

# oracion introductoria

Following Ignatius Loyola, we suggest beginning each period of meditation with a preparatory prayer: *“The Preparatory Prayer is to ask God our Lord for the grace that all my intentions, actions, and operations may be ordered purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty” (Spiritual Exercises 46).*

This recommendation of Ignatius may be adapted to the personal circumstances of each pilgrim. Someone might say, for example, “Lord, may I live for you and not for myself. Let everything I do be solely for your service and praise and not for my own interests.” Or perhaps: “Lord, let the whole of my being turn toward you, let me not be separated from your will either consciously or unconsciously. Orient me completely toward you. Draw me to you.”

What the pilgrim asks for is a gift, a grace. What we are actually asking for is to know ourselves, so that in this self-knowledge we may be oriented toward that happiness which comes from living solely in the presence of God. We therefore ask that our intentions (desires, motivations), our actions (external works), and our activities (reflections, plans, questions, tastes) be oriented toward the Light of Life.

Through the constant repetition of this petition in the course of the Spiritual Exercises, we are creating a magnetic field that orients all our molecules toward the only true source of happiness. Little by little, step by step, the Ignatian Way becomes the Way toward our Origin, toward the God who impels us and attracts us, our beginning and end. The intangible Spirit exerts an orienting force within each pilgrim so that all his/her “intentions, actions, and operations” are for the “glory and praise” of Love.

One of the fruits of the Spiritual Exercises will be experiencing the peace of knowing that one is oriented toward complete happiness, which is already partially experienced now, as the pilgrim journeys along.

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