

A NATURE PRAYER METHOD

PRAISING AND THANKING GOD ON BEHALF OF NATURE

*Taken from the book "You Can Pray" of P. Ribes, s.j.
published by the Gujarat Sahitya Prakash.*

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 praying with nature 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*
- ✓ **For this exercise a beautiful and quiet natural setting is a must.**

Introductory Thoughts

- Except for man, all God's creatures are not conscious of themselves.
- They cannot know God, thank Him and praise Him.
- They are not able to perceive their beauty and much less to discover their Maker.
- Only we, human beings, because of our intelligence, can perceive, understand, love, thank and praise God.
- **In this exercise we intend to immerse ourselves in nature, feel one with it, and praise and thank God on behalf of all created things.**

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 the 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.

Nature Walk

- Go out alone, walk around and look at nature. Keep staring at God's creation and at all his wonderful creatures.

- Of all the things you see, choose the one that attracts you most: Keep staring at it...Feel one with it...

A river?	The breeze?	A bird?	A pond?
A dog?	The sun?	A flower?	A Stone?
A fish?	A tree?	A cloud?	Etc.

Fantasy and Prayer.

- Imagine that all of a sudden you become the object that attracts your attention most: the sun, a river, a tree, a fish, a flower, or anything else. .
- Look at yourself...How beautiful you are... What do you feel... Think of what God has given you... What you are able to do, etc.
- Vocally thank and praise God - as that thing would – was it able to.
- Now in writing, in a prayerful form, express its feelings. Its longings. Its hopes, etc.
- When you are off with that item of nature, choose yet another one, and go over again through the same process of fantasizing, feeling, praying, thanking and praising God as that thing would (*Do not destroy what you wrote. Later on you price it*)

Closure:

- End by reciting “The Our Father’ and ‘The Glory Be”
- Recite or better sing a Hymn of Thanksgiving.