

*“Led by the Spirit of God”
(Rm 8:14)*

The Holy Spirit is the teacher who shows us how to pray. He works in us to make us aware of our poverty and powerlessness. He teaches us to acquiesce in this, and thus prepares us to receive the graces that he will give.

Are those “wasted” periods of mental prayer, when we have the feeling of doing nothing, really time lost? Not at all! Rather, they are sacred. They are “the sacrifice of mental prayer.”

79 *Place your offering on the rock*—When the Lord seems far away, it is time for us to reaffirm our faith in his present and active love. Then our desire grows deeper, and our love purer and more intense.

80 *Desert prayers*—If someone possesses everything except God, he has nothing; but nothing is lacking to the person stripped of everything except God. There is only one real poverty: being deprived of God.

81 *On that day, he will know how to pray*—Actually, God is never absent. He dwells within us. Even so, we must search for him where he is. We must listen attentively to the one whom we can hear clearly only amid silence.

82 *The legend of the musk deer*—Let us not speak, when deep within our souls we are invited to be silent, in an attitude of attention and self-offering.

83 *The kingdom of silence*—This interior silence and immobility are an extraordinarily intense activity. We must have no doubts about that.

84 *The invitation to silence*—In the mental prayer of silence, a child’s heart gradually awakens within us. This is the child’s heart which, according to Christ’s own words, is qualified to enter the Kingdom of God.

85 *The captive girl-child*—The purified and silent soul soon discovers, in its depths, light that penetrates the intellect and a love that strengthens the heart.

86 *Whiffs of prayer*—Such a soul’s desire for God grows by leaps and bounds. But in the spiritual realm, “the soul’s desire is satisfied by the very fact that it remains insatiable.”

87 *Finding consists in seeking*—This desire becomes an irrepressible need to give God all the room within us, and surrender our whole substance to him, the way wood surrenders to the flame that consumes it.