



# Archdiocesan Program

## WHY CATHOLIC?

STRENGTHENING FAITH ... MAKING DISCIPLES



## CHRISTIAN PRAYER

### *CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER*

#### **Biblical Reflection: Song of Songs 2:8-17**

... Contemplative prayer seeks him “whom my soul loves.” It is Jesus, and in him, the Father. We seek him, because to desire him is always the beginning of love, and we seek him in that pure faith which causes us to be born of him and to live in him. In this inner prayer we can still meditate, but our attention is fixed on the Lord himself. (CCC 2709)



Contemplative prayer is the prayer of the child of God, of the forgiven sinner who agrees to welcome the love by which he is loved and who wants to respond to it by loving even more (cf. Lk 7:36-50). But he knows that the love he is returning is poured out by the Spirit in his heart, for everything is grace from God. Contemplative prayer is the poor and humble surrender to the loving will of the Father in ever deeper union with his beloved Son. (CCC 2712)

Contemplative prayer is silence... Words in this kind of prayer are not speeches; they are like kindling that feeds the fire of love. In this silence, unbearable to the “outer” man, the Father speaks to us his incarnate Word, who suffered, died, and rose; in this silence the Spirit of adoption enables us to share in the prayer of Jesus. (CCC 2717)

Contemplative prayer is a union with the prayer of Christ insofar as it makes us participate in his mystery... (CCC 2718)

Contemplative prayer is a communion of love bearing Life for the multitude, to the extent that it consents to abide in the night of faith. The Paschal night of the Resurrection passes through the night of the agony and the tomb – the three intense moments of the Hour of Jesus which his Spirit (and not “the flesh [which] is weak”) brings to life in prayer. We must be willing to “keep watch with [him] one hour.” (CCC 2719)

St. Teresa of Jesus explain the contemplative prayer as follows: “*Contemplative prayer [oración mental] in my opinion is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us.*” (CCC 2709)

#### **Questions for discussion:**

- **Have you ever had the experience where, when in front of a person you loved, a beautiful view, a song, some phrases you read or heard, you were left speechless, only with the emotions and the love? Please share your memories.**
- **What could you do to relieve that same experience directly with God?**
- **What benefits would you be able to receive from the contemplative prayer?**
- **Today we are receiving an invitation to enter decidedly in the area of contemplative prayer. Do you accept this invitation?**

**Further reading:** Catechism of the Catholic Church, numbers 2709-2719; and 2724