

The Agpia

In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. Amen.

Aim

- † The benefits of praying the Agpia
- † Learn how the Agpia is arranged and how to pray using it

Key verses

“Seven times a day I praise You” (Psalm 119:164)

Introduction:

The word ‘Agp’ in Coptic means ‘hour’. So the word Agpia means ‘the book of the hours’. It is called this name because it comprises the prayers as we should pray at specific hours of the day. David the prophet and the king said, “Seven times a day I praise You” (Psalm 119:164); therefore the church arranged that we pray the Agpia seven times everyday.

Prayer is our way to communicate with God. The Agpia teaches us to pray and allow us to involve God in everything in our life.

Lesson Outlines:

- ❖ The Agpia comprises prayers for different hours of the day, each one reminds us of God and His love and care for us.
- ❖ The Agpia is a very complete prayer for through it we remember the greatness of God, our creator and our Father. We offer thanks to the Lord for everything He gives us. We ask Him for all our needs and we praise Him and glorify Him.
- ❖ At the time of our Lord’s life on earth the day was calculated as from sunrise to sunset. So the first hour of the day correspond to 6 Am., the third to 9 Am., and the sixth at noon and so on.
- ❖ **Prime - Morning Prayer (6 am):** we should pray early in the morning as soon as we wake up. It reminds us of our Lord Jesus Christ Resurrection. We pray it to give thanks to the Lord for having us rise from the sleep and to grant us the power of His resurrection.
- ❖ **Terce - Third Hour (9 am):** reminds us of three events, Christ’s trial by Pilate, His ascension to the heavens and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples. We pray that the Holy Spirit Who descended upon the disciples on the Pentecost day would be with us and purify us.

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- ❖ **Sext - Sixth Hour (12 Noon)**: reminds us of the crucifixion of our Lord. We ask the Lord that through His passions He delivers us from every evil thought and that we always remember His commandments.
- ❖ **None - Ninth Hour (3 pm)**: commemorates the death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross and the repentance of the thief. We ask God to accept our repentance as He accepted that of the thief.
- ❖ **Vespers - Eleventh Hour (5 pm)**: commemorates the act of taking down Christ's body from the cross. We give thanks to God and ask Him to count us among the laborers who were called at the eleventh hour of the day.
- ❖ **Compline - Twelfth Hour (6 pm)**: reminds us of the burial of our Lord Jesus Christ. We ask God to forgive us our sins and protect us through the night.
- ❖ **Midnight prayers**: commemorates the second coming of the Lord. These prayers contain three watches (9 pm, 12 midnight, and 3am) corresponding to the stages of Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane
- ❖ **The Veil**: This is an extra prayer directed to be prayed by the monks as a means of examining the heart.

The order of prayers for every hour is as follows:

- ❖ Each of the hours starts with the Lord's Prayer, the prayer of Thanksgiving and Psalm 50.
- ❖ After these three prayers we then pray the psalms, a part of the Gospel and the litanies.
- ❖ These are followed by kyrie-eleison (Lord have Mercy) repeated 41 times reminding us with the 39 scourges our Lord suffered and the crown of thorns put on His head and the nails.
- ❖ Each hour ends with the absolution of the hour followed by the conclusion of every hour.

Review:

- ❖ How many times did David praise the Lord daily?
- ❖ What do we pray for in the third hour?
- ❖ How many Kyrie-eleison do we repeat every hour?
- ❖ Which psalm we pray every hour?

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Conclusion:

The Agpia prayer is well arranged to keep us continually in touch and in relationship with God. It is a complete prayer that contains all the component of the acceptable prayer in front of God. However, the most important thing is the spirit of the believer during praying with the Agpia.

Applications:

- ❖ Start praying with the Agpia if you are not using it now. It is good to start with part of the hour and gradually increase the number of Psalms prayed.
- ❖ Memorize the conclusion of every hour for next week.

Glory is to God, forever. Amen.