

A NATURE PRAYER METHOD

Thanking God for 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 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*

Preparation.

- A natural setting would be very useful for this prayer exercise; however, if not available, use your fantasy.
- This exercise may lead us realize how much God gives Himself to us in and through nature.
- 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 of time in future exercises.
- Do not be in a hurry. Keep you watch out of sight. No rush, no haste!

Procedure:

- Quiet down. Relaxation and/or awareness exercises may help.
- Invoke the assistance of the Holy Spirit.
- Strive to create within you a listening attitude; an openness to God and nature.

Reflect and Write

- Move around some natural surroundings; if not possible, use your fantasy. Imagine you are doing so.
- Write the names of some items of nature that are necessary to sustain our very life; e.g. water, the sun, animals, fruits, seeds, stones, breeze, the air, etc

- How God, so to say, continuously works in nature through all those things to satisfy our wants and needs.
- Ponder on each of them. After a while write down the name of those items along with the blessings and blessings God gives us through them.

Thanking God for the gift of nature

- Once you finish writing the blessings God gives you through all those things of nature, write a thanksgiving prayer to God for them and his blessings.
- All those items and the favors coming to us though they are signs of God's love and care for us!
- After writing your prayer, slowly and prayerfully read it over and over again.

Pray in Silence.

- Pause for a while. Then, in silence, **feel how much God loves you** and cares for you. Everything around in nature, speaks to you of God's love and concern.
 - The sun is God warming you...
 - The breeze is God caressing you...
 - The ground, on which you stand, is God holding you in his protecting hands.
 - The air you breathe is God sustaining your life.
 - The water you drink is God quenching your thirst.
 - The fruits you eat are God feeding you
 - Etc
- Keep thinking of so many other things God does for you through nature.....
- After a while, express your feelings of wonder, gratitude and love towards God.

Litany of Thanksgiving

- Write a thanksgiving prayer in litany form:
 - I thank you Lord for the **sun**, because.....
 - I thank you Lord for the **birds**, because...
 - I thank you God, for the **water**, because.....
 - I thank you God, for the all the **fruits**, because...
 - I thank you God, for the **rain**, because...
 - *Keep adding any other items of your choice.*
- Next, read your litany in a prayerful way several times over.

Closing:

- Recite the 'Our Father' and 'The Glory Be.'
- End with a hymn of Thanksgiving and Praise.