CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

The Practice of the Presence of God

Brother Lawrence · *1692 · Public-domain English, translated from the French (translator not named in the catalogue)*

The first time I saw Brother Lawrence, was upon the 3d of August, 1666. He told the writer that GOD had done him a singular favor, in his conversion at the age of eighteen. In winter, seeing a tree stripped of its leaves, he received a high view of the Providence and Power of GOD, never since effaced from his soul. Project Gutenberg #13871, conversations and letters of Nicholas Herman of Lorraine. For grades 7–12. The translator is not named. Quote the conversations and letters, not only the preface.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read The Practice of the Presence of God as what it is—notes of conversations and letters of Brother Lawrence, who learned the providence of God from a tree in winter—rather than as a later devotional digest only?

"The first time I saw _Brother Lawrence_, was upon the 3d of August, 1666. He"
First Conversation

The hosted book, from Fleming H. Revell, is conversations and letters of Nicholas Herman of Lorraine, a lay brother among the barefooted Carmelites, called Brother Lawrence. The translator from the French is not named in the catalogue; do not invent one. The first conversation is dated the 3d of August, 1666. He told of his conversion at eighteen: in winter, seeing a tree stripped of its leaves, and considering that the leaves, flowers, and fruit would return, he received a high view of the Providence and Power of GOD, never since effaced from his soul. Teach that, for grades 7–12. The rest of the short book is further conversations and letters about practicing the presence of God in ordinary work. Quote them, not only the preface.

KEY CHARACTERS

Brother Lawrence (Nicholas Herman of Lorraine)
A lay brother who learned, from a winter tree, a high view of the providence and power of God, and practiced that presence in ordinary work

The visitor of 1666
Who records the first conversation, dated the 3d of August

GOD, whose providence he saw
In the renewal of a tree stripped of its leaves

HOW TO BEGIN THIS LITTLE BOOK

> *"The first time I saw _Brother Lawrence_, was upon the 3d of August, 1666. He"*
> First Conversation

> *"he received a high view of the Providence and Power of GOD, which has never since been effaced from his soul."*
> First Conversation

Grades 7–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01
The 3d of August, 1666
FIRST CONVERSATION

The first time the writer saw Brother Lawrence was upon the 3d of August, 1666. The book begins as a dated visit, not as a treatise.

- Keep "3d of August, 1666," as this file prints it, not "3rd."
- The speaker of this sentence is the visitor, not Lawrence himself.
- 7–12.
- Do not invent a translator's name.

> *"The first time I saw _Brother Lawrence_, was upon the 3d of August, 1666. He"*
> First Conversation

02
A Singular Favor at Eighteen
FIRST CONVERSATION

He told the writer that GOD had done him a singular favor, in his conversion at the age of eighteen. The practice begins in a conversion he will explain by a tree.

- Keep this file's "GOD" in capitals, if you quote this line.
- Eighteen is exact.
- 7–12.
- The later letters belong to the same life.

> *"He told me that GOD had done him a singular favor, in his conversion at the age of eighteen. That in"*
> First Conversation

03
A Tree Stripped of Its Leaves
FIRST CONVERSATION

In the winter, seeing a tree stripped of its leaves, and considering that within a little time the leaves would be renewed and after that the flowers and fruit appear, he received his first great lesson.

- The tree is the image; keep leaves, flowers, and fruit.
- A winter tree, not a later ornament only.
- 7–12.
- Teach providence from the thing he saw.

> *"That in the winter, seeing a tree stripped of its leaves, and considering that within a little time the leaves would be renewed and after that the flowers and fruit appear, he"*
> First Conversation

04
Providence and Power, Never Effaced
FIRST CONVERSATION

He received a high view of the Providence and Power of GOD, which has never since been effaced from his soul. That view set him loose from the world, and kindled in him a love for GOD.

- Keep "never since been effaced from his soul."
- The practice of the presence grows from this view.
- 7–12.
- Quote the conversations and letters, not only a later digest.

> *"he received a high view of the Providence and Power of GOD, which has never since been effaced from his soul."*
> First Conversation

05
Conversations and Letters, Translator Unnamed
THE EDITION

Project Gutenberg #13871 is a short book: notes of conversations and letters of Nicholas Herman of Lorraine (Brother Lawrence), translated from the French in a Fleming H. Revell printing. The catalogue does not name the translator; do not invent one. Quote the conversations and letters, not only the preface. For grades 7–12. The later letters teach ordinary work as a place to practice the presence of God.

- Name Nicholas Herman, and Brother Lawrence.
- Short, complete as hosted.
- Do not treat the preface as the book.
- A high view of providence, practiced in common labor.

> *"The first time I saw _Brother Lawrence_, was upon the 3d of August, 1666. He"*
> First Conversation

The practice of God's presence · A tree in winter · Providence and power · Love not effaced · Ordinary work as prayer

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 7–12

1. Keep "3d of August, 1666," as printed, not a silent "3rd."
2. The tree stripped of its leaves is the first lesson: providence, power, and a love not effaced.
3. The book is conversations and letters. The translator from the French is not named in the catalogue; do not invent one.
4. For grades 7–12. Short, as hosted. Quote the conversations and letters, not only the preface.

Quotations are verbatim from the Public-domain English, translated from the French (translator not named in the catalogue), Project Gutenberg #13871, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/practice-of-the-presence-of-god/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.