-kairos time. The question seems to come down to focusing on the agency of God, or the agency of man, and how these may be layered into each other in decisions of rectitude – what "should" be.

Chronos - measuring qualitative time

The monastic *horarium* is, largely and on an expansive view, chronos time. There are no interventions by God here. It is a human order. The rules above, from Cassian to Benedict to Lanfranc, have made abundantly clear that humans have determined, in the past (Cassian's elders), that this ordered schedule is the one to be followed, and still determine, presently (Lanfranc's sacrist, for example), when to coordinate the community to carry it out. The ordered schedule is a necessity of human discipline. If man were perfect, he would pray all the time. A person needs training, however; he also needs rest, and to attend to other business. A rule for many must give room to allow manageable endurance to a range of human temperaments, and thus time is ordered in an institutional agreement, present and past.

However: within this schedule, not all times are equal, neutral, interchangeable in any mode of organization one way or another. They differ in liturgical content in sometimes quite conscious reference to the time at which they are said; they take the cue to happen *at this time* from something outside both arbitrary and intentional human organizational purposes. Hours of the horarium which stand out as qualitative in this manner, in Lanfranc's customary, revolve around cosmologically-indicated times of night and sunrise: Vigils at night, Lauds at daybreak, and Compline to begin the silence of night. These times are less neutral than the Little Hours of Prime, Terce, Sext, and Nones. The "quality" of their temporal symbolism acts as an inherent bulwark to the relevance of the prayers said at these times – these offices are said now for a

reason. Rising in the middle of the night to offer praise at Vigils is a special duty which requires a night watch; it recreates the angelic watches of the city of Jerusalem, or the Easter vigil, or commemorates the plague on the Egyptians or Christ's conquest of hell.[215] Compline, meanwhile, firmly seals an observant silence until Vigils: even when traveling outside the monastery walls, this silence is to be kept vigilantly after Compline prayers are done.[216] Lauds, as we have seen, was the most strictly detailed in temporal limit, the break of day acting as potent symbolism for the coming of Christ, praise of the Lord, thankfulness for a new day. These are not blank units of even time: they are imbued with temporal significance. Within the "waiting time" of chronos, thus, the monastery schedule highlights special moments; ones which might, perhaps, by their quality, grant encouragement to this waiting - reify that the prayers we offer constitute a relation to a God who, we can see, himself acts in this world.

Cosmological Time

Lauds is specifically aligned with cosmological time: the rising and the setting of the sun. This is the focus and the theoretical limit for this Hour; but cosmological time is also indicative of a higher order. In Honorius Augustodunensis' educational textbook known as the *Elucidarium*, the master in the work explains to his student that nothing inanimate is insensitive to God – not even those things that we as humans think are dead or have no capacity to feel.[217] The sun and moon sense and serve God by following the courses he set them in, *invariabiliter*. The earth, too, follows His will by ripening with fruit and producing seeds when it is time.

[215] Honorius Augustodunensis, *Gemma Animae,* lib. II, cap. I, XV (PL vol. 172) *https://www.proquest.com/books/gemma-animae-sive-de-divinis-officiis-et-antiquo/docview/2684151938/se-2.*

[216] Additionally, from Honorius: "For while they go to sleep at night, they protect themselves with the sign of the cross, almost as a seal, until they loosen their lips shut at night, which they now open, to praise God." "Dum enim in nocte dormitum eunt, signaculo crucis quasi sigillo se muniunt, qua nunc aperiunt, dum ora in nocte clausa ad laudem Dei solvent. » *Gemma Animae*, lib. II, cap. 1 (PL vol. 172, col. 0616C). ProQuest: *https://www.proquest.com/books/gemma-animae-sive-de-divinis-officiis-et-antiquo/docview/2684151938/se-2.*

[217] English: Clifford Teunis Gerritt Sorensen, "The Elucidarium of Honorius Augustodunensis: Translation and Selected Annotations" (Brigham Young University, 1979), 15–16, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/9019/. Latin: Honorius Augustodunensis, *Elucidarium Sive Dialogus De Summa Totius Christianae Theologiae*, lib. 1, cap. V (PL 172, col. 1113A-1113B). ProQuest: https://www.proquest.com/patrologialatina/books/elucidarium-sive-dialogus-de-summa-totius/docview/2684151513/sem-2?accountid=15607.

Rivers feel Him, by returning to the places from which they flow. Such an exposition shows God clearly at work in everything which happens in this world, because everything is capable of sensing His will.

Benedicta Ward has suggested a slight difference of focus in accounts of miracles and the miraculous from Augustine to the High Middle Ages.[218] Augustine describes the natural and supernatural as equals on a continuum. What happens every day is a miracle; we have simply gotten used to many of the abundant, constant ones. Later, around the twelfth century, a little more stringency in distinction had begun to develop, and can be demonstrated in Anselm. In his *De conceptu virginali*, he explains that there can be a three-way differentiation of events: those that occur naturally, those that occur by the will of God, and those that occur by the will of man.[219] The *Elucidarium*'s description of the natural course of the world as a sensation of God chimes well with the Augustinian continuum of wondrous events. This vision is the closest to aligning qualitative time with *kairoi* under God's purview – for, not only do the sun and the moon feel "the right time" in the ordained order, but so too, conceivably, might humans be able to sense "the right time" as a manifestation of God's will. The typology seen in *De conceptu virginali*, however, differentiates more sharply. Christ coming into the world is an act of God. The sun rising is an act of nature. Prayers at Lauds are an act of man.

But, as the effortful schedule of the *horarium* has made clear, it can be an act of man to strive to follow God's will. And the *horarium* does so. Monks wrote up star charts to find the right time to rise for Vigils; they constructed sundials, and discussed astrolabes.[220] Hermannus Contractus' *De utilitatibus astrolabii libri duo*, as Mario Arnaldi explains, describes a portable

[218] Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record, and Event, 1000-1215* (Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 1–5, http://archive.org/details/miraclesmedieval00ward.
[219] Ward, 5.
[220] There was little Latin European knowledge and use of astrolabes until the 12th century, though it was developed and used in the Islamic world much earlier. Gerbert of Aurillac (ca. 945–1003) was one early importer. Schechner, "Astrolabes and Medieval Travel," 189.

cylindrical dial for telling time – Arnaldi even points out the similarities of Hermannus' device with a portable sundial discovered buried under the Christ Church cloisters, dated to the tenth century. Within his book, Hermannus offers instructions for its reader to "test the truth of the hours of the day" (*horis diei experire veritatem*). He writes of the utility of his device for prayer hours:

> "This most worthy office of hours is to be celebrated in the day, and it seems so useful to knowledge how much more pleasing and proper all now proceed, while, with the greatest reverence, the Sunday services are carried out by the due hours under the rule of the just Judge, who wishes to be deceived by no shadow of vicissitude."[221]

He refers just a sentence later to the times which his astrolabe can more accurately attune to as "the most certain hours" (*certissimas horas*). Proper observance of these ensures that "everything then proceeds" – the tasks of the day, including the other offices, could go forth smoothly, and that everyone can be in agreement about when the times really are. The advantage given by his "*astrolapsus*" was that it effected an alignment of quantitative, chronos hours with cosmological time. The uses of technologies including the astrolabe, sundials, and star charts aspires to a verification beyond simply human decision, and one more fine-tuned than the obvious case of the sacrist having been late "*ultra modum et indecenter*" to ring the bell for Lauds.

Cosmological time steps outside of mortal contingency, accidental or perhaps not so accidental inconsistency or inattention. It is a means to check our own discipline. It holds human timekeeping accountable to a standard which is inscribed with certainty – the heavens will move

[221] Hermannus Contractus, *De Utilitatibus Astrolabii libri duo*, lib. I, cap. V (PL 143, col. 0397D- 0398A). ProQuest: https://www.proquest.com/books/hermanni-contracti-monaciii-augiensis-de/docview/2684145073/se-2?accountid=15607. « Hoc dignissimum ad diurnum horarum celebrandum officium, et pernimium ad scientiam videtur utile, quanto gratius et decentius cuncta tunc procedunt, dum cum summa reverentia debitis horis sub regula justi Judicis, qui in nullo vult falli vicissitudinis obumbraculo, Dominica ministeria convenienter peraguntur. » My translation.

in their ordained courses objectively. Quantitative time is one attempt to predict and to align with this.

Cosmological Time, And – theological, institutional, traditional layers of meaning

Cosmological time, then, provides a vouchsafe of truth and correctness, which accuracy in quantitative time aims for and tests itself (occasionally) against.[222] Which cosmological times are important – which cosmological times should count as "qualitative" time – is subject to institutional arrangement and theological argument. What should happen at these times is, indeed, far more determinative of how we approach what simply does happen in the traceable movements of the heavens.

Vigils and Compline, the two other offices from this "qualitative" list I have provided, are, too, important in reference to the time at which they are said. For these offices, however, there is not a specific time that is cosmologically indicated (despite the range of possible variation in when "daybreak" might be). The important thing is that these Offices happen around night. The

[222] Bede, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, quotes a letter which describes "horological inspection" to determine or verify the equinox. Hugh George McCague, "Durham Cathedral and Medieval Architecture: Manifestation of the Sacred through Number and Geometry," *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses* (M.A., Canada -- Ontario, CA, York University (Canada), 1992), 85, https://www.proquest.com/docview/304025936/abstract/8EB551600F37414EPQ/1. Part of the Insular Paschal Controversy included the fact that the old Celtic computus still used the extremely antiquated date of March 25 as the equinox, when centuries of calendrical slip had made this date (verifiably?) *not* the equinox. The British using the old computus were not, therefore, verificationist, but instead remained obedient to the tables which had been passed down to them (see Wallis, "Introduction", p. lviii (especially footnote 126), lxii-lxiii.) Faith Wallis prudently notes the difference between knowing how tables should be composed, and knowing how to use an existing (inherited) table (lxii). Computus is a predictive, not a reactive science, and it takes a high level of expertise to compose or to correct paschal tables. The Council of Whitby, as reported by Bede, was in large part a deference to greater expertise – though, significantly, supported by claims for universality of observance, which should translate into truth and accuracy of observance – orthodoxy. See chapter 25, Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, 295-309. A second example however, of verification taking place in Bede's own work: he explains in Chapter 43 why the moon sometimes is older than its predicted age. This is a necessary fiction to preserve the wider goal of reconciling the lunar and solar calendars mathematically. Bede, *The Reckoning of Time*, 115–19. Verification is of more consequence at the level of the hour, when it is more apparent than more minute measurements for determining the timing of the equinox.

specific "when" is determined by human order: what time we should get up in order to finish in time for Lauds at daybreak, etc; or, when we retire for sleep. These "whens" are instrumental.

But that is not all that they are. The dusk and the dawn, the day and the night, the seasons, are kairoi, qualitative time, due to their content. They fulfill a meaning at this time and no other. Citing Psalm 29:30, Goscelin du Saint Bertin, in his *Liber confortatorius*, associates weeping with the evening, and joy with the daybreak. In correspondence to and explanation of this, he writes, "Evening means this transitory life, and morning means the eternal light."[223] To some extent we might feel we can "sense" the meanings of these times, as the rivers, the earth, the sun and the moon sense the will of God, in the *Elucidarium* quote. A person might notice they are most sad in the evening; he or she might notice a brightening of spirits in the new light of day. These things come upon us seemingly naturally, and we can conduct prayers in accordance with these moods that we sense. Requisitely, the prayers of Lauds are ones of praise, while at Compline we make confession and ask for protection.[224]

These "meanings" might come "naturally" because they are ingrained in the practice monks grow up in, and in the tradition of directive interpretation which is layered into identifying "the right time". Even a moment seemingly determinate, like "dawn", must be decided upon and placed within a hierarchy of significance. For example, Prime, which takes place in the full light of day, could easily be cosmologically justified over Lauds, when light is just breaking, as, for example, bringing to fruition what was only hinted at before. Yet the liturgical content and the temporal emphasis is definitely on Lauds and not on Prime in medieval Benedictine houses. The monks in observance inherit these meanings from practices decided long ago, and

[223] Otter, *Goscelin of St Bertin*, 110.
[224] Recall Lauds includes, and is named for, Psalms 148-150, the "*Laudate*" psalms. Knowles identifies that confession was said at Compline in his "Introduction", xxi. Honorius Augustodunensis describes both evening and morning confession in his Gemma Sive Animae: confession at Compline is for the sins of the day, confession in the morning makes amends for sins of the night. *Gemma Sive Animae,* liber II, caput lxiv. *PL*, vol. 172, col. 0638B.

under them come to understand implicitly that Lauds is a more significant time than Prime, because that is how they observe it.

The temporal significance of Vigils and Compline is in direct conversation with the meanings that have been attributed to the darkness at the end of the day. Bede, for example, gives the "natural" "meaning" of night: it is a time for rest, for both humans and animals. Bede praises God's order that "where [the climate] is colder because of the distance of the Sun, there the night is longer, in order that labour might be shortened and limbs kept warm."[225] Within the monastic *horarium*, in parallel and moving in the opposite direction as this naturalistic interpretation, rising at night demonstrates the constancy of prayer, our devotion to work for God even in the night. In his *Gemma Sive Animae*, Honorius Augustodunensis associates the twelve nocturns said at night with earning a denarius for one's twelve hours of labor – normally, the work of the day.[226] (Monks are, evidently, not relying upon the generosity to the eleventh hour laborers). It thus also suggests a transcendence of normal human action: an etymology by Isidore says the night (*nox*) is so called because it detracts (*noceat*) from human affairs or human vision.[227] Honorius Augustodunensis, meanwhile, associates the office of Vigils with the angels keeping watch for Jerusalem, and with the rising of the prophets from "the night of ignorance to the light of knowledge".[228] To rise at night transcends the ordinary or untrained course of human nature. We are no longer fulfilling "human affairs", but instead a higher calling. "Sensing" the will of God, in this service, happens not in the natural course of things, but by instruction from interpreted revelation, which itself sets in place a natural order and guides the believer for how they should live in it.

[225] Bede, *The Reckoning of Time*, 31.
[226] Honorius Augustodunensis, *Gemma Animae*, lib. II, cap. XXV, XXIX (PL vol. 172, col. 0623D, col. 0625B-0625C).
[227] Bede, *The Reckoning of Time*, 28.
[228] Honorius Augustodunensis, *Gemma Sive Animae*, cap. XXVI, col. 0624A. "Versus Media nocte surgebam tempus legis denotat, quo prophetae de nocte ignorantiae ad lucem scientiae surgebant."

Compline also very much takes reference from the meanings associated with the night, and the human order which accompanies them: a time of sleep, a time of silence, a time of darkness and, perhaps, vulnerability. "Because our body is made destitute of the human senses at night," Honorius says, "for this reason [our body] is more intently committed to God" at the hour of Compline.[229] Lanfranc prescribes the hymn "Christe, qui lux es et dies » to be said at Compline in the winter season,[230] and its verses commend the "heavy body" to the protection of the Lord.[231] The hymn "Te lucis ante terminum", for the summer, likewise asks for defense from "nightly fantasies" and the pollution of "the enemy".[232] The three invariable psalms 4, 91, and 133 said at this time all allude to the coming of the night and the entrusting of a soul to sleep. A confession is made at this Office, to reflect upon and ask forgiveness for the day's sins. Finally, this office "seals" the mouths of the monks in silence, until the Vigils service in which the verse, "Open my lips, O Lord…" is said.[233] While silence is to be held by monks as a habit at many times of the day, Benedict imposes a "severe penalty" (*gravi vindictae*) on anyone who breaks this silence especially at Compline (RB 42, titled: No One Is to Speak After Compline).[234] In Lanfranc's Constitutions the stringency of this night silence is carried even into the outside world, for the traveling monk. The night is a perilous ground for sinful thoughts and actions, and Lanfranc's customary designates a dormitory watchman to keep an eye "to see if there be anything needing correction", to layer an extra watch – besides one's personal conscience before God – to "take care that nothing be done at night that will be shameful to

[229] Honorius Augustodunensis, *Gemma Animae*, lib. II, cap. LXIV (PL 172, col. 0638B). Et quia corpus nostrum in nocte ab humanis sensibus destituitur, ideo per hanc horam intentius Deo committitur.
[230] Lanfranc, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, 12–13.
[231] Verse 39 in collection by F.J.E. Raby, ed., *The Oxford Book Of Medieval Latin Verse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 51, http://archive.org/details/raby-f.-the-oxford-book-of-medieval-latin-verse-1959.
[232] Verse 36 in Raby, 48.
[233] Knowles, "The Instruction of Novices," 208–9.
[234] Benedict of Nursia, *Benedict's Rule*, 344. Adalbert de Vogüé has a lengthy analysis of the night silence (as well as *all* other parts of Benedict's Rule) where he touches on the aspect of institutional discipline important here; he also treats the movement from private cells to a communal dormitory. de Vogüé, *La Règle de S. Benoît, Commentaire Histoire et Critique (Parties IV-VI)*, 5:645–722.

hear in the morning."[235] The night silence is one measure, not so much natural as institutional, to curb and contain falling prey to sins which otherwise might be cloaked in the darkness of night. The night has symbolic attributions; the monastery responds in kind.

Temporal symbolism in the horarium, thus, appears sometimes as an act of will, and other times as a natural sense. The night is "naturally" for rest and for silence; we break our repose, however, to transcend the nature of the night in praise of the Lord. When light begins to creep over the earth, however, we give full rein to a "natural" feeling of hope and anticipation, in Lauds, where timeliness bears the most significance. The horarium plans what should happen around what does happen. Its artificial discipline is not arbitrary; qualitative is built into quantitative time.

Kairos

Charles Taylor, too, talks about objective meanings in describing the pre-modern, pre-secular world of the Middle Ages. As Bede, Goscelin, Honorius Augustodunensis and others describe, there is a moral, normative order to which the natural world conforms to, and to which humans should strive to set themselves in alignment with. As qualitative is built into quantitative, chronos time, monks set themselves into God's order. They hone their "sensation" of God – not only in personal discipline, but in an objective relation to the world and the "right times" which God ordains within it.

The call to prayer is not directly God's call – as we have seen, there are layers of institutional and highly human order (fallible, adjustable, subject to reason and argument), involving the sacristan, the method of reckoning the angle of the sun or the stars, the customary, Benedict's Rule. It is filtered through a near-arbitrary obedience: the observant monk comes

[235] Knowles, "The Instruction of Novices," 211.

when he is called; he obeys the times which were set down by pious elders long before him, "compelled as it were by law to fulfill these duties of piety at least at fixed moments".[236] In intention, though, it can be God's call. He is doing the *opus Dei*. The horarium was decided upon in the light of God-guided wisdom; the piety of the Fathers which Cassian underscores, the sanctity of Benedict, the Scriptural concordances adduced in the intervening centuries, all serve to "prove" this. Once set down, this horarium becomes the framework in which an intentional believer can pursue God, and in taking up such a framework he or she may thus follow God's will. The Office is an opportunity, if not to find him, every time, at 9 am or at sunset – but to train an openness to feeling how he works in this world - in one's own daily time.

Such a training cannot but effect qualitative moments which might feel like kairoi, as one's emotions, hopes, pleas for protection, sense of right and wrong are associated with a relation to God. In the preface to his *Liber confortatorius*, when he is recalling how he has been cut off from the young woman he addresses, Goscelin du Saint Bertin writes,

> "But see, as I was writing this, my sorrow swelled up and could not be repressed. My hand and my pen dropped; a moaning and sobbing overcame me. I rushed before the altar of your St. Lawrence, as I was sitting in his remote chapel. In a flood of tears, I called out again and again, as if buffeted and beaten by the Lord: Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. I snatched up a psalm, "Miserere mei Deus," and intoned it amidst sobs: 'a contrite and humble heart'; and again from another psalm these verses that seek you out: 'I am made like unto a pelican in the desert,' and 'The Lord looked down from Heaven onto the Earth, to hear the groans of them that are in fetters.' With loud wails I forced out, 'Holy Mary, come to the aid of the miserable and help the dejected.'"[237]

It does little to doubt here if this literally happened – if he got up from writing to go to the altar and aloud, amid wails, intone these prayers. I would like to take him at his word that he did, for the same reason that one could argue that this is a normative construction: this

[236] Cassian, *The Institutes*, 140.
[237] Otter, *Goscelin of St Bertin*, 22.

passage offers a pattern of what he felt requisite to do when assailed by a grief such as the one he was feeling. There is no reason to doubt that this is what he indeed did. He here demonstrates how a training in the psalms and the association of God with protection, mercy, deep emotion, can effectuate – does effectuate - spontaneous piety. To ask Goscelin, in this moment, "why is it good to pray?" would be nonsensical. This is the way he has understood to channel emotions, both to direct and to give expression to them. Grief can be laid at God's feet; help can be supplicated by the words of the psalms.

We encounter again here the "as if". His turmoil embroils him "as if buffeted and beaten by the Lord." This is not a definitive statement of the action of God within him; it is not a claim to *kairos*. But God's action is the standard to which he gauges himself and his feelings. He is aware of the possibility of a great power beyond him; his personal turmoil is so great as to demand supplication to that power. He might not say he can feel God acting within him, but he knows instinctually that he needs Him *now*, at this time.

Goscelin might have needed God then, personally and internally – but how does one determine, objectively, if it is the right time? For humans, for moments other than moments of personal spontaneous prayer, this determination sometimes must come retroactively, or at least with a knowledge of what is coming. It is often reliant on the success of the action at hand. This demands a look at the whole of which the moment is a part. Precisely, *kairoi* cannot be predicted. All moments are present to God; but sometimes humans can only judge the rightness of a moment as it is given to them, or after.

The *Carmen de Hastingae Proelio*, a poem commemorating William's Conquest by Guy, bishop of Amiens, begins with William waiting for the right time to cross the channel. "For a long time foul weather and ceaseless rain" prevented the passage, and he "awaited the favor of the winds". For fifteen days he waited, and busied himself with offering prayers and

alms at the church of Saint-Valery, in the port where he had taken refuge. At last – "the Gracious God at last pitied you [William's] intention, and gave you all the means for your sworn endeavor."[238] God "drove the clouds from the sky and winds from the sea, dispelled the cold and rid the heavens of rain," "grant[ing] everything according to [William's] desire."[239] It is the right time according to William's own intention: this is the answer that he was hoping for. God provides the means for fulfillment – and, moreover, he decides when. The English, about to be invaded, might question William's intention as "right"; but they might be less likely to question that it was the right time to cross the channel, by the circumstances of the sea and the weather. God is not commanded or bound by human "should"; but he is enlisted in human causes, for purposes of a rectitude which looms greater than silly little human willings, wanting something to be so or so. God's "when" pronounces William's intention to be right. Because it was such a fateful event, Godly rectitude is heavy in this commemorative poem.

To ask the question of "what is right" is to have already a template of what something should be, and how it should fit into its whole.[240] God acts as this template for what, and how, things should be. The sun should rise; the river should flow; the man should become as God made him. A man learns – perhaps by a "narrow way", perhaps by peripheral socialization – that, for example, there was a Fall, in which human became less perfect than God made them; but also that God still loves mankind, and even while we are imperfect, both some of this original perfection remains in us (reason; an abiding desire for God), and that sometimes he visits us, to help us along. God reaches into time; he has reached into time; events of salvation history have happened at these very hours in which we pray.

[238] Bishop of Amiens Wido, *The Carmen de Hastingae Proelio of Guy, Bishop of Amiens*, ed. Catherine Morton and Hope Muntz (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 7, http://archive.org/details/carmendehastinga0000wido.
[239] Wido, 7.
[240] I have been much influenced by reading Alasdair MacIntyre's *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*. Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth, 1988). To think about much more.

Since the times of the horarium were ordained, in Cassian's account, by the most pious ancient elders, they have been passed down as the right times: because we pray now, this is what we should do. In the genre of which I have taken Honorius Augustodunensis' *Gemma Animae* to be an example, layering Biblical concordances on the ordained hours of prayer creates a kaleidoscopic kind of time, in which the acts of God can be overlaid onto the believer's own time of day. Goscelin du Saint Bertin's advice to his young hermitess expresses the useful value of this most explicitly: these events act as devotional foci, pricking the believer to imaginative attention and even *compunctio*, the ideal of emotive yearning for God. The numerousness of the Biblical concordances provided in his book, in Honorius Augustodunensis' *Gemma Animae*, in Drogo Astiensis' *Liber De Divinis Officiis Seu Horis Canonicis*, provide a symphony of opportunities to focus on a believer's relation to God, how God has and does reach down to man. They are not, necessarily, originary reasons why monks pray to God at these times. They are affirmative, though, of the received order, and reflect in it a higher rectitude than merely human reasons. These times *can*, for a passionate and reflective believer, be significant in themselves, and these concordances demonstrate the rectitude of the elders' decision in establishing them.

St. Anselm, in his *De Veritate*, connects the highest truth with rectitude.[241] Some types of truthful rectitude simply happen: the sun rises, the stone seeks to be below when it is above. But he further stresses that one only earns merit for rectitude if one submits to it by will. The "right time", if it is to be the right time in the best and fullest sense for a man to experience it, must also be a decision. It should not only be a responsive, reflexive thing. King William had a broader intention which made the turn of weather the *right* thing to happen – for his purposes. A monk has a broader intention which makes prayer the *right* thing – because he is devoted to

[241] Anselm, "On Truth," in *The Major Works*, ed. Brian Davies and G. R. Evans, trans. Ralph McInerny, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 151–74.

a life of prayer. These intentions are essential for making the rectitude to be one of a worth over and beyond a simple natural order. If the sun rising is the right time to praise God, it is because we consciously recognize and assent that this is one exemplar of the ways in which God acts in this world, one instance where "praise" is a meaning especially demonstrative. Gratitude at daybreak seems to emerge naturally; but we adorn it with further, deeper meanings, in actions of intellect, intention, and will. We hone this kind of rectitude; we train in and for it, plan for it, in carefully measured quantitative time.

This is not to say that there were not bored monks, tired monks, rebellious monks, apathetic monks. There were. But they shared in the template of what should be – they all were ruled by this customary, which was supplemented with readings from Benedict, from Church Fathers such as Cassian, from commentators on the Psalms and theological expositions on the Offices – supplemented with a social life in which one could earn self-worth and social merit from the virtues of obedience and humility. They lived together in a community which had both weighty spiritual and practical tasks to attend to, in which the Offices were central nodes around which things were to be done. The fabric of practice reifies the necessity to pray, and the value of finding it momentous, sometimes, to do so. The meanings which a monk grows up with and in provide both motivation, and reason to continue, within the quantitative discipline of the monastic horarium.

I hope that I have, at least in part, come back around to the different presentations of belief cited from Charles Taylor and Steven Justice in the introduction of this thesis. This schedule was a conscious commitment; monks sometimes arbitrarily submitted, not because they felt the hour of prayer as a qualitative time, but because they were bound to the quantitative rule. The binding nature of such a commitment, whether through sincerity of broader belief or through institutional enforcement, supersedes momentary affection or apathy for the liturgy. As Justice rightly points out, in accord with classical Christian theologians from Augustine to

Anselm, faith is an affirmation. Enrolled in this commitment, however, the rectitude of the task they are set exists in a kind of background belief, as Taylor explained it. The necessity to pray is the underlying ethos of the schedule of time, in the discipline for lateness, in the social life of the monastery. This discipline exists in part because the wider society believes in the monastery's value for interceding between heaven and earth – that their prayers have an objective value, something of greater significance than the personal devotion of any individual monk. The hand of God is inscribed in the actions and decisions of monks as they tell each other about their lives in their letters; in historical chronicles, in the popularity of hagiographies. He reaches into the lives of monks every day in the miracle of the sacrament of the Eucharist. Lanfranc himself argued for the daily miracle of the *real* presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the bread and wine taken twice in every monastic day at communion.[242] God's involvement in this world is not a rarified thing.

Even more, the notion that there is an objective right – a right time, for example, binding on both individuals and on a community, one which is communicated in temporal concordances with events of the Bible, with numerology, with changes of the wind and emotional changes of mind - is a notion which, in these texts, relies on God as vouchsafe for it. The proofs of right do not need to make proofs of God, for He already underlies them. He is the proof. When God is the intention, it is always the right time.

[242] Lanfranc of Canterbury and Guitmund of Aversa, *On the Body and Blood of the Lord; on the Truth of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist*, trans. Mark G. Vaillancourt, The Fathers of the Church. Mediaeval Continuation, v. 10 (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 2009).

Epilogue-Epigraph

"We have now come to the center of what I have called the ontological mystery, and the simplest illustration will be the best. To hope against all hope that a person whom I love will recover from a disease which is said to be incurable is to say: It is impossible that I should be alone in willing this cure; it is impossible that reality in its inward depth should be hostile or so much indifferent to what I assert is in itself a good. It is quite useless to tell me of discouraging cases or examples: beyond all experience, all probability, all statistics, I assert that a given order shall be re-established, that reality is on my side in willing it to be so. I do not wish: I assert; such is the prophetic tone of true hope."

- Gabriel Marcel, *The Philosophy of Existentialism*. Secaucus, N.J: Citadel Press (1956): 28.

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