

Spiritual Theology: Introduction

Spiritual Theology: A Two-Part Course

1. Part 1: Christian Prayer
2. Part 2: The Spiritual Theology properly speaking

What is Prayer?

1. Prayer: “A vital and personal relationship with the living and true God” (CCC 2558)
2. St. Therese of Lisieux: “a surge of the heart; a simple look toward heaven”
3. St. John Damascene:
 - a. “The raising of one’s mind and heart to God” (adoration)
 - b. “The requesting of good things from God” (petition)
4. Humility: the foundation of prayer (CCC 2559)
5. Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4:1-30)
 - a. Jesus seeks us before we seek him—even when we are in sin
 - b. Jesus thirsts; the wellspring of prayer is God’s thirst for us
 - c. Prayer is “the gift of God”
 - d. Prayer is “the response of faith and love” (cf. the woman’s response)
 - e. Jesus the Bridegroom at the Well (Gen 29:1-30; cf. 24:10-67; Exod 2:15-21)
6. Prayer from the Heart (CCC 2562-64)
 - a. Our hidden center
 - b. Interior Life: The place “to which I withdraw” (Lagrange, *Three Ages*, 1:40-41)
 - c. The place of decision and truth
 - d. The place of encounter and covenant

As soon as a man ceases to be outwardly occupied, to talk with his fellow men, as soon as he is alone, even in the noisy streets of a great city, he begins to carry on a conversation with himself... In a man’s hours of solitude, this intimate conversation begins again in spite of everything, as if to prove to him that it cannot stop. The center of the soul has an irresistible need which demands satisfaction. In reality, God alone can answer this need... The soul must converse with someone other than itself. Why? Because it is not its own last end; because its end is the living God, and it cannot rest entirely except in Him. As St. Augustine puts it: “Our heart is restless, until it rests in Thee.” The interior life is precisely an elevation and a transformation of the intimate conversation that everyone has with himself as soon as it tends to become a conversation with God.” (Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Three Ages*, 1:40, 43)

7. Prayer and the Indwelling Trinity (CCC 2565)
 - a. “The union of the entire Holy Trinity with the whole human spirit”
 - b. Jesus on the indwelling Trinity (John 14:23; CCC 260)

What is Spiritual Theology?

1. What is Spiritual Theology?
 - a. “The science of the Saints” (Tanquerey, *The Spiritual Life*, 2)
 - b. “The science of Christian perfection” (Tanquerey, 3)
2. Two Parts of One Whole: usually referred to as
 - a. Ascetical Theology: first part
 - b. Mystical Theology: second part
 - c. Spiritual Theology: my term for *both* of these combined (cf. Tanquerey)
3. Ascetical Theology: the efforts of the Christian struggling to acquire perfection
 - a. Greek word *askesis*, meaning “exercise, effort”
 - b. Askesis: “any difficult task connected with education, whether physical or moral” (Tanquerey, *The Spiritual Life*, 2)
 - c. St. Paul on Spiritual Asceticism (1 Cor 9:24-27)
 - d. Focuses on the active elements of the spiritual life (penance, mortification)
3. Mystical Theology:
 - a. Greek work *mysterion*, meaning “mysterious, secret, esp. religious secret”
 - b. “Mystical theology lays open the secrets of perfection” (Tanquerey 3)
 - c. Focuses on infused (or ‘passive’) elements of the spiritual life (gifts)
4. Distinction from Other Branches of Theology (Tanquerey, 3)
 - a. Dogmatic Theology: teaches us what we must *believe* about God (Creed)
 - b. Moral Theology: teaches us how we must *live* in response to God (Decalogue)
 - c. Spiritual Theology: goes *beyond* Moral Theology of “obligation” to avoid sin toward the summit of Christian perfection (Beatitudes)

“Spiritual Theology is truly a *branch* of Theology distinct from Dogma and Moral. It has its own proper object. It chooses from among the teachings of Our Lord, of the Church, and of the Saints, all that has reference to the *perfection* of the Christian life, and so coordinates all these elements as to constitute a real science. 1) Spiritual Theology *differs* from Dogma in this that, though grounded upon dogmatic truths, it actually directs these truths towards *practice*, making us understand, acquire a taste for, and live the life of Christian perfection. 2) It differs from Moral Theology, because, while it presents to our consideration the commandments of God and of the Church, which are the bases of all spiritual life, it insists also on the evangelical counsels, and on a higher degree of virtue than is strictly obligatory. Ascetical Theology, then, is truly *the science of Christian perfection*. Hence its twofold character, at once *speculative* and *practical*. (Tanquerey, *The Spiritual Life*, 4-5 [slightly adapted])

- d. Example: St. Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica*, Part 2 (Tanquerey 3)
5. The Three Stages of the Spiritual Life (a.k.a. the Three Ways)
 - a. Purgative Way: the way of beginners (spiritual childhood)
 - b. Illuminative Way: the way of proficients (spiritual adolescence)
 - c. Unitive Way: the way of the perfect (spiritual adulthood)

Why Study Spiritual Theology?

1. The Universal Call to Holiness (CCC 2013; following Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* 40)
 - a. “All Christians are called to *the fullness* of Christian life”
 - b. “All Christians are called to *the perfection* of charity”
 - c. Jesus: “Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt 5:48)
 - d. Christians can, through grace, “reach this perfection”
 - e. It *is* possible, as “the lives of the saints” show us!
2. The Universal Call to the Mystical Life (CCC 2014)
 - a. Goal of “Spiritual Progress”: intimate union with Christ (Unitive Way)
 - b. Participation in Mystery of Christ: through sacraments
 - c. Participation in Mystery of the Trinity: through union
 - d. Not to be identified with “extraordinary signs” of the mystical life
3. Importance of the Ascetical Life (CCC 2105)
 - a. The Way of Perfection = the Way of the Cross
 - b. “No holiness without *renunciation* and *spiritual battle*”
 - c. Spiritual Progress: *ascesis* and *mortification* (“putting to death the flesh”)
4. Jesus, Martha, and Mary: the “One Thing Necessary” (Luke 10:38-48)

Prayer in Sacred Scripture: Examples of Prayer

The Universal Call to Prayer

1. Man in his search of God (CCC 2556)
2. God calls man first (CCC 2567)
 - a. Man may run from God
 - b. God “tirelessly calls each person to the mysterious encounter known as prayer”
 - c. The Grace of the Present Moment

It is certain, then, (and here is a consequence that overwhelms me with its sublimity and depth, but above all, fills me with courage and with joy), it is certain that, by every event, person, or thing, you, Jesus, *you yourself*, do present yourself, objectively, to me, at every instant of the day... O my soul, at every instant Jesus presents himself to you by the *grace of the present moment*. (Jean-Baptiste Chautard, *The Soul of the Apostolate*, p. 15, slightly adapted)

Examples of Prayer in the Old Testament

1. Prayer of Intimacy: “walking” with God
 - a. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:8-9)
 - b. Enoch, the man who “walked with God” (Genesis 5:21-24)
 - c. Noah “walked with God” and was blameless (Genesis 6:9)
 - d. Moses spoke to God “as a friend” (Exod 33:11; Num 12:3-8; CCC 2576)
2. Prayer of Praise: praising and acknowledging God as God

“Praise is the form of prayer which recognizes most immediately that God is God. It lauds God for his own sake and gives him glory, quite beyond what he does, but simply because HE IS.” (CCC 2639)

 - a. Sons of Seth: call upon the name of the Lord (Genesis 4:25)
 - b. Abraham: welcomes the Three Guests into his tent (Genesis 18:1-8; CCC 2571)
 - c. David blesses God for the Promise of the Temple (2 Samuel 7:18-29)
 - a. The book of Psalms or “the Praises” (Hebrew *tehillim*)
 - b. The Psalter: “the masterwork of prayer in the Old Testament” (CCC 2585)
 - c. The Psalms: “the Word of God becomes man’s prayer” (CCC 2587)
3. Prayer of Petition and Intercession: asking God for good things for oneself or others
 - a. Abraham’s Intercession for the Sodomites (Genesis 18:16-33; CCC 2571)
 - b. Moses’ Intercession after the Golden Calf (Exodus 32:30-35; CCC 2577)
 - c. Samuel will not “sin” by ceasing to pray for others (1 Sam 12:23)
 - a. David begs God for forgiveness for his Sins (Psalm 51)
 - b. Solomon intercedes for the people of Israel (1 Kings 8)
5. Prayer of Visions: God appears, and God speaks
 - a. Moses and the Burning Bush (Exodus 3:1-6; CCC 2575)
6. Prayer of Quiet: listening, rather than speaking
 - a. The Call of Samuel in the Tabernacle (1 Sam 3:9-10; CCC 2578)
 - b. Elijah on Mount Sinai: the “still, small voice” (1 Kings 19:1-18; CCC 2583)
7. Prayer as a Battle: persevering in prayer
 - a. Jacob Wrestling with the Angel (Genesis 32:22-32; CCC 2573)

The Prayer of Jesus

1. Jesus' Prayer and His Humanity
 - a. Jesus "learned to pray according to his human heart" (CCC 2599)
 - b. Jesus learned to pray *from his mother* Mary (CCC 2599)
 - c. Jesus learned the prayers of the Jewish people, esp. the Psalms (CCC 2599)
2. Jesus' Prayer Life and Habits
 - a. Jesus prayed *before* "decisive moments" in his life (Luke 6:12; CCC 2600)
 - b. Jesus prayed *in solitude*, preferably at night (CCC 2602; Mark 1:35; 6:46)
 - c. Jesus' prayers were marked by *thanksgiving* (John 11:41-42; Matt 11:25-27)
3. Jesus Ended His Life in Prayer
 - a. High-Priestly Prayer: self-offering to the Father (John 17:1-26; CCC 2746-51)
 - b. Last Words on the Cross: "prayer and the gift of self are one" (CCC 2605)

[With a] "loud cry" he expires, giving up his spirit (Mark 15:37). *All the troubles, for all time, of humanity enslaved by sin and death, all the petitions and intercessions of salvation history are summed up in this cry of the incarnate Word.* Here the Father accepts them and, beyond all hope, answers them by raising his Son. *Thus is fulfilled and brought to completion the drama of prayer in the economy of creation and salvation.* (CCC 2606)

The Prayer of the Virgin Mary

1. Mary' Prayer at Key Moments in Salvation History (CCC 2617)
 - a. The Incarnation of the Word: the Annunciation (Luke 1:38)
 - b. The Redemption of the World: Cana and the Cross (John 2, 19)
 - c. The Descent of the Holy Spirit: Pentecost (Acts 1:14; 2:1)
 - d. She is present at *the Two Processions* of the Divine Economy
2. Mary's Prayer at the Incarnation (CCC 2617)
 - a. "Let it be done unto me according to Your Word" (Luke
 - b. "'*Fiat*': this is Christian prayer: to be wholly God's because he is wholly ours"
 - c. Magnificat: "My soul magnifies the Lord" (Luke 1:46-55)
3. Mary's Intercession at Cana and the Cross (CCC 2618)
 - a. "They Have No Wine" (John 2:3-4; cf. Isa 25:6-8)
 - b. Mary is Heard at Jesus' "Hour" on the Cross (John 19:25-27)
4. Mary's Prayer at Pentecost
 - a. Devotion to Prayer "*with Mary,*" the Mother of Jesus (Acts 1:14)
 - b. Descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2)

The Life of Prayer: Prayer in Sacred Tradition

The Life of Prayer

1. The Importance of Sacred Tradition (CCC 2650)
 - a. “One must have the will to pray”
 - b. “One must *learn* how to pray”
 - c. Through Sacred Tradition, the Holy Spirit *teaches* the Church how to pray
2. The Life of Prayer (CCC 2697-98)
 - a. We cannot pray at all times unless we pray at *specific* times
 - b. Tradition and Set Times of Prayer
3. Three Major Expressions of Prayer in Sacred Tradition (CCC 2699)
 - a. Vocal Prayer
 - b. Meditation
 - c. Contemplation

1. Vocal Prayer

1. What is Vocal Prayer? (CCC 2700-2704)
 - a. “Prayer expressed by *words* and/or *gestures*” (Tanqueray, 319)
 - b. When man speaks to God, with the mouth and the heart (CCC 2700)
2. Why is Vocal Prayer Important? (CCC 2701-2704)
 - a. An essential element of the Christian life: e.g., the Our Father
 - b. Jesus *himself* prayed vocal prayers (the Psalms, the Shema’)
 - c. Human nature: “we are body and spirit”
 - d. We should not be deliberately neglected for interior prayer
 - e. Vocal prayer can lead to contemplative prayer
3. What Vocal Prayer is Not:
 - a. Vocal Prayer is not mere rote recitation, but “*verbalized mental prayer*”

“If a person does not think Whom he is addressing, and what he is asking for, and who it is that is asking and of Whom he is asking it, I do not consider that he is praying at all even though he be constantly moving his lips.” (St. Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle*, Mansion 4, chapter 1; in Dubay, *Fire Within*, 76)

4. Vocal Prayer in Sacred Scripture:

“O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth your praise.”
(Psalm 51:15)

“Through him let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God,
That is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.” (Hebrews 13:15)

2. Meditation

1. What is Meditation?
 - a. “Prayer that takes place wholly within the soul... over a notable period of time.”
(Tanquerey, *The Spiritual Life*, 320)
 - b. “A quest. The mind seeks to understand the why and the how of the Christian life, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking...” (CCC 2705)
2. How does one Meditate? (CCC 2705-2708)
 - a. Attentive reflection with the aid of Spiritual Reading
 - b. “Books” of Meditation: Scriptures, Icons, Liturgy, Spiritual writings, Creation, History of Salvation (cf. 3 Stages of Meditations)
 - c. Engages *whole interior person*: intellect, imagination, emotions, and desires
 - d. Focuses on the mysteries of Christ (e.g., *Lectio Divina* or the Rosary)
 - e. Leads to “*silent dialogue of the soul with God*” (a.k.a. discursive meditation)
3. What Meditation is Not:
 - a. Study: mere intellectual acquisition of knowledge
 - b. Daydreaming: mere wandering of the mind from topic to topic
4. Meditation in Scripture:
 - a. Meditation on Scripture (Psalm 1)
 - b. Acceptable Vocal Prayer and Meditation (Psalm 19:14)
 - c. Praying “with the mind” (1 Cor 14:15)
5. Necessity of Meditation:
 - a. Christians owe it to themselves; cf. parable of the Sower (CCC 2707; Mark 4)
 - b. Fruitfulness of Meditation:

“One of our great bishops, overburdened as he was with work, when he replied to a statesman, himself hard-pressed with his affairs, who asked him the secret of his constant serenity and of the astonishing results of his enterprises. “To all your occupations, my dear friend,” said the Bishop, “*add half an hour of meditation every morning*. Not only will you get through all your business, but you will find time for still more.” (Jean-Baptist Chautard, *The Soul of the Apostolate*, 34)

3. Contemplative Prayer

1. What is Contemplative Prayer? (CCC 2709-19)
 - a. A “*Silent Love*”: the simplest expression of prayer (CCC 2724)
 - b. “A close sharing between friends” with God (St. Teresa of Avila)
 - b. “Inner prayer” where “attention” is focused on “the Lord Himself” (CCC 2709)
 - c. “Communion” with the Most Holy Trinity (CCC 2713)
 - d. The “pre-eminently intense” time of prayer (CCC 2714)
 - e. “A *gaze of faith*, fixed on Jesus” (CCC 2715, citing St. John Vianney)
 - f. A time of listening: “hearing the Word of God” (CCC 2716)
 - g. A time of “silence”: “the symbol of the world to come” (Silence of Angels)
 - h. A time of abiding in “the night of faith” (= the Dark Nights; CCC 2719)
 - i. To gaze up at the Temple: Latin *com-* (“with”) *templum* (“Temple”)
2. How does one enter into Contemplation?
 - a. One “makes time” for Contemplative prayer (CCC 2710)
 - b. One “gathers up” the heart and turns it to the Lord (Acquired; CCC 2711)
 - c. One *receives* it as “a gift, a grace” given by God (Infused; CCC 2713)
3. What Contemplation is Not:
 - a. False notions of contemplation (quote Dubay, *Fire Within*, 57)
 - b. Not a Buddhist state of “impersonal awareness”
 - c. Not Hindu “transcendental meditation
 - d. Not something meant for “the select few,” such as monks and nuns
 - e. Not “extraordinary phenomena” such as “divine messages” and “visions”
 - f. Not something we can “produce,” but only “receive”
4. Contemplation in Sacred Scripture:

“One thing I ask of the Lord, this I seek;
To dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
That *I may gaze on the loveliness of the Lord*
And contemplate his Temple.” (Psalm 27:4)

“Be still, and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10)

5. Grades of Prayer (cf. Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, 316-57)

1. Vocal Prayer

1. External
(Words/Gestures)
2. Internal
(Interior Words)

Examples:

The Our Father
The Hail Mary
The Mass
Liturgy of the Hours

2. Meditation

1. Discursive Meditation
(Intellect Predominates)
2. Affective Meditation
(Will Predominates)

Examples:

The Rosary
Lectio Divina
Affective Prayer

3. Contemplation

1. Acquired Contemplation
(Natural; “Recollection”)
2. Infused Contemplation
(Supernatural; Received)

Examples:

Prayer of Simplicity (Initial Cont.)
Prayer of Quiet
Prayer of Union
Prayer of Conforming Union
Prayer of Transforming Union

The Life of Prayer: Prayer as a Battle

The Battle of Prayer

1. Prayer is both Gift and Response (CCC 2725)

- a. "It always presupposes effort"
- b. "Prayer is a battle"
- c. Dom Sebastian Wyart (Military Officer turned Trappist monk; d. 1904)

There are three kinds of labor:

1. Physical Labor: "The almost exclusively physical work of those who live by manual labor, by a craft, or in the army... No matter what one may think about it, this kind is the easiest of the three."

2. Intellectual Labor: "The intellectual toil of the scholar, the thinker... the writer, of the professor, who put everything they have into the effort to communicate all they know to others; of the diplomat, the financier, the engineer, and so on.. This labor in itself is far more difficult than the first kind, for there is a saying that 'the blade wears out its sheath'.

3. Spiritual Labor: "Finally, there is the labor of the interior life... Of the three, this kind, when it is taken seriously, is by far the most exacting. But at the same time, is this kind that offers the most satisfaction here on earth. It is likewise the most important... *How many there are who can boast of great courage in the first two types of labor, which lead to wealth and fame, but who, when it comes to the effort to acquire virtue, are totally deficient in ambition, energy, or courage...*"

"Who does not know this from experience? *There are times when we might be inclined to prefer long hours in some exhausting occupation to half and hour of serious mental prayer, to an attentive hearing of Mass, or to the careful and intelligent recitation of the Breviary. Father Faber expresses his grief in admitting that for some people 'the quarter of an hour after Communion is the weariest quarter hour of the day.'* When we have to make a three days' retreat, how unwilling some of us are? To withdraw from a life which, though full of things to be done, is easy, and to live on the supernatural plane, making the supernatural sink in to every detail of our existence during this retreat; to compel one's mind to see everything, during this time, by the light of faith alone, and one's heart to forget everything in order to seek Christ alone, and His life; to remain face to face with one's self and lay bare the infirmities and weaknesses of one's soul; to throw the soul into the crucible, and turn a deaf ear to all its cries of complaint: *all this is a prospect which makes some people, otherwise ready to face any fatigue, turn tail and flee when there is no longer a question of an expenditure of merely natural energy.*" (Jean-Baptiste Chautard, *The Soul of the Apostolate*, 28-29, 30-31)

2. A Battle Against Whom? (CCC 2725)

- a. Against *ourselves* and against *the Devil*
- c. Spiritual Battle: inseparable from the battle of prayer
- d. St. Paul and the Spiritual Battle (Romans 7:21-23)

[A French priest, Father de Ravignan once said of his time in formation for his religious order (the 'novitiate'):] "You ask me what I did during my novitiate? Well there were two of us. I threw the other fellow out the window, and then I was alone." (Jean-Baptiste Chautard, *The Soul of the Apostolate*, 33)

1. Objections to Prayer

1. Erroneous notions of Prayer (CCC 2726)
 - a. Not mere “psychological activity”
 - b. Not “an effort at concentration to reach a mental void” (cf. New Age)
 - c. Not mere ritual works and postures
2. Worldly Notions that Choke Prayer (CCC 2727)
 - a. Empiricism: only thing true is what can be observed (prayer is not real)
 - b. Utilitarianism: only “production” matters (prayer is a ‘waste of time’)
 - c. Sensualism: seek pleasure above all things (prayer seeks the kingdom)
 - d. Activism: all that matters is worldly activity (prayer is flight from the world)
3. Failure in Prayer: “What good does it do to pray?” (CCC 2728)

2. Difficulties in Prayer

1. Distraction: “the *habitual difficulty* in prayer” (CCC 2729)
 - a. Can affect all three kinds of prayer (vocal, meditation, contemplation)
 - b. Solution: don’t chase down every distraction (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 226)
 - c. Helpful: “*distractions reveal to us what we are attached to*”
2. Vigilance: the difficulty of persevering in prayer (CCC 2730)
 - a. “Custody of Heart”: maintaining the presence of God
 - b. Giving Up Prayer for Work (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 228)
3. Dryness: the heart feels separated from God, *even though it is not* (CCC 2731)
 - a. No sensible consolations in prayer
 - b. No taste for thoughts, memories, feelings, even spiritual ones
 - c. “The moment of sheer faith clinging to Jesus in his agony and in his tomb”

3. Temptations in Prayer

1. Lack of Faith: Do we really believe God? Do we really trust in Him? (CCC 2732)
 - a. The Inrush of our Labors and Cares
 - b. What is the real love of the Heart?
 - c. Is Prayer a “last resort”?
2. Acedia: a form of spiritual depression; spiritual “sloth” (CCC 2733)
 - a. Lax ascetical practice
 - b. Decreasing Vigilance
 - c. Carelessness of Heart
3. Unanswered Prayer: Giving up because of ‘Not Being Heard’ (CCC 2735-37)
 - a. Adoration: we never doubt we’ve been heard
 - b. Petition: we demand to see the results!
 - c. Are we asking with “a divided heart”?
 - d. Evagrius Pontus: “Do not be troubled if you do not receive what you asked”
 - e. Trust: all our prayers were answered on the Cross! (CCC 2741)

The Necessity of Prayer

1. We Are Commanded to Pray Without Ceasing (CCC 2742)
2. It is “*always possible to pray*” (CCC 2743)
3. Prayer is a “*vital necessity*” (CCC 2744)
4. Prayer and the Christian Life are “inseparable” (CCC 2745)

Vocal Prayer: The Our Father

Introduction

1. A “Summary of the Whole Gospel” (CCC 2761)
2. The “Most Perfect of Prayers”: St. Thomas Aquinas (CCC 2763)
3. A Totally Unique Prayer: taught us by the Lord Himself (CCC 2765)
4. An Eschatological Prayer: for “the end times” (Greek *eschaton*) (CCC 2771)

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

1. A Participation in the Life of the Trinity (CCC 2779-81)
2. A Prayer for the New Jerusalem: “He shall be my son” (CCC 2788)
3. A Universal Prayer for all People (CCC 2793)
4. A Prayer for Return from Exile to Our Heavenly Homeland (CCC 2795)
5. The Seven Petitions: *Love of God* (1-3) and *Love of Neighbor* (4-7) (CCC 2803-06)
(Cf. 10 Commandments and Greatest Commandment; Exod 20; Matt 22:34-40)

1. Thy Name Be Hallowed

1. It is God who “makes holy/hallow” (CCC 2807)
2. A Prayer for God’s Name to be Hallowed (not blasphemed) by All (CCC 2814)

2. Thy Kingdom Come

1. “The Kingdom has been coming since the Last Supper” (CCC 2816)
2. The Kingdom will come in fullness at the Second Coming (CCC 2817)
3. This petition is granted in the Eucharist (CCC 2821; cf. CCC 2770)

3. Thy Will Be Done On Earth as it is in Heaven

1. A Prayer for the Restoration of All Things in Christ (CCC 2823; Eph 1:9-11)
2. A Prayer for the Union of Our Will (and the World’s) with God’s (CCC 2825)

4. Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

1. A Prayer for the Bread of God’s Word and the Eucharist (CCC 2835, 2837)
2. A Prayer for All Men (CCC 2829)

5. Forgive Us Our Trespasses as We Forgive Our Trespassors

1. A Daunting Petition (CCC 2840)
2. How Do We Forgive? (CCC 2843)

6. And Lead Us Not Into Temptation

1. “Temptation” vs. “Trial” (CCC 2846)
2. Entering into Christ’s Battle and His Agony (CCC 2849; cf. Mark 14)

7. But Deliver Us From Evil

1. Protection from the Devil (CCC 2850)
2. A Prayer for “All the Distress of the World” (CCC 2854)

Meditation: *Lectio Divina*

What is *Lectio Divina*?

1. Lectio Divina: “divine reading”—*meditation on Sacred Scripture* (CCC 2708)
2. The Bible and the Spiritual Life: a “dialogue” between God and man (CCC 2653)
3. The Sermon on the Mount and Lectio Divina (Matt 7:7; CCC 2654)
 - a. “*Seek* in reading”
 - b. “You will *find* in meditating”
 - c. “*Knock* in mental prayer”
 - d. “And *it will be opened* to you by contemplation”

Guigo II: “The Ladder from Earth to Heaven”

1. Guigo II: a Carthusian monk in the twelfth century A.D.
2. Composed a letter to a fellow monk Gervase on how to practice *lectio divina*
3. “The Ladder from Earth to Heaven”: the work on praying the Scriptures
4. Based on the Vision of Jacob’s Ladder (Genesis 28:10-17; *Letter & Spirit* 2:176)

The Four Steps of *Lectio Divina* (176)

1. Reading: “the diligent examination of Scripture with attentiveness of soul”
2. Meditation: “the studious action of the mind as it searches out the knowledge of hidden truth under the guidance of its own reasoning power”
3. Prayer: “the heart’s devout reaching out to God for the removal of evils or the acquisition of goods”
4. Contemplation: “the elevation of the mind above itself, suspended in God, as it tastes the joys of eternal sweetness.”
5. All Four Steps Repeated (*Letter & Spirit* 183-84)
 - a. Reading: the foundation; gives us the subject matter (body)
 - b. Meditation: inquires about what should be desired (intellect and imagination)
 - c. Prayer: has to do with desire (the will)
 - d. Contemplation: “beyond all comprehension” (given by God)

Three Analogies for *Lectio Divina*

	<u>The Quest</u>	<u>The Meal</u>	<u>The Spiritual Marriage</u>
4. Contemplation:	Tastes	Joy and Refreshment	Nuptial Union
3. Prayer:	Asks	Extracts the Flavor	Summons Her Spouse
2. Meditation:	Finds	Chews and Breaks	Inflames Desire to Know
1. Reading:	Seeks	Places Food in Mouth	Soul Seeks the Bridegroom
	(176)	(176)	(179-80)

“Thus we see clearly by the guidance of reason and the witness of the Scriptures that the perfection of the blessed life is contained in these four steps, and that man’s spiritual exercise should revolve around them.” (186)

Other Aspects of Meditation on Scripture

1. Warnings to the Bride:
 - a. The Spouse withdraws but does not abandon (181-82)
 - b. The Spouse is a Jealous Husband: do not forget him! (183)
 - c. Do not return to a life of Sin after tasting the sweetness of the Spouse (187)
2. Necessity of All Four Steps Together (184)
 - a. Reading without Meditation: “arid” (dry)
 - b. Meditation without Reading: “prone to error”
 - c. Prayer without Meditation: “tepid” (lukewarm)
 - d. Meditation without Prayer: “unfruitful”
 - e. Contemplation without Prayer: “rare or miraculous”
3. Do Not Descend Too Rapidly down the Ladder (186)
4. Obstacles to Meditation (186)
 - a. Inevitable Necessity (excusable)
 - b. Useful and Upright Activities (tolerable)
 - c. Human Weakness (pitiable)
 - d. Worldly Frivolity (blameworthy)

Contemplative Prayer

Acquired and Infused Contemplation

Acquired Contemplation

1. Also known as “the Prayer of Simplicity” (Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, 327-38)
2. A “simple loving gaze”: extremely simplified prayer
3. Object of the Gaze: God, Christ or one of his mysteries, some Truth of the faith
4. Natural Prayer: something the soul does by its own efforts
5. Usually the transition point to properly mystical prayer (i.e., infused contemplation)
6. No Particular Method: “simply a question of gazing and loving”
7. St. Teresa’s Description (*Way of Perfection*, chap. 28; Garrigou, *Three Ages*, 2:284-85)

Practical Directives:

1. Do not rush it: continue practice of meditation as long as able
2. Do not resist it: if you can remain before God “in loving attention,” then do so
3. Do not force prolonging it:
 - a. Asserting too much effort will destroy the simplicity
 - b. As the gaze begins to waver, simply return to meditation or vocal prayer
4. Be patient: don’t expect in the beginning to practice it for long periods of time
5. Be persistent: acquired contemplation is not always sweet, sometimes dry
6. Fruits of Acquired Contemplation:
 - a. Simplification of life: improvement and progress in the spiritual life
 - b. Practice of the Presence of God: soul continually gazes upon God, loving him
 - d. Custody of Heart: growing perception of faults and imperfections of the day

Infused Contemplation

1. Not a special “charism” but something possible for all (Garrigou *Three Ages* 2:287-88)
 2. An experience of the presence of God: this is the essential element
 3. Invasion of the soul by God: “infused” (Latin *infudere*, “to pour in”) (*Fire Within*, 63)
 4. Impossibility of producing contemplation by one’s own efforts (*Fire Within*, 59)
 5. The soul is more passive than active: like “wax” (*Fire Within*, 59)
 6. The soul has full assurance that it is under the action of God
 7. It is indescribable: a “dark knowing” (*Fire Within*, 63)
 8. It often causes a “binding” of the faculties (“ecstasy”)
 9. Causes a deepening of the all the virtues (*Fire Within*, 60, 64)
- (See Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, 331-36)

Practical Directives:

1. Do not force it: Not to stop meditation until one clearly perceives the call to a higher grade of prayer
2. Do not resist it: Immediately to stop all meditation as soon as one feels the impulse of grace toward infused contemplation (*Fire Within*, 65)
3. Do not squander it: Souls receiving this gift must give themselves completely to the spiritual life. (See Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, 336-37)
4. Persist in it and it will grow in intensity and duration (*Fire Within*, 70)

The Three Stages of the Spiritual Life (Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Three Conversions*, Chapter 5)

1. The Purgative Way (Spiritual Childhood)

1. Doorway: 1st Conversion from state of mortal sin
 - a. Soul Moves from state of Spiritual Death (Mortal Sin)
 - b. To State of Grace (through Baptism or Confession)
 - c. Analogy: God digs first furrow in the “soil” of the soul
2. Purification: active purification of senses
 - a. Avoids mortal sin and deliberate venial sin
 - b. Penance and Mortification
3. Prayer: acquired (active) prayer
 - a. Vocal Prayer (Our Father, Haily Mary, Mass)
 - b. Meditation: Discursive and Affective
 - c. Acquired Contemplation (Prayer of the Simple Gaze)
4. Virtues: initial virtues in their first degrees
 - a. Theological Virtues (Faith, Hope, Love)
 - b. Moral Virtues (Temperance, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude)
 - c. Other Virtues: Chastity, Patience, Humility, etc.
5. Gifts of the Holy Spirit: present in the soul, but rather hidden (latent)
6. Knowledge of Self: recognition that one is a sinner
 - a. Examination of Conscience (daily)
 - b. Sacramental Confession (frequently; monthly)
7. Knowledge of God: focused on God in *creation* (fear of God; omnipotence; beauty)
8. Love of God: “with all your heart” (but not yet with all your soul, strength, and mind)
9. Rewards: deliverance from mortal sin and sensible consolations in prayer
10. Pitfalls: spiritual childishness (Garrigou, *Three Conversions*, 84)
 - a. Spiritual Gluttony: disordered desire for consolations in prayer
 - b. Spiritual Pride: posing as a master in the spiritual life (cf. 1 Tim 3:6)
 - c. Seven Capital Sins: rise up in a spiritual form
 - d. Retarded Souls: lukewarm; do not make it through Dark Night (spiritual dwarf)
11. Dark Night of the Senses: God tills the soil of the soul a second time, even deeper
 - a. Dryness in Prayer: deprived of spiritual consolations
 - b. Difficulty in Discursive Meditation
 - c. Grave Temptations arise: especially against chastity and patience
 - d. Inclination to Acquired Contemplation (Prayer of the Simple Gaze)
 - e. Beginnings of Infused Contemplation
 - f. Analogy: God is uprooting the “weeds” in the soul (cf. John 15)

2. The Illuminative Way (Spiritual Adolescence)

1. Doorway: 2nd Conversion (Dark Night of Senses)
2. Purification: trials of the Dark Night of the Senses
3. Prayer: initial infused contemplation of the mysteries of faith
 - a. Acquired Contemplation (Prayer of the Simple Gaze)
 - b. Temporary Infused Contemplation during Acquired Contemplation
 - c. Importance of the Rosary (*Three Conversions*, 88)
 - d. Prayer of Quiet: not infrequently (either dry or consoled)
4. Virtues: solid virtues in their higher degrees
 - a. Growth in Humility
 - b. Spirit of Evangelical Counsels: Poverty, Chastity, Obedience
5. Gifts of the Holy Spirit: begin to manifest themselves,
 - a. Fear
 - b. Knowledge (Understanding)
 - c. Piety
6. Knowledge of Self: deeper, but partial; greater recognition of imperfections
7. Knowledge of God: focused on *truths of faith* and *mysteries of salvation* (Incarnation)
8. Love of God: “with all your heart and soul” (not yet with all your strength and mind)
 - a. Not only avoids sin, but also imperfections
 - b. Imitates the virtues of Christ (humility, poverty, chastity, obedience)
9. Rewards: gifts of the Holy Spirit begin to bear fruit
 - a. Abundance of light in contemplation of mysteries (understanding)
 - b. Greater facility in prayer
 - c. Fruitfulness in spiritual works (teaching, preaching, organizing, etc.)
10. Pitfalls: spiritual complacency, unconscious pride (*Three Conversions*, 90)
 - a. Pride at fruitful prayer and work
 - b. Inclination to exaggerate one’s talents (and forget they are from God)
 - c. Tendency to emphasize other’s imperfections and forget your own
 - d. “He has not yet totally forgotten himself”
 - e. Other Defects and Imperfections (*Three Ages*, 1:241)
11. Dark Night of the Spirit: God tills ground of the soul a third time, the deepest furrow
 - a. Soul is deprived of supernatural light of mysteries of salvation
 - b. Soul is deprived of supernatural desires for God
 - c. Soul is deprived of facility in prayer and work (which led to pride)
 - d. Temptations: not against chastity, but against faith, hope, and love
 - e. Trials: detraction, failure, persecution, hatred, rejection (8th Beatitude)
 - f. Experience of the *absence* of God (cf. Psalm 22; Lamentations 3)

3. The Unitive Way (Spiritual Adulthood)

1. Doorway: 3rd Conversion: Dark Night of the Spirit
2. Prayer: almost continuous contemplation
 - a. Infused Prayer of Simple Union
 - b. Infused Prayer of Complete Union (sometimes ecstatic)
 - c. Infused Prayer of Transforming Union (the Spiritual Marriage)
3. Virtues: heroic virtues
 - a. Supernatural Charity
 - b. Perfect Humility
 - c. Heroic Faith
 - d. Abandonment to Divine Providence
 - e. Almost Unalterable Patience
4. Gifts of the Holy Spirit: manifest themselves more powerfully and frequently
 - a. Especially Understanding
 - b. Fortitude and Prudence manifested during trials
5. Knowledge of Self: almost perfect; see themselves through God's eyes
 - a. No longer merely in themselves; but in God
 - b. Never cease to see the infinite distance between themselves and God (humility)
6. Knowledge of God: focused on God *in himself* (not through creation or mysteries)
7. Love of God: "with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind"
 - a. Horror at offending the divine Majesty of God
 - b. Desire "to be dissolved and to be with Christ" (Phil 1:23)
8. Rewards:
 - a. Gift of Wisdom
 - b. Union with God: the "seed of eternal life" (Heaven on earth)

The Purgative Way: The Battle against Sin

Mortal Sin and the 10 Commandments

1. What is Sin? “A failure in genuine love for God and neighbor” (CCC 1849)
2. Two Kinds of Sin (1 John 5; CCC 1854-1864)
 - a. Mortal Sin: destroys relationship with God; merits eternal punishment
 - b. Venial Sin: damages relationship with God; merits temporal punishment
3. The 10 Commandments (Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5)

Love of God (1-3)

1. Idolatry: worship of creature rather than the Creator
2. Blasphemy: taking God’s name in vain (e.g., an oath or curse)
3. Irreligion: failing to worship God (Sabbath breaking; omitting Mass)

Love of Neighbor (4-7)

4. Dishonoring Parents: cursing, striking or failing to provide for
5. Murder: willful taking of innocent life
6. Adultery: sex with another person’s spouse
7. Theft: grave stealing from another
8. False Witness: grave lying; false testimony in court
- 9 and 10 . Covetousness: desiring to possess a neighbor’s spouse/possessions for yourself.

5. Jesus and the Rich Young Man (Matt 19:16-30)
 - a. “What must I do to inherit eternal life?”
 - b. “If you would enter life, keep the commandments”

The Triple Lust and the 7 Deadly Sins

1. Why Did Adam and Eve Fall? The Triple Lust (Gen 3:1-7; 1 John 2:16; CCCC 2514)
 - a. “Good for Food” (Lust of the Flesh)
 - b. “A Delight to the Eyes” (Lust of the Eyes)
 - c. “Desirable to Make One Wise/Like gods” (Pride of Life)
2. The 7 Deadly Sins: the *offspring* of the Triple Lust (Tanqueray, *Spiritual Life*, 392)
 - a. Pride of Life: gives birth to
 1. Pride
 2. Anger
 3. Envy
 - b. Lust of the Eyes: gives birth to
 4. Greed
 - c. Lust of the Flesh: gives birth to
 5. Gluttony
 6. Lust
 7. Sloth

1. Pride (*Superbia*)

1. **Definition:** “*Pride is a disordered love of self, which causes us to consider ourselves, explicitly or implicitly, as our first beginning and our last end. It is a kind of idolatry; ‘we make gods of ourselves,’ as did Adam and Eve.*” (cf. Tanquerey, 393)
2. **Forms:** What forms does Pride take?
 - a. Explicitly rejecting God or implicitly forgetting Him (“No God, no Master”; Ps 12:1)
 - b. Unjust preference of Self to Others (The Pharisee in the Temple; Luke 18:9-14)
3. **Effects:** How does Pride affect us?
 - a. Presumption: disordered desire to do things beyond our strength
 - b. Vanity: having too high an opinion of ourselves, our knowledge, our virtues
 - c. Ambition: disordered love of esteem and superiority over others
 - d. Boasting: speaking always of oneself and one’s greatness
 - e. Unhappiness: prideful person knows no peace (Tanquerey, 400)
4. **Dangers:** How serious is the sin of Pride?
 - a. *In itself*, Pride is the gravest of sins; a revolt against God’s law; like Satan (St. Thomas)
 - b. Pride is the *root* of all the other sins (St. Gregory the Great)
 - c. In lesser matters, is it a serious but venial fault (presumptuous, vain, etc.)
5. **Remedies:** How do I overcome Pride?
 - a. Recognize that I came from nothing and that I am a sinner; I have merited Hell
 - b. Practice the virtue of *Humility*: the Litany of Humility (Cardinal Merry de Val)
6. **Pride in the Bible:**
 - a. God opposes the proud (James 4:6)
 - b. Do not do good to be seen by others (Matt 6:1-2; 23:5-12)

2. Envy (*Invidia*)

1. **Definition:** “*Envy is a tendency to be saddened by another person’s good as if it did damage to our own superiority. Often it is combined with a desire to see the other person deprived of whatever it is we want.*” (cf. Tanquerey, 404)
2. **Forms:** What are the Forms of Envy?
 - a. Not to be confused with *Jealousy*: “an excessive love of our *own* possessions”
 - b. Sadness or Anger over other peoples’ gifts or success
3. **Effects:** How does Envy affect us?
 - a. Hatred of others; rejoicing when they suffer evil
 - b. Detraction against others: saying bad things unnecessarily (“tearing down”)
 - c. Violence against others: Cain and Abel (Genesis 4)
4. **Gravity:** How serious is Envy?
 - a. *In itself*, it is a mortal sin: directly opposed to virtue of charity (love)
 - b. More important the good we envy, the graver the sin (St. Thomas)
5. **Remedies:** How do I overcome Envy?
 - a. Practice the virtue of *Brotherly Love*: Love of Neighbor (Rom 13:8-10)
 - b. Rejoice in the gifts of others and emulate them (Tanquerey, 406)
6. **Envy in the Bible:**
 - a. “Through the Devil’s envy, death entered the world” (Wis 2:24; cf. Gal 5:21)
 - b. The elder brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15).

3. Anger (*Ira*)

1. **Definition:** “Anger is a violent and disordered desire for punishing another person, in a way that is excessive, not just, and not animated by love. It is different then righteous indignation, which is a just desire to punish those who deserve it, in moderation, and motivated by love.” (cf. Tanquerey, 408)
2. **Forms:** What are the forms of Anger?
 - a. Impatience: lowest intensity; annoyance and display of temper
 - b. Verbal Abuse: excessive irritation at the faults of others
 - c. Physical Abuse: abuse of others through blows
 - d. Fury: loss of control; incoherent speech, leads to wrath and murder
3. **Effects:** How does Anger affect us?
 - a. Leads to a lack of self-control
 - b. Destroys peace in families and among friends
4. **Gravity:** How serious is the sin of Anger?
 - a. As a passing impulse, Anger is only a *venial* sin
 - b. When self-control is lost, and serious injury done, it is often a grave sin
5. **Remedies:** How do I overcome Anger?
 - a. Acquire the habit of reflecting before acting
 - b. Remember the example of Jesus, who prayed for his executioners
 - c. Pray for the virtue of *Meekness*: self-mastery, tolerance of others’ faults, charity
6. **Anger in the Bible:**
 - a. Be slow to Anger (James 1:19-20)
 - b. The Angry shall be in danger of the fire of Gehenna (Matt 5:22)

4. Greed (*Avaritia*)

1. **Definition:** “Greed is the disordered desire for and love of earthly goods. It does not refer to the desire to acquire goods that are necessary for our good or the good of others.” (cf. Tanquerey, 423)
2. **Forms:** What are the forms of Greed?
 - a. Desiring wealth *for its own sake*: as if it is our last end, not God
 - b. Doing anything to acquire wealth
 - c. Love of Money: worship of the golden calf; money becomes an idol
3. **Effects:** What effects does Greed have on us?
 - a. Love of possessions drives love of God out of the heart
 - b. Leads to lack of mortification and love for sensual pleasures
4. **Gravity:** How serious is Greed?
 - a. *In itself*, Greed is a grave sin, because Man places his *trust* in wealth, not God
 - b. It is grave when it leads one to fraud or to ignore religion because of business
 - c. It is venial when it does not lead one to fail to give God and others their due
5. **Remedies:** How do I overcome Greed?
 - a. Almsgiving: giving ones’ money to God (tithe) or the poor (Matt 6:2-4)
 - b. Remember that wealth passes away (The Rich Fool; Luke 12:13-21)
 - c. Pray for the virtue of *Generosity*
6. **Greed in the Bible:**
 - a. “You cannot serve God and mammon” (Matt 6:24)
 - b. “Store up treasure in heaven” (Matt 6:19-21)
 - c. Do not be anxious about earthly possessions (Matt 6:25-34)

5. Gluttony (*Gula*)

1. **Definition:** “*Gluttony is a disordered desire for or love of the pleasure of food and drink. It loves this pleasure for its own sake, and pursues this pleasure to excess, even to the detriment of health. It is the sin of those “whose God is their belly” (Phil 3:19). (cf. Tanquerey, 411)*
2. **Forms:** What are the forms of Gluttony?
 - a. Eating when there is no need (for example, between meals), for the sake of mere pleasure
 - b. Gorging oneself on food or drink with danger to health; eating like an animal
3. **Effects:** What are the effects of Gluttony?
 - a. “It paves the way to *unchastity, the offspring of gluttony*” (Tanquerey, 412)
 - b. It weakens the spirit of penance by developing a love for sensual pleasure
 - c. It disposes the soul to “surrenders” in sins of the flesh; leaves soul open to Satan (Desert)
4. **Gravity:** How serious is Gluttony?
 - a. It is a grave sin when it injures our health or leads to violate the laws of fast and abstinence
 - b. It is a venial sin when it leads to immoderate eating and drinking
5. **Remedies:** How do we overcome Gluttony?
 - a. Eat and drink in moderation, and with gratitude to God (Grace before meals; 1 Cor 10:31)
 - b. Practice regular mortification: “take no meal without some mortification” (Tanquerey, 414)
 - c. Pray for the virtue of *Temperance*
6. **The Bible:**
 - a. Drunkards “will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal 5:21)
 - b. Jesus expects his disciples to Fast (Matt 6:16-18); the Unfaithful Servant (Matt 25:45-51)

6. Lust (*Luxuria*)

1. **Definition:** “*Lust is a disordered desire for or love of the sexual pleasure that God has created for a husband and wife.*” (cf. Tanquerey, 415)
2. **Forms:** What forms does Lust take?
 - a. Exterior actions: indulge sexual pleasure apart from God’s law (Adultery, Fornication, Contraception, Masturbation, Pornography, Homosexual sex, Bestiality, etc.)
 - b. Interior actions: *deliberate* thoughts, desires, and fantasies (Interior Sexual Objectification)
3. **Effects:** What effects does Lust have? (see *Tanquerey, The Spiritual Life*, 416)
 - a. Relish for prayer disappears; lust *kills* the life of prayer
 - b. Love dies out; the soul becomes a slave to selfishness
 - c. Tyrannical Habits of Sin form; the soul becomes the slave to the body, which is easily aroused
 - d. The Intellect is darkened: mind becomes dull and weak; “the taste for serious studies is lost”
 - e. The Imagination is Deformed: gravitates toward base pleasures (Lewd music, movies, etc.)
 - f. Impotence: excessive indulgence leads to the malfunction of the sexual faculties
4. **Gravity:** How serious is Lust?
 - a. It is a mortal sin, when one directly wills the evil pleasure (Gal 5:20-21)
 - b. It is only a venial sin when it involves lesser matter (books, conversations, dancing)
 - c. Next to Pride, “there is no greater obstacle to spiritual growth than Lust” (Tanquerey)
5. **Remedies:** How do I overcome Lust?
 - a. Avoid the *Near Occasion of Sin*: “flee from sexual immorality” (1 Cor 6:18)
 - b. Modesty of the Eyes, Touch, and the Imagination (Tanquerey, 418)
 - c. Pray for the Virtue of *Chastity*
6. **The Bible:** Jesus and Paul on Lust (Matt 5:28-29; 1 Cor 6:9-20)

7. Sloth (*Acedia*)

1. **Definition:** “*Sloth is a disordered inclination to idleness and/or aimlessness, to apathy in action. It is a disease of the will, which fears effort and flees from it. The slothful want to avoid all exertion, whatever might interfere with their comfort or involve fatigue. Like a parasite, they live on others to whatever extent they can.*” (cf. Tanquerey, *The Spiritual Life*, 420)
2. **Forms:** What forms does Sloth take?
 - a. Indolence: one takes up work reluctantly; what he does, he does badly
 - b. Sluggishness: does not refuse to work, but delays and postpones indefinitely the accepted task
 - c. Laziness: does nothing that involves real work, whether physical or mental
 - d. *Acedia*: dislike for spiritual exercise; shortens and omits them whenever possible
3. **Effects:** What effects does Sloth have?
 - a. Turns a person into a parasite
 - b. Leads to *idleness*, a beloved tool of the Devil
 - c. Leads to *apathy*: a person becomes wearied of life itself
 - d. Disordered love for sleep, rest, and amusement
4. **Gravity:** How serious is Sloth?
 - a. Man was made *to labor*: “to till and keep” the Garden of Eden; imitates God (Gen 2:15)
 - b. Gravity of the sin depends on the gravity of the duties he neglects
 - c. Sloth is a mortal sin when man neglects his religious duties necessary to salvation
 - b. Sloth is a venial sin when man neglects the duties of his state (civil or religious)
 - d. *Acedia* is extremely dangerous, and can lead to loss of heaven
5. **Remedies:**
 - a. Realize the wretchedness of the idle man: he is a burden to everyone
 - b. Christian Marriage: “frequently proves an excellent remedy for sloth”! (Tanquerey, 423)
 - c. Custody of Heart: frequently ask yourself, “Why am I doing what am I doing?”
 - d. Pray for the Virtue of *Diligence*
6. **The Bible:**
 - a. The Parable of the Barren Fig-Tree (Luke 13:7)
 - b. “Why do you stand here idle all day? Go to my vineyard” (Matt 20:6-7)
 - c. Every Tree that does not bear fruit is cut down and thrown into the Fire (Matt 3:10)

The Dark Night of the Senses (Entry into the Illuminative Way)

What is the Dark Night of the Soul?

1. Two Nights:
 - a. Dark Night of the Senses: entry into the Illuminative Way
 - b. Dark Night of the Spirit: entry into the Unitive Way
2. What the Nights are not:
 - a. Ordinary Sufferings of Human Life (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 160)
 - b. Dark Night vs. Mental/Emotional Problem (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 163-64)
3. Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Who Experiences the First Dark Night?

1. The First Dark Night is Common:

“The night of sense is common, and the lot of many; these are the beginners... The soul began to set out on the way of the spirit, the way of proficients, which is also called the illuminative way, or the way of infused contemplation, wherein God himself teaches and refreshes the soul without meditation or any active efforts that itself may deliberately make.” (St. John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul*, 1:8, 14)
2. Many people never make it through this first Night (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 162-63)

When Does the First Dark Night Happen?

1. The First Dark Night happens *soon* after beginning the spiritual life:

“God begins to give this new, dry, nondiscursive type of prayer... very soon after a person begins to take the Gospel seriously, to live it generously and *to give adequate time to mental prayer.*” (Thomas Dubay, *The Fire Within*, 162)
2. How many people experience the Dark night?

“*Not much time ordinarily passes after the initial stages of their spiritual life before beginners start to enter this night of sense. And the majority of them do enter it, for it is common to see them suffer these aridities.*” (St. John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul*, 1:8:4).

How Long Does the Dark Night of the Senses Last?

1. Length of time varies from person to person (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 166)
2. Three Factors determining length:
 - a. Amount of imperfections to be burned away
 - b. Degree of love to which God wishes to raise the person
 - c. Generosity with which one responds to God’s action in the soul

Why is the Dark Night of Senses Necessary?

1. In order to purify beginners of their defects
2. Purification of remnants of the Seven Capital Sins (Pride, Envy, Lust, etc.)
3. Purification of spiritual forms of Capital Sins, especially:
 - a. Spiritual Pride: judging yourself a master; judging others
 - b. Spiritual Sloth: impatience and disgust for hard work of spiritual life
 - c. Spiritual Gluttony: disordered desire for sensible consolations

What are the Three Signs of the Dark Night of the Senses?

1. First Sign: *Dryness in Prayer*
 - a. No consolations in the things of God or created things (Ecclesiastes!)
 - b. Prayers is “dry and unsatisfying; little or no delight in it” (Dubay, 165)
 - d. Infused gift of Knowledge: soul realizes the vanity of all created things
2. Second Sign: *Habitual Desire to Serve God, but Little Pleasure in Doing So*
 - a. Hunger for righteousness and fear of sin grows
 - b. Yet the soul feels like it is ‘backsliding’
 - c. Infused gift of Fear: ability to resist temptations
 - d. Infused gift of Fortitude: strength in the midst of difficulties
2. Third Sign: *Great difficulty in Meditating*
 - a. Difficulty in Meditation (e.g., Lectio Divina)
 - b. Attraction to the Prayer of the Simple Gaze (Infused Contemplation)
 - c. Infused gift of Understanding: begin to penetrate the depths of the mysteries

“Such contemplation is secret and hidden from the very person that experiences it; and ordinarily, together with dryness and emptiness which it causes in the senses, *it gives the soul an inclination and desire to be alone and in quietness, without being able to think of any particular thing or having the desire to do so.* If those souls to whom this comes to pass knew how to be quiet at this time, and troubled not about performing any kind of action, whether inward or outward, neither had any anxiety about doing anything, then they would delicately experience this inward refreshment in that ease and freedom from care. So delicate is this refreshment that ordinarily, if a many desire or care to experience it, he experiences it not; for, as I say, it does its work when the soul is most at ease and freest from care...” (St. John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul*, 1:9:6).

What do I do during the Dark Night of the Senses?

1. Do not stop praying or abbreviate prayer time (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 168)
2. Do not force yourself to keep meditating; “this is not the time for it.” (St. John)

“If [those in the Dark Night of the Senses] meet with no one who understands the matter, these persons fall away and abandon the right road; or they become weak, or at least put hindrances in the way of their further advancement, because of the great efforts they make to proceed in their former way of meditation, fatiguing their natural powers beyond measure.”

3. Be patient; do not think you are wasting time: God himself is acting in you!

How Do I Enter into the Dark Night of the Senses?

1. St. John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, Book 1, Chapter 13:3-11

“First, let him have an habitual desire to imitate Christ in everything that he does, conforming himself to His life; *upon which life he must meditate* so that he may know how to imitate it, and to behave in all things as Christ would behave.”

The Holy Rosary: Contemplating the Mysteries of Christ with Mary

Introduction

1. The Rosary: a “*Christocentric* Prayer” (RVM, 1)
2. Pope John Paul II’s “Favorite Prayer”! (RVM 2)
3. Objections to the Rosary (RVM 4)
 - a. A “Crisis of the Rosary”
 - b. Greater Importance of Liturgy means Lesser Importance of Rosary?
 - c. The Rosary is “unecumenical”
5. The Rosary: A Path of Contemplation (RVM 5)
 - a. “A most effective means of fostering contemplation of the Christian mystery”
 - b. What we need: “Christian life distinguished above all by *the art of prayer*”

To recite the Rosary is nothing other than to *contemplate with Mary the face of Christ.*(RVM, 3)

Contemplating Christ with Mary

1. Mary, Model of Contemplation (RVM, 10)
 - a. A questioning gaze
 - b. A penetrating gaze
 - c. A gaze of sorrow
 - d. A gaze radiant with the joy of the Resurrection
 - e. A gaze afire with the Holy Spirit
2. The Memories of Mary (RVM 11)
 - a. “She kept all these things, *pondering them in her heart*” (Luke 2:19, 51)
 - b. Mary sets the mysteries of Christ before the faithful
3. The Rosary: “an *exquisitely contemplative prayer*” (RVM 12)
 - a. Body: Vocal Prayers
 - b. Soul: Meditation on the Mysteries of Christ’s Life
 - c. St. Louis de Montfort: Vocal Prayer and Mental Prayer (*Secret of the Rosary* 9)
4. The Goal: The *Imitation* of Jesus Christ (RVM 15)

The Parts of the Rosary (The Body)

1. Introductory Prayers
 - a. The Apostles’ Creed
 - b. 1 Our Father
 - c. 3 Hail Mary’s
 - d. 1 Glory Be
2. The Decade
 - a. 1 Our Father
 - b. 10 Hail Mary’s
 - c. 1 Glory Be
 - d. Additional Prayer (e.g., Fatima Prayer: “O My Jesus”)
3. Concluding Prayers (Vary according to Custom)
 - a. Hail, Holy Queen
 - b. Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

The Mysteries of the Rosary (The Soul)

1. The Joyful Mysteries
 - a. The Annunciation
 - b. The Visitation
 - c. The Nativity
 - d. The Presentation
 - e. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple
2. The Sorrowful Mysteries
 - a. The Agony in the Garden
 - b. The Scourging at the Pillar
 - c. The Crowning with Thorns
 - d. The Carrying of the Cross
 - e. The Crucifixion
3. The Glorious Mysteries
 - a. The Resurrection
 - b. The Ascension
 - c. The Descent of the Holy Spirit
 - d. The Assumption
 - e. The Coronation
4. The Luminous Mysteries
 - a. The Baptism
 - b. The Wedding at Cana
 - c. The Kingdom of God
 - d. The Transfiguration
 - e. The Last Supper

(added John Paul II, Oct 16, 2002)
5. Church in Third Millennium: Will it enter into the mysteries? (RVM 24)

How to Pray the Rosary Well

1. Announce each Mystery (RVM 29)
 - a. Use of Icons
 - b. Use of Scripture (RVM 30); cf. the *Scriptural Rosary* (Christianica Publishers)
3. Silence after announcing the Mystery (RVM 31)
4. The Our Father: Mind is lifted up to the Father (RVM 32)
5. The 10 Hail Marys
 - a. True Nature of Repetition: an outpouring of love (RVM 26)
 - b. The Hail Mary: A Biblical Prayer (RVM 33; CCC 2673-2679)
 - c. The Name of “Jesus”: the “center of gravity”
6. The Gloria: “Trinitarian doxology... *the high point of contemplation*” (RVM 34)
7. Concluding Prayers: prayer for the fruits of that mystery (RVM 35)
8. The Rosary Beads: a “chain” linking us to God (RVM 36)
9. The Opening and Closing: diverse customs (RVM 37)
10. The Mysteries and the Days of the Week (BVM 38)
 - a. Joyful Mysteries: Monday, Saturday
 - b. Sorrowful Mysteries: Tuesday, Friday
 - c. Glorious Mysteries: Wednesday, Sunday
 - d. Luminous Mysteries: Thursday
11. The Family Rosary (RVM 41)
 - a. “The family that prays together stays together”
 - b. Replicates the “household of Nazareth”
 - c. The Rosary for Children: “Why not try it?!”
12. Prayer of Blessed Bartolo Longo: (BVM 43)

The Benefits of Praying the Rosary Well (St. Louis De Montfort)

1. Note: these benefits only come when the Rosary is said “with meditation on the mysteries” (*Secret of the Rosary*, 79, 81)

2. It helps us pattern our lives on Christ’s virtues:

It was because our Lady wanted to help us in the great task of working out our salvation that she ordered Saint Dominic to teach the faithful to meditate upon the sacred mysteries of the life of Jesus Christ. *She did this*, no only that they might adore and glorify him, but *chiefly that they might pattern their lives and actions on his virtues*. (St. Louis de Montfort, *Secret of the Rosary*, 66)

a. Jesus’ Prudence: the Proclamation of the Kingdom (Matt 10)

b. Jesus’ Justice: the Baptism of Jesus (Matt 3)

c. Jesus’ Fortitude: Agony in the Garden (Luke 22:43)

d. Jesus’ Temperance: the Temptations in the Desert (Luke 4)

3. It is more powerful than many Penances:

Blessed Albert the Great, who had St. Thomas Aquinas as his student, learned in a revelation that *by simply thinking of or meditating on the passion of Jesus Christ, a Christian gains more merit* than if he had fasted on bread and water every Friday for a year, or had beaten himself with the discipline once a week till blood flowed, or had recited the whole book of Psalms every day. If this is so, then how great must be the merit we can gain from the Rosary, which commemorates the whole life and passion of our Lord?” (St. Louis de Montfort, *Secret of the Rosary*, 88, 28th Rose)

4. It leads us more quickly to more advanced stages of prayer:

We need to learn this easy form of meditation before progressing to the highest state of contemplation... Believe me, dear brother... if you genuinely wish to attain a high degree of prayer in all honesty and without falling into the illusions of the devil so common with those who practice mental prayer, *say the whole Rosary every day, or at least five decades of it*. If you have already attained, by the grace of God, a high degree of Prayer, keep up the practice of saying the holy Rosary if you wish to remain in that state and by it to grow in humility. For never will anyone who says his Rosary every day become a formal heretic or be led astray by the devil. This is a statement which I would sign with my blood. (St. Louis De Montfort, *The Secret of the Rosary*, nos. 76, 78)

The Rosary and the Illuminative Way

“The proficient [person in the illuminative way] obtained a deeper self-knowledge while passing through the period of prolonged aridity which marks the second conversion. With this knowledge of his poverty, of his spiritual indigence, there grows within him by contrast a quasi-experimental knowledge of God, not only in the mirror of the sensible things of nature, of the parables, of exterior worship, but in *the spiritual mirror of the mysteries of salvation* with which he familiarizes himself. *These mysteries*, which are those of the incarnation of the Word, of the redemption, of eternal life, *the Rosary daily places before our eyes* by recalling to us the Savior’s childhood, His sorrowful passion, His resurrection and ascension. If the proficient is faithful, he goes beyond the sensible aspect of these mysteries, he attains all that is spiritual in them, the infinite value of the merits of Christ; then the Rosary is no longer the mechanical recitation of the Hail Mary, but a living thing, a school of contemplation...

The proficient who would thus live a little better each day by the spirit of the Rosary, would reach the contemplation of the mystery of Christ... If he should listen daily to the secret teaching in the depth of his heart, this prayer would enkindle in him the desire of heaven, of the glory of God, and the salvation of souls; it would give him a love of the Cross and strength to carry it, and from time to time a foretaste of heaven, a certain savor of eternal life... He thus growing increasingly familiar with these mysteries of faith, he penetrates them a little, tastes them, sees their application in his daily life. In this more or less frequent contemplation, the proficient or advanced [souls] receive, in the measure of their fidelity and generosity, the light of *the gift of understanding*, which renders their faith more penetrating and which makes them glimpse the lofty and simple beauty of these mysteries, a beauty accessible to all those who are truly humble and pure of heart.

Consequently this period of the interior life merits the name of illuminative way. (Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Three Ages of the Interior Life*, 2:66-68)

The Tabernacle of Moses and the Illuminative Way

1. Three Parts of Tabernacle
 - a. The Outer Court: Bloody Sacrifice (Purgative Way)
 - b. The Holy Place: Unbloody Sacrifice (Illuminative Way)
 - c. The Holy of Holies: the Ark of the Covenant (Unitive Way)
2. The Holy Place:
 - a. The Bread of the Presence (Exod 25:23-30; 37:10-16)
 - b. The Golden Menorah (Exod 25:31-40; 37:17-23)
 - c. The Golden Altar of Incense (Exod 30:1-10; 37:25-28)

The Mystery of the Golden Menorah

1. The Menorah: *illuminated* the Holy Place
2. 7 Flames: 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isa 11:1-3 LXX; Rev 5:6; cf. 1:12-13)
3. A Bush/Tree Covered with *Flowers!* (Num 8:4; 1 Kgs 7:22-26; cf. Ps 45:1!)
 - a. The Burning Bush/The Tree of Life
 - b. Decorated with *50 Flowers?* (see *Encyclopedia Judaica*, “Menorah,” 11:1358)
 - c. Greek Bible: they are “lilies” (*krinon*) (Exod 25:32; compare Song 2:17!)
4. St. Louis de Montfort: “The Mystical Rose Tree” (*Secret of the Rosary*, 5-6)

THE PRAYER OF THE ENTIRE GOSPEL: THE ROSARY

(Courtesy: Jimmy Seghers)

I. THE STRUCTURE: THE PRAYERS

Invocation (once)

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19).

The Apostle's Creed (once)

I believe in God (Deut 6:4-5; Is 45:22-24; Phil 2:10-11; Mk 12:29-30), the Father almighty (Mt 28:19), creator of heaven and earth (Deut 32:6; Mal 2:10).

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, Our Lord (Mk 12:35-37; Mt 11:27; 16:16-17; Jn 1:1; Acts 2: 34-36; 9:20; Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 2:8; Gal 1:15-16; Col 1:15; Phil 2:6; Titus 2:13; Heb 1:3; Rev 5:13).

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary (Mt 1:18-25; Lk 1:26-38).

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried (Mt 27; Mk 15; Lk 23; Jn 18:26-19:42; Heb 2:9; 1 Cor 15:3; Rev 1:18; Acts 3:15).

He descended into hell (Eph 4:9-10; 1 Pet 4:6). On the third day he rose again (Mt 28: 1-15; Mk 16; Lk 24:1, 5-6, 34-36; Mk 16:1; Jn 20:11-18; 1 Cor 15:3-8; Acts 1:22; 2:24; 9:3-18; 13:32-33).

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father (Mk 16:19; Lk 24:31; Jn 3:13; 12:32; 20:19, 26; Eph 4:8-10; Acts 1:9; 2:33; 7:56; Lk 9:34-35; Mk 16:19; 1 Cor 15:8; Gal 1:16; Heb 7:25; 9:11, 24; Rev 4:6-11).

He will come again to judge the living and the dead (Jn 5:28-29; Mt 25:31-32, 46; Jn 12:49).

I believe in the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:17; 16:13; 1 Cor 2:11; Gal 4:6; Mt 28:19),

The holy catholic Church (Mk 16:15; Acts 19:39; 1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13; Phil 3:6),

The communion of saints (Jn 15:1-17; 1 Cor 12:7, 26-27; Rom 14:7; Eph 4:16),

The forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38-41; 22:16; Heb 10:32; 1 Cor 6:11; Jn 20:19-23),

The resurrection of the body (Jn 6:39-40, 54; 11:25; Rom 8:11; 1 Thess 4:14; 1 Cor 6:14; 15:12-14; 2 Cor 4:145; Phil 3:10-11)

And life everlasting (1 Jn 32; 1 Cor 2:9; 13:12; Rev 2:17; 22:4-5; Phil 1:23; Jn 14:3; 1 Thess 4:17; Mt 25:21, 23).

Amen

The Lord's Prayer (once)

Our Father who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our trespasses,

As we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil. Amen. (Mt 6:9-13; Lk 11:2-4)

Hail Mary (three times)

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee (Lk 1:28).
 Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus (Lk 1:42).
 Holy Mary, mother of God (Lk 1:43), pray for us sinners
 Now and at the hour of our death (Jas 5:16; 1 Tim 2:1-6). Amen.

Glory be (once here, and once after each decade)

Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever (Rev 1:6; 4:9, 11; 5:12-13; 7:12; 11:13; 14:7; 19:1-2; 21:22-24, et. al). Amen.

JOYFUL MYSTERIES

1. **The Annunciation** (Lk 1:26-38)
2. **The Visitation** (Lk 1:39-56)
3. **The Nativity** (Lk 2:1-21)
4. **The Presentation** (Lk 2:22-40)
5. **The Finding of Jesus in the Temple** (Lk 2:41-52)

LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

1. **Jesus' Baptism by John** (Mt 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21-22; Jn 1:29-34)
2. **The Wedding Feast at Cana** (Jn 2:1-11)
3. **The Proclamation of the Gospel** (Mt 4:12-17; Mk 1:14-15; Lk 4:14-15)
4. **The Transfiguration** (Mt 17:1-8; Mk 9:2-8)
5. **The Eucharist** (Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:2-25; Lk 22:14-20; Jn 6:22-71; 1 Cor 10:14-17; 11:23-30)

SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

1. **The Agony in the Garden** (Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Lk 22:39-53)
2. **The Scourging at the Pillar** (Mt 27:26; Mk 15:15; Lk 23:16; Jn 19:1)
3. **The Crowning with Thorns** (Mt 27:27-31; Mk 15:16-20; Jn 19:2-16)
4. **The Carrying of the Cross** (Mt 27:31-44; Mk 15:22-32; Lk 23:26-43; Jn 19:16-50)
5. **The Crucifixion** (Mt 27:45-56; Mk 15:33-41; Lk 23:44-56; Jn 19:31-42)

GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

1. **The Resurrection** (Mt 28:15, 7; Mk 16:1-18; Lk 24:1-43; Jn 20:1-21:19)
2. **The Ascension** (Mk 16:19-20; Lk 24:50-53; Acts 2:1-13)
3. **The Descent of the Holy Spirit** (Acts 2:1-13)
4. **The Assumption of Mary** (Rev 12:1)
5. **The Coronation of Mary** (Rev 12:1)

The Dark Night of the Spirit (Entry into the Unitive Way)

What is the Dark Night of the Spirit?

1. The Dark Night of the Spirit: entry into the Unitive Way
2. Why is the Dark Night the Spirit Necessary?
 - a. Reasons: there are still defects deep in the soul (Dubay, *Fire Within*)
 - b. It is a kind of Purgatory on earth:

Even as spirits are purged in the next life with *dark material fire*, so in this life they are purged and cleansed with the *dark spiritual fire* of love. *The difference is that in the next life they are cleansed with fire, while here below they are cleansed and illumined with love only.* It was this love that David entreated, when he said: “Create in me a clean heart, O God...” (St. John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul*, Book 2, 11:1, quoting Ps 51:10)

When Does the Dark Night of the Spirit Happen?

1. It does not begin immediately after the first Dark Night (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 169)
2. Usually, a soul spends “many years” in the illuminative way (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 169)

How Long Does the Dark Night of the Spirit Last?

1. No set rule of length: depends on
 - a. The level of purification needed.
 - b. The heights to which God wishes to bring the soul. (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 170)

2. St. Thérèse of Lisieux:

The trial did not last merely a few days or weeks; *it went on for months, and I am still waiting to be delivered from it.* It is impossible to explain what I feel. I only wish I could. *I am in a dark tunnel, and you would have to go through it yourself to understand how dark it is...*” (St. Thérèse, *Story of a Soul*, Chapter 9)

3. Blessed Teresa of Calcutta: 50 Years! (David Scott, *A Revolution of Love*, 151ff.) .
4. Until the soul begins to experience union with God. (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 170)

What Happens during the Dark Night of the Spirit? (St. Thérèse of Lisieux)

1. The soul feels *rejected* and *abandoned* by God (Scott, *Revolution of Love*, 152)
2. Prayer seems impossible; reassurance from a spiritual director does not help
3. The soul is beset by grave *temptations against faith, hope, and love*:

Then *suddenly the fog about me seems to enter my very soul* and fill it to such an extent that I cannot even find the lovely picture I had formed of my homeland [i.e., Heaven]; everything has disappeared! When, weary of being enveloped by nothing but darkness, I try to comfort and encourage myself with the thought of eternal life to come, it only makes matters worse. *The very darkness seems to echo the voices of those who do not believe and mocks at me: “You dream of light and of a fragrant land; you dream that the Creator of this loveliness will be your own for all eternity; you dream of escaping one day from these mists in which you languish! Dream on, welcome death; it will not bring you what you hope; it will bring an even darker night, the night of nothingness!”* (St. Thérèse, *Story of a Soul*, Chapter 9)

4. Intermittent consolations; but darker night follows (Scott, *Revolution*, 152-53)

When I sing of Heaven's happiness, of what it is to possess God forever, I feel no joy; I simply sing of what I want to believe. Now and then, I must admit, a gleam of light shines through the dark night to bring a moment's respite, but afterwards, its memory, instead of consoling me, only makes my night darker than ever. (St. Thérèse, *Story of a Soul*, Chapter 9)

What do I do during the Dark Night of the Spirit?

1. What you are "least inclined to do": accept it generously (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 173)
2. Abandonment to divine Providence: "Not my will but thine be done"

The Unitive Way: Prelude to Eternal Life

Prayer in the Unitive Way (according to St. Teresa of Avila)

1. Prayer of Complete Union (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 94-95)
2. Rapture (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 97-98, 99)
3. The Transforming Union: Vision of the Trinity (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 104)
4. Habitual Presence of the Trinity (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 105)
5. Extraordinary Phenomena during Prayer: Levitation (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 102)
6. The Spiritual Marriage: Divinization (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 193; cf. CCC 460)

Virtue in the Unitive Way

1. The soul does not even “experience the first motions of sin” (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 183)
2. Fruits of the Holy Spirit: come to full fruition (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 183)
3. The soul is raised up to *heroic virtues* (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 184-85)
 - a. Theological Virtues: Faith, Hope, and Love
 - b. Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance

Suffering in the Unitive Way

1. The soul desires *union with Christ crucified* (Scott, *Revolution*, 156-5)

It seems to me at the moment that there is nothing to prevent my flying away, because *I desire nothing at all now except to love until I die of love*. I am free, I am not afraid of anything, not even of what I used to dread most of all... a long illness which would make me a burden to the community. *I am perfectly content to go on suffering in body and soul for years, if that would please God*. I am not in the least afraid of living for a long time; I am ready to go on fighting. (St. Thérèse, *Story of a Soul*, Chapter 9)

“It has come to this: that I can no longer suffer, because all suffering is sweet.” (St. Thérèse, *Story of a Soul*, Epilogue)

Death in the Unitive Way

1. Death is unlike “normal” human death

The death of persons who have reached this state is far different in its cause and mode than the death of others, even though it is similar in natural circumstances. If the death of other people is caused by sickness or old age, the death of these persons is not so induced, in spite of their being sick or old; their soul is not wrested from them unless by some impetus and encounter of love, far more sublime than previous ones.... *The death of such persons is very gentle and very sweet, sweeter and more gentle than was their whole spiritual life on earth.....* (St. John of the Cross, *Living Flame of Love*, Stanza I:30, quoted in Dubay, *Fire Within*, 196).

St. John of the Cross’s Question to Us

1. “O souls... How are you spending your time?” (Dubay, *Fire Within*, 194)

Conclusion:

St. Peter and the Three Stages of the Spiritual Life

The Purgative Way

1. Call: Andrew brings Peter to Jesus (John 1:35-42)
2. Repentance: Peter's Recognition that he is a Sinner (Luke 5:1-11)
3. Faith: Peter's Confession of Jesus' Messiahship (Matt 16:13-28)
 - a. Peter knows that Jesus is Messiah, the divine Son of God
 - b. Peter does not yet understand the Cross
4. Spiritual Consolations: The Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36)
5. Spiritual Pride:
 - a. The Request of James and John (Matt 20:20-28)
 - b. The Disciples at the Last Supper (Luke 22:24-27)

The Illuminative Way

1. The Dark Night of the Senses:
 - a. The Coming Trial: Satan will "Sift" them (Luke 22:31-34; cf. Matt 26:30-35)
 - b. Prayer in Gethsemane: "watching" with Jesus (Matt 26:36-46)
2. Peter's Second Conversion:
 - a. "You cannot follow me now" (John 13:36-38)
 - b. Spiritual Failure and Repentance (Luke 22:54-62)
3. Peter's Threefold Act of Love: (John 21:15-17)
4. Jesus Teaches the Apostles the mysteries of "the Kingdom" (Acts 1:1-4)
- (4. The Disciples Know Christ through: Road to Emmaus (Luke 24)
 - a. The Scriptures
 - b. The Eucharist)

The Unitive Way

1. The Dark Night of the Spirit:
 - a. Jesus "abandons" the Apostles (Acts 1:6-11)
 - b. Peter prays *with Mary* (Acts 1:12-14)
2. The Coming of the Holy Spirit: Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4)
3. Peter After Pentecost:
 - a. Spiritual Insight: Sermon in the Temple, 3000 Convert! (Acts 2:14-42)
 - b. Spiritual Power: Jesus performs miracles (Acts 3:1-10)
 - c. Spiritual Courage: Peter and John before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:1-22)
 - d. Spiritual Prudence: Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)
 - e. Zeal for Souls: they did not cease preaching (Acts 5:17-42)
4. Suffering with Christ: Peter's Imprisonment (Acts 12:1-17)
5. The Final Act of Love: Peter's Martyrdom (John 21:18-23)

Where Am I in the Spiritual Life?

(Jean-Baptiste Chautard, *The Soul of the Apostolate*, Part 4)

Hardened in Sin

Mortal Sin: Stubborn persistence in sin, either out of ignorance or because of a maliciously warped conscience.

Prayer: Deliberate refusal to have any recourse to God.

1. The Purgative Way

Surface Christianity

Mortal Sin. Considered as a trifling evil, easily forgiven. The soul easily gives way and commits mortal sin at every possible occasion or temptation. Confession almost without contrition.

Prayer. Mechanical; either inattentive, or always dictated by temporal interest. Such souls enter into themselves very rarely and superficially.

Mediocre Piety

Mortal Sin. Weak resistance. Hardly ever avoids occasions but seriously regrets having sinned, and makes good confessions.

Venial Sin. Complete acceptance of this sin, which is considered as insignificant. Hence, tepidity of the will. Does nothing whatever to prevent venial sin, or to extirpate it, or to find it when it is concealed.

Prayer. From time to time, prays well. Momentary fits of fervor.

Intermittent Piety

Mortal Sin. Loyal resistance. Habitually avoids occasion. Deep regrets. Does penance to make reparation.

Venial Sin. Sometimes deliberate. Puts up a weak fight. Sorrow only superficial. Makes a particular examination of conscience, but without any method or coherence.

Prayer. Not firmly resolved to remain faithful to meditation. Gives up as soon as dryness is felt, or as soon as there is business to attend to.

2. The Illuminative Way

Sustained Piety

Mortal Sin. Never. At most very rare, when taken suddenly and violently by surprise. And then, often it is to be doubted if the sin is mortal. It is followed by ardent compunction and penance.

Venial Sin. Vigilant in avoiding and fighting it. Rarely deliberate. Keen sorrow, but does little by way of reparation. Consistent particular examen, but aiming only at avoidance of venial sin.

Imperfections. The soul either avoids uncovering them, so as not to have to fight them, or else easily excuses them. Approves the thought of renouncing them, and would like to do so, but makes little effort in that direction.

Prayer. Always faithful to prayer, no matter what happens. Often affective. Alternating consolations and dryness, the latter endured with considerable hardship.

Fervor

Venial Sin. Never deliberate. By surprise, sometimes, or with imperfect advertence. Keenly regretted, and serious reparation made.

Imperfections. Wants nothing to do with them. Watches over them, fights them with courage, in order to be more pleasing to God. Sometimes accepted, however, but regretted at once. Frequent acts of renunciation. Particular examen aims at perfection in a given virtue.

Prayer. Mental prayer gladly prolonged. Prayer on the affective side, or even prayer of simplicity. Alternation between powerful consolations and fierce trials.

3. The Unitive Way

Relative Perfection

Imperfections. Guards against them energetically and with much love. They only happen with half-advertence.

Prayer. Habitual life of prayer, even when occupied in external works. Thirst for self-renunciation, annihilation, detachment, and divine love. Hunger for the Eucharist and for Heaven. Graces of infused prayer, of different degree. Often passive purification.

Heroic Perfection

Imperfections. Nothing but the first impulse.

Prayer. Supernatural graces of contemplation, sometimes accompanied by extraordinary phenomena. Pronounced passive purifications. Contempt of self to the point of complete self-forgetfulness. Prefers sufferings to joys.

Complete Sanctity

Imperfections. Hardly apparent.

Prayer. Usually, transforming union. Spiritual marriage. Purifications by love. Ardent thirst for sufferings and humiliations.

Few and far between are the souls that belong to the last two, even to the last three categories.

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Recommended Works of Spiritual Theology

- St. Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*
St. John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul*
Jean-Baptiste Chautard, *The Soul of the Apostolate*
Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, *The Mystical Theology* (see Complete Works)
Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses*
St. Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey to God*
St. Catherine of Siena, *The Dialogue*
Thomas A Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*
St. Francis de Sales, *Treatise on the Love of God*
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St. Louis De Montfort, *True Devotion to Mary*
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Timothy Gallagher, *The Discernment of Spirits*
Robert Barron, *The Strangest Way: Walking the Christian Path*