

Helpful Information for Keeping a Prayer Rule

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By St. Theophan the Recluse

You ask about a prayer rule. Yes, it is good to have a prayer rule on account of our weakness so that on the one hand we do not give in to laziness, and on the other hand we restrain our enthusiasm to its proper measure. The greatest practitioners of prayer kept a prayer rule. They would always begin with established prayers, and if during the course of these a prayer started on its own, they would put aside the others and pray that prayer. If this is what the great practitioners of prayer did, all the more reason for us to do so. Without established prayers, we would not know how to pray at all. Without them, we would be left entirely without prayer. However, one does not have to do many prayers. It is better to perform a small number of prayers properly than to hurry through a large number of prayers, because it is difficult to maintain the heat of prayerful zeal when they are performed to excess.

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