

## Seven Daily Habits

The following are inspired by Rev. C. John McCloskey's *The Seven Daily Habits of Holy Apostolic People* and include:



1. The Morning Offering
2. Mental Prayer (at least 15 minutes)
3. Spiritual Reading (at least 15 minutes)
4. Holy Mass and Communion
5. The Angelus (at noon & 6 p.m.)
6. The Holy Rosary
7. Examination of Conscience (at night)

Consider some key points, first just like someone who is starting a daily exercise program, you do not go out and run several miles on the first day. That would invite failure, and God wants to see you succeed. Take it easy on yourself as you incorporate these habits in your daily routine over time.

Second, while gradually implementing these habits, you still want to make a firm commitment, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to make them the priority in your life - more important than meals, Sleep, work, and recreation.

Third, St. Basil writes, "The reason why sometimes you have asked and not received is because you have asked amiss, either inconsistently, or lightly, or because you have asked for what was not good for you, or because you have ceased asking." It is time to set aside the disorderly, \*free-styling" way in which most of us have practiced our daily prayer life throughout our lives. The "cult of the casual" has become so pervasive in the world that it has seeped into our faith lives. This lack of discipline has spelled disaster for those who have ever attempted to maintain regular habits of prayer. These habits must be done when we are most alert, during the day, in a place that is silent and without distractions, where it is easy to put ourselves in God's presence and address Him. Schedule your prayer or it will never happen.

Fourth, Father McCloskey points out that "living the seven daily habits is not a zero sum game. You are not losing time but rather, in reality, gaining it. I have never met a person who lived them on a daily basis who became a less productive worker as a result, or a Worse spouse, or who had less time for his friends, or could no longer grow in his cultural life. Quite the contrary, God always rewards those who put Him first. Our Lord will multiply our time amazingly as He did with those few loaves and fishes that fed the multitude with plenty left over. "

1. **The Morning offering:** This prayer that lets you begin by offering up your entire day for the glory of God. St. Josemaria Escriva encourages us to get up on the dot: "Conquer yourself each day from the very first moment, getting up on the dot, at a set time, without granting a single minute to laziness. If with the help of God, y you

conquer yourself in that moment, you have accomplished a great deal for the rest of the day. It is so discouraging to find yourself beaten in the first skirmish” This is called the “heroic moment” and gives us the physical and spiritual energy throughout the day to stop what we are doing in order to live the other habits. Once your feet hit the ground, speak the words “I will serve” (or *Serviam*, in Latin)

2. **Mental Prayer (15 minutes):** This is the one thing necessary that constitutes the essential foundation for the interior life. This prayer is simply one-on-one direct conversation with Jesus Christ, preferably before the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle.
3. **Spiritual Reading (15 minutes):** This refers to the systematic reading of Sacred Scripture known as *Lectio Divina* or reading and contemplating on the daily scripture readings.
4. **Hear Daily Mass & Receive Holy Communion:** This is the most important of the seven. As such, it has to be at the very center of our interior life and consequently our day. St. Peter Julian Eymard tells us to “hear Mass daily; it will prosper the whole day. All your duties will be performed the better for it, and your soul will be stronger to bear its daily cross. The Mass is the most holy act of religion; you can do nothing that can give greater glory to God or be more profitable for your soul than to hear Mass both frequently and devoutly. It is the favorite devotion of the saints.”
5. **Angelus (or Regina Coeli):** This is the very ancient Custom that has us stop what we are doing to greet our Blessed Mother for a moment (at 6am, noon & 6pm daily), as any good child remembers his mother during the day, and to meditate on the Incarnation and Resurrection of our Lord, which give such meaning to our entire existence (The Regina Coeli is said only during the Easter Season, the Angelus is said the rest of the year).
6. **The Holy Rosary:** “For those who use their intelligence and their study as a weapon, the Rosary is most effective, because this apparently monotonous way of beseeching Our Lady, as children do their mother, can destroy every seed of vainglory and pride.” – St. Josemaria Escriva
7. **Nightly Examination of Conscience:** Take a few minutes just before bed to review your day asking, “How have I behaved as a child of God?” It is also a great time to look at the “dominant fault” you need to improve upon in order to become a saint. Conclude these few minutes of reflection by praying three Hail Mary’s for purity and then pray the *Act of Contrition*.