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## **“Prayer ought to take root and grow in the soul”**

True prayer which absorbs the whole individual benefits not so much from the solitude of the desert as from interior recollection. (Furrow, 460)

July 6

The path that leads to holiness is the path of prayer; and prayer ought to take root and grow in the soul little by little, like the tiny seed which later

develops into a tree with many branches.

We start with vocal prayers which many of us have been saying since we were children. They are made up of simple, ardent phrases addressed to God and to his Mother, who is our Mother as well. I still renew, morning and evening, and not just occasionally but habitually, the offering I learned from my parents: 'O my Lady, my Mother! I offer myself entirely to you, and in proof of my filial love, I consecrate to you this day my eyes, my ears, my tongue, my heart...' Is this not, in some way, a beginning of contemplation, an evident expression of trusting self-abandonment? What do lovers say when they meet? How do they behave? They sacrifice themselves and all their possessions for the person they love.

First one brief aspiration, then another, and another... till our fervour seems insufficient, because words are too poor...: then this gives way to intimacy with God, looking at God without needing rest or feeling tired. We begin to live as captives, as prisoners. And while we carry out as perfectly as we can (with all our mistakes and limitations) the tasks allotted to us by our situation and duties, our soul longs to escape. It is drawn towards God like iron drawn by a magnet. One begins to love Jesus, in a more effective way, with the sweet and gentle surprise of his encounter. (Friends of God, 295-296)

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