

cuatro

We offer here a way of possibly dividing the stages of the Ignatian Way, by making them correspond to the “Four Weeks” of the Exercises. Since the pilgrims will know their own personal processes and their time limitations, we leave them free to adapt our approach to their own particular needs. The Exercises normally begin with the First Week, so if someone wanted to make just one week of pilgrimage, it would be best to start with these meditation and not those of the later weeks. Each person will know best how to judge, but if you have any doubts, you will certainly be able to get advice from others who have experienced the Exercises in their own lives.

First week of pilgrimage: Loyola - Logroño

We start off with a quotation of Cándido de Dalmases SJ from the book *Place Me with your Son*, (Georgetown Univ. Press, 1986): *“From the days of his convalescence in Loyola, Ignatius made a constant effort to put his life in order. He became aware that the first and most necessary thing was to know the end for which he was created. To him what was most important was that God’s designs for him be accomplished. In order to do God’s will, though, it was above all necessary to discover what that will was. The obstacle to that was to be found in the ‘disordered affections’ which obscure the eyes of the mind and drag the will toward evil. Ignatius saw that he had to struggle against these disordered affections, and to that end he would have to overcome himself. This would be the final end to which the Exercises would help a person, and the title of the book sums up its contents: SPIRITUAL EXERCISES TO OVERCOME ONESELF AND TO ORDER ONE’S LIFE, WITHOUT REACHING A DECISION THROUGH SOME DISORDERED AFFECTION.”*

This is the first step for the pilgrim: feeling a great need to engage oneself in a dynamic of discovery (of God’s will and one’s disordered affections) which can help illuminate one’s search for peace, freedom, and happiness. Ignatius entered on this way with *“great courage and generosity toward his Creator and Lord.”* The modern pilgrim on the Ignatian Way must seek to achieve this same interior disposition.

In the course of the first week of the Spiritual Exercises, the pilgrim is invited to follow the experience of Ignatius: *“Inigo went over in his mind the course of his life, recalling the sins he had committed year by year, the houses in which he had lived, his dealings with other people, the positions he had held. Two feelings overpowered his soul, shame and sorrow: shame at the repulsiveness of his sins, sorrow for having offended God. But the result was not despair.”*

Finding himself before the Cross of God’s love and discovering God’s great compassion, Ignatius asks: “What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I to do for Christ?” The subsequent life of Ignatius will be the answer to this question. We invite our pilgrims to begin their first week walking with Ignatius and asking themselves, as he did: What have I done with my life? What is my orientation? What difference does God’s make in my life? What about my disordered affections? There is no need for us to be in a rush to find answers. Rather, we should let the answers rise out of our meditations and our walks.

Second week: Logroño - Zaragoza

As we enter into the second stage of our Spiritual Exercises, we have already had some experience of the first fruits of our “exercising”: our heart is filled with the peace and love of Jesus Christ after experiencing his compassion and the warm embrace of the Father, who asks us to enter once more into his house. After this experience, not only do the pilgrims desire not to offend Jesus again, but they also want to follow him. As C. Dalmases tells us, Christ presents himself as a king whom the pilgrims are to serve *“more faithfully than they would serve the lords of the world. Jesus calls the pilgrims to join him in a great venture, the restoration of a lost humanity.”* For Ignatius holiness means participating in the conquest of a kingdom. He was quite familiar with the enemies of Christ from his own experience in the world. After considering the invitation of Christ to join him, *“Ignatius decided to take part in this campaign with the greatest of generosity. He wanted only to follow the example of Christ, who was walking before him. His fervent desire was to know Christ intimately so that he could love him more dearly and follow him more nearly.”*

By meditating on the scenes of the Gospel, Ignatius seeks *“to penetrate deeply into the ‘intentions’ of the divine Master, that is, into his spirit and his basic principles, which are diametrically opposed to those of the world: poverty and*

humility over against greed and pride. Ignatius finds it all summed up in the Sermon on the Mount, in which Jesus teaches his beatitudes to the world. Ignatius accepts poverty and humiliations for the sake of imitating Christ poor and humiliated and of being accepted under his banner.” In this second week, as the pilgrims journey along the Ignatian Way, they are asked to walk through the gospels with Jesus, and they are invited to enter into the service of Jesus Christ under his banner. As the pilgrims learn more about the “way of Christ,” they will soon discover whether they are as attracted by him as Ignatius was.

Third week: Zaragoza - Fraga

In the Spiritual Exercises, this stage is the moment of confrontation: all the good desires and intentions that have been aroused in the prior stage need to be purified in the experience of death on the cross. Ignatius guides us through the mystery of the Lord’s passion and his incomprehensible death. The pilgrim is invited to enter heart and soul into the sorrowful mysteries. The first disciples of Jesus recounted the events of the passion in great detail. These accounts seem to have been the very first ones recorded about Jesus, so that they would be well remembered. This shocking experience changed the world of the disciples, and it still changes our world. The Master was abandoned by all, even by his Father. But Jesus had the strength of Faith, the spirit of Love, and an enormous Hope that God would ultimately act for the benefit of all humankind. Ignatius invites us to share these moments, praying with Jesus in his agony, but also realizing that his passion is being re-enacted daily in the body of his poor, suffering people. This week the pilgrim is invited to meditate on the cross of Jesus, present in many forms, both in the pilgrim’s life and in the world. We will feel great compassion for the crucified people of our world, and we will consider our own good intentions: are we prepared to follow our King to the very end?

Fourth week: Fraga - Manresa

Ignatius takes us to a new world in this our fourth and final week: the resurrection calls us to a new beginning, working again for the Kingdom. The grace we are to ask for during the fourth week is the consolation, the joy, and the new surge of life that the risen Christ gives to his followers, starting from Easter morning and continuing till our own day. We have experienced with Jesus the way of the cross, and now we share in his joy: *“For as the sufferings of the Messiah abound to us, even so our comfort also abounds through the Messiah”* (1

Corinthians 1,5). In all the gospel contemplations proposed for this week, we observe how the risen Lord reveals himself with truly divine splendor through the consolation and fortitude he gives to those his Father loves.

As we approach the end of our Ignatian Way, we feel already the joy of having a dream fulfilled: walking with Ignatius and Christ Jesus on the same spiritual path which transformed the life of that “pompous courtier” some 500 years ago. Let us give thanks to our God as we walk gladly through this fourth week. The Contemplation to Attain Love will help us to hold fast to the fruits of our pilgrimage.

[WITH IGNATIUS](#)

[GUIDE](#)

[BREATHING](#)

[PRAYER](#)

[PILGRIM'S BLESSING](#)

Tips for the Way

Practicalities, credentials, certificates, transportation, lodging..

[GET READY](#)

The Ignatian Way

History of the Way, Pilgrimage to the past, the Spain of Ignatius, Acknowledgements...

[DISCOVER IT](#)

The Pilgrim's Office

Experiences, activities, agencies, credentials, associations, path of respect...

[we help you](#)