

# A NATURE PRAYER METHOD

## TAKING DICTATION FROM NATURE

*Taken from the book "You Can Pray" of P. Ribes, s.j.*

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### Note:

*Prayers of nature quite often trigger deep and delicate feelings in those who practice them. They may easily open the door for people into a more contemplative way of praying.*

*The outcome of any Nature Prayer will likely be:*

- ✓ *Deep peace, joy and delicacy of feelings.*
- ✓ *A growth in love for nature.*
- ✓ *An awareness that prayer does not consist only in thinking, but even more, in affections and feelings.*
- ✓ *A sense of "oneness" and "wholeness" with God's creation.*
- ✓ *The prayer nature method here below, can be used both for personal prayer, as well as for directing prayer groups*

### INTRODUCTION

- This exercise is basically a fantasy. We imagine that nature is an old and experienced teacher. We sit at her feet and take dictation from her.
- We ask her to teach us some important lessons in order to lead good lives, for instance; What does she – **nature** - has to teach us about **God, about us, about others, about Working, Generosity, Friendship, Peace, Joy, Patience, Beauty, Endurance, Sacrifice, Trust, Honesty, Giving, Loving, etc.**
- Ideally, this exercise should be done in a garden, in a park, or in a natural setting. However, if this is not possible, you may do it in a quiet place, looking at beautiful pictures of nature, or through fantasy imagining that we are in beautiful natural surroundings.

### PROCEDURE:

- Before you begin your prayer, decide the length of time you intend spending in the exercise. (Say 20 to 30 minutes for a start) You may increase its length later on.
- Do not be in a hurry. Keep you watch out of sight. No rush, no haste!
- Quiet down. Relaxation and/or awareness exercises may help.
- Strive to create in you a listening attitude; an openness to God and to nature.
- Invoke the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

### **Fantasy:**

- Take some writing materials with you`
- Alone by yourself and in silence, spend time looking at the birds, the trees, the flowers, the skies, the stones, the sea, the mountains, etc.
- Then, quietly, sit down, and imagine that nature being an old and kind teacher, out of her great wisdom and long experience speaks to you.
- Pointing to you the beauty of nature and the good qualities of the trees, the flowers, the bees, the birds, the sun, the moon, the water, etc she will teach you lots of lessons about God, about friendship, about honesty, beauty, goodness, patience, etc (*For instance, trees teach you.... bees teach you... etc.*)
- **Open your ears and listen to her attentively.**
- Keep writing, as if by dictation, the lessons your teacher is giving you .

### **Personal Prayer.**

- Keep reading in a reflective and prayerful way what you wrote.
- After a while, thank God for what nature – your teacher – taught you.
- Next, ask Him to help you to practice the good lessons nature has taught you.
- Write a prayer to God that expresses what you learned today; as well as the feelings and good desires you experienced.
- Do not destroy what you wrote. It may help you very much later on.

### **Closure:**

- Close your prayer by reciting 'The Our Father' and 'Glory Be'.
- End by reading or singing an appropriate Hymn about God's wonderful creation.