

*Method of St. Ignatius Loyola:*<sup>9</sup>

Preparation	{	acts of faith and reverence in the presence of God general preparatory prayer to ask the grace of making a good meditation composition of place (exercise of the imagination) petition for the special grace sought in the meditation
Body of the meditation	{	exercise of the memory to recall the material to be meditated upon exercise of the intellect by reflection and consideration of the material of the meditation and practical applications and conclusions to be drawn from it exercise of the will by arousing devout feelings and affections and by making practical, particular resolutions
Conclusion	{	colloquy or conversation with God vocal prayer, such as Our Father, Hail Mary, etc.

*Method of St. Francis de Sales:*

Before meditation: preparation of material; use of books recommended

Immediate preparation	{	exercise of the presence of God invocation to God representation of the mystery or composition of place
Body of meditation	{	considerations (exercise of the intellect) exercise of the will (affections, colloquy, resolutions)
Conclusion	{	act of thanksgiving act of offering act of petition
After meditation	{	spiritual reflections recollection return to duties of one's state immediate execution of resolutions

*Method of St. Alphonsus Liguori:*

Preparation	{	acts of faith and adoration acts of humility and contrition petition for light
Body of meditation	{	meditation or reflection (from a book) affections of faith, adoration and love renunciation, oblation, resignation, conformity to God's will prayer of petition practical resolutions
Conclusion	{	thanksgiving purpose to carry out resolutions request for God's help to be faithful petition for one's neighbors, souls in purgatory, etc.
After meditation	{	spiritual reflections practice of resolutions preservation of recollection

*Method of Saint Sulpice:*

Remote preparation: life of recollection and solid piety

Proximate preparation	{	select meditation material the night previous go to sleep thinking of the material make meditation as soon as possible after rising
Immediate preparation	{	place oneself in the presence of God make acts of humility and contrition invoke the Holy Ghost: <i>Veni Sancte Spiritus</i>
First point of meditation (adoration)	{	consider words or actions of Jesus or some saint render homages and veneration, thanksgiving, etc.
Second point of meditation (communion)	{	convince oneself of necessity of practicing virtue in question sorrow for the past, confusion for the present and desire for the future petition God for virtue in question
Third point of meditation (co-operation)	{	form a particular resolution renew resolution of particular examen
Conclusion	{	make thanksgiving to God ask pardon for faults committed petition blessings on one's resolutions and whole life make spiritual reflection for the rest of the day place all in Mary's hands: <i>Sub tuum praesidium</i>

*Which accompany the course on Mental Prayer given at  
St. Benedict Center in January and February of 2006.*

These outlines are copied from the book *The Theology of Christian Perfection* by the Dominican Friars, Father Antonio Royo Marin, O.P., and Father Jordan Aumann, O.P., pgs. 452-454.

In addition to these methods, there is the simple outline that will be followed in the class, one given by the Trappist Abbot, Dom Vitalis Lehodey, O.C.R., in his excellent book *The Ways of Mental Prayer*:

*Carmelite Method:*<sup>10</sup>

Introduction	{ preparation reading
Meditation	{ imaginative representation of material reflection or meditation properly so called affective colloquy or conversation with God
Conclusion	{ thanksgiving oblation petition

As is evident from the outlines given above, all meditation can be reduced ultimately to a basic framework which contains all the essential parts or very soul of meditation: consideration of some supernatural truth, application of that truth to one's life and personal needs, and the resolution to do something about it. These three steps, we believe, are absolutely essential for true meditation; the other details may be used or not according to the needs of individual souls.

1. Preparatory Acts.
2. Considerations.
3. Affections.
4. Petitions.
5. Resolutions.
6. Concluding Acts.

I should mention on this handout the fact that *the method itself is not the important thing*. Fathers Marin and Aumann's comments, under Carmelite Method's outline, distill the essentials. St. Teresa of Avila did not care what method her nuns used, only that they prayed. To some extent the method is like "training wheels" which help the beginner in mental prayer. There are some who find none of these methods useful. For them, the "alternatives to the methodical approach" may be useful or helpful. For many years, St. Teresa herself *needed* such alternatives. These will be discussed in class six of the eight-class series.

It would be best not to treat these methods as so many recipes to be "tried out." The beginner is advised to pick one and persevere. The Carmelite is the simplest of the outlined methods given by Fathers Marin and Aumann. The six-step method of Dom Lehodey is quite "user friendly." The Ignatian method was prescribed to instill a certain mental discipline that is very Jesuit, while the Sulpician method, made primarily for seminarians, was born out of the French school of piety represented by such authors as Father Olier and Father Tronson. Out of that school we get St. Louis Marie de Montfort.

— Brother André Marie, M.I.C.M.