



## The Monastic Tradition of Education

with Dr. Christopher Perrin

### Lesson 3: Work, Study, and Prayer

#### Outline:



*Communion of the Apostles, Fra Angelico, 1440-1441*

#### Work, Study, Prayer

- Ora et Labora is a maxim meaning pray and work.
- The whole rhythm of the monastic life was designed to be restful.
- Even their work could be restful.
- The general pattern was 6 hours of work, 3 hours of study, and a cumulative 4 hours of prayer.
- The rhythm of prayer oriented the entire life of the monastery.
- Pagan literature was preserved in the monasteries.

What could we do with prayer in our schools and homeschools? How could prayer orient and characterize the entire life of the school?

- What if we had a deliberate, slow, and unrushed way to enter study?
- Some schools have a liturgy planned. This can be enlivening.
- There are many recorded prayers for beginning study.
  - Thomas Aquinas's Ante Studium prayer, Proverbs 1, Proverbs 2
- Some schools have a liturgy planned.



What does it mean to be a thoughtful deliberate student?

- Prepare a zone of silence and study for at least two hours a day.
- As an educator, you are at leisure to dedicate your life to idea and books and conversations around them.
- Could we privilege our schedule such that we are reading in a restful state?  
Could we find ways of sleeping well? Could we find ways of eliminating some of the distractions that keep pulling us away from a more concentrated way of study and thought?

What could we do in our schools and homeschools that might emulate the practices of monastic traditions of meals?

- What if we had table settings? What if older students could perform during lunch?
- What if we would occasionally read to our students during lunch?
- What if there was beautiful art to gaze at in that space?