

# *The Way of Perfection*



*The Collected Works of Saint Teresa of Avila*  
*Volume 2*

*Translated by Otilio Rodriguez O.C.D. & Kieran Kavanaugh O.C.D.*

# *The Way of Perfection*

may be divided as follows:



## -Introduction (Overview)

Origins (Slide 4)

Historical Context (Slide 5)

Central Theme (Slide 10)

Foundation of Prayer (Slide 11)

A Method of Prayer (Slide 17)

-Purpose of the Teresian Carmel (chs. 1-3)

-Foundations of prayer: Love of Neighbor, Detachment, Humility (chs. 4-15)

-Diversity of Paths in Contemplative Communities (chs. 16-18)

# *The Way of Perfection*

may be divided as follows



- Prayer in General (chs. 19-26) (Slide 24)

- Commentary on the Our Father

- Christ as Master and Guide in Prayer (chs. 26-27) (Slide 42)

Prayer of Recollection (chs. 28-29) (Slide 44)

Prayer of Quiet (chs. 30-31) (Slide 52)

Abandonment to the Will of God (ch. 32) (Slide 57)

The Eucharist (chs. 33-35) (Slide 62 )

Pardon of offenses & detachment from honor & esteem  
(chs. 36-37) (Slide 70 )

Deliverance from deception & illusions  
(chs. 38-41) (Slide 79 )

Desires for eternal life (ch. 42) (Slide 96)

# Introduction

## Origins



- ❧ *The Way of Perfection* was written at the request of Teresa's nuns when they learned that Teresa's confessor at the time, Domingo Banez, refused to allow her book, *La Vida, (Life)* to be circulated among nuns and interested others. He did however give permission for her to 'write some things on prayer' and so she wrote *The Way of Perfection* as an act of obedience to her nuns. (1566)
- ❧ Teresa summarizes the subject matter as 'how one reaches the fount of living water, what the soul feels there, how God satisfies it.' She implied that *The Way of Perfection* was an introduction to her *Life*. She felt that those who had reached the fount of living water would find her *Life* very beneficial and receive much light from it.

# Introduction

## *Historical Context*



- ❧ In sixteenth-century Spain, political events were closely tied to religious ideas. What was happening in the world at large, particularly in Spain, left its traces on Teresa's works.
- ❧ The final experiences relayed in her *Life*, suggests that Teresa was living more among the Church triumphant of heaven, but the first chapters of *The Way of Perfection* describe her as very much back on earth, keenly distraught over the afflicted Church. For Teresa, the Church and Christianity were identical. The attack of 'those Lutherans' was an attack against Christianity.
- ❧ In her mind, the faith was what the Church holds, the truths of Sacred Scripture...in consulting learned men and in giving them an account of her spiritual life, Teresa was concerned with whether or not her life and experiences were in agreement with these truths. Teresa felt that what was done against the Church was done against Christ.

# Introduction

## *Historical Context*



- ❧ What might Teresa do to prevent this harm (Lutherans), these 'great evils'? She resolved 'to do the *little* that was in my power.' This *little* developed into the Teresian ideal: a small group of Christians who would be good friends of the Lord by striving to follow the evangelical counsels (poverty, chastity, obedience) as closely as possible and living a life of unceasing prayer; a life in service to Christ and to the Church.
- ❧ A group of women dedicating themselves to a life of prayer and contemplation in that age and in those circumstances was destined to be looked upon with suspicion. The Spanish people at the time were taught to follow the ascetical life, practice vocal prayer and shun mysticism.
- ❧ There was a fear of false women mystics. It was said that women were a mistake of nature, unfinished men. A saying of the time suggested a woman should only leave her house on 3 occasions: at the time of her baptism; to go to her spouse's home; for her burial.

# Introduction

## *Historical Context*



- ❧ Teresa founded a monastery of women dedicated to a life of prayer, of intimate friendship with God and of living faith and love.
- ❧ Conservative theologians at the time feared that the seeds of Protestantism lay in the practice of mental prayer...for ordinary people Mass and vocal prayer were sufficient. In this environment where it was thought that women should...*stick to their sewing...*and that the *Our Father* and *Hail Mary* were sufficient.
- ❧ Teresa agreed that if the *Our Father* were to be authentically prayed it must be joined to mental prayer...vocal prayer joined to mental prayer can lead to perfect contemplation.

# Introduction

## *Historical Context*



- ❧ Teresa emphasized the practice of solitude and withdrawal from the world greater than was practiced at the Incarnation, a poor community where large numbers lived and easily obtained permission to leave the enclosure.
- ❧ Some nuns at the Incarnation desired a stricter observance of enclosure but Teresa's appeal was to the *eremitical spirit* of living in accordance with the Carmel rule (1247, Honorius III): *'For the style of life we aim to follow is not just that of nuns but of hermits.'*
- ❧ Silence and solitude were both important for Teresa's small communities dedicated to prayer.



# Introduction

## *Historical Context*



- ❧ Much evidence suggests that the Incarnation monastery was devout and fervent . However, there existed among the nuns a class structure based on one's material (wealthy or impoverished) background.
- ❧ Teresa sought the poverty of spirit of the Gospels; equality amongst her sisters; poverty-in clothing, in words, in thought- was the insignia of her nuns along with detachment from both honor and money as they always go together.
- ❧ This life of equality and humility was meant, as Teresa envisioned it, to blossom into a life of authentic sisterly love, the love Christ insisted upon for His followers. As she put it, *"in this house all must be friends, all must be loved, all must be held dear, all must be helped."*

# Introduction

*Central Theme*



*The Way of Perfection* is  
a practical book of advice and counsel  
destined to  
initiate the Carmelite nun into a life of prayer.

Thus, Teresa is a teacher throughout the work,  
demonstrating how to lead a life of prayer,  
pointing to the pitfalls, and explaining  
the right from the wrong way.

# Introduction

*Foundations of Prayer*



Love of Neighbor

Detachment

Humility

# Introduction

## *Foundations of Prayer*



- ❧ Teresa wanted the Lord's friends to be good ones, so she wanted her nuns to follow Christ's counsels as perfectly as possible; this implied careful observance of the Rule of Albert, the essential element being *prayer without ceasing*.
- ❧ Peace was necessary for a life of prayer so Teresa avoided placing burdens on her nuns.
- ❧ She focused on the three practices necessary to possess inward and outward peace thus disposing them to a life of prayer: Love of Neighbor, Detachment and Humility. These three virtues form a *foundation for prayer* and *free the spirit* but are also *the effects of prayer*.

# Introduction

## *Foundations of Prayer*



### ❧ 1/ Love of Neighbor:

- Two types of love: spiritual love and love mixed with sensuality,
- term 'love' is applied to too much having little to do with true and perfect love,
- **importance** of friendship and its growth into perfect love, compassion is essential,
- avoid too much restraint to not frighten people away from the service of God,
- never lose compassion that goes with charity.

# Introduction

## *Foundations of Prayer*



### 2/ Detachment:

- in observing the human condition Teresa was struck at how quickly things come to an end;
- the result of detachment is inner freedom from worry about bodily comfort, honor and wealth.

# Introduction

## *Foundations of Prayer*



### 3/ Humility:

Humility and detachment are so closely joined that Teresa couldn't speak of one without the other; humility implies detachment from oneself-- from worry about esteem and honor;

By humility the soul draws love to itself; in humility one realizes that every good thing comes from God and could be taken away;

Humility does not disturb or disquiet, it comes with peace, delight, and calm; the pain of genuine humility expands the soul enabling it to serve God more.

# Introduction

*Foundations of Prayer*



“I cannot understand how there could be  
humility without love or  
love without humility;  
nor are the two virtues possible  
without detachment from all creatures.” (W 16 2)



# Introduction

## *A Method of Prayer*



Teresa's method of prayer is for those minds, like hers, that are like *'wild horses'* vs. methodical minds who practice discursive meditation.

Teresa turns to the *Our Father* as vocal prayer does not prevent contemplation. Its recitation must be prayed using the prayer of recollection or Teresa's way... *'the soul collects its faculties together and enters within itself to be alone with its God.'* (W 28 4)

It is also important to realize the nearness of God... *'all the harm comes from not truly understanding that He is near. Not only is He near, but 'He never takes His eyes off of you.'*

# Introduction

## *A Method of Prayer*



- ☞ Teresa's method is one of being fully present to God in our prayer...*'I am not asking you now that you think about Him...I am not asking you to do anything more than look at Him.'* (W 26 3)
- ☞ The Prayer of Recollection, accompanied by vocal prayer, proved to be an *excellent method* of disposing one for contemplative prayer...the divine Master comes more quickly to teach it and give it the prayer of quiet...(W 29 7)

# Introduction

*A Method of Prayer*



Teresa claims that she never knew what it was to pray with satisfaction until the Lord taught her this method. (W29 7) ...

'out of love for the Lord get used to praying the Our Father with this recollection, and you will see the benefit before long. This is a manner of praying that the soul gets so quickly used to that it doesn't go astray, nor do the faculties become restless ... (W 29 6)

# Introduction

## *A Method of Prayer*



- ❧ Teresa never limited herself to one formula and utilized all forms of prayer: adoration, petition, praise, offering and thanksgiving.
- ❧ Free from any restriction, Teresa valued being present in a variety of ways to the Lord. Joyful, she sought the Risen Christ; in trial and sadness, she sought the Christ in His Passion.
- ❧ Prayer of Quiet, the initial stage of contemplation, can occur while praying vocally. This passive prayer is unattainable through any human efforts. There is not yet a complete silencing of the faculties (only the *will*, not the *intellect* or *imagination*, is taken over by God).

# Introduction

## *A Method of Prayer*



- ❧ Prayer of union, recollection takes a deeper hold, all the faculties (*intellect, imagination, will*) are silenced or under God's control.
- ❧ This favor cannot be brought about (active prayer) nor removed but only received in gratitude (*passive prayer or contemplation*).
- ❧ Contemplation is like living water drunk from the fount, but unlike earthly water, while satisfying the soul's thirst, it, at the same time, increases its thirst.

# Introduction

*A Method of Prayer*



‘Certainly it never entered my mind that this prayer (Our Father) contained so many deep secrets; for now you have the entire spiritual way contained in it, from the beginning stages until God engulfs the soul and gives it to drink abundantly from the fount of living water, which He said was to be found at the end of the way.’ (W 42 5)

# Introduction

*A Method of Prayer*



...Muy determinada determinación...

'They must have a great and very resolute determination to persevere until reaching the end, come what may, happen what may, whatever work is involved, whatever criticism arises, whether they arrive or whether they die on the road, or even if they don't have courage for the trials that are met, or if the whole world collapses.' (W 31 6)

...the end of the way cannot be reached without Teresa's 'determined determination'...

# Prayer in General

## Chapters 19



Methodical Minds and those who can concentrate within themselves...by means of so good a path the Lord will draw them to the haven of light. And through such a good beginning the end will be reached. All who are able to walk along this path will have rest and security, for when the intellect is bound one proceeds peacefully. (W 19-1)

But...there are some souls and minds so scattered, they are like wild horses no one can stop. Now they're running here, now there, always restless. (W 19-2)

She stresses the importance of persisting to the Fount of Living Water, 'whoever drinks of it will never thirst.' (W 19-2)



# Prayer in General

## Chapters 19



### Three Properties of Water: (Contemplation)

**Refreshes:** ...no matter how much heat (temptations) we may experience, as soon as we approach the water the heat goes away...if it is water that rains from heaven, so much less will it extinguish **this fire**...the water of true tears, those that flow in true prayer...(W 19 5)

**-Cleans dirty things:** this divine union is something supernatural, it is not a matter of our own choosing. The Lord shows the soul in an instant more truths, and gives it a clearer understanding of what everything is. (W 19 6,7)

**-Satisfies to the full and takes away thirst:** one can be drowning from not being able to endure the world but is revived in God; one is then able to enjoy what couldn't be enjoyed without dying....by continuing to live we can help others die of desire for this death... (W 19 8,9)

# Prayer in General

## Chapters 19



...Don't be dismayed by the Trial and Contradiction along the way. It is a Battle. Advance with courage and don't grow weary. (W 19 14)

Remember, the Lord invites us all; and, since He is Truth Itself, we cannot doubt Him. If His invitation were not a general one, He would not have said: "I will give you to drink." He might have said: "Come, all of you, for after all you will lose nothing by coming; and I will give drink to those whom I think fit for it." But, as He said we were all to come, without making this condition, I feel sure that none will fail to receive this living water unless they cannot keep to the path. May the Lord, Who promises it, give us grace, for His Majesty's own sake, to seek it as it must be sought. (W 19 14)

...All those who do not falter on the way will drink this living water. May the Lord, because of who He is, give us the grace to seek this living water as it should be sought, for He promises it. (W 19 15)

# Prayer in General

Chapters 20



...In many ways He gives drink to those who wish to follow Him so that no one will go without consolation or die of thirst...Never is the lack of consoling water such that it can't be endured. (W 20 2)

...Take my advice and do not stop on the road ( of prayer) but, like the strong, fight even to death in the search, **for you are not here for any other reason than to fight**. You must always proceed with this determination to die rather than fail to reach the end of the journey. (W 20 2)

...Walk along this path of prayer that you do not go astray at the beginning....the most important part for everything. (W 20 3)

...For the love of God I beg you that your conversation always be directed toward bringing some good to the one with whom you are speaking... for what is very suited to this path...is peace and tranquility of soul.(W 20 3, 5)

# Prayer in General

Chapters 21



Do Not Be Frightened , daughters, by the many things you need to consider in order to begin this divine journey (of prayer) which is the royal road to heaven. A great treasure is gained by travelling this road; no wonder we have to pay what seems to us a high price. The time will come when you will understand how trifling everything is next to so precious a reward. (W 21 1)

...How they are to begin is very important – in fact, all important. They must have a great and very resolute determination to persevere until reaching the end (...to drink from this water of life), come what may, happen what may, whatever work is involved, whatever criticism arises, whether they arrive or whether they die on the road, or even if they don't have courage for the trials that are met, or if the whole world collapses. (W 21 2)

# Prayer in General

## Chapters 21



It is always good to base your prayer on prayers coming from the mouth of the Lord... I have been fond of the words of the Gospels and found more recollection in them than in very cleverly written books. (W 21 3)

...Whether we like it or not, my daughters, we must all journey toward this fount,...don't let anyone deceive you by showing you a road other than that of prayer. (W 21 6)

# Prayer in General

## Chapters 21



There is one great blessing: you will always find someone who will help you, because this is a characteristic of the real servant of God to whom His Majesty has given light concerning the true way. (W 21 9)

Believe only those who walk in conformity with Christ's life, try to preserve a pure conscience, humility, and contempt for all worldly things; believe firmly what Holy Mother Church holds, and you can be sure you will be walking along a good path. (W21 10).

# Prayer in General

Chapters 22



Realize, Daughters, that the nature of mental prayer isn't determined by whether or not the mouth is closed. If while speaking I thoroughly understand and know that I am speaking with God and I have greater awareness of this than I do of the words I'm saying, mental and vocal prayer are joined.

If, however, others tell you that you are speaking with God while you are reciting the Our Father and at the same time in fact thinking of the world, then I have nothing to say.

But if you are to be speaking, as is right, with so great a Lord, it is good that you consider whom you are speaking with as well as who you are, at least if you want to be polite. (W 22 1)

# Prayer in General

Chapters 23



☞ There are many reasons why it is extremely important to begin with great *determination*:

...if we resolve to give something ...there is no reason for failing to give with complete determination...let us be wholly determined never to take it (time) back from Him...He adjusts Himself to our way of giving...He is not at all petty, but generous. Just the raising of our eyes in remembrance of Him will have its reward. (W 23 1-3)

...The devil will not then have so free a hand to tempt. (W 23 4)



# Prayer in General

## Chapters 23



...The person who does so (begins with determination) struggles more courageously. He knows that come what may he will not turn back...one who is in battle...wants to fight like a desperado...he is convinced that for him to conquer is to live...if we don't let ourselves be conquered, we will obtain our goal

...Don't be afraid that the Lord will leave you to die of thirst, for He calls us to drink from this fount...it is a great thing to have experienced the friendship and favor He shows toward those who journey on this road and how He takes care of almost all the expenses. (W 23 5)

...Little would be lost in trying the journey of prayer....it brings with it the following good: more is given than is asked for, beyond what we could desire. This is absolutely true; I know. (W 23 6)

# Prayer in General

## Chapters 24



- ❧ What I would like us to do... is refuse to be satisfied with merely pronouncing the words...when I say, 'Our Father,' it will be an act of love to understand who this Father of ours is and who the Master is who taught us this prayer. (W 24 2)
- ❧ ...vocal prayer His Majesty teaches, is to be recited in solitude. This is what He always did when He prayed...for our instruction. (W 24 3)
- ❧ ... one must not speak simultaneously to both God and the world...we understand to whom we are speaking...even though we do not hear Him He speaks well to the heart when we beseech Him from the heart...He is very close...to recite the Our Father well, remain at the side of the Master who taught this prayer to you. (W 24 5)

# Prayer in General

Chapters 24-25



- ☞ You are right in saying that vocal prayer is now in fact mental prayer...I don't know how vocal prayer can be separated from mental prayer if vocal prayer is to be recited well with an understanding to whom we are speaking...an obligation to pray with attention...the best remedy...strive to center the mind upon the one to whom the words are addressed... be patient and strive to make a habit...(W24, 6)
- ☞ ...it is very possible that while you are reciting the Our Father ... the Lord may raise you to perfect contemplation...His Majesty shows that He listens... it is His grandeur that speaks to the soul, suspending one's intellect, binding one's imagination ...The soul understands ...this divine Master is teaching it by suspending its faculties...the soul is being enkindled in love...the will is enkindled without understanding how...this good cannot be merited or gained...it a gift from the Lord...What I have described is perfect contemplation. (W 25 1-2)

# Prayer in General

## Chapters 25



- ☞ ...the difference that lies between perfect contemplation and mental prayer....(in mental prayer) being aware and knowing that we are speaking , with whom we are speaking, and who we ourselves are who dare to speak ...with so great a Lord...(but)in contemplation... we can do nothing; His Majesty is the one who does everything, for it is His work and above our nature. (W 25, 3)
- ☞ ...strive after what is contained in this present book and leave the rest to God; for it is He who must bestow supernatural prayer, and He will grant it to you if you do not stop short on the road but try hard until you reach the end. (W25, 4)

# Prayer in General

Chapters 26



☞ Method for Recollecting one's Mind...The examination of conscience, the act of contrition, and the sign of the cross must come first...since you are alone, strive to find a companion. What better companion than the Master Himself who taught you this prayer? Represent the Lord Himself as close to you and behold how lovingly and humbly He is teaching you.....remain with so good a friend as long as you can. If you grow accustomed to having Him present at your side, and He sees that you do so with love and that you go about striving to please Him, you will not be able –as they say– to get away from Him; He will never fail you; He will help you in all your trials; you will find Him everywhere. Do you think it's some small matter to have a friend like this at your side? (W 26 1)

# Prayer in General

## Chapters 26



- ☞ Those of you who cannot engage in much discursive reflection with the intellect or keep your mind from distraction, get used to this practice!....I suffered many years from the trial ...of not being able to quiet the mind in anything....the Lord does not leave us ....if we humbly ask Him for this friendship, He will not deny it to us. And if we cannot succeed in one year, we will succeed later. Let's not regret the time that is so well spent. Who's making us hurry? I am speaking of acquiring this habit and of striving to walk alongside this true Master. (W 26 2)
- ☞ I am not asking you now that you think about Him or that you draw out a lot of concepts or make long and subtle reflections with your intellect. I am not asking you to do anything more than look at Him. For who can keep you from turning the eyes of your soul toward this Lord, even if you do so just for a moment if you can't do more?...your Spouse never takes His eyes off of you. (W 26 3)

# Prayer in General

## Chapters 26



- ☞ They say that for a woman to be a good wife toward her husband she must be sad when he is sad, and joyful when he is joyful, ....see what subjection you have been freed from, Sisters! The Lord...is the one who submits, and He wants you to be the lady with the authority to rule; He submits to your will. If you are joyful, look at Him as risen...If you are experiencing trials or are sad, behold Him on the way to the garden...He will look at you with those eyes so beautiful and compassionate, filled with tears; He will forget His sorrows so as to console you in yours...(W 26 4,5)
- ☞ ...but you will also delight in speaking with Him, not with ready-made prayers but with those that come from the sorrow of your own heart...all the trials that come to me ...enable me to imitate You in something. Let us walk together, Lord, Wherever You go, I will go; whatever You suffer, I will suffer. (W 26 6)

# Prayer in General

Chapters 26



- ☞ Take up that cross, Daughters. Don't mind at all if the Jews trample upon you, if His trials can thereby be lessened...whoever doesn't want to use a little effort now to recollect at least the sense of sight and look at this Lord within herself...would have been much less able to stay at the foot of the cross with the Magdalene...don't think you are capable of such great trials if you are not capable of such little ones. (W 26 7,8)
- ☞ ...carry about an image or a painting of this Lord...look at it ...speak often with Him...He will inspire you with what to say...acquire the habit. (W 26 9)



# Prayer in General

## Chapters 26



- It is also a great help to take a good book written in the vernacular in order to recollect one's thoughts and pray well vocally...little by little accustom the soul with coaxing and skill not to grow discouraged ...many years have passed since the soul left the house of its Spouse...our soul and our thoughts are so accustomed to wandering about at their own pleasure -grief- that the poor soul doesn't understand itself. In order that it get to love remaining at home once again, a great deal of skill is necessary. (W 26 10)
- Draw near, then, to this good Master with strong determination to learn what He teaches you, and His Majesty will so provide that you will turn out to be good disciples. He will not abandon you if you do not abandon Him...(W 26 10)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Our Father: Christ as Master and Guide in Prayer* (chs. 27)



- ✧ Our Father Who Art In Heaven...how You do show Yourself to be the Father of such a Son; and how Your Son does show Himself to be the Son of such a Father...this favor would not be so great if it came at the end of the prayer. But at the beginning, You fill our hands and give a reward so large that it would easily fill the intellect and occupy the will so that one would be unable to speak a word. ...how readily should perfect contemplation come at this point! (W 27 1)
  
- ✧ You humble Yourself...in joining with us in prayer and making Yourself the Brother of creatures so lowly and wretched...You desire that He consider us His children...in being Father He must bear with us...pardon us...console us in our trials...(W 27 2)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Our Father: Christ as Master and Guide in Prayer* (chs. 27)



- ☞ Since You, Jesus, have vowed to undergo disgrace for us, leave Your Father free. Don't oblige Him to do so much for a people so wretched who will not thank You properly...what You say on earth will be done in heaven. (W 27 3,4)
  
- ☞ If our Father had not so much majesty, it wouldn't surprise me if we refused to be known as His children.. such an attitude doesn't belong here...the one from a noble lineage should ...speak least about her father. All the Sisters must be equal ... you have a good Father, for He gives you the good Jesus. Let no one in this house speak of any other father but Him. (W 27 5,6)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Who Art In Heaven: Prayer of Recollection* (Chs 28)



☞ ...Do you think it's of little importance to know where heaven is and where you must seek your most sacred Father?...for wandering minds it is very important ...to believe these truths...to strive to understand them by experience. Doing this is one of the ways of greatly slowing down the mind and recollecting the soul.  
(W 28 1)

☞ Do you think it matters little for a soul with a wandering mind to understand this truth...there is no need to go to heaven ...to speak with one's Eternal Father or find delight in Him? Nor is there any need to shout. ...He is near enough to hear us...All one need do is go into solitude and look at Him within oneself...with great humility speak to Him as to a father. Beseech Him as you would a father, tell Him about your trials, ask Him for a remedy ...realizing that you are not worthy to be His daughter. (W 28 2)

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Who Art In Heaven: Prayer of Recollection* (Chs 28)



☞ ...humility doesn't consist in refusing a favor the King offers you but in accepting it and understanding how bountifully it comes to you and being delighted with it...I have the Emperor of heaven and earth in my house...speak with Him as a with a father, or a brother, or a lord or as with a spouse; sometimes in one way, at other times in another; He will teach you what you must do in order to please Him. (W 28 3)

☞ The intellect is recollected much more quickly with this kind of prayer even though it may be vocal; it is a prayer that brings with it many blessings. This prayer is called 'recollection' because the soul collects its faculties together and enters within itself to be with its God. And the divine Master comes more quickly to teach it and give it the prayer of quiet than He would through any other method it might use. For centered there within itself, it can think about the Passion and represent the Son...and not tire the intellect... (W 28 4)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Who Art In Heaven: Prayer of Recollection* (Chs 28)



- ☞ ...Those who can enclose themselves within this little heaven of our soul, where the Maker of heaven and earth is present...should believe they are following an excellent path and that they will not fail to drink water from the fount...It is the path of heaven. (W 28 5)
- ☞ ...anyone who walks by this path keeps his eyes closed...a praiseworthy custom...a striving so as not to look at things here below. This striving comes at the beginning; afterward, there's no need to strive...(W 28 6)

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Who Art In Heaven: Prayer of Recollection* (Chs 28)



...At the beginning since the recollection is not so deep– **for there are greater and lesser degrees of recollection** – the soul should get used to this recollection...If we make the effort, practice this recollection for some days, and get used to it, the gain will be clearly seen; we will understand when beginning to pray that the bees are approaching and entering the beehive to make honey. And this recollection will be effected without our effort...the Lord has desired that ...the faculties are drawn inward...When the soul does no more than give a sign that it wishes to be recollected, the senses obey it and become recollected. Even though they go out again afterwards, their having already surrendered is a great thing; for they go out as captives and subjects and when the will calls them back...they come more quickly, , until after many of these entries the Lord wills that they rest entirely in perfect contemplation. (W 28 7)

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Who Art In Heaven: Prayer of Recollection* (Chs 28)



Let's speak a little about how we should get accustomed to a method that 's so good...let's imagine that within us is an extremely rich palace, built entirely of gold and precious stones...you have a part to play in order for the palace to be so beautiful; for there is no edifice as beautiful as is a soul pure and full of virtues...in this palace dwells this mighty King ...seated upon an extremely valuable throne, which is your heart. .. I consider it impossible for us to pay so much attention to worldly things if we take that care to remember we have a Guest such as this within us...(W 28 9)

...I understood that I had a soul. But what this soul deserved and who dwelt within it I did not understand because I had covered my eyes with the vanities of the world....if I had understood as I do now that in this little palace of my soul dwelt so great a King, I would not have left Him alone so often. I would have remained with Him ... striven... not to be so unclean. (W 28 11)



# Commentary on the Our Father

*Who Art In Heaven: Prayer of Recollection* (Chs 28)



- ❧ So that the soul won't be disturbed in the beginning by seeing that it is too small to have something so great within itself, the Lord doesn't give it this knowledge until He enlarges it little by little and it has the capacity to receive what He will place within it.....we should give ourselves to Him with complete determination...He doesn't give Himself completely until we give ourselves completely. (W 28 12)
- ❧ ...if we fill the palace with lowly people...how will there be room for the Lord with His court?... certainly His court attendants would never leave Him alone...they beseech Him on our behalf since they are full of charity. (W 28 13)

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Who Art In Heaven: Prayer of Recollection* (Chs 29)



Q

...we have not come here to seek a reward. Let us always direct our thoughts to what is lasting...how quickly all things come to an end...Turn your eyes inward and look within yourself...you will find your Master...the less you have of exterior consolation the more He will favor you. (W 29 1,2)

Q

...the solitude enjoyed between the soul and its Spouse when the soul desires to enter this paradise within itself to be with its God...you must understand that this recollection is not something supernatural, but that it is something we can desire and achieve ourselves with the help of God – for without this help we can do nothing, not even have a good thought. This recollection...is an enclosure of the faculties (body-5 senses; soul-will, intelligence and imagination) within the soul. (W 29 4)

Q

...I'm speaking only of how vocal prayer should be recited...we should see and be present to the One with whom we speak...all the harm comes from not truly understanding that He is near, but in imagining Him as far away...to acquire the habit of easily recollecting our minds and understanding what we are saying and with whom we are speaking...the exterior senses must be recollected ...be occupied...We have heaven within ourselves since the Lord of heaven is there. (W 29 5)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Who Art In Heaven: Prayer of Recollection* (Chs 29)



- ☞ With this method we shall pray vocally with much calm, any difficulty will be removed...He is very fond of taking away our difficulty...of His willingness to give to us, how eagerly He remains with us...get used to praying the Our father with this recollection, you will see the benefit before long. This is a manner of praying that the soul gets so quickly used to that it doesn't go astray, nor do the faculties become restless...try this method...it may mean some struggle...before the habit is acquired. (W29 6)
- ☞ ...I never knew what it was to pray with satisfaction until the Lord taught me this method. ...so many benefits from this habit of recollection...you can if you want , avoid ever withdrawing from such good company; ...if you can, practice this recollection often during the day; if not, do so a few times...Once this recollection is given by the Lord, you will not exchange it for any treasure. (W 29 7)
- ☞ ...if you try, within a year, or perhaps half a year you will acquire the habit,..see how little time it takes for a gain as great as is that of laying a good foundation. (W 29 8)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Hallowed be Your name, Your Kingdom Come: Prayer of Quiet (chs. 30)*



- ☞ Your petition in the garden...manifested Your own desire and fear...but You (Jesus) abandoned them to His will...we are not as surrendered to the will of Your Father as you are...what He gives is better. (W 30 2)
- ☞ ...we could not hallow...His holy name in a fitting way, ...He provided for us by giving us His kingdom here on earth...one will no longer take any account of earthly things, but have a calmness and glory within...(W 30 4, 5)
- ☞ ...He doesn't tell us to ask for impossible things...there are times when...the Lord calms our faculties and quiets the soul...a clear foretaste of what will be given those He brings to His kingdom. And to those to whom He gives here below the kingdom we ask for, He gives pledges ...they may have great hope of going to enjoy perpetually what here on earth is given only in sips. (W 30 6)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Hallowed be Your name, Your Kingdom Come: Prayer of Quiet (chs. 30-31)*



- ⌘ ...the beginning of pure contemplation...the prayer of quiet. But since I'm dealing with vocal prayer, it may seem...that vocal prayer doesn't go with contemplation; but I know that it does...there are many persons who while praying vocally ...are raised by God to sublime contemplation...those of you who are the enemies of contemplatives should not think that you are free from being a contemplative if you recite your vocal prayers as they should be recited, with a pure conscience...(W 30, 7)
- ⌘ ...I want to explain this prayer of quiet...the Lord begins to show that He hears our petition...to give us His kingdom here below so that we may truly praise and hallow His name...this prayer is supernatural...we cannot procure it through our own efforts...the Lord puts it (soul) at peace by His presence...all the faculties are calmed...not much more would be required for it to become one with Him in union...it (soul) sees it is in the kingdom, at least near the King who will give the kingdom to the soul...the state resembles an interior and exterior swoon...(W 31 1,2)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Hallowed be Your name, Your Kingdom Come: Prayer of Quiet (chs. 31)*



- ❧ A person feels the greatest delight in his body and a great satisfaction in his soul (prayer of quiet)...the faculties are still...two of them are free (Intellect, Memory). The will is the one that is captive here. ...if there is some sorrow...it comes from a realization that the will must return to the state of being free...Persons in this prayer don't want the body to move.... to lose that peace...don't dare stir...They are within the palace, near the King...He is giving them His kingdom. In sum, while this prayer lasts they are so absorbed ...with satisfaction and delight...(W 31 3).
  
- ❧ Sometimes in this prayer of quiet the Lord grants another favor (sleep of the powers)...when this quiet is great and lasts for a long while...the will wouldn't be able to remain so long in that peace if it weren't bound to something...They (intellect & memory) are not wholly in what they are doing...the best part is lacking, that is, the will...is united with its God, and leaves the other faculties free to be occupied in what is for His service...in worldly matters, these faculties are dull...in a stupor...This is a great favor...the active and contemplative lives are joined...the will is occupied in its work and contemplation ... the other two faculties serve in the work of Martha. Thus, Martha and Mary walk together. (W 31 5)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Hallowed be Your name, Your Kingdom Come: Prayer of Quiet (chs. 31)*



- ☞ ...it would be good to give some counsel for those whom the Lord ... has brought here...to think they'll be able to hold on to that satisfaction and don't even dare take a breath...this prayer is no longer our work...it's something very supernatural...only receive it with gratitude, as most unworthy of it...you will be unable to manage the other two faculties...the soul will be in the greatest quiet and the intellect will be so distracted...sometimes I want to die in that I cannot cure this wandering of the intellect...the will shouldn't pay anymore attention to the intellect than it would to a madman. (W 31 8)
  
- ☞ ...this prayer of quiet is different from that prayer in which the entire soul is united with God, for then the soul doesn't even go through the process of swallowing this divine food...the Lord places the milk within it. In the prayer of quiet it seems that He wants it (soul) to work a little...the intellect torments the will, it doesn't cause this torment when there is union of all three faculties, for He ...suspends them. With the joy He gives them He keeps them all occupied...the delight is in the interior of the will...In this prayer the will is the ruler and the powerful one. (W 31 10)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Hallowed be Your name, Your Kingdom Come: Prayer of Quiet (chs. 31)*



...to the soul placed in this prayer it seems the Eternal Father has already here below granted its petition for His Kingdom...when this favor is granted by God, we shall forget the things of the world...a soul to whom God gives such pledges has a sign that He wants to give it a great deal...if the Lord sees that after He places the kingdom of heaven in the soul's house this soul turns to earthly things, He will fail to show it the secrets in His kingdom...seldom grant it this favor... (W 31, 11)

When individuals do not respond by service that is in conformity with so great a favor... and take back their wills...the Lord goes in search of those who do love Him to give more to them...But there are persons...who make themselves deaf when the Lord... gives the kingdom and places them in this prayer of quiet...they do not receive it...they distract themselves from the prayer of quiet...Do not do this...be on your guard when the Lord grants you this favor. .. consider that you are losing a great treasure...you do much more by saying one word of the Our Father...than rushing through the entire prayer many times. You are very close to the one you petition...herein lies the true praise and hallowing of His name... (W 31 12,13)



# Commentary on the Our Father

*Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven:*

*Contemplation & Rapture (ch. 32)*



- ☞ ...He has granted us so great a favor as to make us His brothers, let us see what He desires us to give His Father, and how He offers this gift for us and what He asks of us...it is right that we serve Him in return for such great favors. (W 32 1)
  
- ☞ “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” ...your Father does what You ask Him ... giving us His kingdom here on earth...for once earth has become heaven, the possibility is there for Your will to be done in me...His will must be done...like it or not, and it will be done in heaven and on earth...great gain that comes from freely abandoning my will to Yours...what a great loss there is when we do not carry out what we offer to the Lord in the Our Father! (W 32 4)
  
- ☞ ...I want to ...remind you what His will is...Do you want to know how He answers those who say these words to Him sincerely? Ask His glorious Son who said them with such determination and complete willingness...sorrows, injuries and persecutions He suffered ...death on a cross...By that we understand what His will is. For these are His gifts to the world. He gives according to the love He bears us...the measure for being able to bear a large or small cross is love...strive to suffer what His Majesty desires you to suffer. (W 32 7)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven:*

*Contemplation & Rapture (ch. 32)*



- ☞ ...Let's give Him the jewel ...The truth is that He rewards us beforehand so that we might give the jewel to Him...Those in the world will be doing enough if they truly have the determination to do His will...everything I advise you is directed toward the complete gift of ourselves to the Creator, the surrender of our wills to Him, and detachment from creatures...we are preparing ourselves that we may quickly reach the end of our journey and drink the living water from the fount...unless we give our wills we will never be allowed to do so...Drinking from the fount is perfect contemplation. (W 32 9)
- ☞ In this contemplation...we don't do anything ourselves...nor is there anything else necessary...than to say...Your will, Lord, be done in me...If you want it to be done with trials, strengthen me and let them come; if with persecutions, illnesses, dishonors, and a lack of life's necessities, here I am. I will not run away, my Father, nor is it right that I turn my back on You. Since Your Son gave You this will of mine in the name of all, there is no reason for any lack on my part. But grant me the favor of Your Kingdom that I may do Your will, since He asked for this kingdom for me, and use me as You would Your own possession, in conformity with Your will. (W 32, 10)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven:*

*Contemplation & Rapture (ch. 32)*



- ☞ ...strength lies in this gift!...when accompanied by the necessary determination, it draws the Almighty so that He becomes one with our lowliness, transforms us into Himself, and effects a union of the Creator with the creature...(W 32 10)
  
- ☞ ...the more our deeds show that these are not merely polite words, all the more does the Lord bring us to Himself and raise the soul from itself and all earthly things so as to make it capable of receiving great favors, for He never finishes repaying this service in the present life....Not content with having made this soul one with Himself, He begins to find His delight in it, to reveal His secrets, and rejoice that it knows what it has gained ...He makes it lose these exterior senses so that nothing will occupy it. This is **rapture**. And He begins to commune with the soul in so intimate a friendship that He not only gives it back its own will but gives it His. For in so great a friendship the Lord takes joy in putting the soul in command...He does what it asks since it does His will.  
(W32 12)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven:*

*Contemplation & Rapture (ch. 32)*



- ✧ It (soul) often grows weary seeing itself subject to so many difficulties, impediments and fetters...from dwelling in the prison of this body. It would want to repay something of what it owes...only humility can do something ...a clear perception ...the truth...about what a trifle we are and how very great God is. (W 32 13)
- ✧ I give you one counsel...don't think that through your own strength or efforts you can arrive, for reaching this stage is beyond our power.... With simplicity and humility, which will achieve everything, say : fiat voluntas tua (thy will be done). (W 32 14)

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Give us this day our daily bread: The Eucharist* (chs. 33)



- ☞ Jesus knows our weakness...we often show we do not understand what the Lord's will is. We are weak and He is merciful...He saw that doing the Father's will was difficult...once Jesus saw the need...to show the extreme of His love for us, and in His own name...He made this petition: "Give us this day, Lord, our daily bread." ...it is a matter of life and death not to pass over these words hastily.(W 33 1)
- ☞ ...it was necessary for us to see His love and courage in order to be awakened---not just once but every day. After He saw all this, He must have resolved to remain with us here below. Since to do this was something so serious and important...He well understood that He was asking for more in this request than He was in the others, for He knew beforehand the death they would make Him die and the dishonors and insults He would suffer....What father...would consent that his son remain among us every day to suffer? Certainly no Father, Lord, but Yours....how many insults will be committed today against this Most Blessed Sacrament! (W 33 2,3)

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Give us this day our daily bread: The Eucharist (chs. 33)*



- ☞ *...in exchange for doing Your will perfectly, and doing it for us, He allows Himself to be crushed to pieces each day....Why must all of our good come at His expense?...in this petition He repeats the words: first He says and asks the Father to give us this daily bread, and then repeats, 'give it to us this day, Lord' ...It's as though Jesus tells the Father that He is now ours since the Father has given Him to us to die for us; and asks that the Father not take Him from us until the end of the world; that He allow Him to serve each day...it seems that Jesus is honored to be our slave. (W 33 4)*
- ☞ *...by sharing in our nature He has become one with us here below...and as Lord of His own will...He reminds the Father that because He belongs to Him the Father in turn can give Him to us. And so He says, 'our bread.' He doesn't make a difference between Himself and us, but we make one by not giving ourselves up each day for His Majesty. (W 33 5)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Give us this day our daily bread: The Eucharist (chs. 34)*



- ☞ *In this petition the word 'Daily' seems to mean forever...why after the word 'daily' ...'give us this day'...that it be ours every day...He remains with us to help, encourage, and sustain us in doing this will, that we have prayed might be done in us. (W 34 1)*
- ☞ *In saying 'this day,' ...He is referring to one day...which lasts as long as the world and no longer...it will not be the Lord's fault if the unfortunate ones let themselves be conquered. He doesn't stop encouraging them until the battle is over...So the Son tells His Father...since there is no more than one day...let Him pass it in servitude...He has given us this most sacred bread forever. His Majesty gave us...the manna...of His Humanity that we might find Him...and not die of hunger, save through our own fault...the soul will find delight and consolation in the most Blessed Sacrament ...He is teaching us to set our wills on heavenly things and to ask to begin to enjoy Him here below...would He get us involved in something so base as asking to eat?... once we start worrying about bodily needs, those of the soul will be forgotten!...There is no need, trial or persecution not easy to suffer if we begin to enjoy the delight and consolation of this sacred bread. (W 34 2)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Give us this day our daily bread: The Eucharist (chs. 34)*



- ❧ *...Ask the Father ... to give you your spouse 'this day' so that you will not be seen in this world without Him. To temper such great happiness it's sufficient that he remain disguised in these accidents of bread and wine...Beg Him not to fail you. .. Carefully avoid wasting your thoughts at any time on what you will eat...Leave this care...to your Spouse; He will care for you always.( W 34 4)*
- ❧ *Your attitude should be like that of a servant when he begins to serve. His care is about pleasing his master in everything...be concerned with asking for this bread...let us ask that we might merit to receive our heavenly bread in such a way that the Lord may reveal Himself to the eyes of our soul and make Himself known...our bodily eyes cannot delight in beholding Him, ...He is so hidden. (W 34 5)*
- ❧ *Do you think this heavenly food fails to provide sustenance, even for these bodies, that it is not a great medicine even for bodily ills? (W 34 6)*



# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Give us this day our daily bread: The Eucharist (chs. 34)*



- ℞ *...for many years when she received Communion...she strove to strengthen her faith so that in receiving her Lord it was as if ...she saw Him enter her house...she freed herself from all exterior things when it was possible and entered to be with Him. She strove to recollect the senses ...She considered she was at His feet and wept with the Magdalene...even though she didn't feel devotion, faith told her that He was indeed there. (W 34 7)*
- ℞ *...Receiving Communion is not like picturing with the imagination...In communion the event is happening now, and it is entirely true...why doubt, if we have faith, that miracles will be worked while He is within us and that He will give what we ask of Him, since He is our house? His Majesty is not accustomed to paying poorly for His lodging if the hospitality is good. (W 34 8)*
- ℞ *...to see Him with our bodily eyes...is not fitting for us...there is no person capable of enduring such a glorious sight...In seeing the Eternal Truth one would see that all the things we pay attention to here below are lies and jokes...Beneath the bread He is easy to deal with...who would dare approach...with so many imperfections! (W 34 9)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Give us this day our daily bread: The Eucharist (chs. 34)*



- ☞ *He has many methods of showing Himself to the soul, through great interior feelings...Be with Him willingly; don't lose so good an occasion for conversing with Him as is the hour after receiving Communion...strive to leave your soul with the Lord. If you immediately turn your thoughts to other things...how will He reveal Himself to you? This is a good time for our Master to teach us and for us to listen to Him ...and beg Him not to leave. (W 34 10)*
- ☞ *If you have to pray to Him by looking at His picture...it would seem foolish. You would be leaving the Person Himself to look at a picture of Him...it is good to have a picture of Christ...when He is absent, or when by means of dryness He wants to make us feel He is absent...With what better...thing can our eyes be occupied than with One who loves so much...(W 34 11)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Give us this day our daily bread: The Eucharist (chs. 34)*



- ☞ *.....after having received the Lord, since you have the Person Himself present, strive to close the eyes of the body and open those of the soul and look into your own heart...acquire the habit of doing this every time you receive Communion...Though He comes disguised, the disguise ...does not prevent Him from being recognized in many ways, in conformity with the desire we have to see Him. And you can desire to see Him so much that He will reveal Himself to you entirely. (W 34 12)*
- ☞ *On the other hand, if we pay no attention to Him...what is there for Him to do?...He wants to reveal Himself to us. No, for they didn't treat Him so well when He let Himself be seen openly by all and told them clearly who He was; very few were those who believed Him...His Majesty is being merciful...to all of us who love Him, by letting us know that it is He who is present in the most Blessed Sacrament. He doesn't want to show Himself openly...and give His treasures except to those who He knows desire Him greatly; these are His true friends...whoever is not His true friend...will quickly forget what took place...hurries on ...to other...worldly impediments so that the Lord of the house may not occupy it. (34 13)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Give us this day our daily bread: The Eucharist (chs. 35)*



- ☞ *...in the Prayer of Recollection, I spoke of the significance of entering within ourselves to be alone with God...when you do not receive Communion...but hear Mass, you can make a spiritual communion...highly beneficial...you can recollect yourselves in the same way after Mass for the love of this Lord is deeply impressed on the soul. If we prepare ourselves to receive Him, He never fails to give in many ways we do not understand....it is like approaching a fire...the fire may be a large one, it will not...warm you if you turn away ...if the soul ...remains there for a while, it will stay warm for many hours. (W 35 1)*
- ☞ *...the devil will make you think you find more devotion in other things and less in recollection after Communion. Do not abandon this practice; the Lord will see in it how much you love Him...there are few souls who accompany Him and follow Him in trials. Let us suffer something for Him; His Majesty will repay you for it... since He suffers and will suffer everything...to find even one soul that will receive Him and lovingly keep Him within, let your desire be to do this ... the Father is so fond of friends...in seeing the will of His Son He doesn't want to hinder this excellent work; in it the Son's love for Him is fully demonstrated ...He shows how much He loves us and helps us suffer our trials. (W 35 2)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Give us this day our daily bread: The Eucharist (chs. 35)*



☞ *...holy Father in heaven, since You desire and accept this work, ...You will not deny us anything that is good for us...O my God, would that I might have begged You much and served You diligently so as to be able to ask for this great favor in payment of my services, since You don't leave anyone without pay!...what is there for me to do , my Creator, but offer this most blessed bread to You, and even though You have given it to us, return it to you and beg You through the merits of Your son to grant me this favor since in so many ways He has merited that You do so? Now, Lord, now; make the sea calm! May this ship, which is the Church, not always have to journey in a tempest like this (Lutherians). Save us, Lord, for we are perishing. (W 35 5)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Pardon of offenses and detachment from honor and esteem (chs. 36)*



- ☞ *Since our Good Master saw that with this heavenly bread everything is easy for us, save through our own fault...He says..."And forgive us, Lord, our debts as we forgive our debtors." (W 36 1)*
  
- ☞ *...He doesn't say 'as we will forgive.'"...whoever asks for a gift as great as the one last mentioned (give us this day our daily bread) and ...has already surrendered his will to God's will, should have already forgiven...at least ...have the resolve to (forgive)...the saints were pleased with the wrongs and persecutions they suffered; they then had something to offer the Lord...that our Lord forgives our faults, which deserve eternal fire, ...by means of something so lowly as our forgiving others...I have nothing ...to give You ... that I may ask You to forgive my debts. May Your Son pardon me; no one has done me an injustice, and so I have nothing to pardon for your sake, unless Lord, You accept my desire. (W 36 2)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Pardon of offenses and detachment from honor and esteem (chs. 36)*



☞ *...pay no attention to the things they call wrongs...like children, we are making houses out of straw with these ceremonious little rules of etiquette...if we knew what honor is and what losing honor consists in!...at the time I prized honor without understanding what it was. I was following the crowd...by how many things was I offended!...neither was I careful about the main rule...I didn't ...pay any heed to the honor that is beneficial...the honor that benefits the soul...honor and profit don't go together...the soul's profit and what the world calls honor can never go together...the world moves in the opposite direction. Blessed be the Lord who drew us out of it...O Lord, Lord! Are You our Model and Master?... What did Your honor consist of, You who honored us? Didn't you ...lose it in being humiliated unto death? No, Lord, but You won it for all. (W 36 3,5)*

☞ *...how we get lost on the road because we start out wrong from the beginning...we shall reach the point of thinking that we have done a great deal if we pardon one of these little things, that was neither an offense, nor an injury, nor anything...we shall think that the Lord pardons us because we have pardoned others. Help us understand...that we do not know ourselves and that we come to You with empty hands; and pardon us through Your Mercy...all things come to an end ... but the punishment is without end...You would grant us so great a favor...because of Your Son who asks it of You. (W 36 6)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Pardon of offenses and detachment from honor and esteem (chs. 36)*



☞ *...how the Lord must esteem this love we have for one another!...He could have put other virtues first ... He said only, 'forgive us because we forgive.' Perhaps He said the prayer and offered it on our behalf because He knows we are so fond of this miserable honor...to be forgiving is a virtue difficult for us to attain by ourselves but most pleasing to His Father. (W 36 7)*

☞ *... consider carefully...He says, 'as we forgive,' as though it were something already being done... when among the favors God grants in perfect contemplation...there doesn't arise in the soul a very resolute desire to pardon any injury...do not trust much in that soul's prayer...For the soul God brings to Himself in so sublime a contemplation is not touched by these wrongs nor does it care whether it is esteemed or not...nor does it care at all...more afflicted by honor than dishonor and a lot of ease and rest than trials...when truly the Lord has given His kingdom here below, the soul no longer desires honor in this world...seen through experience the great gain and progress that comes to it by suffering for God. Very seldom does God give such great gifts, save to persons who have willingly undergone many trials for Him...the trials of contemplation are great...the Lord looks for contemplatives among people who have been tested. (W 36 8)*



# Commentary on the Our Father

*Pardon of offenses and detachment from honor and esteem (chs. 36)*



☞ *...contemplatives already know what everything is worth...if ...a great ...trial causes pain, their reason comes to their rescue, before the pain is fully felt, with another consideration...and almost annihilates the pain by means of joy...from seeing...something by which they will gain more graces and perpetual favors from His Majesty...they prize trials and desire them, they know that these latter ...will make them rich...they like others to know about their sins and like to tell about them when they see themselves esteemed...it is with those that God grants the grace of this humility and great love for Himself...they are already so forgetful of self that they can't believe that others feel some things...or consider them an affront. (W 36 9, 10)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Pardon of offenses and detachment from honor and esteem (chs. 36)*



*These effects...found in persons ...closer to perfection ...the Lord very habitually favors by bringing to Himself through perfect contemplation...the first effect....resolve to suffer wrongs ...though this may be painful ... will soon be possessed by anyone who has from the Lord ...the prayer of union...if one doesn't experience these effects...one may believe ...the favor was not from God...(W 36 11)*

*...in the beginning ...it can happen ... the soul will not immediately experience this fortitude...in a short while...if He continues to grant them (favors)...the soul will have fortitude in this virtue of forgiving...it may not have fortitude in other virtues...I cannot believe that a person who comes so close to Mercy itself, where he realizes what he is and the great deal God has pardoned him of, would fail to pardon his offender immediately...and with a readiness to remain on very good terms with him...mindful of the gift and favor granted by God ...he saw signs of great love...he rejoices that an opportunity is offered whereby he can show the Lord some love...(W 36 12)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Pardon of offenses and detachment from honor and esteem (chs. 36)*



*...I know many persons whom the Lord Has favored by raising to supernatural things, giving them this prayer or contemplation ....and, even though I see other faults and imperfections in them, I have never seen anyone with this one ...nor do I believe that such a fault will be present if the favors are from God...God's favor always enriches the soul it reaches ...although the favor ...passes quickly, it is gradually recognized through the benefits the soul receives ...since Jesus know this well, He says resolutely to His holy Father that "we pardon our debtors." (W36 13)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Pardon of offenses and detachment from honor and esteem (chs. 37)*



*We ought to give great praise to the Lord for the sublime perfection of this evangelical prayer...in so few words everything about contemplation and perfection is included; it seems we need study no other book than this one...the Lord has taught us the whole way of prayer and of high contemplation, from the beginning stages to mental prayer, to the prayer of quiet, and to that of union...from here on, the Lord begins to teach us about the effects of His favors...(W37 1)*

*... since this prayer was intended for general use so that each one could petition according to his own intention, be consoled and think that he has a good understanding of the prayer, the Lord left it in this obscure form. Contemplatives...who no longer desire earthly things, ask for the heavenly favors...that can be given on earth. Those who still live on earth...may ask for bread. They must be sustained ...sustain their households. Such a petition is very just and holy, and so is their petition for other things according to their needs. (W37 2)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Pardon of offenses and detachment from honor and esteem (chs. 37)*



*But both should consider that two of the things mentioned pertain to all: giving Him our will and forgiving others...It seems on our behalf He makes a kind of pact with His Eternal Father..."You do this, Lord, and My brothers will do that." ...He doesn't fail to do His part...how well He pays! And He pays without measure! (W 37 3)*

*We can say this prayer only once in such a way that the Lord will enrich us since He sees that we do so sincerely and are determined to do what we say...if ...we don't say one thing and then act differently, He always gives more than what we ask of Him...Our good Master knows ...that those who ask with perfection will be filled with such favors from His Father that they will reach a high state...those who are already perfect or who are approaching it are not afraid of anything ...since they have trampled the world underfoot...they have the greatest hope of this in the effects of the favors He grants them. Absorbed in these delights they don't want to remember even that there is a world or that they have enemies. (W 37 4)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

*Pardon of offenses and detachment from honor and esteem (chs. 37)*



*What a wonderful thing...to have a wise and cautious teacher who foresees the dangers. This is the entire good that a spiritual soul can desire here below because it provides great security....it is necessary to awaken and remind us that we have enemies...so that we do not go about mistaken and without self-knowledge, He makes the following petitions so necessary for all as long as we live in this exile: "And lead us not, Lord, into temptation; but deliver us from evil." (W 37 5)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 38)



☞ *...those who reach perfection do not ask the Lord to free them from trials or temptations or persecutions or struggles...a great and certain effect of the contemplation and the favors His Majesty gives and of the Lords' Spirit ...these persons desire, ask for, and love trials... (W 38 1)*

☞ *...the soldiers of Christ, those who experience contemplation and engage in prayer, are eager to fight... the enemy has no power against the strength the Lord gives...they always come out victors with much gain...they fear...the angels of light who come disguised. Not until they have done much harm to the soul do they allow themselves to be recognized...let us ask and often beg the Lord in the Our Father to free us and not let us walk into temptation, so that they will not draw us into error or hide the light and truth from us... (W 38 2)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 38)



- ❧ *Consider...the many ways these enemies can cause harm. Don't think they do so only by making us suppose that the delights and consolations they can feign in us are from God...this seems ...the least harm...it could be by this means that they make one advance more quickly...being fed on that delight, a person will spend more hours in prayer...he doesn't stop thanking God...he feels greater obligation to serve Him...dispose himself so that God will grant him more. (W38 3)*
- ❧ *Strive always...for humility and to see that you are unworthy of these favors; do not seek them...the devil loses many souls who strive for this humility...the Lord draws good from evil...His Majesty looks at our intention...to please and serve Him and remain with Him in prayer... the Lord is faithful...be on one's guard against...a break in humility... or in some vainglory ...beseech the Lord to free you from this...His Majesty will not allow you to be favored ...by anyone other than Himself. (W38 4)*



# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 38)



- ☞ *...The way the devil can do a great deal of harm, without our realizing it, is to make us believe we have virtues when we do not...a pestilence...it seems that we are serving and giving... so the Lord is obliged to pay...little by little this notion does great harm...it weakens humility...we grow careless about acquiring that virtue we think we have...what is the remedy?...prayer and supplication to the Eternal Father not to let us enter into temptation. (W 38 5)*
- ☞ *...If it seems the Lord has already given us virtue, ...and it has been received ...He can take it away, as in fact often happens...sometimes I think I am very detached...at another times I will find myself so attached and perhaps to the thing that the day before I would have made fun of, that I almost don't know myself...(W 38 6)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 38)



☞ ...since this is true, who will be able to say of himself that he is virtuous or rich?...at the very moment...that there is a need for virtue one finds oneself poor...let us always think we are poor...and not go into debt when we do not have the means...to repay...if others in thinking we are good, bestow favors and honor on us...which is the borrowing...we both will have been fooled...if we serve with humility, the Lord...will succor us...but if this poverty of spirit is not genuinely present at every step...the Lord will abandon us...one of His greatest favors... He does it so that we might be humble and understand in truth that we have nothing we haven't received. (W 38 6)

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 38)



- ☞ *...the devil makes us think we have a virtue...we are very satisfied...I advise you not to pay any attention to the virtue...when you suffer often, praise God that He is beginning to teach you a virtue and strive to endure, for the suffering is a sign that ... He wants you to pay for the virtue...He gives it to you...you do not possess it ...it is on deposit...(W 38 8)*
- ☞ *The devil brings about another temptation. We think we are very poor in spirit...we say we don't desire or care about anything...then an occasion arises to receive a gift...our poverty of spirit is completed ruined.....Great is the importance of always being careful to understand this temptation...when the Lord truly gives one of these solid virtues, it seems it carries all the others in its wake...I warn you...though it seems you possess it...fear lest you be mistaken. The truly humble person always walks in doubt about his own virtues, and usually those he sees in his neighbors seem more certain and valuable. (W 38 9)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 39)



*... be on your guard ...against ... humility given by the devil ...great disquiet is felt about the gravity of our sins. This disturbance can afflict..to the point of giving up receiving Communion and practicing private prayer. ...one feels unworthy...when such persons approach the Blessed Sacrament, the time they used to spend in receiving favors is now spent in wondering if they are well prepared. The situation gets so bad that the souls thinks God has abandoned it...it almost doubts His mercy. ...it feels such distrust of itself that it folds its arms and remains idle; what is good in others seems evil...within its own self. (W 39 1)*

*...sometimes it will be through humility and virtue that you hold yourselves to be wretched...other times it will be a gross temptation...humility does not disturb or disquiet or agitate...it comes with peace, delight and calm. Even though a person...seeing himself so wretched understands that he merits to be in hell...if the humility is genuine it comes with a sweetness...a satisfaction that he wouldn't want to be without. The pain of genuine humility doesn't agitate...the soul... it expands it and enables it to serve God more...The devil's aim is to make us think we are humble...and if possible, make us lose confidence in God. (W 39 2)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 39)



- ☞ *...in this condition...turn your thoughts to the mercy of God, how He loves us and suffered for us...if undergoing a temptation...it will be enough if you recognize that it is a temptation...he tempts us in regard to excessive penances...if when told to stop you do not...you are clearly undergoing a temptation...strive to obey...since the greatest perfection lies in obedience. (W 39 3) The devil sets up another dangerous temptation: self assurance...that we will not return to our past faults and worldly pleasures...in beginners it is very dangerous...since the devil sees that he is dealing with a soul that can do him harm and bring profit to others, he uses all his power...(W 39 4)*
- ☞ *Strive, without hiding anything, to discuss these favors and consolations with someone who will enlighten you...and however sublime the contemplation, let your prayer always begin and end with self-knowledge...if the favor is from God...you will follow the advice most of the time because God's favor brings humility...and always leaves greater light that we may understand the little that we are...all that we say...cannot give us complete security. (W 39 5)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 39)



- ☞ *Eternal Father, what can we do but have recourse to You and pray that these enemies not lead us into temptation?...we always need to pray to you for a remedy. Instruct us, Lord, so that we may understand ourselves and be secure. You already know that few take this path; but if they have to travel it with so many fears, many fewer will take it...(W 39 6)*
- ☞ *...It's as though the devil tempts only those who take the path of prayer... everyone is more surprised by a mistake of one ... nearing perfection than by the mistakes and sins of a hundred thousand others...among those who recite the Our Father as was explained...so very few are deceived by the devil that ...their mistake causes surprise...it is something very common among mortals...they pass over easily what they continually see and wonder about what seldom or most never happens...the devil himself causes them to be surprised; it is to his advantage: he loses many souls through one who reaches perfection...souls who practice prayer walk so much more securely than those who take another road...prayer is a safe road; you will be more quickly freed from temptation when close to the Lord... Beseech Him ...to deliver you from evil...in the Our Father..(W 39 7)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 40)



- ☞ *...Good Master, teach us to live without any sudden assault in so dangerous a war...His Majesty gave us love and fear. Love will quicken our steps: fear will make us watch our steps to avoid falling... on this way there are many stumbling blocks...with fear we will be secure against being deceived. (W 40 1)... how can you tell if you have these two great virtues? ...you cannot be very certain ... if we possess love , we are certainly in the state of grace ... not many possess them perfectly; Love and fear of God: what more could you ask for!...like two fortified castles from which one can wage war on the world and the devils. (W 40 2)*
- ☞ *...Those who truly love God, love every good...they always join, favor and defend good people...do you think it is possible for a person who really loves God to love vanities?...he cannot...because he seeks only to please the Beloved...they dedicate their lives to learning how they might please Him more... hide itself? ... if it is genuine love...this is impossible...Love has this characteristic: it can be greater or lesser in degree... make itself known according to its intensity....but where there is love of God...it is always recognized. (W 40 3)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 40)



- ☞ *...the deception and illusions the devil brings on contemplatives are not few. With contemplatives there is always much love, or they wouldn't be contemplatives; ...their love is clearly recognized...it is a great fire...if this splendor is not present, they should walk with serious misgivings...have many reasons for fear...strive to understand ...pray, walk with humility, and beseech the Lord not to lead them into temptation...if this sign isn't present...we may walk into temptation...if one proceeds with humility, strives to know the truth, is subject to a confessor, and communicates with him openly and truthfully...the things...the devil intends to cause death will cause life. (W 40 4)*
- ☞ *...since he can't win us over, he can ...try and make us lose something if you feel this love of God ...and the fear...rejoice and be at peace...to disturb your soul so that you will not enjoy these wonderful blessings the devil will set a thousand false fears . (W 40 5)*



# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 40)



- ❧ *...do you think it matters little to the devil to set up these fears?...it matters a great deal...he causes two kinds of harm. First, those...struck with a terror of approaching prayer...think they will be deceived. Second, ...if it were not for these fears many more would come closer to God...(VV 40 6)*
- ❧ *...when you see... someone to whom the Lord gives favors, praise the Lord...but don't think she is...safe...help... with more prayer. No one can be safe...in the dangers of this tempestuous sea...You will not fail to recognize this love...could one conceal a love ... so strong and just that it always increases....its foundation is made from the cement of being repaid by another love? This other love can no longer be doubted since it was shown...with so many sufferings and trials... that we might have no doubt. (VV 40 7)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 40)



☞ *May it please His Majesty to give us His love before He takes us out of this life...it will be a great thing at the hour of death to see that we are going to be judged by the One who we have loved above all things. We shall be able to proceed securely with the judgment concerning our debts...the gain there is in this love...the loss in not having it. Such a loss puts us in the hands of the enemy... What will become of the poor soul...how mangled as it goes to hell...what a wretched inn! It is hard for a self-indulgent person...the ones who will be more likely to go there...to spend one night in a bad inn...what...will that sad soul feel at being in this kind of inn forever, without end?...Let us not desire delights,...we are well-off here, the bad inn lasts for only a night. Let us praise God...force ourselves to do penance in this life.. How sweet will be the death of one who has done penance for all his sins,...from here below you can begin to enjoy glory! You will find no fear within...but complete peace.*  
(W 40 9)

☞ *As long as we have not reached this state...beseech God that if ...we are to receive sufferings, they will be received here below...with the hope of being freed from them, we can bear them here willingly... not lose His friendship and grace. Let us beseech Him to give us His grace in this life so we will not walk unaware into temptation. (W 40 10)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 41)



- ☞ *...Let me not leave this life, O my Lord, until I no longer desire anything in it; neither let me know any love outside of You...your very love for the world will afterward punish you... this is what wears you down...let us deal with the fear of God. This trait is easily recognized...in the beginning it is not so developed...unless in some persons to whom...the Lord grants great favors, for in a short time He makes them rich in virtue. ...in the beginning one starts to turn away from sin...its occasions and from bad companions...once the soul has reached contemplation...the fear of God, as with love, ...becomes very manifest...you may watch these persons ...you will not see them become careless...the Lord keeps them ...they will not advertently commit a venial sin; mortal sin they fear like fire... Let us beseech God always that the temptation may not be so strong as to make us offend Him, that its strength might not outweigh the fortitude He gives us to conquer it...fear is what is important...it will help us.(W 41 1)*
- ☞ *...in the end all must serve the Lord despite themselves...those in hell do so by force, whereas we do so willingly...if we please the Lord, those in hell will be kept bound; they will not do anything that may be harmful to us...such as draw us into temptation... or set secret snares for us. (W 41 2)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 41)



- ☞ *Be careful...until ...you are strongly determined not to offend the Lord, that you would lose a thousand lives rather than commit a mortal sin, and that you are most careful not to commit venial sins...But from any very deliberate sin...may God deliver us....there is nothing small if it goes against His immense Majesty.....a sin is very deliberate when...one says: "Lord, although this grieves You, I will do it...I want to follow my whim...more than Your will." ...it's serious, very serious...never become careless in this regard... (W41 3)*
- ☞ *...if you want to gain the fear of the Lord...understand the seriousness of an offense against God ...reflect on this frequently ...it is worth our life and much more to have this virtue rooted in our souls. ...until you have it...turn from every occasion... from any companion who does not help you come closer to God. ...take great care ....to bend our will...that our speech be edifying...flee those places where conversations are not of God. (W41 4)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 41)



- It's ... necessary that this fear be deeply impressed within the soul. ...it is easy to obtain if there is true love... a great inner determination not to commit an offense against God for any created thing...the soul may sometimes fall...we are weak ... we have no reason to trust ourselves...our confidence must be placed in God...the Lord will protect us..the habit acquired will...be a help against offending Him. The need instead will be....a holy freedom, conversing with those who are good...somewhat worldly...who , before you possessed this authentic fear of God, were... a means of killing the soul, will afterward often be a help to your loving and praising God more because He has freed you...from ...a glaring danger. If previously you played a part...in their weaknesses, ...now your mere presence ..contributes to their restraint...(W 41 4)
- ...often a servant of God, without uttering a word, prevents things from being said against God...there is always some restraint...not to offend an absent person in the presence of someone known to be his friend. So it is with a servant of God: his friendship with God wins him respect...others avoid...offending God in his presence...do not be tense...such a feeling (constrained) will be very harmful to everything good...it will not bring many souls to God, because they will see so much ...tenseness. (W 41 5)

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 41)



- ☞ *... constraint is frightening and oppressive to others, ...they flee from following the road that you are taking...though they know ...it is the more virtuous path. (W 41 5)*
  
- ☞ *Another harm...is judging others. There are those who advance with greater holiness...and in order to be of benefit to their neighbor, speak with him...since they do not journey by your path they at once seem to you to be imperfect. If they have a holy joy, it will seem to be dissipation...This constraint (judging others) is a dangerous thing; it means going about in a continual temptation...it bears ill effects; it is detrimental to your neighbor. To think that if all do not proceed as you do, in this constrained way, they are not proceeding well, is extremely wrong. (W 41 6)*
  
- ☞ *...strive ...to be affable and understanding...that everyone you talk to will love your conversation and desire your manner of living and acting, and not be frightened and intimidated by virtue...the holier they are the more sociable they are...if conversations do not go as you would like them to, never turn away if you want to help...and be loved...we must strive earnestly, to be affable, agreeable, and pleasing to persons with whom we deal (W 41 7)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Deliverance from Deception and Illusions* (chs. 41)



- ☞ *...strive to think rightly about God...He doesn't look at trifles...don't lose your courage or allow your soul to be constrained...many blessings could be lost. Have the right intention, a resolute will...not to offend God...Don't let your soul withdraw into a corner...instead of obtaining sanctity you will obtain many imperfections...you will not be of as much benefit to yourself or to others...(W 41 8)*
- ☞ *...with these two virtues...love and fear of God...you can advance on this road calmly and quietly, but not carelessly since fear must always take the lead. As long as we live, we will never have complete security; that would be a great danger. ...this is what our Teacher understood when ...He spoke these words to His Father...(W41 9)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Desires for Eternal Life* (chs. 42)



- ☞ *...It seems ...Jesus was right to include Himself in this petition, for we already see how tired He was of this life when he said...'I have greatly desired to eat his supper with you.' ...Nowadays people don't tire of living ...we don't suffer in life as much evil ... as many trials as His Majesty suffered, nor such poverty...what a good reason He had to beseech The Father to free Him...and bring Him to rest forever in the Father's kingdom... (W 42 1)*
- ☞ *...Amen...all things come to an end, the Lord asks ...that we be freed from all evil forever. It is useless ...to think ...we can be free of many temptations ...imperfections...sins...whoever thinks he is without sin deceives himself... if we turn to bodily ailments and hardships...it is not good that we ask to be without them...let's understand what we are asking for...it seems impossible to say 'from all evil' ...it behooves us to ask the Lord for a remedy...I do not find this remedy while living...so I ask the Lord to deliver me from all evil forever...(W 42 2)*



# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Desires for Eternal Life* (chs. 42)



- ☞ *...deliver me from ...so...many things that tire and weary me...I beseech the Lord to deliver me from all evil forever since I do not make up for what I owe....perhaps each day I become more indebted... what is unendurable, Lord, is not to know for certain that I love You ... that my desires are acceptable before You. O My Lord ...deliver me now from all evil and be pleased to bring me to the place where all blessings are. What do they still hope for here, those to whom You have given knowledge of what the world is ...who have a living faith in what the Eternal Farther has kept for them? (W 42 2)*
- ☞ *To ask for these blessings with ...desire...determination is a clear sign for contemplatives that the favors they receive in prayer are from God...those who have a share in the consolations of God desire to be...where they will enjoy them more than in mere sips, ...they do not want to remain ...where there are ...any obstacles to the enjoyment of so much good...where the Sun of justice does not set. ...They could not live with any contentment if they have ...already begun to enjoy the Lord's Kingdom here below....such a person must ...live for the the will of his King. (W 42 3)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Desires for Eternal Life* (chs. 42)



- ❧ *...how different this life would have to be ...to not desire death! How our will deviates ...from...the will of God. He wants us to love truth... desire the eternal...the sublime...only what is secure...Everything is a mockery...except beseeching God to ...draw us away from every evil. ...let us force ourselves to make the request. What does it cost us to ask for a great deal?...to be right, let us leave the giving to His will since we have ...given Him our own. His name be forever hallowed in heaven and on earth, and may His will be always done in me. Amen*
- ❧ *...you see friends, what it means to pray vocally with perfection...be aware of ... who you are asking, who it is that is asking, and what your are asking for...what you do not understand about prayer, beseech the Lord to teach you...no one can take vocal prayer from you or make you recite the Our Father hastily ...without understanding it...(W 42 4)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Desires for Eternal Life* (chs. 42)



- ❧ *...the Lord gave me understanding of the great deal we ask for when reciting this evangelical prayer...it never entered my mind that this prayer contained so many deep secrets; for now you have seen the entire spiritual way contained in it, from the beginning stages until God engulfs the soul and gives it to drink abundantly from the fount of living water, which He said was to be found at the end of the way...*
- ❧ *...it seems the Lord has desired to give us understanding of the great consolation contained in this prayer. It is highly beneficial to persons who don't know how to read. If they understand this prayer, they can draw a lot of doctrine from it and find consolation...this book cannot be taken away for it comes from the mouth of Truth itself, who cannot err...strive to learn from so excellent a Master the humility with which He prays...(W 42 5)*

# Commentary on the Our Father

## *Desires for Eternal Life* (chs. 42)



☞ *...His Majesty...taught me what I have said. Be grateful to Him....The Lord has taught you and me the path that I have described in the book (Life)...how one reaches this fount of living water, what the soul feels there, how God satisfies it, takes away thirst for earthly things, and makes it grow in the things pertaining to the service of God. Those who have reached this fount will find that book (Life) very beneficial and receive much light from it. You may get it from Father Domingo Banez....my confessor and the one to whom I'll give this book. (W 42 6)*

☞ *If he ...gives it to you, I will be consoled that you are consoled. If...no one may see it, you can accept my good will...I have obeyed your command. I consider myself well paid ...May the Lord be blessed and praised: from Him comes every good we speak of, think about and do. Amen.*