

SERAPHIC COUNSELS
Third Order Daily Rule of Life
and Retreat Prayer Schedule on page 2

- 1. ORDER YOUR AFFAIRS.** Reduce your daily occupations to a fixed rule, and do everything for the greater honor and glory of God. “The light of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be lightsome. But if thy eye be evil, thy whole body shall be darksome” (Matt. 6:22). The holy Fathers refer this passage to the good intention: if we have it, all our works will be meritorious; if it be absent, they will be of no value before God. Therefore obey the injunction of the Apostle. “Whether you eat or drink, or whatever else you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).
- 2. HAVE A FIXED HOUR FOR RISING AND RETIRING.** Experience teaches that the success of the entire day depends on regularity. You may change the hours of rising and retiring with the seasons; but having adopted a certain hour, be sure to adhere to it. Seven hours, or at most eight, are abundantly sufficient for rest; more is rather harmful than otherwise.
- 3. ON AWAKENING, RAISE YOUR HEART TO GOD.** Consecrate your first aspirations to God; immediately on awakening offer Him your heart. Make the sign of the Cross, and devoutly invoke the holy names of Jesus and Mary. The day thus commenced will have God’s blessing. Whilst dressing, occupy your mind with pious thoughts, dwelling on the points of meditation.
- 4. SAY YOUR MORNING PRAYERS AND MAKE YOUR MEDITATION.** Immediately after dressing, kneel down and say your morning prayers. Then make the meditation: you will find a method elsewhere in this book.
- 5. REMEMBER THE PRESENCE OF GOD.** Disengage yourself at stated times — for instance, when the clock strikes — for a few moments from your occupations, and raise your mind and heart to God.
- 6. MAKE THE PARTICULAR EXAMEN.** About noon, recollecting yourself and reviewing the past half-day, examine yourself on the particular fault which you purpose to eradicate, or the virtue which you desire to attain. A method of this examination is given below.
- 7. BE CAUTIOUS DURING RECREATION.** A bow never unstrung will slacken, and a mind always occupied will be fatigued. It is therefore quite proper to devote some time, especially after meals, to recreation. Do not, however, abandon watchfulness over yourself. Be careful in the selection of your friends; pious and prudent members of the Order will be the best ones. In conversation avoid slander, backbiting, etc. Make the rule of St. Bonaventure your motto: “I will never say of my neighbor in his absence what I would not say in his presence.”
- 8. VISIT THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.** It would be a shame for us if those who are not members of the Order were to be more zealous than we in this respect. If possible, visit our dear Lord in the Blessed Sacrament during the course of the afternoon or evening, and open to Him with filial confidence your whole heart, placing in the sacred wound of His heart all your secret troubles and desires; for He invites you, saying, “Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you” (Matt. 11:28).
- 9. CLOSE THE DAY WITH PRAYER.** In the evening you should, if possible, have family prayers. A general examination of conscience should form a part thereof. Conclude by reading the meditation for the following day.
- 10. RETIRE MODESTLY.** Sleep and your bed should remind you of death and the grave. While awaiting sleep, occupy your mind with the next day’s meditation, piously invoke the Holy names, and commend yourself to God and the Saints. Should you happen to awake during the night raise your soul to heaven, that you may be protected from all harm of soul and body.

**Third Order Pre-Lenten Retreat
Prayer Schedule**

- MATINS & LAUDS:.....6am
- Morning Prayer
 - Angelus
 - Morning prayers and consecration
- HOLY MASS:.....7am
- followed by the Holy Rosary
- MORNING MEDITATION:.....9:30am
- HOUR OF SEXT:.....11:40am
- Angelus
 - Spiritual Communion
- LUNCH:.....12pm Noon
- SIESTA/ FREE TIME.....1 pm - 1:55 pm
- NONE:.....2 pm
- AFTERNOON MEDITATION:.....following None
- HOLY HOUR:.....4pm—5pm
- Exposition/Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament
 - Vespers
 - Rosary for the Day
 - Benediction
- SUPPER:.....6pm
- COMPLINE:.....7:45pm
- Nightprayer
 - Reading from the Franciscan Book of Saints for the Third Order
 - Blessing and Grand Silence