



Candidacy Formation

Meeting Six

The Four Pillars of Dominican Life: Prayer, Part III

Saint: Bl. Henry Suso and St. Catherine of Siena

Objectives

- State that prayer in all stages is always the initiative of God the Holy Spirit, a gift of grace.
- Recognize that fidelity to mental prayer helps one to grow in love of God, love of neighbor, and love of the Church.
- Recognize the various categories that spiritual writers use to describe ways and stages of prayer:
 - Purgative, illuminative, unitive
 - Meditation, affective prayer, contemplation
 - Active prayer to passive prayer

Reading List

Philippe, Jacques *Time for God*. New York, NY: Scepter Publishers, 1992.

- Ch 1, 2, and 3 (pp 7-81)

Bl. Henry Suso

- [PDFLINK](#) | Also linked below module on Southern Province Formation Website

St. Catherine of Siena

- [PDFLINK](#) | Also linked below module on Southern Province Formation Website



Southern Dominican Laity
PROVINCE OF ST. MARTIN DE PORRES
laydomsouth.org

Updated September 2025

Questions

Time for God

1. What does it mean that prayer is “not the result of a technique, but a gift we receive”? (Ch 1 pp 9-10)
2. Father Philippe speaks about the necessary conditions for receiving God’s Gift of prayer as “certain inner attitudes and certain dispositions of the heart”. Why does he stress that faith is the most important inner attitude? (Ch 1 p 14)
3. There are other inner attitudes that are mentioned in the summary of Chapter 1 (p 42) and are also discussed throughout the chapter. Can you take one (or all of them) and describe why it (they) are so important in persevering in mental prayer?
 - a. Trusting abandonment in God’s hands (p 40)
 - b. Humility (p 20)
 - c. Poverty of heart (p 20)
 - d. Spiritual childhood or purity of intention/peaceful trust (pp 18 and 41)
4. Father Philippe describes “four great principles” that should guide us through mental prayer. These are listed in his summary of Chapter 2 (p65) and throughout the chapter. Explain the meaning of each:
 - a. God’s action (pp 50-52)
 - b. Primacy of love (pp53-57)
 - c. Humanity of Jesus as an instrument of Communion with God (pp 57-61)
 - d. God’s dwelling within our hearts (pp 62-65)
5. How does God’s dwelling within our hearts relate to what St. Catherine of Siena called, “the inner cell”? (Ch 2 p 64)
6. Define active prayer and passive prayer. (Ch 2 p 48 and Ch 3 pp 67-71) Describe what is meant in the shift from active prayer to passive prayer. (Ch 3 pp 67-71)
7. Explain the states of prayer in meditation and contemplation. Describe the movement from the stage of meditation to the stage of contemplation. (Ch 3 p 68)
8. What are some forms of a heart wounded by love? (Ch 3 p 73)
9. Explain how mental prayer and love of the Church go hand in hand. (Ch. 3 pp 76-81)
10. How does fidelity to mental prayer help one grow in each of these?
 - a. Love of God (pp 38-39)
 - b. Love of neighbor (p 15)
 - c. Love of the Church (pp 76-81)

BI. Henry Suso and St. Catherine of Siena

1. Describe how Blessed Henry Suso and St. Catherine of Siena exemplified their fidelity to mental prayer through Love of God, Love of neighbor, and Love of the Church.