



Pearls from Day 2: *What is Mental Prayer and Why is it Indispensable?*

God desires happiness (holiness) for us in this life and Heaven in the next.

Prayer is God's primary way for guiding us through this life.

Prayer can be distinguished as *vocal prayer* and *mental prayer*. Vocal prayer is just that – spoken prayer – and ranges from simple vocal prayers like grace before meals to the communal vocal prayers that are part praise and worship services and the Sacrifice of the Mass.

What is Mental Prayer?

Mental prayer is both prayer of the mind and in the silence of our hearts.

Mental prayer has the benefit of being ordered to meditating on God and talking with God. It is how we come to know Him and listen to Him.

St. Teresa of Avila describes it thus: “Mental prayer in my opinion is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us.”

Why is Mental Prayer Indispensable?

Our faith, our spiritual life, is about relationship with God.

Loving relationships require that we spend time with the other person. We know this from our human relationships.

Mental prayer is the primary way that we spend “quality time” with God because mental prayer facilitates pondering Him and talking with Him – especially, listening to Him.

No other spiritual practices can provide for this growth in relationship in place of mental prayer.

Jesus communicates this indispensability by His teaching (such as pointing out that Mary *chose the better part* over Martha) and example (by regularly going off to spend time alone in prayer with the Father).