

# Secrets of Prayer

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In the Introduction, the author exposes her *Sitz im Leben*, her situation in life, as a white Roman Catholic Sister raised in a Boston Irish community. What is your situation in life? If you are in a group, introduce yourselves to each other by way of sharing your *Sitz im Leben*. Where we stand does indeed influence what we see! Before you start, consider if you have a concept of the Divine. If you do, what is your concept? Are you more comfortable with the concept of a *personal* God or a God *without* attributes?
2. Chapter one speaks of a different type of *knowing*. Have you ever met anyone who had “the sight” like Eusebius, or have you ever experienced knowing something without the use of your five senses? If so, explain the situation and your experience. Do you trust this type of knowledge?
3. Chapter two introduces the concept of chakras. The existence of chakras suggests that there is a connection between our sexual energy and our prayer. Is this a familiar concept to you? How does your tradition (or your belief system) view sexuality?
4. Chapter three is a reflection on the use of our five senses. Which one of your senses appears to be dominant to you? Is there one sense that you would like to further develop on your spiritual journey? What are the symbols in your life that remind you of the Sacred? What brings you bliss?
5. Chapter four concentrates on the gift of diversity. Name a time in your life when you felt like the “other,” different from everyone else. How old were you? How has this memory affected your life? What did you learn from this experience?
6. What are the places that scare you? Do you see any value in moving out of your comfort zone? If so, how would it be possible to move out of your comfort zone to confront these places? If not, explore why you want to stay where you are.
7. Chapter five is filled with stories. What is one of your favorite stories? Why do you think this story remains in your consciousness? Share a story of your own.
8. Chapter six suggests that knowing *about* the Holy and *knowing* the Holy are different. Have you ever thought of yourself as a mystic, as one who experiences the Sacred in life? Is there a religious tradition that fascinates you? How could you go about becoming more familiar with this tradition?
9. As an overview, has your concept of the Divine changed in any way after reading *Secrets of Prayer*? Is there some action you do that makes you more reflective? Could this be called “prayer”? Thomas Berry speaks of the inherent principles of the universe as interiority, diversity, and communion. In what ways has this text helped you to see these principles as active in your own life?