

# **THE PRACTICE OF MENTAL PRAYER**

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The Practice of Mental Prayer by René de Maumigny

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**RENÉ DE MAUMIGNY**

**THE PRACTICE OF  
MENTAL PRAYER**



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# THE PRACTICE OF MENTAL PRAYER

BY  
FATHER RENÉ DE MAUMIGNY  
*of the Society of Jesus*

SECOND TREATISE  
**Extraordinary Prayer**

*Translated from the Fourth Edition with the Author's  
corrections and additions.*

TRANSLATION REVISED BY  
FATHER ELDER MULLAN, S.J.

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## PREFACE

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FOR some years, cases regarding extraordinary prayer have often been laid before me and I have thought Christian charity entailed upon me the duty of giving my humble opinion, in spite of the difficulty of the subject. But in these lofty paths a single answer is generally not enough, and I have been asked to supplement these individual counsels by a treatise on infused Contemplation. I will say nothing more as to the origin of this work, because this is enough to indicate its spirit. It is not a theological, but a practical treatise that I have in mind, and I have avoided as far as possible anything which might give rise to controversy.

The treatise is divided into five parts.

Part I speaks of the nature and degrees of Contemplation, but only so far as to give the necessary ideas to directors for the guidance of souls. I have inserted lengthy cita-

tions from the writings of the Saints. Doubtless a few lines from an author would sometimes have been enough to prove the point at issue, yet I have believed it very useful to quote several pages. These passages, indeed, in their all-heavenly beauty if quoted in part might have stirred hearts but little to the love of God; but reproduced in their entirety, they afford souls a spiritual food well calculated to sanctify them, as Holy Church says in the prayer for St. Teresa's feast.

Part 2 shows the great trials to which souls raised to Contemplation are sooner or later subjected. It is upon this point that I have been most often consulted and consequently I have been obliged to develop it rather at length. I hope these pages, written with bruised hearts rather than written books before my eyes, will bring some comfort to the afflicted souls who read them.

The subject of Part 3 is the virtues necessary to contemplative souls. This part is of supreme importance, since the greater number of souls who are raised to Contemplation and who make only indifferent progress in it, must attribute it to the absence of solid virtues.

Part 4 treats of supernatural visions and speech. Here illusion is easy and I have been obliged to dwell at length upon the discernment of spirits.

Lastly, the subject of Part 5 is the vocation to infused Contemplation. The importance of this question is obvious: in order to reach the goal, it is not enough to run, but the running must be along the path leading to the goal.

The sources from which I have drawn are Holy Writ, the lives and writings of the Saints, and the experience gained from the numerous cases laid before me. I have avoided citing particular instances of the wonderful operation of the Holy Ghost in souls, for on this point discretion is of the highest importance.

May this humble work, composed for the spiritual good of the generous souls who have begged me for it, teach them how, having received much from God, they may render Him much in return.

I dedicate these pages to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the blessed Source of all grace, and I humbly beg Him so to vivify them that they may produce abundant fruits of sanctity.



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