

CANONICAL PRAYERS

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Canonical prayers are obligatory. Laziness and lousy attitude towards this is not acceptable. In the orthodox tradition, the prayers are assigned to do seven times. Evening, Before bed time (Soothoro) Midnight (four parts), Morning, Third hour, Sixth hour, and Ninth hour are the seven times. If we count the four parts of the midnight prayer, the number will be ten. This is the symbolic cleaning of the five outer senses and the five inner senses.

Sundays and the feasts known as the feasts connected with our Lord have the prayers corresponding to the days. The days other than Sundays have separate prayers. Any time we pray, we have to start with a Kaumo and finish with a kaumo. The first part – In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, needs to be used only in the beginning. If we do any of the prayers for different times together, we just have to start the Kaumo with Holy art Thou O God. All prayers finish with the Creed. If we combine two prayers like evening and soothoro, we have to use the Creed at the end of the prayer.

On regular prayers we are supposed to prostrate three times when we say Holy art Thou O God.... In the middle of the Creed when we start – came down from heaven.. we prostrate three times. As we prostrate we have to make the sign of the cross. Sundays and the feasts of the Lord are exempt from this rule, so as the days from Easter to Pentecost. Good Friday and all Passion Week we have to prostrate. On Paschal Thursday, after the Holy Communion and until the evening prayer we do not have to prostrate.

We can use any language for prayer, but the basic thing is we have to pray. Those who have chosen the monastic vows have special prayers in addition to the canonical prayers. These prayers focus on repentance.