



QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING & REFLECTION

Growing in Prayer (pp. 281 – 304)

1. Why, even when we're distracted in prayer, can our efforts to pray still bear fruit?
2. What is "acquired recollection"? How, specifically, can it be achieved?
3. How does acquired recollection differ from "infused recollection"? List some of the characteristics that accompany infused recollection.
4. According to St. Teresa and St. Bernard, what are some of the steps we can take to make ourselves more disposed to receiving the gift of infused recollection or contemplation?
5. Define contemplation.
6. What benefits did St. Bernard say that he reaped from his "visits" with the Lord?
7. How, according to St. Teresa, can a soul know if it has experienced the prayer of union?

8. What does God make possible through the experience of union in prayer?

9. How does St. Teresa understand the obstacles we encounter on our journey to God?

10. When you're distracted or uninterested in praying, do you still continue to pray? Why or why not? If at times you have persisted, what benefits have come from doing so?

11. Reflect upon the levels of prayer outlines in this chapter. Which have you experienced? How has God used those experiences to draw you closer to him?

12. The depth of our prayer life changes and varies, week to week, year to year. Under what circumstances have you found your prayer life has flourished? What can cause it to suffer?

13. Why do you pray? What are you most often seeking when you go to God in prayer? Do you seek consolations or the granting of favors? If so, what are the dangers of such motivation?

14. How could taking St. Therese of Lisieux's "shortcut" to God deepen your experience of prayer?