

*“Eternal life is this: to know you...” (Jn 17:3)*

Knowledge plays a primordial role in our relations with God, as it does in love. This is particularly true in mental prayer. We need to know in order to love, and to know better in order to love better.

Knowledge of God arouses love of God. Love, to use the words of St. Augustine, “yearns for the holy leisure of mental prayer,” where it is renewed and strengthened through a better knowledge of the Lord.

30 *Time stolen from God*—Assiduous meditation on God’s perfections brings forth in us the great fundamental attitudes of prayer: adoration, praise, reverent fear, thanksgiving, self-offering.

31 *Reacting to God*—Our supernatural faculty to know is faith. Since it is often dormant, it is important to awaken it, and exercise and develop it through meditation and mental prayer. It then becomes eagerness to know the living God.

32 *Knowing in order to love*—God speaks to us in many ways in order to make himself known. His works reveal him, and first among all these works is marriage, in which divine love is reflected.

33 *Letter to Paul and Monique*—Reflection on the great joys that govern the conjugal life makes possible a better understanding of the demands and riches of the life of mental prayer, which is also an encounter, a communion of love.

34 *To a young man engaged to be married*—God reveals himself by his words far more even than by his works. For lack of meditation on the Scriptures, our faith withers. Nourished by God’s Word, faith bears abundant and delectable fruit.

35 *The arid garden*—God was not content to speak to us through his works and his spokesmen. To make himself known to us, he sent his Son. “Listen to him” is the Father’s command. We must listen attentively to him, with our whole mind, our whole heart, and our whole being.

36 *“Listen to him” (Mt 17:5)*—Then, little by little, the knowledge of the unfathomable riches of Christ will awaken our admiration and love, and open up the wellsprings of our prayer.

37 *“The unfathomable riches of Christ” (Ep 3:8)*—Christ made this essential revelation to us from the Cross. That is why we must never tire of meditating on the book that is the Cross.

38 *The deepest book*—But we must still understand its language. It is not a panegyric of suffering, but the proclamation of conquering love.

39 *Should we pray before the crucifix?*