

«Walking with Ignatius... in your Ignatian Way»
« Íñigo 500... five hundred years after him! »



A walking spiritual workshop with Fr. Josep Lluís Iriberry, sj.

Pilgrims' book

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1. Pilgrims Song

“The Servant Song”

Brother, sister let me serve you.
Let me be as Christ to you.
Pray that I might have the grace
To let you be my servant, too.

*We are pilgrims on a journey.
We're companions on the road.
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and share the load.*

I will hold the Christ-light for you
In the night time of your fear.
I will hold my hand out to you;
Speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping.
When you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow
Till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven,
We shall find such harmony
Born of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister let me serve you.
Let me be as Christ to you.
Pray that I might have the grace
To let you be my servant, too.

Richard Gillard, New Zealand 1976

2. Planning: 30 days pilgrimage 540 km (335 miles).

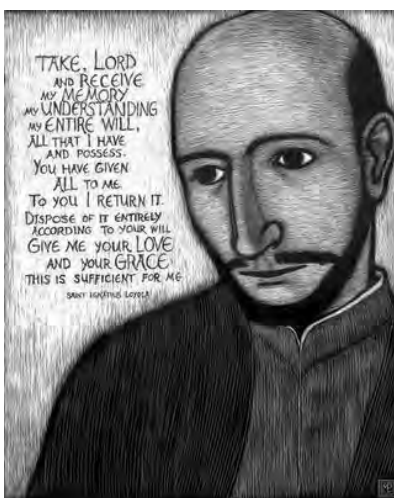
Day / Date	Step	KM	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Lodging – sleep at night	Activities
0 / 5 Oct	Flight Arrival to Spain & Loyola	0	On your own	On your own	Jesús María	Casa de Espiritualidad Jesus Maria, Azpeitia, Avenida Loiola, 24, Tel: 943 811 034 // 635 759 890	19:00 First introductory meeting
1 / 6	Loyola	7	Jesús María	Restaurant in Azpeitia	Jesús María	Casa de Espiritualidad Jesus Maria	Visit Shrine, Ignatius family Home, Parrish, Hostel Saint Magdalena Olatz church, Mass at the Shrine
2 / 7	Loyola - Legazpi	25	Jesús María	Lunch pack Jesús María	Hotel Mauleón	Hotel Mauleón C/ Nafarroa, 16. Tel: 943 730 870 / 609 245 525	Buy lunch for tomorrow
3 / 8	Legazpi - Arantzazu	18	Hotel Mauleón	On your own	Goiko Benta	Goiko Benta Hostel 943 781 305	Visit Arantzazu Shrine, Mass at the Shrine
4 / 9 Sunday	Arantzazu – Araia – Eguino	25	Goiko Benta	Lunch pack Goiko Benta	Casa Oración (retreat house) Haiztur Eguino	Casa de Oración Haiztur San Esteban Kalea, 1 - Eguino 945 31 46 37	
5 / 10	San Roman – Ullíbarri (Santa Cruz Campezo)	18	Casa Oración Haiztur	Casa Oración Haiztur Lunch pack	Restaurant in Santa Cruz	Pilgrim's Hostel Aterpea in Santa Cruz de Campezo Arrabal Kalea 97, 945 212 051	Private bus PÉREZ to shorten the step from Eguino to San Román and from Ullíbarri to Santa Cruz Buy some lunch for tomorrow
6 / 11	Santa Cruz – Kripan (Laguardia)	25	Pilgrim's Hostel Aterpea	On your own	Hotel Marixa	Hotel Marixa Paseo Sancho Abarca 945 600 165. Laguardia	Private bus PÉREZ Kripan- Laguardia. Visit La Guardia medieval town

7 / 12	Laguardia - Fuenmayor	16	Hotel Marixa	Bar at La Puebla de Labarca (sandwich)	La Vega Restaurant	Pilgrim's shelter in Fuenmayor	Visit Parrish Church and old winery
8 / 13	Fuenmayor - Navarrete	6	On your own in Fuenmayor	Restaurant El Molino	On your own	Posada Ignatius – Navarrete Plaza de Arco, 4 941 12 40 94	Visit town and mass at the Parrish.
9 / 14	Navarrete - Logroño	16	Posada Ignatius	On your own in Logroño	Pilgrim's shelter Albas.	Albergue de peregrinos Albas Plaza Martínez Flamarique, 4 Tel: 688 766 475	Visit Logroño old town, Saint Ignatius Parrish. Buy food for breakfast and lunch tomorrow
10 / 15	(Logroño) Agoncillo – Alcanadre (Alfaro)	20	Pilgrim's shelter Albas.	On your own	Hotel HM	Hotel HM Alfaro C/San Anton, 32, Alfaro, 941 180 056	Public bus to shorten the step. Train to shorten the Way.
11 / 16 Sunday	Alfaro - Tudela	26	Hotel HM	Hotel HM Lunch pack	Hotel Delta NH	Hotel Delta NH Av. Zaragoza, 29, 948 82 14 00	Visit old town
12 / 17	(Tudela) Gallur – Alagón (Zaragoza)	22	Hotel Delta NH	Bar Cubero Restaurant (sandwich)	Restaurant Caball	Hotel Sauce, Calle Espoz y Mina, 33, Zaragoza, 976 20 50 50	Train to shorten the Way.
13 / 18	Day Off in Zaragoza	6	Hotel Sauce	On your own	Pizza di Napoli Restaurant	Hotel Sauce	Visit El Pilar Basilica, Aljaferia Palace and surroundings
14 / 19	Zaragoza – Fuentes de Ebro	30	Hotel Sauce	Bar La Pista, El Burgo de Ebro (sandwich)	Hostel in Fuentes de Ebro	Fuentes de Ebro: Hostel Texas Calle Mayor, 15, Fuentes de Ebro, Tel: 976160419	
15 / 20	Fuentes de Ebro (Pina de Ebro) – Venta de Santa Lucía (Bujaraloz)	18	Hostel Texas	Venta de Santa Lucía Restaurant	Hostel El Español	Hostel El Español, 976 173 192 / 976 173 043. Bujaraloz	Public bus to shorten the step in between Fuentes de Ebro and Pina de Ebro. Another public bus from Venta to Bujaraloz.
16 / 21	Bujaraloz - Candanos (Alcarràs)	23	Hostal El Español	Restaurant El Pilar, Candanos	Can Peixan Hostel	Hotel Restaurant Can Peixan, Avinguda de Catalunya, 78, 25180 Alcarràs, Lleida	Public bus to shorten the step.
17 / 22	Alcarràs - Lleida	14	Can Peixan Hostel	On your own in Lleida	Hotel Real Lleida	Hotel Real Avinguda de Blondel, 22, Tel. 973 239 405	Free visit of Lleida. Meeting point with all the pilgrims at the reception of Hotel Real at 6:30 PM. Mass at Saint Ignatius Parrish
18 / 23 Sunday	Lleida – Palau d'Anglesola	24	Hotel Real Lleida	Bar – Bell-lloc	Pensió Sant Antoni	Pension Sant Antoni C/ Sant Antoni, 7. 973 602 158.	
19 / 24	Palau d'Anglesola - Verdú	25	Pension Sant Antoni	Lunch pack Pension Sant Antoni	Restaurant Cal Terrisser	Pilgrim's Hostel Saint Peter Claver 616 893 602	Visit the Shrine
20 / 25	Verdú - Cervera	18	Pilgrim's Hostel Sant Pere Claver	Pilgrim's Hostel Sagrada Familia	Pilgrim's Hostel Sagrada Familia	Pilgrim's Hostel Residencia Religiosas Sagrada Familia, Calle Mayor, 57. 973 530 805.	Guided visit of the old town
21 / 26	Cervera – Jorba	33	Residencia Sagrada Familia	Bar La Panadella (sandwich)	Refuge Saint James	Pilgrim's Hostel Saint James Plaza de la Fuente, 3, 93 809 41 01	

22 / 27	Jorba – Montserrat	20	Refuge Saint James	Lunch pack Refuge Saint James	Restaurant Abad Oliva	Pilgrim’s Hostel Abat Oliva, Montserrat	Public bus transportation to shorten the step. 6:45 PM Monks’ prayer
23 / 28	Montserrat Day Off	8	Restaurant Abad Oliva	Pack lunch Montserrat Abad Cisneros	Restaurant Abad Cisneros	Pilgrim’s Hostel Abat Oliva, Montserrat	11:00 AM Mass at the Monastery Free time 9:45 PM Vigil of prayer
24 / 29	Montserrat - Manresa	25	Abad Oliva	Bar Montserrat, (sandwich)	Retreat house - Casa de Espiritualidad SJ – La Cova	Casa de Espiritualidad SJ – La Cova, Passatge de la Cova, s/n 938 720 422.	7:15 AM Early mass at the chapel of Our Lady
25 / 30 Sunday	Manresa	10	Casa de Espiritualidad SJ – La Cova	Casa de Espiritualidad SJ – La Cova	Casa de Espiritualidad SJ – La Cova	Casa de Espiritualidad SJ – La Cova	Short walk to Viladoris Church. Visit La Cova Shrine, visit Ignatian Manresa.
26 / 31 Oct	Manresa - Barcelona	8	Casa de Espiritualidad SJ – La Cova	Casa de Espiritualidad SJ – La Cova	Restaurant Fresco Casp / Llúria	Religious residence Lopez Vicuña Carrer del Consell de Cent, 397 Tel: 934 87 65 94 // 656 532 956	Morning: movie Ignatian Way. Afternoon: Private bus to Barcelona. Visit the Ignatian Barcelona
27 / 1 Nov	Barcelona	8	On your own	On your own	Last supper! Restaurant Núria	Religious residence Lopez Vicuña	9:30 AM Visit Sagrada Familia. Free visit in Barcelona 6:30 PM Final evaluation of the pilgrimage.
28 / 2	Barcelona	8	On your own	On your own	On your own	Religious residence Lopez Vicuña	Free visit or flight back home
29 / 3 Nov Thursday	Flight back home		On your own	Free visit or flight back home			

Let’s walk with Ignatius, living in the Present Moment!

«**The present moment is**, then, like a desert, where the simple soul only sees God, and He enjoys it, without taking care of anything other than what He wants of it: everything else is left aside, forgotten, abandoned to Providence.» *Jean-Pierre de Caussade sj. (†1751)*



As we begin this spiritual journey together, let us pray this prayer of St. Anselm of Canterbury, which he made to God as he began one of his theological works:

Teach me to seek you,
and reveal yourself to me as I seek;
for unless you instruct me
I cannot seek you,
and unless you reveal yourself
I cannot find you.
Let me seek you in desiring you;
let me desire you in seeking you.
Let me find you in loving you;
let me love you in finding you.

3. Understanding our pilgrimage

(We adapt the text and take the ideas and methodology from the “Red Book” of the Jesuit MAGIS experience 2011)

3.1. Being a pilgrim

3.1.1. Going on pilgrimage

A pilgrim is someone who undertakes a long journey with a holy or spiritual motive. Pilgrims often travel across foreign lands, towards places that have a religious significance. The great religions have their pilgrims and their places of pilgrimage. The Koran requires Muslims to journey to Mecca once during their lives if at all possible. Jews and Christians journey to Jerusalem and visit the Holy Land. Other traditional pilgrimage destinations for Christians have been Rome, Canterbury, or Santiago de Compostela. Some Marian shrines are also goals for pilgrimage, such as Fatima in Portugal (5 million pilgrims every year!), where the Virgin Mary appeared to three young shepherds, Lourdes in France (7 million pilgrims every year!), Walsingham in England and Czestochowa in Poland. And many young people in recent decades have found in Santiago de Compostela (3 million pilgrims) or Taizé, France, another key spot in their spiritual quest.

Being a pilgrim and going on pilgrimage are metaphors for the spiritual journey that each person makes during his or her life. As human beings we travel an internal path towards Christ and an external one that leads us, each day, towards others. St Augustine expresses this well when he says: “Our heart is restless till it rests in thee”. In the Autobiography, St Ignatius calls himself “the pilgrim”, and describes himself as he who seeks his comfort and strength in God alone.

Being a pilgrim requires courage - the courage to leave the familiar for the unknown. The pilgrim must trust in God as he or she encounters new places and new people along the way. Being a pilgrim is difficult. You must travel long distances. You have few possessions, and carry little baggage. You may come across the unexpected and will have to face difficulties. You will constantly be meeting other people on your pilgrimage. Sharing with and supporting one another is a great help in turning strangers into companions. God makes himself present through the people the pilgrim encounters on his or her journey. Pilgrims must stay attentive for the signs, on the watch to recognize the presence and guidance of God in countless small details on the way.

And so the «Ignatian Way» is meant to be a pilgrimage, shared in by elders and young people from all over the world, who undertake, together, a spiritual journey.

3.1.2. Ignatius of Loyola: the pilgrim

Ignatius of Loyola was born in 1491. He was the youngest son of a big family of the Basque nobility (he was the 13th son). Growing up he was educated in the ideals of medieval chivalry: honor, renown and bravery. At 30 years old his right knee was destroyed by a cannon ball, thus ending his military career. The process of recuperation lasted months and needed painful operations. Facing the possibility of death and failure during this process Ignatius, convalescing in the family tower house of Loyola, began to reflect on his past and think about the future. He started to sense God in a new way, and had his first intuitions about the different spirits - the interior movements of God in his soul. The lives of the saints left him fascinated, and little by little he realized the need to direct his life for the greater glory of God. Ignatius became a pilgrim. He stayed almost a year at Manresa, near Montserrat, in prayer and penance. He immersed himself in the depths of human experience, which included a profound depression, remorse over his past life to the point of suicidal thoughts. Nevertheless during this time God was guiding him, and he came to see that the life God gives us has nothing to do with grand heroics, but rather with peace, balance, hope and trust. Coming to realize that after the storm comes light and joy, he was led by all he had come through to see human nature, the world and God in a new way. All these experiences and insights were set out in his Spiritual Exercises.

Following a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where he was not allowed to remain, Ignatius decided to study firstly in Barcelona and after that in Alcalá and Salamanca. He wanted to be a priest so as to help others discover God. Finally his studies took him from Spain to Paris. Together with six friends he took vows of poverty and chastity in 1534. Not being able to go on pilgrimage together to Jerusalem with the idea of staying there, as was their original intention, in 1538 they offered themselves to Pope Paul III so as he could send them to any part of the world. In 1539 they founded the Society (“Company”) of Jesus, which was approved the following year by the Pope. A year later Ignatius was elected first Superior General of the Order. From that time he continued on in Rome. He died on 31st of July, 1556, at the head of an Order which by now counted more than 1000 members throughout the world. In 1622 he was canonized, and his feast is celebrated on 31st July.

3.1.3. The MAGIS (more) of Ignatius in our pilgrimage

«Walking with Ignatius... in your Ignatian Way» is something that appeals us to go further “magis”, more, to us all. St Ignatius too wanted more - to be a saint, even better than those he read about while he was recovering at Loyola. In order to be a saint, he thought about fasting more, praying more, doing more penance... until he came to realize that that wasn't what God wanted.

The more that Ignatius discovered was one which helps in making proper decisions. He grasped that the difficult choices we

normally have to make are not between good and bad (taking for granted that we must always choose the good), but between one good thing and another. In such dilemmas he understood the “magis” as being to choose that which is “for the greater glory of God”. In other words, whichever brings us closer to what God hopes of us.

The «Walking with Ignatius... in your Ignatian Way» experience is different for every pilgrim, since each one of us has a unique and distinct relation with God, and a vocation that is personal. There is no one homogeneous standard experience which serves for everybody. Comparisons cannot be made. Living the pilgrimage is trying to know yourself and to be aware of your interior life. It entails trusting in God's guidance, and knowing he has a dream for you. Living the pilgrimage means opening yourself to discovering what God wants to teach you. At times it is what we least want to admit. But for each one of us, as for Ignatius, the greatest happiness is learning, more and more clearly, to discover God in our lives.

3.1.4. How to live the MAGIS (the more) today?

What about today - is it still possible to live the ignatian “magis”? The answer is “yes!”. Like Ignatius we can learn to seek what brings us closer to God. God is still present at the crossroads of history and in the hearts of men and women of our day. His Spirit calls us to live a “life in fullness”, committed to the unceasing yet absorbing task of discovering his traces in everything, and of working with him for a world that is more just and fraternal. Superficiality and complacency are our greatest enemies, and we run the risk of remaining stuck in a mediocre life, “satisfied” with what we have or do. And in this “going out into the open” towards others and the commitment to the Kingdom, we are surprised to discover that it is giving (and giving oneself!) which fills us with happiness and joy.

Perhaps the age in which we find ourselves living, when it seems God is known less, may be a “time of grace”, an opportunity to (re)discover the presence of Jesus in the depth of our hearts, in the desires and dreams living within us. And it is Him we ask: “Lord, what do you want me to do?” Karl Rahner wrote that “the Christian of the XXI century will either be a mystic, or not Christian at all”. To live the “magis” today entails firstly to discover the love of God in our lives, and to make Him our light and our way, our source of peace and trust.

But this path we do not take alone. It is with others that we build the Church and work for a world of greater solidarity. The first thing that Jesus did was look for companions. And we all have the experience that the path travelled with others is made easier. There is an African saying: “go alone if you want to arrive soon; but go with others if you want to get far”. So it is with the Church, the community that follows the Lord. It is a community that is both fragile and diverse, containing a huge amount of variety, where holiness and sinfulness live side by side. Sometimes conflict takes place. Perhaps the easiest thing would be to abandon it, and start afresh. But you don't leave your family on discovering the weaknesses of your parents and elder siblings. This is the Church of Jesus, and the “ignatian magis” entails loving it, belonging to it and struggling within it - without ceasing! - to improve it from within, with a critical spirit that is loyal and constructive, and out of it to build up the Kingdom.

Living the “magis” today means, lastly, being very clear in our mind that the world needs us, and being ready for whatever God may happen to call us, with the people and in the contexts we live in. Ours is a world split apart by poverty, marginalization and inequality. A world very different from the dream God has for it, and where He needs our hands and our capacity to love so as to change it - so as to turn it into a home where all human beings may live as, and feel themselves to be, children of the same Father, the God of Love.

3.2. Inspiring principles

3.2.1. Pilgrims with Christ in the world and walking together

The “principles” on which «Walking with Ignatius... in your Ignatian Way» is based are:

- On pilgrimage: Throughout history there have been many people who, like Ignatius Loyola, have covered long distances in order to encounter God, in order to seek where he is to be found in the world and in the Church. Following Ignatius' experience, «Walking with Ignatius... in your Ignatian Way» is an invitation to take the path from one's own heart in the direction of the world and God. Going on pilgrimage is a life-giving attitude which leads us to be fuller and better persons.
- With Christ: We walk with Christ and in his footsteps. He invites us to be aware of God's action in places and in people we have never before thought of. His path is our path. From Him we receive the Good News in order to be his witnesses.
- In the world: This path leads us towards the world that is our dwelling, the place where we encounter others and God - a world rich and diverse, though torn apart by inequality. In the midst of human suffering God calls us to build bridges and work together in his mission of reconciliation.
- As Pilgrim's Community: In this path the pilgrim discovers other companions engaged in the same pilgrimage. Jointly we discover the grace of being called - and experiencing ourselves as - Church, a community that is fraternal and rich in diversity.

3.2.2. Experience - where encounter takes place

It has been said that “when it comes to practice, the theory is different”. This is, in fact, what we experience about life. Knowing by heart an instruction manual on driving doesn't mean you will be a good driver. Nor will reading any number of articles about human relations give you the ability and skill to negotiate the richness and complexity of human interactions. The need to “get your hands dirty” applies also to the faith, and for many people their vision of the faith and of God has changed as a result of experiences of sharing on a deep level, or of doing some voluntary work. Action is one place we encounter and can really come to know God, other people and even ourselves more profoundly. The Ignatian Way pilgrimage is, above all, precisely this sort of encounter with people who are new or different, in a unique context.

- The walking experience: «Walking with Ignatius... in your Ignatian Way» is based on the intuition that the walking pilgrimage experience is a place of encounter. The walking experience will take place after the initial meeting in Loyola and it seeks to intensify this encounter with God, with others and with our own selves. The walking experience is an opportunity for trying, testing, risking oneself, as a way of discovering the “magis” - the greater. It is like plunging oneself into a different reality and is based on the idea of Ignatius Loyola - which is still used today in Ignatian training - of putting oneself in new situations one is not familiar with. The result is you broaden your horizons, learn from the lives of others as you walk with them and begin to know God and understand yourself in unexpected ways.
- An experience of faith: It is not always easy to find God in international groups or in whatever kind of activity that takes place. However, that shouldn't discourage anyone. On the contrary, God is present in all things. He is our principle and foundation. Everything that exists has its roots in God. If you take this statement seriously, it means you look for God not only in the familiar, easy or pleasant things of life. It is rather a matter of finding God in new and unknown realities, even those that are hard or difficult to grasp. The specific objective of «Walking with Ignatius... in your Ignatian Way» is to seek and find how to be a people of God in spite of our differences and peculiarities, and how God, the world and we are profoundly linked together.
- Inner journey: During these weeks we shall try also to walk within ourselves. Following the course of the basic journey of Ignatius Loyola, we shall be taking a look at some of the high points that leave traces in each person in his or her search for meaning and purpose in life.

With the Morning Prayer during the pilgrimage is intended to give a definite orientation and focus to the spiritual path of that day. The plan of each day suggests a theme, inspired by the pilgrim life of Ignatius. Sometimes there is an Ignatian quotation which will serve to illustrate the day with his Autobiography. A little reflection offers some ideas and suggests some points for personal prayer and meditation. Pilgrims should prepare their personal meditation the night before. Some days there are a special theme to meditate and share with other pilgrims.

3.2.3. Five Pillars

In any life of faith there are some aspects that are fundamental: action, prayer, the practice of examining one's life by seeking God in it, the joy of celebration and the willingness to share. These features, in one way or another, can make their way into our daily routine. In «Walking with Ignatius... in your Ignatian Way» we shall be trying to bring them in explicitly, so as to include these five elements: Prayer, which helps us seek, listen and relate more explicitly to God and his word. Celebration in which we express together the depth, joy and richness of the faith we share. Pilgrimage which is the specific place of life and its surprises, of learning and encounter. Sharing and placing our experience in common, since what others discover, live and communicate is also source of richness and growth. And lastly, the daily Examen will allow us to cast our eye over each day, so as to seek God in what we have experienced.

These five elements will be present, one way or another, all along of the pilgrimage, so as to help these days become a time for living both without and within, seeking to make them a source of learning for our daily life. How this will be done in practice will depend in each case on the place and moment of the pilgrimage, but the five elements will be there.

1. Morning Silent Prayer

The pilgrims together will work out how to arrange it and how best to meet the needs of the group. It will last about 5-10 minutes as a short introduction of the silent meditation that will follow (2 hours). It might begin with a song. Then, someone can read the text leaving some silence period of reflection. Someone could next read the biblical texts and the Ignatian one if there is one for that day, after which would follow a moment of silence, so as everyone could recall the reflections and the focus of the day given the day before. If it seems suitable, any of the pilgrims can make some additional point, more relevant to what to expect in the day ahead. Perhaps it can follow with a moment of sharing prayers or feelings about the biblical text. To close of the meditation silent walk the group could gather

and say together the Our Father and perhaps a final song. Whatever the case, the important thing is to make it flexible and adapted to the circumstances and characteristics of the group.

2. Celebration

If the group contains at least one priest or the group has the chance to get on time for the parish liturgy in town, then the celebration will usually be the Eucharist of the day. This could take place in some quiet corner, with the same people that are sharing this period of the experience, who could work together in preparing the celebration. It is always interesting to participate at the parish liturgy if it is possible. In some places pilgrims can even ask for a special pilgrim's blessing.

It is recommended to celebrate a daily Mass if it is possible but always being flexible. In this daily Mass we are invited to recall and reflect on the love and self-giving of Jesus himself in the Last Supper, as well as being able to offer our every joy, fear and act of love.

3. Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage challenges us in unexpected ways and can lead us to learn much about our own selves. The challenge can come from various directions: it might be that the walking puts me in situations that are new, it might be the people I meet, or cultural differences, relationship with my companions, living conditions, being far from home or just weariness.

The organizers have worked hard in preparing the pilgrimage. But they cannot foresee every possible situation that may arise. Things will happen that are out of their control - at the very least, the question of weather or even who takes part in the pilgrimage. And given that not everything can be foreseen or controlled, flexibility, the ability to adapt and make allowances they are an indispensable part of the experience.

4. Sharing: The Pilgrim Circle

The Pilgrim Circle is a central part of pilgrimage. It gives people the chance to reflect on the day lived together, and to learn to appreciate and value the richness of each day.

This form of sharing works best when every person is involved and recounts some of his or her personal experience each time. Fundamental to these encounters is the capacity to listen. In the Pilgrim Circle it's not a matter of discussing or responding to whatever each one says. Rather, you make room for others with respect, listening with attention and learning from their experiences and insights. The Pilgrim Circle takes place in groups, of 7 or 8 people. Ideally the Pilgrim Circle should last between 30 and 45 minutes.

The Pilgrim Circle is led by one person chosen by the pilgrims, and has these steps:

A) A brief reflection. Each person takes a moment to look over the day or days just past.

B) The first two rounds are for listening only. As each person speaks the others listen; what the person says is not discussed - unless, if necessary, to make a request for clarification.

Round 1.

How has the day gone for me?

When did I feel great joy?

When did I find things hard?

Round 2.

How were the day's themes and the texts read in the morning reflected in the course of the day?

C) In the third round there can be more discussion about what has been said. However, it's not about imposing a point of view or convincing others of a particular opinion. The object is to share experiences and learn from one another.

Round 3.

What especially struck me from what someone has said? Is there anything else I'd like to share in the light of what I've heard?

D) Rapid last round. Conclusion. Each one responds to the last question with one word or short phrase: What is my feeling at the end of this Pilgrim Circle?

5. The Examen of the Day

Ignatius considered the day's Examen a prayer of great importance, so much so that he wrote that if a Jesuit finds himself short of time to pray, at least he should not omit this Examen.

If you think about it, each day is filled with impressions, encounters and experiences. We go through happiness and disappointment; we feel sadness, desire, enthusiasm, any many things besides. It's important we don't make too rapid a judgment on what we experience: God sometimes speaks to us in what energizes us, at other times he does so in what upsets us, and he wants to lead us by means of all these experiences. If we allow ourselves to listen to the voice of God with us, we will be able every day to grow a little freer, more patient and more love-filled.

The Ignatian Examen can be made anywhere: on the beach, in a car, at home, in the library. It takes some 10 or 15 minutes, and consists of five very simple steps, which can be set out in various ways. Here is one way:

1. I begin with some sign or gesture, as bowing the head or making the sign of the cross. I thus recall God's presence - even if at that moment I don't feel it.
2. I ask the Spirit for light and assistance, to aid me as I look at the day just past.
3. I review the day, placing it before God. One by one, I allow the events I have lived through emerge into view. If it helps, I can ask myself:
 - What was the best aspect of the day? Why?
 - What was the worst of the day? Why?
 - What do I think God was trying to say to me in these moments?
4. I thank God for the day I have lived through. I ask pardon for all that has led me away from him. I ask for his help and his grace in whatever I may feel I need at this moment.
5. I look forward to the next day. I place it in God's hands. I end by praying the Our Father or another prayer, finishing with the same gesture I began with.

4. Introductory meeting

«The Spiritual Exercises are all the best that I have been able to think out, experience and understand in this life, both for helping somebody to make the most of themselves, as also for being able to bring advantage, help and profit to many others.

So, even if you don't feel the need for the first, you will see that they are much more helpful than you might have imagined for the second».

Letter of St Ignatius to Rev. M Miona, Nov 16, 1536

A CREDO FOR OUR PILGRIMAGE: WE ARE BUILDING A COMMUNITY

(From: Effectiveness Training Inc. California)

You and I are in a relationship which I value and want to keep. Yet each of us is a separate person with our own unique needs and the right to try to meet those needs. I will try to be genuinely accepting of your behavior both when you are trying to meet your needs and when you are having problems meeting your needs.

When you share your problems, I will try to listen acceptingly and understandingly in a way that will facilitate your finding your own solutions rather than depending upon mine. When you have a problem because my behavior is interfering with your meeting your needs, I encourage you to tell me openly and honestly how you are feeling. At those times, I will listen and then try to modify my behavior.

However, when your behavior interferes with my meeting my own needs, thus causing me to feel unaccepting of you, I will tell you as openly and honestly as I can exactly how I am feeling, trusting that you respect my needs enough to listen and then try to modify your behavior.

At those times when either of us cannot modify our behavior to meet the needs of the other, thus finding that we have a conflict-of-needs in our relationship, let us commit ourselves to resolve each such conflict without ever resorting to the use of either my power or yours to win at the expense of the other losing. I respect your needs, but I also must respect my own.

Consequently, let us strive always to search for solutions to our inevitable conflicts that will be acceptable to both of us. In this way, your needs will be met, but so will mine - no one will lose, both will win.

As a result, you can continue to develop as a person through meeting your needs, but so can I. Our relationship can always be a healthy one because it will be mutually satisfying. Thus, each of us can become what we are capable of being, and can continue to relate to each other in mutual respect, friendship love and peace.

5. Common prayers

You have called Me by Name (Joseph Tetlow sj.)

Oh, Lord my God,
You called me from the sleep of nothingness
merely because in your tremendous love
you want to make good and beautiful beings.
You have called me by my name in my mother's womb.
You have given me breath and light and movement
and walked with me every moment of my existence.
I am amazed, Lord God of the universe,
that you attend to me and, more, cherish me.
Create in me the faithfulness that moves you,
and I will trust you and yearn for you all my days.
Amen.

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Within thy wounds hide me.
Permit me not to be separated from thee.
From the wicked foe defend me.
At the hour of my death call me.
And bid me come to thee.
That with thy saints I may praise thee.
For ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer for Generosity (St. Ignatius of Loyola)

Lord, teach me to be generous. Teach me to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I do your will.

The Pilgrimage Prayer

God of Life, as Ignatian pilgrims on the Camino Ignaciano, we gather on the way of Saint Ignatius and turn to you in prayer.

Give us generous hearts, Open to the graces with which you wish to bless us: the grace of joyful companionship with one another and with Jesus; the grace of deep spirituality, to grasp how wide and long, how high and deep is the love of Christ; the grace of loving service in which you call us to give "more" of ourselves.

We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

Our Lady of the Way..... Pray for us
Saint Ignatius of Loyola.... Pray for us
Saint Peter Claver..... Pray for us

Pilgrim's Blessing

May the Lord bless and keep you,
May His face shine upon you and be gracious to you;
May the Lord look kindly upon you and grant you peace.
May He enlighten the eyes of your heart,
So that you may understand the hope to which He calls you,
And the treasure that awaits you.
May He help you to overcome all obstacles in this Way and through life,
And may He accept you to His loving service.

Praying by breathing

Breathing along the Ignatian Way (cf. X. Melloni, *El deseo esencial*)

Breathing is the basis of our life: oxygen is to the body what consciousness is to the mind and what spirit is to the soul: our vital energy source. Without oxygen our body would slowly become contaminated with toxins which would kill us. We breathe to stay alive and we breathe because it is our life. Prayerful breathing is part of many spiritual traditions, including our Christian tradition.

The four moments of breathing are a metaphor for the essential dynamism of life: inhaling, retention, exhaling, emptiness. As we walk along our Way, our breathing can help us become conscious of how present life is to us. The inhaling should be deep, and the exhaling should last longer than the inhaling. The moments of pause, when we retain the inhaled air and again when our lungs are empty after exhaling, can vary in length, according to our walking pace, but we should be conscious of each moment.

These four phases are a metaphor for the meaning of our existence: receiving and giving, becoming aware of what we have received and experiencing ourselves as needy after giving generously of ourselves. The inhalation is the moment of receiving what we are: our life and our historical existence. We receive, and we become aware that we are receivers of life. The Way makes us receivers of our life. We feel humble in the recognition that we have “received” from others and from the Other. As we inhale, there is a first moment of amazement that places us in the Presence of the Divine Essence.

The retention of the inhaled air allows us a pause, in which we become aware of what we have received: we feel that life is within us and delight in it. Our aim is to unite our inner and outer selves; we want to feel that what used to be outside us now forms part of our very being. Exhalation is the moment of giving, of abandoning ourselves to what existed before us and will continue after us. Exhaling is learning to become detached. A long, profound exhalation helps us to understand that our ultimate meaning lies not in possessing ourselves but in sharing ourselves. The air we inhaled has taken on something of our being and now we share it with the universe. We feel ourselves part of the Whole, collaborators in a fullness of which we have also received.

The fourth phase of breathing, the emptiness that follows exhalation, invites us to desire that fullness which has been promised us and which we hope for. Out of our emptiness we earnestly long to be filled. Emptiness is the condition for receiving. In our emptiness we become aware of how needy we are, and so humility accompanies us on our Ignatian Way. Thanks to our breathing, we can make of our pilgrimage an experience of renunciation and collaboration, of breaking down and building up. Breathing helps us to become ever more aware of what our own Ignatian Way is communicating to us. Let’s breathe!

6. Prayer Guide for the Ignatian Way

How to begin the meditation?

1. Begin the meditation by taking a few minutes to put yourself in the presence of God. That is, free yourself of all anxiety and any distractions that might bother you, such as thinking about what you’ll have for your next meal. A favorite piece of spiritual music might help you to get into the right state of soul for prayer, but as soon as you are there, turn off the music so that you can concentrate better on your Way. Spend a few minutes centering yourself just on the natural rhythm of your breathing, your steps, or the birds. Repeat some short prayer that centers you on the presence of God or on your being present in prayer with God.
2. Consider the introductory prayer of the Spiritual Exercises (which is the principal aim of the whole experience) and the special petition for the day.
3. Read the introductory text that provides the setting for the key themes of the day’s meditation.
4. Read the passage of scripture for the day, slowly. Then read it a second or even a third time, dwelling on various points of the day if you feel yourself drawn by them.

Don’t inject a lot of thinking into your prayer. Many people are tempted to make lists with lots of ideas, and then to combine the ideas with one another, and so on. Instead of this, see if you can let God speak with you. Allow him to reach you through prayer. It is important to be patient with yourself and with God. You should be ready to walk in all tranquility until the images, the ideas, or the thoughts begin to filter out. Ignatius says that we should “pause wherever fruit is found” – a very useful suggestion. You may feel attracted or struck by a phrase from scripture or by some idea. Stay there as long as seems

appropriate, savoring the fruit of your reflection. Distractions will inevitably arise – “I wonder what my friends are doing right now” – but just let them pass, without giving them much importance or keeping them in mind.

It will help to observe a regular schedule for prayer – for example, the first hour of each day’s walking. Or it could be a half hour in the morning and another half hour in the afternoon. You should be faithful to whatever schedule you decide on. Apart from the hours of formal prayer, you’ll keep having other related ideas, which you should welcome. For example, in the long stretches by the canals of the Ebro River, there may be moments when by analogy you feel yourself “floating spiritually” downstream. Enjoy those moments of closeness to nature and to God, who speaks to us through nature.

But don’t get obsessive, especially if you are meditating on something hurtful or difficult. A painful idea can get you into a vicious mental circle. Avoid this kind of trap, because it can exhaust you and turn you aside from your path. Sometimes this can happen even with “pious” ideas: Ignatius warns us that at times we may be tempted to stray from our path because of what appears to be a good idea. In other words, we can think about something that appears to be good, but in reality it only wears us down or carries us far from our intended route and the goal of the stage we are on.

5. End each period of prayer with the same formula. First and most important, we should be grateful. We should give thanks for the prayer time we just shared, for the communication that took place, for the other blessings of the day, and for the gifts of the pilgrimage, such as having the free time, the financial resources, the health, and the desire to journey as a pilgrim. End with an Our Father.

Write a daily journal. At the end of each day, or even after each period of prayer if you feel inclined to it, note down the key thoughts or ideas that moved you, the key images from the scriptures, and other meaningful details. A spiritual diary will help you recall and reflect on your experience at the very end of the Ignatian Way in Manresa. Or if you do the pilgrimage in stages, the journal will help you keep track of your experiences from year to year.

If you’re on pilgrimage with a small group, you may want to share with your companions the gifts or the ideas that have struck you most, BUT it is not recommended that you do it every day. Furthermore, such sharing does not mean debating or “intruding”: it should be a moment of communicating and of listening with respect to what God has been doing in the life of each participant. It is not a time to be “playing God” in someone else’s life. The way of the Exercises is essentially personal, something that happens between “the Creator and his creature.”

Introductory Prayer

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.

7. Daily prayers. Spiritual diary.¹

Day 1: discovering Ignatius Home Land. Prayer and Eucharist at the Chapel – Chamber of Iñigo.

Some Ignatian hints for today:

A) Hermitage of our Lady of Olatz

In the heart of the marvelous valley of Loyola and at a short distance from the Sanctuary of Saint Ignatius, the hermitage of our Lady of Olatz is a simple but beautiful and cozy chapel from the XIII Century. In this chapel a precious Romanesque image of the Virgen who gives the name to the church and to the place is worshiped.

This Hermitage served as the place of withdrawal and veneration for Iñigo, who frequently prayed before the Virgin. His devotion was such, that even while recovering from his wounds and not being able to go to the hermitage, he used to sing the “Salve” to the Virgin fixing his eyes to Olatz.

B) Parish of San Sebastian of Soreasu

The origin of this building is the tower, possible part of a Templar fortress (1310). From the primitive gothic style church, we have just one small remain that you can see preserved inside of the church. The new church started in 1571 and it was in 1655 with the stonemason Joan de Ansola that the church got its present appearance. The main altarpiece is from 1684-1687 made by Juan de Apaezteguia and Martín de Olaizola. The image of Saint Sebastian is the work of Julio Beobide and replaced the original allegorical painting of the martyrdom of the saint after the fire in 1932. In 1741, the master craftsmen Agustín Conde and Juan Miguélez started gilding the altarpiece, thanks to the donations of local residents and the large sums sent from others residing in South America. The Baptistery, built by Martín de Zaldúa from 1701 onwards, contains the font where tradition firmly holds Saint Ignatius of Loyola was baptized. The *Capilla de la Soledad* (Chapel of Solitude) was built in 1553 thanks of the donations of Nicolas Sáez, one of the captains who accompanied the General Pizarro during the conquest of Peru. The chapel is a fine example of the classic Renaissance style. It contains the mausoleum of the captain and beautiful paintings (made with the “grisaille” technique) that represent, on the right, the “Last Judgement” of Michelangelo (Sistine Chapel in Rome). Unfortunately, in 1898 part of the wall was cut away to make a niche for the altar. A large, coffered dome soars above the large central area, leaving a central aperture that copies the model of the Pantheon in Rome. See the beautiful figures of the evangelists in sandstone. Underneath, during the restauration work that started in 2002, archeologists discovered two different levels for burials, as well as the remains of a mold for a bell.

C) Hermitage and Hospital of the Magdalene

1.- The Pilgrim

Ignatius of Loyola was born in 1491 in the Tower House of Loyola in Azpeitia, which is situated upstream around three kilometres from the Magdalena Hospital. He was the youngest of thirteen children. He neither devoted his life to military campaigns, like some of his brothers, nor did he become a priest, like his brother Pedro. As he was a good scribe and accountant, he seemed to be suitable for a civilian career at the Royal Court.

At fourteen he was sent to Arevalo (Avila) to the house of the Chief Treasurer of the Realm so as to be brought up and educated in the style of the Court. As a consequence, there were two possible training and career paths for him to follow: to work with the Chief Treasurer keeping the account books, or to work to the Royal Secretariat, due to his elegant handwriting and knowledge of administrative tasks. However, his mentor fell in disgrace, and thus, he moved to Najera at the age of twenty-five. In 1521, while defending Castile, Ignatius, from Gipuzkoa, was seriously wounded in Pamplona. He was at that time thirty years old.

While convalescent in his Loyola birthplace, Ignacio underwent an inner change and started a path on conversion which led him to consider himself a “pilgrim” the rest of this life. He departed as a pennant to Montserrat, passing by Arantzazu. After a long period in Manresa, and after many moments of light in his spiritual life, he went to Barcelona and Venice on his way to Holy Land, Jerusalem. In spite of his desire to stay there, he was obliged to leave the land of Jesus.

On his way back he saw the need to study in order to continue with his apostolic ideals. He tried to find companions and went on with his studies in Barcelona, Alcala and Salamanca. However, it was in Paris that he achieved his degree in Arts (Bachelor and Master), and it was here that he found a group of followers, with whom they would set in motion what later on was called the society of Jesus.

He left Paris in March 1535. Seven young men were by then determined to live and work together, although they did not yet know very well how to do so. These companions, who were finishing their studies in Paris, agreed to meet in Venice two years later, and thus, start a journey to Holy Land, where they had decided to spend their life in service of others. Meanwhile, Ignatius would return to his hometown to deal with some pending issues that he had with old acquaintances.

¹ The biblical quotations are from <http://www.biblestudytools.com/esv/>

In his Autobiography, Ignatius stated that his visit to Azpeitia was due to health problems and to this need to rest in this homeland, Azpeitia, as in Paris he was often ill. There were, however, other reasons. On the one hand, he was forced to leave Paris owing to inquisitorial pressure, and, on the other hand, it was convenient for him to come to Spain to change his reputation. He came to preach openly in his homeland, to renew this negative image from the past, and for all to know that he could preach in public with all the necessary permissions.

2.- The Hospital

At the time there were two hospitals in Azpeitia: San Martin, in the centre of the town, meant to sick, and Santa Maria Magdalena (Saint Mary Magdalene), in the outskirts. The latter was a Charity hospice for hosting beggars. As he had done on other occasions, Ignatius chose to live with the poor, that is, to eat and sleep with them. He stayed at the Magdalena Hospital from April to the end of July 1535.

His relatives offered him manor house for him to stay, but he rejected the offer. They also sent him a good bed for him to sleep in, but he never used it as he wanted to remain supportive with the poor at the hospital. He sent word to his brother that "he had neither come to ask for a room at the Loyola household, nor had he come to walk in palaces, but to spread the word of God". He gave evidence of humility, poverty, patience, solidarity, spirit of prayer and holiness.

The Magdalena hospital also received lepers. There are at least three documents that prove this fact. In 1523, Miguel de Arzuaga from Urrestilla stated in his will that as he had leprosy, he wanted to be sent to and buried at the church (chapel) of the Magdalena, which is where those who died from leprosy were usually buried. In 1538, Pedro de Alzaga left some money to improve the conditions of those with leprosy as they lived in isolation. He asked for a window to be opened so that the sick hear mass whenever the mass of the chapel was to be celebrated outdoors. In 1548, Juanica de Loyola (the saint's sister) gave a power of attorney so as to collect money to improve the financial situation of the hospital, which housed the poor, pilgrims and lepers.

Ignatius' stay in the Magdalena Hospital was imprinted on the memory of all and it was almost a place of worship. Francis of Borja visited the Magdalena Hospital in 1551 and he wanted to spend a night in the same place where Ignatius had done so. His secretary wrote to Rome about this incident and said among other matters, "We found the same little horse (pony) that your father left at the hospital sixteen years before, and it is very fat and very good and is still nowadays doing very well in the house". It was a little donkey with chestnut fur that some of his companions in Paris had given him by digging deep into their empty pockets, and with it he had come to Azpeitia with its pack-saddle full of books.

3.- The Magdalena Chapel

The Magdalene Church appears in XIV century documents. Throughout centuries the church has undergone diverse transformations and repairs. The one that Ignatius knew was a much smaller building. Ignatius preached in the Magdalena Chapel, or more precisely outside, as it was very small. Children's catechesis and encouraging weekly communion were some of his favorite ministries. His low voice was no obstacle for the neighbors of Azpeitia and other regions to approach him so as to listen to his effective and penetrating words. He gave Spiritual Exercises to several people, as well as two of his nephews.

He took part in several sectors of social life. First, he insisted on banning betting and he fought against gambling houses, the vice of betting and card games. Secondly, he fought against the practice of young women who lived with a man without getting married. He scolded adulterers and concubines, who pretended to be lawful wives, and even some priests who were a cause of scandal for this reason.

He tried to make friends of those who were confronted. He had a special charm to reconcile people who were in conflict or had fallen out with each other. In his ability to reconcile blocked spirits and to negotiate with diplomacy, he was also able to settle problems of married couples. Therefore, to many married couples, he was capable of bringing back their peace. Ignatius also intervened as a mediator to help settle the existing disagreement among the Franciscan Sisters of the village and the clergy of the parish church. He gave much more importance to consensus, peace and agreement than to lawsuits, discussions and disputes, even if they had to yield to a legally fair issue.

He proposed that the bells should ring at midday so as to pray for each other, as it was done in other places, such as Rome. After almost five hundred years, this special daily midday ringing of bells still continues in the Sanctuary of Loyola.

The day after his arrival at the Magdalena Hospital, Ignatius went begging, from door, for the poor in the Hospital. He soon, however, found a more structured solution. Ignatius became the organizer of public welfare for the Magdalena Hospital. Although Azpeitia was not listed as one of the poor villages, social and economic inequality was high. He gave instructions for the poor to be continuously helped economically in a public way.

Ordinances against begging and in favor of public charity were instituted in Azpeitia. The ordinances established that "two good people" (a priest and a layman) must have, every year, the official competence of begging for the poor in the village. Apart from them, nobody should do so. Moreover, there should be record of the needy so as to avoid misuse, and a consequence, those who could work and support themselves could not take advantage of these measures. A fund for the poor soon grew thanks to donations.

4.-An Amendment in Azpeitia

A witness of the process of beatification recalled Saint Ignatius' humility to recognize in 1535, and in public, a sin and offence he had committed two decades before in his hometown. The evidence given by Gabriel Henao SJ stated:

"An austere style of life together with a rare humility led him to declare in his first sermon preached at the parish church of his town that he, together with other young boys, had been the ones who had stolen fruit from one orchard, and not the person who was suspected at the moment. This man had been imprisoned and obliged to repair the damage. As that person was present, he asked forgiveness and granted him two of his fields, which was part of his inheritance, and thought it to be a plentiful reward."

The text adds the words Saint Ignatius said in public, "The reason why I have come to my hometown, which I had renounced forever, had been the persistent remorse of conscience of the bad example I had set when young, and I believed that I had to give satisfaction by setting a good example to restore the many bad ones. After I parted from you, I have never ceased asking our Lord for forgiveness of my sins by shedding tears and making penance; and I now plead your forgiveness for the way I have scandalized you in my youth and beg you to ask the Lord to grant me his forgiveness. And if my bad action has led anyone to go astray, that they should take my penance as an example for their sins, as I have done with mine".

From that "glowing and refined young man very fond of social events", "with long, abundant, and shoulder-length hair", "dressed in a checked and double-coloured garb, red cap, sword and other weapons", accused in 1515 for "insolence and disturbance", there was a change into the humble pilgrim dressed in the clothes of the poorest people".

D) The Basilica of Loyola

Work began in 1689 and ended in 1738. The first architect was the Belgian Jesuit Juan Bégard, but the project was from Carlo Fontana, an Italian architect working at the Vatican and disciple of the sculptor Bernini. The problems encountered while building the interior arches (twisted) to support the building (the original plant was altered) caused a visit of the famous architect Joaquín Churriguera to Loyola in 1720 in order to solve the problem. From him there are two classic examples of the "churrigueresco" style: the porch and the main altar.

The main altar was finished in 1757. It represents an outstanding job of marble inlaid marble, with a technique called "marquetry". It took two years to create each column. The image of San Ignacio was commissioned in 1741 and put in place in 1758. The sculptor Francesco of Vergara made it in Italy and brought by sea from Genoa to San Sebastian. The doors of the basilica are made in mahogany, and they came as a gift from Cuba (1739). The organ has three keyboards and 2172 pipes. The Basilica of Loyola has 33 meters of diameter (108 foot) and 50 meters high (164 foot). With the exception of the gold paint, there are no other paint inside the Basilica: every color you see is made only by the combination of stones.

Prayer for Detachment

I beg of you, my Lord,
to remove anything which separates me from you, and you from me.
Remove anything that makes me unworthy
of your sight, your control, your reprehension; of your speech and conversation,
of your benevolence and love.

Cast from me every evil
that stands in the way of my seeing you, hearing, tasting, savoring, and touching you;
fearing and being mindful of you;
knowing, trusting, loving, and possessing you;
being conscious of your presence
and, as far as may be, enjoying you.

This is what I ask for myself
and earnestly desire from you. Amen.

-Blessed Peter Faber SJ. (1506-46), he was one of the original companions of St. Ignatius. Ignatius considered Faber most gifted in directing the spiritual exercises.

Here you can write your thoughts of today:

Day 2: Some Ignatian hints for today: Autobiography, leaving Loyola to Arantzazu

Ignatius did not want to hurt his family since they were so concerned about his future, yet knew he must begin his new life. This was confirmed during his very first stop in the chapel of Aranzazu.

«Ignatius left his father's house and set out upon his journey on horseback. His brother wanted to accompany him as far as Oñate, but during the journey Ignatius persuaded him to spend one night in vigil at the shrine of Our Blessed Lady at Aranzazu. Then, after praying for some time at the shrine for strength for the journey, he left his brother in Oñate at the house of their sister. After paying her a short visit, Ignatius journeyed on to Navarrete (to visit the Duke of Najera).»

What did his brother think about being separate from Ignatius at Oñate? What did Ignatius speak about with Our Lady of Aranzazu during that night in prayer? A new road opened before him, guided only by his desire for greater service to our Lord. We also ask Our Lady to become a sure guide for our own pilgrimage, and to protect us as we discover the presence of God who also accompanies us on pilgrimage. We ask protection for all whom we love as Ignatius certainly did, entrusting his entire family to the Virgin Mary.

Day 2:

Notes: Let us begin our journey calmly, taking up our subject seriously. It is very useful to spend some time reflecting on the Preparatory Prayer. If you find "depth" in some word or at some point, it is better not to move on, but to remain there, asking what the Spirit is saying and allowing it to speak to us in our heart. Ignatius tells us that "to know and taste something interiorly" is more important than knowing a lot about it.

Ask for the **Grace** I want: Lord, grant me the grace to feel your love in my life interiorly, and to be profoundly grateful for it.

Reflections: Spirituality has been defined as «*turning one's journey through life into a journey towards God.*» We hope to transform our journey through Spain into a spiritual journey.

We begin by contemplating what surrounds us in these beautiful places near Loyola. We walk slowly, aware that it is a gift to be able to dedicate time to this encounter with God, with the world and ourselves. It is a privilege to be able to do these "exercises"! Let our hearts leap in gratitude as we begin our pilgrimage. The One who has loved us from the beginning and leads us in our lives is the One who has brought us here. With this conviction we begin our walk. God who is Father and Mother to us comes to meet us in every person and thing we see. May His presence fill us with gratitude.

Scripture:

Isaiah 55:1-11. God, in his love for me, invites me to come to Him.

«Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know, and a nation that did not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring

forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.»

Psalm 63. I respond to God by expressing my desire to meet him.

«O God, you are my God; early will I make my search for you: my soul is dry for need of you, my flesh is wasted with desire for you, as a dry and burning land where no water is; To see your power and your glory, as I have seen you in the holy place. Because your mercy is better than life, my lips will give you praise. So will I go on blessing you all my life, lifting up my hands in your name. My soul will be comforted, as with good food; and my mouth will give you praise with songs of joy; When the memory of you comes to me on my bed, and when I give thought to you in the night-time. Because you have been my help, I will have joy in the shade of your wings. My soul keeps ever near you: your right hand is my support. But those whose desire is my soul's destruction will go down to the lower parts of the earth. They will be cut off by the sword; they will be food for foxes. But the king will have joy in God; everyone who takes an oath by him will have cause for pride; but the false mouth will be stopped. »

Final Colloquy: Sum up what I have thought about or felt during my prayer, talking to Jesus as one friend does to another. Be frank with him about what you have experienced and felt (or not felt) during this stage of your walk with him.

May I Be Worthy of Your Trust

For some strange reason, Lord, you depend upon me.
What possible need could you have for my shoulder?
Why should you lean on me? Yet you do just that.
I am grateful.
It is a challenge and a trust, an inspiration and a call to character.
If you are willing to depend upon me,
weak and clumsy as I am,
I am eager not to fail you.
Lean on me, dear Lord.
At least pretend to find me a help.
May your sweet pretense
make me worthy of your very real trust.

-Daniel A. Lord SJ. This prayer is from a series of prayerful reflections Daniel Lord made after he had been diagnosed with cancer.

Day 3:

Notes: We insist that it is very useful to devote some time to the introductory prayer, which expresses the fundamental objective of our inner pilgrimage. Remember that if you find “depth” in some a word or idea, it is better not to go further, but to remain there, allowing it to talk to us in depth. Today you are recommended to spend a long time in prayer on arrival

at Aranzazu sanctuary, just as Ignatius did. Pray with gratitude for everything in your life, for the gifts that you have received up to now and, last but not least, for being here!

Grace: Lord, grant me the grace to feel your love interiorly in my life, with profound thanksgiving.

Reflections: As we approach the sanctuary of our Lady of Aranzazu, we devote a second day to delving prayerfully into the happy points in our life's story. As you walk and pray recall moments of happiness and grace, especially those you now see as turning points in your life. Were there moments when you particularly felt God's presence as you made a major choice, or moments in which you endured a major tribulation that you overcame with the help of God? Were there moments when you felt God was absent, times when you could not believe that God could be with you? Nonetheless, He was always there, as your best friend, as a tender Father, as a nurturing Mother. Take into your heart all those moments and feel filled with great gratitude for the persons and events in your past life: God is always at work in our surroundings. Why not present those moments and all those people to God and give thanks that they were His hands and His arms that held you?

Scripture:

Luke 1, 46-55 With Mary, my soul glorifies the Lord.

Luke 12: 22-34 Lord, You know all my needs. I am not to worry.

Final Colloquy: Sum up your meditation in a spirit of prayer, talking to Mary as a son or daughter does to her or his mother. Now that you are close to her shrine, be open with her about what you have discovered during this stage of your journey.

Patient Trust

Above all, trust in the slow work of God
We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay.
We should like to skip the intermediate stages.
We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new.
And yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability—
and that it may take a very long time.

And so, I think it is with you
your ideas mature gradually — let them grow,
let them shape themselves, without undue haste.
Don't try to force them on,
as though you could be today what time
(that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will)
will make of you tomorrow.

Only God could say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be.
Give Our Lord the benefit of believing that his hand is leading you,
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete.

-Pierre Teilhard de Chardin SJ (1881-1955)

Day 4:

Notes: We would like to insist on the importance of devoting some time to reflection on the introductory prayer. Remember what Ignatius tells us, that “to know and savor something interiorly” is more important than knowing a lot. So don’t be in a hurry. Today we begin to consider our Principle and Foundation, by reflecting on the purpose for which we were created. An overall vision is essential before going into detail later on.

Grace: Lord, grant me the grace to feel your love internally in my life, with profound thanksgiving. Help me, O Lord, to discover the foundation of my life, according to your will.

Reflections: We begin by recalling that our whole life has been a spiritual journey. As you walk today, devote some time to remembering again your own life story and letting your mind wander over it prayerfully. Recall your past and let God show you a sort of photo album of key moments in it, some painful, others joyful, which have brought you to this present stage of your life. Who am I? How have I reached this point in my life? What people, events or places have been influential in molding the person I now am? Let these images surface, along with whatever grateful, painful, or prayerful feelings go with them.

In contrast with the good ones, are there moments, people, or aspects of your life that cause feelings of embarrassment, which you want to disown and which you can’t imagine God accepting either. Present those moments to God, with a prayer for acceptance and growth. You don’t have to feel you have become completely reconciled or to “settle” anything today; the people and moments you have recalled and the feelings that have welled up can become matters for consideration and prayer as you walk with God on this pilgrimage. We are experiencing the process of “holding our whole life up to God”, which may at times fill us with joy and gratitude, and at others with regret and shame. The graces we seek will be gratitude, understanding and acceptance of oneself, and realization that we are accepted by God. Think of yourself as “panning for gold,” sifting through the multitude of ideas that first come up until you find the “nugget”, the aspects of life where you may have something to learn or where you need to grow. God may be leading you to spend time reflecting on them.

Scripture:

Hosea 11,1-9. His love for me is a tender love.

«When Israel was a child he was dear to me; and I took my son out of Egypt. When I sent for them, then they went away from me; they made offerings to the Baals, burning perfumes to images. But I was guiding Ephraim's footsteps; I took them up in my arms, but they were not conscious that I was ready to make them well. I made them come after me with the cords of a man, with the bands of love; I was to them as one who took the yoke from off their mouths, putting meat before them. He will go back to the land of Egypt and the Assyrian will be his king, because they would not come back to me. And the sword will go through his towns, wasting his children and causing destruction because of their evil designs. My people are given up to sinning against me; though their voice goes up on high, no one will be lifting them up. How may I give you up, O Ephraim? how may I be your savior, O Israel? how may I make you like Admah? how may I do to you as I did to Zeboim? My heart is turned in me, it is soft with pity. I will not put into effect the heat of my wrath; I will not again send destruction on Ephraim; for I am God and not man, the Holy One among you; I will not put an end to you.»

Psalms 139, 1-14.17-18. In awe and reverence, I remember how God has cared for me in times of joy and pain, in times of success and failure, in times of faithfulness and infidelity.

«O Lord, you have knowledge of me, searching out all my secrets. You have knowledge when I am seated and when I get up, you see my thoughts from far away. You keep watch over my steps and my sleep, and have knowledge of all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue which is not clear to you, O Lord. I am shut in by you on every side, and you have put your hand on me. Such knowledge is a wonder greater than my powers; it is so high that I may not come near it. Where may I go from your spirit? how may I go in flight from you? If I go up to heaven, you are there: or if I make my bed in the underworld, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and go to the farthest parts of the sea; Even there will I be guided by your hand, and your right hand will keep me. If I say, Only let me be covered by the dark, and the light about me be night; Even the dark is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day: for dark and light are the same to you. My flesh was made by you, and my parts joined together in my mother's body. I will give you praise, for I am strangely and delicately formed; your works are great wonders, and of this my soul is fully conscious. [...] How dear are your thoughts to me, O God! how great is the number of them! If I made up their number, it would be more than the grains of sand; when I am awake, I am still with you.»

Spiritual Exercises, 5. «It is very helpful if those who do the exercises begin them with great courage and generosity towards their Creator and Lord, offering Him all their love and freedom, so that his Divine Majesty may dispose of their person and all they have according to His holy will.»

Final Colloquy: Sum up what has come to mind in your time of prayer, talking to Jesus as one friend does to another. Be honest with him about what you have discovered on this stage of your journey.

You have called me by my name

Oh, Lord my God,
You called me from the sleep of nothingness
merely because in your tremendous Love
you want to make good and beautiful beings.
You have called me by my name in my mother's womb.
You have given me breath and light and movement
and walked with me every moment of my existence.
I am amazed, Lord God of the universe,
that you attend to me and, more, cherish me.
Create in me the faithfulness that moves you,
and I will trust you and yearn for you all my days.
Amen.

-Joseph Tetlow SJ.

Day 5:

Notes: We insist again on the need to devote some time to reflection on the introductory prayer. Remember as well what Ignatius tells us -- that "inner knowledge and inner savor" are more important than knowing much. So don't be in a hurry. Today we continue our consideration of our Principle and Foundation.

Grace: I beseech you, Lord, to direct all my actions by Your inspiration, to carry them on by Your gracious help, so that every intention and operation of mine may begin always from You and through You be happily ended.

Reflections: The previous meditations reminded you where you have been in your life and that God has been and always will remain a faithful presence in your life journey. Today our meditation shifts focus. We reflect on the wider panorama, the bigger and fuller picture of your life, the meaning of our human journey through life. What is God's plan for us humans? What is the purpose of our pilgrimage through this world? In the Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius gives a straightforward yet profound answer to those questions: *"God created us to praise reverence and serve Him and in this way to save our souls. God created all other creatures to help us achieve this purposes."*

This statement is simple yet profound. God created us for union with Him (to "save our souls," as Ignatius puts it). In this earthly life, we draw close to God by praise and gratitude for the wonders of this planet, by reverencing and showing deep respect for the persons and gifts God has created, and by serving God in our fellow men and women.

I attain full spiritual freedom when I am seized so completely by the love of God that all the desires of my heart and every action, affection, thought and decision which flows from them are directed to God my Father/Mother and His service and praise.

We begin by reflecting on the purpose of our lives: we know what a coffee maker is for. What are human beings for?

Scripture:

Psalm 104. The God who calls me is the God who created me and who made everything else because He loves me.

«Give praise to the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, you are very great; you are robed with honour and power. You are clothed with light as with a robe; stretching out the heavens like a curtain: The arch of your house is based on the waters; you make the clouds your carriage; you go on the wings of the wind: He makes winds his angels, and flames of fire his servants. He has made the earth strong on its bases, so that it may not be moved for ever and ever; Covering it with the sea as with a robe: the waters were high over the mountains; At the voice of your word they went in flight; at the sound of your thunder they went away in fear; The mountains came up and the valleys went down into the place which you had made ready for them. You made a limit over which they might not go, so that the earth would never again be covered by them. You sent the springs into the valleys; they are flowing between the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field; the mountain asses come to them for water. The birds of the air have their resting-places by them, and make their song among the branches. He sends down rain from his store-houses on the hills: the earth is full of the fruit of his works. He makes the grass come up for the cattle, and plants for the use of man; so that bread may come out of the earth; And wine to make glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face shining, and bread giving strength to his heart. The trees of the Lord are full of growth, the cedars of Lebanon of his planting; Where the birds have their resting-places; as for the stork, the tall trees are her house. The high hills are a safe place for the mountain goats, and the rocks for the small beasts. He made the moon for a sign of the divisions of the year; teaching the sun the time of its going down. When you make it dark, it is night, when all the beasts of the woods come quietly out of their secret places. The young lions go thundering after their food; searching for their meat from God. The sun comes up, and they come together, and go back to their secret places to take their rest. Man goes out to his work, and to his business, till the evening. O Lord, how great is the number of your works! in wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of the things you have made. There is the great, wide sea, where there are living things, great and small, more than may be numbered. There go the ships; there is that great beast, which you have made as a plaything. All of them are waiting for you, to give them their food in its time. They take what you give them; they are full of the good things which come from your open hand. If your face is veiled, they are troubled; when you take away their breath, they come to an end, and go back to the dust. If you send out your spirit, they are given life; you make new the face of the earth. Let the glory of the Lord be forever; let the Lord have joy in his works: At whose look the earth is shaking; at whose touch the mountains send out smoke. I will make songs to the Lord all my life; I will make melody to my God while I have my being. Let my thoughts be sweet to him: I will be glad in the Lord. Let sinners be cut off from the earth, and let all evil-doers come to an end. Give praise to the Lord, O my soul. Give praise to the Lord.»

Genesis 22:1-18. This text about Abraham's faith and freedom questions my own faith and freedom.

«Now after these things, God put Abraham to the test, and said to him, Abraham; and he said, Here am I. And he said to him, Take your son, your dearly loved only son Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah and give him as a burned offering on one of the mountains of which I will give you knowledge. And Abraham got up early in the morning, and made ready his ass, and took with him two of his young men and Isaac, his son, and after the wood for the burned offering had been cut, he went on his way to the place of which God had given him word. And on the third day, Abraham, lifting up his eyes, saw the place a long way off. Then he said to his young men, keep here with the ass; and I and the boy will go on and give worship and come back again to you. And Abraham put the wood for the burned offering on his son's back, and he himself took the fire and the knife in his hand, and the two of them went on together. Then Isaac said to Abraham, My father; and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, We have wood and fire here, but where is the lamb for the burned offering? And Abraham said, God himself will give the lamb for the burned offering: so they went on together. And they came to the place of which God had given him knowledge; and there Abraham made the altar and put the wood in place on it, and having made tight the bands round Isaac his son, he put him on the wood on the altar. And stretching out his hand, Abraham took the knife to put his son to death. But the voice of the angel of the Lord came from heaven, saying, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Let not your hand be stretched out against the boy to do anything to him; for now I am certain that the fear of God is in your heart, because you have not kept back your son, your only son, from me. And lifting up his eyes, Abraham saw a sheep fixed by its horns in the brushwood: and Abraham took the sheep and made a burned offering of it in place of his son. And Abraham gave that place the name Yahweh-yireh: as it is said to this day, In the mountain the Lord is seen. And the voice of the angel of the Lord came to Abraham a second time from heaven, saying, I have taken an oath by my name, says the Lord, because you have done this and have not kept back from me your dearly loved only son, that I will certainly give you my blessing, and your seed will be increased like the stars of heaven and the sand by the seaside; your seed will take the land of those who are against them; and your seed will be a blessing to all the nations of the earth, because you have done what I gave you orders to do.»

Mark 12:28-34. My Principle and Foundation is the Love of God.

Final Colloquy: Sum up what has come to mind in your time of prayer, talking to Jesus as one friend does to another. Be honest with him about what you have discovered on this stage of your journey.

God of My Life

Only in love can I find you, my God.
In love the gates of my soul spring open,
allowing me to breathe a new air of freedom
and forget my own petty self.

In love my whole being streams forth
out of the rigid confines of narrowness and anxious self-assertion,
which makes me a prisoner of my own poverty and emptiness.
In love all the powers of my soul flow out toward you,
wanting never more to return,
but to lose themselves completely in you,
since by your love you are the inmost center of my heart,
closer to me than I am to myself.

But when I love you,
when I manage to break out of the narrow circle of self
and leave behind the restless agony of unanswered questions,
when my blinded eyes no longer look merely from afar
and from the outside upon your unapproachable brightness,
and much more when you yourself, O Incomprehensible One,
have become through love the inmost center of my life,
then I can bury myself entirely in you, O mysterious God,
and with myself all my questions.

-Karl Rahner SJ (1904-84) was a German Jesuit whose theological investigations and prayerful reflections supplied much of the vocabulary for post-Vatican II theology.

Day 6:

Notes: We know already that it is very important to reflect on the introductory prayer. We should also bear in mind that we should not be in a hurry while meditating. Today we want to consider all the “means” that God employs to show us His Love, and the use to which we should put these “means”.

Grace: I beseech you, Lord, to direct all my actions by Your inspiration, to carry them on by Your gracious help, so that every intention and operation of mine may begin always from You and through You be happily ended.

Reflections: Today we reflect further on our human life and how to live in order to achieve its purpose well. Specifically we consider more deeply this sentence from the Exercises of St Ignatius: «*The other things on the face of the earth were created for humans, to help them in pursuing the end for which they were created.*» Here’s how Ignatius reveals some of the challenging implications of that sentence: «*We ought to use these things to the extent that they help us towards our end, and free ourselves from them to the extent that they hinder us from it. To attain this it is necessary to make ourselves indifferent to all created things, so that we do not seek wealth rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, a long life rather than a short one, and so on. Rather, we ought to desire and choose only that which is most conducive to the end for which we were created.*»

Being 'indifferent,' in Ignatius's words, means being 'free': that is we are free from being so attached, addicted, enslaved or bewitched by any created or merely human thing that it gets in the way of living according to our purpose. That is, we do not want to become so obsessed with living a successful earthly life that our life becomes about serving ourselves and not serving God and following His plan. We want to be free from anything that could prevent us from being free for our true purpose. We want to put the love of God above any merely human love. We want to live a balanced, ordered life: a life in which we have a proper relationship with other persons, with money and with things, so that we don't become enslaved by an attachment to any of them. While created things can help us achieve our purpose, they can also distract us from it if we become focused on them rather than on our greater purpose. We shouldn't confuse earthly ambitions with the purpose of life and allow them to take the place of God.

Make a list of people you admire in this regard. What is it that you admire in them? Maybe you can picture holy people of the past or people you know now, whose lives show this healthy balance and freedom. This is not the time to judge yourself on where you may be falling short (you will reflect on your own performance later). For the moment, we are trying to develop a clear sense of purpose, and a clear sense of the ideals we want to aspire to in our life.

Scripture:

Psalms 8. What is a frail human, that you should be mindful of him?

«O Lord, our Lord, whose glory is higher than the heavens, how noble is your name in all the earth! You have made clear your strength even out of the mouths of babies at the breast, because of those who are against you; so that you may put to shame the cruel and violent man. When I see your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have put in their places; What is man, that you keep him in mind? the son of man, that you take him into account? For you have made him only a little lower than the gods, crowning him with glory and honour. You have made him ruler over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet; All sheep and oxen, and all the beasts of the field; The birds of the air and the fish of the sea, and whatever goes through the deep waters of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how noble is your name in all the earth!»

Romans 8: 5-6; 12-18. All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. Those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

Philippians 1:21-26; 3:7-16; 4:10-13. Here and now, how closely can I identify with the attitude of Saint Paul?

Final Colloquy: Sum up what has come to mind in your time of prayer, talking to Jesus as one friend does to another. Be honest with him about what you have discovered on this stage of your journey.

Perfect Resignation

My God,
I do not know what must come to me today.
But I am certain that nothing can happen to me that you have not foreseen,
decreed, and ordained from all eternity.
That is sufficient for me.
I adore your impenetrable and eternal designs,
to which I submit with all my heart.
I desire, I accept them all,
and I unite my sacrifice to that of Jesus Christ, my divine Savior.
I ask in his name and through his infinite merits, patience in my trials,
and perfect and entire submission to all that comes to me by your good pleasure. Amen.

-St. Joseph Pignatelli SJ (1737-1811) remained faithful to his Jesuit vocation even after the Society of Jesus was suppressed in 1773. Trusting in the providence of God, he found many ways to keep in contact with the dispersed members of the Society. The Society of Jesus was restored on August 7, 1814, by Pope Pius VII.

Day 7: Evaluation day. Exam of the week. Take note of two or three main points of this past week.

Day 8 Some Ignatian hints for today: Autobiography,

Ignatius wants to change his life. To accomplish this, he decides to settle his accounts and put his affairs in order. And even though he had no money on hand, the Duke Najera did not hesitate to show his affection for Ignatius by granting all he asked.

«Later, Ignatius remembered that an official in the Duke's palace owed him some money, and so he prepared a written account for the Duke's treasurer. Ignatius got his money and left word for it to be distributed to several persons to whom he felt indebted. He also devoted part of the money to restore a statute of the Blessed Virgin which was poorly attired. He then dismissed the two servants who had accompanied him, mounted his mule, and set forth alone from Navarrete for Montserrat. From the day he left Navarrete he practiced daily penances.»

It is not money that matters to Ignatius, but rather practicing works of charity and assisting those who had some particular need. Thus, restoring the image of our Lady seemed an important gesture. As Ignatius' inner transformation takes place, he began to externalize this change in religious gestures. He did this in his practice of penance, scourging himself every night. No wonder then that we also do penance for our own past mistakes, as a preparation to better receive the gift of new life that God offers. Follow Ignatius in this process: perhaps we are also being invited to begin a new life.

Day 8:

Notes: Today we begin to consider the presence of evil in our lives. We are called to feel the pain of our sinful ways. It is a "gloomy day", when we discover that serious reality. Ignatius asks us to be in that mood during our meditation, our walk,

our day. The Jesuits have defined themselves as follows: «*What is it to be a Jesuit? It is to know that one is a sinner, yet called to be a companion of Jesus as Ignatius was. What is it to be a companion of Jesus today? It is to engage, under the standard of the Cross, in the crucial struggle of our time: the struggle for faith and the struggle for justice which it includes.*» (General Congregation 32:11-12)

Grace: Aware of the end for which I was created and of the call which God makes to me, I beg Him for a deeply felt understanding of my sins and of the disordered tendencies in my life, so that I may feel shame and confusion, and turn to Him for healing and forgiveness.

Reflections: We have been reflecting on God's plan for humans and the harmony that results when our relationships to other people and the world are in good order. Today we reflect on the reality of sin: that is that there is gross disorder in our world. Sin is not just an accident or a mistake. Rather, sin means that people are deliberately choosing to bring disorder and chaos into their own and others' lives because of some gross attachment: the salesperson who cheats customers to enrich himself, the pimp who sells children into sex slavery, the government official who steals money and allows citizens to live in squalor, the spouse whose children don't get the love they deserve, the politician who lies and cheats for the sake of power.....

Reflect today not so much on your own personal history as a sinner (that will be tomorrow), but on the harsh, cruel reality of sin in our world and the disorder, pain, and chaos it causes. Sin has consequences. Reflect as well on the reality of Christ hanging on the cross, an image that is enshrined at the centre, above the altar in every Catholic Church. Christ entered history and suffered in response to human sinfulness, to redeem humans and show them a better path. Try to appreciate what our culture has lost today: an awareness of the reality of sin. Call to mind images of our World in Pain, suffering because of the injustice that is at work in nearly every relationship and human interchange. Go through the economic crisis and its causes. Think of the roots of sin and selfishness in the World. As you walk along, pray to have a clear vision of the Sin at work without shame in our lives. And pray that you will feel the disorder in your own life and the shame of it.

Scripture:

Jeremiah 18:1-10. The clay vessel he was making was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel.

«The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Up! go down to the potter's house, and there I will let my words come to your ears. Then I went down to the potter's house, and he was doing his work on the stones. And when the vessel, which he was forming out of earth, got damaged in the hand of the potter, he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O Israel, am I not able to do with you as this potter does? says the Lord. See, like earth in the potter's hand are you in my hands, O Israel. Whenever I say anything about uprooting a nation or a kingdom, and smashing it and sending destruction on it; If, in that very minute, that nation of which I was talking is turned away from its evil, my purpose of doing evil to them will be changed. And whenever I say anything about building up a nation or a kingdom, and planting it; If, in that very minute, it does evil in my eyes, going against my orders, then my good purpose, which I said I would do for them, will be changed.»

1 John 1:5-2:2. If we say, "We are without sin," we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we acknowledge our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing.

Final Colloquy: «*Imagining Christ our Lord before me nailed to the Cross, to ask why the Creator became man and from eternal life came to temporal death, so as to die for my sins. Likewise, looking at myself, ask what I have done for Christ, what I am doing for Christ, what I should do for Christ; and seeing Him like this hanging on the cross, I reflect on what occurs to me. The Conversation/Prayer is made speaking as one friend speaks to another, or a servant to his Master, asking for some grace, or blaming myself for some wrong, or bringing my concerns before Him and asking for advice about them. Conclude by saying an Our Father.*»

Day 9:

Notes: We continue considering the presence of evil in life, but now we look at the evil in our own lives. We try to become aware of our own faults. Ignatius advises us to keep a “gloomy day”, as an aid to discovering the sin in our lives and experiencing its reality. So we maintain that “sad mood” for meditation, to help us get better into this consideration of evil.

Grace: Having become aware of the purpose for which I was created and of the vocation to which God invites me, I beg Him for a deeply felt understanding of the sin in me and of the disordered tendencies in my life, so that I may feel shame and confusion, and turn to Him for healing and forgiveness.

Reflections: Yesterday we prayed for the grace of a deeper understanding of the reality of a sinful world. Today we take on another uncomfortable, awkward reality: My own sin. That we are sinners is true not only of reprobate criminals: each of us is a sinner, starting with the Pope down to whatever disgraced reprobate occupies this morning’s news. Each of us has habitual patterns of rebellion against God’s plan: what are mine? One psalm declares, “*The Lord hears the cry of the poor.*” What about me? Are there ways in which I have habitually not listened to “those in need” who have crossed my path: the poor, elderly, unpopular, marginalized, etc.? Have there been ways in which I have used or abused other persons in order to satisfy my own need for attention, money, sex, approval, comfort?

Today we seek the grace of understanding our own sinfulness. Too often, our culture “anesthetizes” us from taking responsibility for our own false way of thinking and our wrongdoing. Aristotle once declared that the “unexamined life is not worth living.” We need to scrutinize our shortcomings and habitual failings: the pockets of darkness in our lives, the habits which have become “normal”. The ones which drag us down and hold us back from living in proper relationship with God, others and God’s world. We might pray to God for the courage to discover our blind spots, to confront ourselves and our sinfulness, in order to abhor it.

Be sure to talk to God and Jesus. To feel abandoned in our sin is exactly the opposite of the grace we seek for this day. Our sinfulness should not leave us wallowing in self-pity or depressed; rather, we pray for exactly the opposite grace—a sense of wonder and gratitude that I am a “sinner who is loved,” so loved by God that He gave His only begotten Son for me, so loved that, although He knows fully the extent of my sins, His love remains undimmed and His desire for partnership and friendship with me is utterly unchanged. Ignatius invites me to experience genuine shame for my sinfulness, coupled with great wonder that I am still here and alive: the wonder that I am a sinner but also loved and redeemed. I seek an *inner healing*, knowing that I am a sinner who is loved.

Scripture:

Luke 15:1-7. Jesus receives sinners and eats with them.

Luke 5:1-11. I say to Jesus: Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinner!

2Cor 12:8-10. When I am weak, then I am strong.

Final Colloquy: *«Imagining Christ our Lord before me, hanging on a cross, speak to Him, asking Him how the Creator became man for me, and came from eternal life to temporal death, and so died for my sins. Likewise, looking at myself, ask what I have done for Christ, what I am doing for Christ, what I should do for Christ; and so, seeing Him like this, hanging on the cross, discuss what occurs to me. The dialogue is held as one friend speaks to another, or a servant to his Master; sometimes asking for some grace, sometimes blaming myself for some wrong, sometimes discussing my affairs and asking advice about them. Conclude by saying an Our Father. »*

Prayer for New Life through Death to Sin

Through your most holy passion and death,
I beg of you, Lord, to grant me a most holy life,
and a most complete death to all my vices
and passions and self-love,
and to grant me sight of your holy faith, hope and charity.

-St. Alphonsus Rodriguez SJ (1531-1617) was a Spanish Jesuit lay brother and spiritual director. Under his influence, Peter Claver, who lived with him for some time at Majorca, followed his advice in asking for the missions of South America.

Day 10:

Notes: We are still considering the presence of evil in our lives, but today in an entirely different way. We now open ourselves to the mercy of our Father. Ignatius invites us to experience the wonder to be felt when, in spite of the reality of our own sin, we come face to face with the infinite mercy of God. Today our attitude on our Walk is that of a repentant sinner, but above all of a sinner who is immensely loved.

Grace: Dear Father, I ask you for the gift of an interior, felt knowledge of my sinfulness so that I may experience also your love for me, as well as a growing desire to turn towards you and a renewed enthusiasm for following Jesus.

Reflections: You have reflected on the reality of human sin and your own sinfulness. Today you are invited to reflect on the awesome reality of God's mercy. You are loved and forgiven, completely. "Repent and believe the Good News." The two go hand in hand. That is, we first accept the reality of our sinfulness and repent truly that we have brought disharmony and disorder to our own life and to the world. We then believe the Good News: God is merciful, always has been and always will be. What ultimately matters is not that we are faithful to God (none of us is capable of complete fidelity) but that God is faithful to us. It is the same God who accompanies you: at your best moments, when you behave well and earn praise from all sides and at you most shameful moments, when you know there is good reason for you to be disgraced. You cannot earn God's love, and you do not have to! God's love is freely given, so freely given that seems impossible to us! The father in the parable, though he has every reason to be angry, harbors no resentment. His younger son has offended him and squandered what he worked so hard to accumulate, a thing we humans find almost impossible to accept. Indeed, the elder son cannot accept the forgiving attitude of the father.

In your life as sinner, you are not alone. You are forgiven. You are loved. And this is what drives us to repentance, to the desire to make amends. But we must know that we need God's grace to repent and desire to do so: we do not know and follow the right way by our own wisdom and strength. Ask Jesus. Pray that you may be willing and able to accept fully what God offers so freely: forgiveness. We humans often go through life saddled with crippling guilt. God asks us instead to walk in freedom.

Scripture:

Luke 15: 11-32. This son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found.

Luke 5: 17-26. When Jesus saw their faith he said (*to the paralytic*), "Your sins are forgiven."

John 8: 2-11. And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and do not sin again."

Romans 5: 1-8. God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

Final Colloquy: I talk to Jesus as one friend does to another, experiencing with growing feeling the wonder of being alive at this moment, and feeling that I live in a world that is called to be saved by the love of God. I contemplate its creation and history. Then, after meditating on the destruction of sin, I speak with Jesus about the grace of the forgiveness I have received. It is a dialogue about mercy, in which I reflect and give thanks to God our Lord, because has given me life until now, and I propose with His grace to amend my life from now on. To conclude, I say a heartfelt *Our Father*.

An Act of Contrition

My God, I love you above all things
and I hate and detest with my whole soul
the sins by which I have offended you,
because they are displeasing in your sight,
who are supremely good and worthy to be loved.
I acknowledge that I should love you
with a love beyond all others,
and that I should try to prove this love to you.
I consider you in my mind as infinitely greater than everything in the world,
no matter how precious or beautiful.
I therefore firmly and irrevocably resolve never to consent to offend you
or do anything that may displease your sovereign goodness
and place me in danger of falling from your holy grace,
in which I am fully determined
to persevere to my dying breath. Amen.

-St. Francis Xavier SJ (1506-52)

Day 11:

Notes: Today we begin the “second week” of the Spiritual Exercises. Our point of entry is through a meditation that invites us to follow Christ the King. We are walking through a big city, so we can see the wonders of a “worldly kingdom” and imagine the Kingdom of God. Today we meditate on how our life is oriented: are we walking with Jesus or are we following other leaders?

The grace we ask for: Despite my limitations, yet aware of the love of the Father for me, I ask for the grace to feel personally called to journey alongside Jesus as his companion and co-laborer.

Reflection: A deep awareness of God’s merciful love (yesterday’s grace), often leads to a desire to respond to that love. Today we begin to meditate on Jesus’ invitation to walk beside him in his work. In the Spiritual Exercises Ignatius places God’s call to work with him just after the meditations that touch on our own human sinfulness; the juxtaposition is important: God calls us to work close to him while he knows us fully yet loves us as we are. He calls us as ‘loved sinners;’ just as St Paul tells us when he asked the Lord to help him the Lord replied, “My grace is enough for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” So Paul said, “I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2 Cor 12:9). So, despite being sinners, today we feel called to work in that same world touched by our sin, and work for peace and justice, with the support of the merciful love we have received. We believe in a God who is justice because He is love. The road to justice and the road to faith in our world are inseparable. In the Gospel, Faith and justice are undivided. We are

deeply conscious of how often and how grievously we ourselves have sinned against the Gospel, yet it remains our ambition to proclaim it worthily: that is, in love, in poverty, and in humility. This is what the Jesuit General Congregation 32 said.

In his famous meditation "The Call of the King", Ignatius imagines how compelling would be the call of a truly worthy king, working in our world just for faith and justice. After that consideration, we turn to Jesus, whose call is even more worthy still because Christ our Lord, the eternal King calls each person in particular and says: "My will is to bring together the best in the whole world and build the Kingdom of Eternal Love". Ignatius sees that all those who wish to throw in their lot with Christ the King must labor with Him, so that following Him in pain they may also follow Him in the glory of his Kingdom.

The call of the King is the call to become his companion, to learn more about Him, to experience His loving care and to join Him in serving His people. And this King comes to us as one of us, all the more able to share our lot. Today we focus on the marvel of being called and on the nature of the call; tomorrow you can begin to focus on your response to this call.

Scripture Texts:

Psalms 120. The Lord is kind and full of compassion.

In my trouble my cry went up to the Lord, and he gave me an answer.

«O Lord, be the saviour of my soul from false lips, and from the tongue of deceit. What punishment will he give you? what more will he do to you, you false tongue? Sharp arrows of the strong, and burning fire. Sorrow is mine because I am strange in Meshech, and living in the tents of Kedar. My soul has long been living with the haters of peace. I am for peace: but when I say so, they are for war.»

Luke 5: 27-32. Follow me.

Micah 5:1-4. A mighty king will come to free his flock with the power of Yahweh.

«Now you will give yourselves deep wounds for grief; they will put up a wall round us: they will give the judge of Israel a blow on the face with a rod. And you, Beth-lehem Ephrathah, the least among the families of Judah, out of you one will come to me who is to be ruler in Israel; whose going out has been purposed from time past, from the eternal days. For this cause he will give them up till the time when she who is with child has given birth: then the rest of his brothers will come back to the children of Israel. And he will take his place and give food to his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the glory of the name of the Lord his God; and their resting-place will be safe: for now he will be great to the ends of the earth.»

Closing Colloquy: As a friend speaks to a friend, so we speak with Jesus. We bring together our thoughts and emotions from our meditation on the Kingdom and on the value of following Jesus. We discuss with Jesus and, if we so feel, we ask Him to invite us to walk with him.

Teach Me Your Ways

Teach me your way of looking at people:
as you glanced at Peter after his denial,
as you penetrated the heart of the rich young man
and the hearts of your disciples.
I would like to meet you as you really are,
since your image changes those with whom
you come into contact.
Remember John the Baptist's first meeting with you?
And the centurion's feeling of unworthiness?
And the amazement of all those who saw miracles and other wonders?
How you impressed your disciples,
the rabble in the Garden of Olives,
Pilate and his wife
and the centurion at the foot of the cross....
I would like to hear and be impressed by your manner of speaking,
listening, for example, to your discourse
in the synagogue in Capharnaum
or the Sermon on the Mount
where your audience felt you "taught as one who has authority."

-Pedro Arrupe (1907-91) was the superior general of the Society of Jesus from 1965 to 1983.

Day 12 Some Ignatian hints for today: Autobiography: the moor

This encounter was more probably in Aragon region, way before Zaragoza city (the step 14th of the Ignatian Way). But we write it here because it is something important to Ignatius as he wrote it and recall it pretty well.

At this stage of his pilgrimage, the still “very cavalier” Ignatius has an experience that could have changed the course of his life. God was aware of the danger and was ready to teach Ignatius the value of prudence and control of his impulses, even in the face of a good cause.

«As he journeyed on, he came upon a Moor riding a mule. They both fell to talking, and the conversation turned to Our Lady. The Moor admitted that the Virgin had conceived without man’s aid, but could not believe that she remained a virgin after having given birth. He was so obstinate in holding this opinion that no amount of reasoning by Ignatius could force him to abandon it. Shortly afterward the Moor rode on, leaving the pilgrim to his own thoughts about what had taken place. These gave rise to emotions that sorely troubled him and he thought he had failed in his duty to honor the Mother of God. The longer he thought about the matter, the more his soul was filled with indignation against himself for allowing the Moor to say such things against Our Lady. He concluded that he was obliged to defend her honor. As a result, he felt a strong desire to search out the Moor and give him a taste of his dagger for what he had said. This battle of desires lasted for some time with the pilgrim still doubtful at the end as to what course he should follow. The Moor had gone on ahead and had mentioned that he was going to a town not too far distant from the highway. Ignatius, wearied by his inner struggle and not able to come to any clear decision, decided to settle his doubts in the following way: he would let the mule decide, and gave her free reign up to the cross-road. If the mule took the road that led to the village, he would pursue the Moor and kill him. But if his mule kept to the highway, he would allow the wretch to escape. This he did. It happened through God’s Providence that his mule kept to the highway, even though the village was only thirty or forty yards distant, and the road leading to it was broad and even»

We add here an interpretation of this text from the Autobiography, written by Jose Luis Martin Vigil. It illustrates very well the sentiments of Ignatius Loyola at this stage of his journey:

«It happened that, when I (Ignatius) was reflecting by myself, I happened to overtake a Muslim eager to talk. I wasn’t upset at him since courtesy is a habit for someone well-born. We spoke, I don’t know of what, until he asked about the purpose of my journey. I said I was going to the shrine since I didn’t think he would understand my desire to reach the Holy Land. In that guise we spoke about the Virgin, since I was filled with the enthusiasm of a new convert. The Moor was composed, even respectful and reasonable. He said he was not opposed to the virginity of Our Lady before her delivery, which for a Muslim says a lot. But he could not understand her remaining a virgin after giving birth. I gave him many reasons for this, but he refused to accept them. We spoke a lot in vain, without coming to any agreement on the matter. Finally he declared that he was going to Pedrola, a Moorish village just a few miles beyond the crossroads up ahead.

I remained gloomy and aggrieved and I decided that I had not acted honorably with the Moor. I worried that I spoke more than necessary about the Virgin Mary and thus offended her. Had I done well to allow this? But I have to be judged according to the time when I lived. Martin Lutero, a competent theologian and not a man of the sword, said twenty years later that it

was lawful to stab a Jew if he was heard swearing. He further confessed that he “would give a blow and pierce him with his sword if he could, since it is lawful to kill a thief much more than a blasphemer. Further, more than two centuries earlier, a saintly king of France told his men: “Laymen, when they hear someone cursing the Christian faith, defend the faith not with words but with the sword, thrusting it as far as possible into the belly of the infidel.

Is it any wonder, then that the pilgrim entertained thoughts of death since the honor of Our Lady was called into question? I had a deep craving to search for the Moor and stab him to death, yet I doubted that this was the right course of action. So I decided to drop the reins of my horse at the crossroads up ahead. If the horse went towards Pedrola I would find the Moor and slay him. But, if the horse stayed on the highway, then I would leave things alone and find peace. That Moor never knew how close he came to death that afternoon. It please God that he lived, despite his blindness in denying the virgin birth of His Mother, our Lady.”

(cf. José Luis Martín Vigil, “Yo, Ignacio de Loyola”, ed. Planeta. Pàg 64).

God saved that Muslim traveler, but he also kept Ignatius Loyola from committing an act that could have brought severe consequences. God’s presence is manifested in our personal history in many ways. We can discover the Hand of God in the simplest and most humble events, and let the mule decide which way to go. If we discern the actions of our lives from the light of the heart open to God, we then become “agents of life” rather than death.

Day 12:

Notes: We keep walking with Jesus, in order to see more clearly, love Him more deeply and follow Him more closely. Do not forget the "introductory prayer" both before we pray and throughout the day. Starting today, the final conversation is becoming even more important: we move into this interior knowledge of Jesus who is to strengthen our commitment to life. We talk about this with our "friend" at the end of our prayer and during the day.

Grace: I ask the Father for three things that I need and that only He can grant: a more intimate knowledge of Jesus who has become one of us; a more personal experience of His love for me so that I may love Him more tenderly; and a closer union with Jesus in His mission of bringing salvation to humankind.

Reflection: Jesus as a person who heals people may be the image that stands out most clearly in public life. The healing ministry of Jesus is also a saving ministry. Jesus heals bodies, spirits, and broken relationships with God and with others by means of forgiveness. Jesus tells a paralytic to get up and walk, rubs mud over a blind man’s eyes. His concern is not just for the withered limb or the non-functioning organ. It is also that the one whom He heals may turn from sin and believe in Him. We know His wonderful compassion, his willingness to touch and engage with the outcasts and untouchables of ancient society. Use the Ignatian practice of contemplation: that is, imagine one or more of these healing scenes from Jesus’ ministry, and imagine yourself in the scene, perhaps as a companion traveling with Jesus, or perhaps people bring me to Jesus - What is it that I want Jesus to do to heal me? On entering into these mysteries in my pilgrimage, I present myself to Jesus as one in need of healing in body, mind and spirit. I wish to keep on asking for the grace of this day.

Scripture Texts:

Luke 18: 35-43. “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

John 5:1-9. Jesus’ question to a sick and crippled man is, in my contemplation, addressed also to me: “Do you want to be healed?” I show the Lord my need for healing: my pettiness, my pride, my ambition, my need for security and control, my self-deception. Yes, Lord, I want to be healed.

Luke 8:40-56. I beg Jesus to come to my home. I try to touch the hem of His cloak.

Closing Colloquy: Make a summary of the things I have meditated upon during my time of prayer, talking to Jesus as a friend talks to a friend. Be honest with him about the items I dealt with at this time. Ask Him to accept you under His banner and to become a healer like Him. End with the “Our Father”.

Some Ignatian hints for today: St Joseph Pignatelli, Jesuit.

On our tour through the old city of Zaragoza, we found the tracks of a figure, little known, but of exemplary significance: Saint Joseph Pignatelli SJ, sixth son of the noble family of the Counts of Fuentes.

The Society of Jesus is suppressed by Pope Clement XIV in 1773. Joseph Pignatelli dies in Rome on November 15, 1811 and fails to meet the restoration of the Society of Jesus in 1814 – for which he struggled- but is able to renew his vows in 1797 with the rest of the Society, which has been kept alive in Russia. The life of Joseph Pignatelli is a long story of adventure and suffering.

The child born in Zaragoza on December 27, 1737, did not think much about the difficulties that life would keep for him. The death of his mother at the age of four makes the family move to Naples, where his father dies five years after. He goes back to Zaragoza, with his older brother. From this date onwards, he studies in a school belonging to the Society of Jesus, which years later he decides to join, along with his younger brother Nicholas.

After entering the novitiate in 1753, he will spend years of training, studies and ministry that will be interrupted when the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain in 1767. After soldiers entered the school campus of the Immaculate on April 3, 1767, the path of his life would take a very different stage. After spending a day locked in the refectory of the house he will be expelled from the city, with nothing else, and will go to Tarragona, where he will board towards the Papal States. But they are denied asylum in the Papal States and so he begins a tough journey by boat, looking for a place to be hosted. Not until seven months later, in October, the ordeal will end at the port of Ferrara.

It is from the expulsion from Spain when biographers point out that Joseph, still a young Jesuit who has not made his vows, became the comfort, support and assistance to his brother Jesuits, in times of difficulty will take up reins, even the provincial will put him legally in front of his companions, to accompany, accommodate, feed and assist those men who suffer expulsion, overcrowding, lack of food and, above all, not wanting to be hosted anywhere, going from side to side, feeling hated and rejected.

His family, his brother, will suggest more comfortable ways, but he will keep his commitment to the Society of Jesus until the end, together with colleagues at that difficult time. In Bologna, as a diocesan priest, he devoted himself to fight for the full restoration of the Company, which he failed to see.

Day 13:

Notes: We continue to walk with Jesus, in order to see more Him more clearly, love Him more deeply and follow Him more closely. There is no further need to remind you to say the "introductory prayer" before you begin and throughout the day. Remember also that the final conversation is becoming more and more important as we move into this interior knowledge of Jesus who is strengthening our commitment to life. This is discussed with our "friend" Jesus in our conversation at the end of our prayer and during the day.

Grace: I will ask the Father for three things that I need and that only He can grant: a more intimate knowledge of Jesus who has become one of us; a more personal experience of His love for me so that I may love Him more tenderly; and a closer union with Jesus in His mission of bringing salvation to humankind.

Reflection: After watching Jesus healing, another great image of Jesus to admire is his preaching: He was a real innovator as well as a really free man! Admire the clarity and purity of Jesus' message, and his courage in proclaiming it, even though he was well aware of the danger he was courting. Jesus maintains his unyielding focus on the justice of God's kingdom. He accepts no hypocrisy, no double dealing. He rejects legalistic or ritualistic positions that raise the letter of law above its true spirit.

Jesus promulgates his new alliance, his plan for living, his plan of action for how we, his followers, will help restore this world to what God originally planned for how human beings would treat one another. The famed “Sermon on the Mount” or “the Manifesto of the Kingdom” comes early in Jesus’ ministry. We have heard these words before, but do not let its familiarity detract from its radical appeal. Listening reverently to this discourse I allow the seed of Jesus’ word to be implanted in me and to take root. Imagine yourself sitting among the impoverished people who gathered on a hillside to listen to Jesus comprehensively laying out his path, his “Way.” Then as now, his way is highly counterintuitive; he is inviting us to be and to live for values that are exactly the opposite of what contemporary culture and advertising tell us to do. In His time, Jesus was in contradiction to His world.

Scripture Texts:

Matthew 23: 11-12; 23-24. He who is greatest among you shall be your servant; whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Matthew 5: 1-48. Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying...

John 12:44-50. I gear myself up to listen to Jesus, for when I hear His message, I hear the Father.

Closing Conversation: Make a summary of the things I have meditated on during my prayer, talking to Jesus as a friend talks to a friend. Be candid with him about the things I have just found at this time of prayer. If that is how I feel, ask Him to be accepted under His banner. Finish with the Our Father.

Day 14:

Notes: Remember that the aim of these meditations of week 2 is to see Jesus more clearly, to love Him more deeply and follow him more closely. Let us not forget the “Introductory Prayer,” the ultimate fruit of this entire exercise. Use this prayer of contemplation to enter into the gospel account of the Baptism of Jesus.

Grace: I ask the Father for three things that I need and that only He can give: a more intimate knowledge of Jesus who has become one of us; a more personal experience of His love for me so that I may love Him more tenderly; and a closer union with Jesus in His mission to bring salvation to humankind.

Reflection: Around thirty years of age, Jesus left his work and home to begin his public ministry. Try to imagine what thoughts he might have had.

Jesus’ public life began with a journey, a kind of pilgrimage. He left his home in Nazareth, and traveled south- east to the River Jordan where he was baptized by John the Baptist. John’s ministry was calling sinners to repentance. John was well known and respected: certainly Jesus knew of John’s message as a prophet of God sent to the Jewish people. Jesus knew what John was doing. Ponder the message that Jesus, the sinless one, chooses to launch his ministry by placing himself in solidarity with sinners. The symbolism of these early verses from the gospel summons up a rich imagery of a pilgrimage along

a new way of life. John the Baptist's ministry is introduced with the words of Isaiah: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." John calls sinners to repentance and to conversion. It is a word with roots that suggest a "turning point." John is inviting us to turn in a new direction and to follow a new path in life. At some moment, Jesus makes a conscious and deliberate choice to begin his ministry, to change his worldly life in Nazareth; imagine what might have been going through his mind, what he saw around him to make him feel this was the right moment. Consider too how he chooses to begin his ministry, not with a speech or a miracle, but by traveling to be baptized by John. And also consider the experience of Jesus in the Jordan, His discovery, His understanding of the mission which the Father invites Him to carry out fully.

You can beg the Father to place you with Jesus, His Son, in line with John the Baptist. Imagine that you are one of His companions and that you are right behind Him, because you want to know Him better, love Him more and be more faithful in serving Him and humanity. Try to contemplate the gospel scene. What is John telling us?

Scripture:

Romans 6:3-4. Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so that we too might walk in newness of life.

Luke 3:1-22. "Then what are we to do?" At the moment of His baptism by John God's voice confirms His sonship and His mission.

Matthew 3:13-17. Jesus, having pondered in His heart the mystery of the Fatherhood of God and the mission given Him by the Father, decides to leave Nazareth. I try to be present to Him as He reaches this decision, shares it with His mother, makes His farewells and leaves all that has helped to form Him as an adult and responsible human being. Let us walk with Him towards the Jordan River and stay on the river bank contemplating His baptism. What is it that I hear? What should I understand?

Closing Colloquy: Make a summary of what I have meditated upon during my time of prayer, talking to Jesus as a friend talks to a friend, being candid with him about the items found at this stage of the journey we have done. End with the Our Father.

Day 15 Some Ignatian hints for today: Autobiography,

As a brave and valiant knight, Ignatius does not set limits. If a particular saint was known for a special penance or service to our Lord, Ignatius had to match and surpass it. We have here an inner experience that someone who has been forgiven much may also be prepared to give much in return. The intensity of such effort corresponds to an inner awareness of being truly saved by God's mercy.

«It will be helpful to recall one event that occurred during this journey as a way of showing just how God directed Ignatius. Although filled with an ardent desire of serving God, his knowledge of spiritual things was still very obscure. He had undertaken extraordinary penances not only to atone for his past sins, but also with the intention of doing something pleasing to his Lord. Indeed he declared that, though filled with the liveliest abhorrence of his past sins, he could not assure himself that they were forgiven.

Yet so intense was his desire to do great things for Christ during his austerities that he did not think of his sins. And when he recalled the penances practiced by the saints, his whole energy was directed to equal or even surpass these holy persons. He found his consolation in this holy ambition since he had no ulterior motive for his penances, knowing very little as yet about humility or charity or patience. He knew still less the value of discretion which regulates the practice of these virtues.

To do something great for the glory of his God, to emulate saintly persons in all that they had done before him – this was the sole purpose of Ignatius in his practices of external penance.»

As Fr. J.M. Rambla, S.J. states in his book *“The Pilgrim,”* the *“MORE” (MAGIS)* is a keynote of the Ignatian symphony. Love always leads to a dynamic excess without measure. Love does not conform to the cold balance of what is just and right. Love always seeks out the *“more,”* surrenders *“more,”* becomes *“more,”* grows *“more.”* The famous Ignatian motto *“Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam”* expresses very well this growing dynamism of committed love. At the same time, Ignatius also recognizes that, during this period of his life, he also lacked the discretion *“to regulate and measure these virtues”* as he evaluated his great desires. It is this discretion that St. Paul identifies as a virtue which helps us in every circumstance of life to *“find God’s will, that is, what is good and pleasing to God, and perfect.”* (Romans 12:2). By dint of personal observation and knowledge of God’s presence, Ignatius will learn to live out of such discretion, and thus to transmit it to his fellow Jesuits. The *“greater glory of God”* will come about with a good dose of *“love for God”* and decisive action *“to serve God.”* Ignatius will affirm what Saint Irenaeus said much earlier: *“The glory of God is man fully alive!”* To this goal Ignatius pledged his life.

Day 15:

Notes: Pay attention to the *“introductory prayer.”* We now enter into the *“third week”* of our interior pilgrimage, following our Spiritual Exercises. Ignatius invites us to become aware of the growing hardships Jesus encounters in His own *“life pilgrimage.”* We also enter into a more *“arid”* part of our pilgrimage. As we do so, keep in mind the cost and courage of Jesus’ commitment for each of us. Our hearts become sad as we walk with Jesus towards Jerusalem for the last time. In our final conversation, we enter into this interior understanding of Jesus who suffers death on the cross even though innocent. We speak of this sadness with our *“friend”* Jesus during the colloquy at the end of this prayer, as well as throughout the day.

Grace: I beg the Father to draw me closer to Jesus so that I may hear and understand His challenge, thrill to the adventure He invites, and ardently desire to serve Him and His people, all the while sharing His lot and His suffering.

Reflections: In the gospel, Jesus makes a pilgrimage from Galilee to Jerusalem, where He will celebrate the Last Supper and undergo His passion. He has spent nearly three years in the company of His disciples, yet this final journey together shows that they still do not fully grasp His message. They argue, for example, about who will be greatest in God’s kingdom. Jesus tries once again to help them understand that leadership in God’s kingdom involves service to others. They don’t understand – or perhaps can’t bring themselves to hear and accept – that Jesus’ way involves both suffering and sacrifice. Imagine yourself on this long journey to Jerusalem with Jesus. Bring Him your own questions, and pray that your eyes will be open to see his message more clearly, and that your ears will be ever more open to hear his call. Jesus feels weak and tired along His journey. The disciples go fetch food and water, but He stays outside the village. The sun is high and it is hot in Samaria. In John’s gospel Jesus encounters a Samaritan woman – remember that there was deep enmity between Jews and Samaritans. Jesus meets her at a well as she comes to draw water there. Jesus is very thirsty, so He asks the woman for water. In the ensuing conversation, the woman comes to know who Jesus is and accepts Him as the Christ, even as she discovers Him as a tired and thirsty man who needs help! Who am I? Who is Jesus? In encountering Jesus, God helps us to understand ourselves more deeply. In the process, we also come to understand God more deeply. The Ignatian journey passes through *“Los Monegros,”* Spain’s desert-like region. Walking through this hot, arid, and dusty landscape, one can imagine how vital water became in the reality and imagination of Jesus’ listeners. Without food and water, there is no life. Thus we find one of the most evocative and enduring gospel images: Jesus is the water of eternal life, the wellspring that never runs dry, water always abundant. A true personal encounter with Jesus is transforming. It changed this woman’s life, as it transformed the lives of the many disabled people Jesus met. Meet Jesus yourself at the well as this Samaritan woman did. Who am I – really? And who is Jesus for me? What is Jesus asking of me? And what is my response?

Scripture:

Mark 10:32-45. *“If anyone would be the first, he must become last of all and servant of all.”*

John 4:6-15. *“Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water I shall give will never thirst.”*

John 6:30-44. I believe that Jesus is living bread and life-giving water. I beg the Father to draw me closer to Jesus so that, eating and drinking with Him, I may have new life.

Final Colloquy: Make a summary of your thoughts during this time of prayer. Speak with Jesus as one friend does with another. Open your heart to Him about what you have discovered within yourself during this pilgrimage. As you are able, invite Jesus to accept you under His banner. Conclude with the *“Our Father.”*

Day 16:

Notes: Again we persist in making the introductory prayer. Today we make enter a consideration typical of the Spiritual Exercises: the meditation titled "The Two Standards." Saint Ignatius offers us an exercise of contrast to see what our life is opting for, in our following of Jesus. Throughout the day we can be considering and asking the grace of this exercise and feel that Jesus wants us to go on pilgrimage with Him. The typical "Triple Discussion" that Saint Ignatius offers in the exercises, can be done as it is set out here... or done as your heart tells you, in accordance with the layout of the pilgrimage that we are engaged in.

Grace: As a friend of Jesus, I ask God to allow me to share the gift of being able to recognize the deceits of the devil so that I can guard against them; I also ask for a true knowledge of Jesus Christ, my true Leader and Lord, and the grace to imitate Him.

Reflection: Over the coming days we will reflect on Jesus' earthly ministry, and on his way of living and working in accordance with the values of the Kingdom. Today we take a meditation commonly known as the "two standards" (standard as in a banner). We can imagine Jesus prepared to set out on his own journey, poised at a critical fork in the road. He has no doubt which way he is going, and he figuratively asks us to join him. Jesus' values and Jesus' "Way" is the way of simplicity (even of poverty), leading so many times to dishonor and to humility: in other words, it is the way of those who share their life with God and hope for everything from Him. The other way, is the worldly choice of riches, honor, and pride: in other words, to have the things and prestige that makes us feel important in the world, to turn ourselves into the gods of our own life, and be "the only ones in the world". Earlier in this spiritual pilgrimage, Ignatius invited us to make a fundamental choice: to be faithful to our Principle and Foundation. This is not a new choice, a "do over," rather, it is a reminder, a deeper insight into the Way of Jesus and to check our desire to follow Him, choosing a way that it is fundamentally different to the ways of the world. Who are we: are we our possessions and reputation? Or are we God's beloved creation? Why are we important? Is it because others know us, or because God has chosen us? Jesus is inviting us to lighten our load so as to be able to walk beside him freely on our spiritual pilgrimage through life.

The purpose of this meditation is to become aware of the strategies of Jesus and of the Evil One so that I may accurately discern the spirits which I often experience when I have to make a decision in my life: In what direction am I going? Am I going with Jesus? As Ignatius says: "We shall in our next exercise observe the intention of Christ our Lord and, in contrast, that of the Evil One, the enemy of human nature... Imagine that the leader of all the enemies in that great plain of Babylon calling all his supporters... and sending them to tempt people to covet riches, so that they may more easily come to vain honor from the world, and finally to surging pride. And from there all the disasters in the world are guaranteed. Similarly, by contrast, gaze in imagination on the supreme and true leader, who is Christ our Lord summoning all His people... sending them to attract all persons, first, into the most perfect spiritual poverty, and also, if the Divine Majesty should be served and should wish to choose them for it, even to no less a degree of actual poverty; and second, by attracting them to a desire of reproaches and contempt, since from these humility results. And from there true humility will follow." We should consider these two banners and make a choice from our heart: Shall I go with Jesus? Do I really feel that? Is that what I desire?

Scripture texts:

1 Tim 6: 6-10. Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.

Galatians 5:16-25. I pray to know what it is like to be with and without the Spirit.

Ephesians 6:10-20. War of the spirit.

Luke 11:15-26. Jesus and Satan in opposite sides.

Final Triple Colloquy: «1st A discussion with Our Lady that she obtain for me from her son and Lord the grace, to be received under his banner, and first in spiritual poverty, and if His Divine Majesty would be served and He wishes to choose me and

be received no less in actual poverty, and second, to spend more insults and slander in order to imitate him, only if that could happen without sin on the part of any person or displeasure of His Divine Majesty, and with it a Hail Mary.

2nd conversation: Ask the same of the Son, that he may obtain it from the Father, and with it say an Anima Christi.

3rd conversation. Ask the same of the Father, that he grant it to me, and say an Our Father.»

[‘Anima Christi’ prayer. It is a prayer from around the 14th century. It is still widely used after receiving the body and blood of Our Lord, Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. Certainly Saint Ignatius prayed with it very often and that’s why he wrote it in the Spiritual Exercises. You have this prayer at page 1]

Day 17:

Notes: We continue our journey with Jesus going to Jerusalem, so we may see Him more clearly, love Him more deeply, and follow Him more closely in His Way to the Cross. Remember the “introductory prayer” before beginning prayer as well as during the day. Remember that the final conversation with God at the end of prayer becomes very important. We beg to grow in our interior knowledge of Jesus who strengthens our commitment to life. We discuss all of this with our “friend” Jesus in the dialogue at the end of prayer, as well as throughout the day.

Grace: I beg the Father to draw me closer to Jesus so I may hear and understand His challenge, thrill to the adventure he invites, and ardently desire to serve Him and His people, all the while sharing His lot and His suffering.

Reflections: The gospels tell us that, as Jesus walked along the Sea of Galilee, He called two disciples who were casting their nets into the sea. “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of all people.” They immediately left their nets and followed Him. So mysteriously compelling is this

Jesus, we are told, that two fishermen simply drop their nets, leave the past behind, and follow Jesus toward a new life, a new pilgrimage. We pray to know this Jesus better, and to have deeper insight into the attractiveness of His call. We also beg for a growing desire to be with Jesus, so that an important criterion in my life choices will become less “what would please me,” but rather “what will help me to walk with and to become like Jesus.” Much will be asked of the King’s followers. There will be the challenge to discover “the one thing necessary” and the “one thing more.” Pondering these challenges, I pay attention to the interior movements that are taking place within me during this pilgrimage. Do I know where I am headed? Does this matter to me?

Scripture:

Luke 9:57-62. I pray not to be a half-hearted follower of Jesus.

Luke 10: 1-9. After this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them on ahead of Him.

Luke 10:38-41. Jesus says to me: “One thing alone is required.” My challenge is to include both “Martha and Mary” in my life, as I become the contemplative-in-action whose work for the Lord is animated by constant intimacy with Him.

Mark 10:17-27. As Jesus looks with love on a good man whose life has been a model of goodness and fidelity, Jesus challenges him – as He also challenges me -- with these words: “There is one thing more you must do.” I know what He said to the man in the gospel. I listen now as Jesus tells me in my own heart what one thing more is asked of me.

Final Colloquy: Make a summary of your thoughts in this time of prayer, speaking to Jesus as one friend does with another. Open your heart to Him about what you have discovered within during this pilgrimage. As you are able, invite Jesus to accept you under His banner. End with the “Our Father”.

Day 18:

Notes: We walk with Jesus in His ascent to the Cross. Do not neglect the “introductory prayer”: now more than ever we ask that our lives be directed to God’s will, our only source of salvation and happiness. Recall that the final colloquy is very important: we enter deeply into an inner knowledge of the suffering Jesus who strengthens our personal life commitments. We discuss all this with our “friend” in the colloquy at the end of the prayer, as well as during the day.

Grace: I ask the Father for this gift: to feel sorrow with Christ in sorrow; to experience anguish with Christ’s own anguish; and even to experience tears and deep grief because of all the afflictions Christ endures for me at the end of His life.

Reflections: After so many days walking with Jesus, we know already that His life is in danger. He knows this as well, even though people don’t understand. The Kingdom of God is fighting for survival, but the enemy is powerful. As the prophet said, our hearts are made of stone, and we are not prepared to change this. Our hearts are tough to break into. In the core of our being we even feel that the tender merciful heart of God is not attractive. Jesus confronts us about this, but we don’t want to hear. Jesus feels angry but He cannot change our hearts. As His disciple I feel awkward in this situation. I don’t understand either and feel tired. Jesus sees me and asks me to go with Him and relax. Things are not going to be easier in Jerusalem.

In Jerusalem Jesus celebrates His last supper on earth with His disciples. Through a powerful, almost shocking gesture, Jesus reinforces again the servant nature of leadership in God’s kingdom. Jesus, the Lord, takes upon Himself a household servant’s task by washing the dirty feet of the supper guests. Can you imagine Jesus washing your feet? During the meal, Jesus breaks bread and shares wine with his disciples, inviting them to “do this in memory of me.” Picture in how many places and by how many varied peoples throughout history this moment of Eucharist has been repeated over the past two millennia. It is not only the manner in which Christians remember Jesus. The Eucharist also draws us into a living, intimate connection with Jesus: the bread and wine Jesus offers us is actually His own body and blood, generously give to each of us.

Recall that Ignatius invites us to pray by mentally inserting ourselves into the various scenes as they unfold, filling in the blanks of the basic gospel stories. The passion narratives especially lend themselves to this type of contemplative prayer. For example, regarding the Last Supper, Ignatius speaks to us of Jesus who, “*after eating the Paschal lamb and finishing the meal, washed their feet and gave his most holy Body and Precious Blood to his disciples.*” Ignatius says further: “*See the persons at the supper, and then, as I reflect on myself, draw profit from them. Listen to what they are saying....see what they are doing.*”

Scripture:

Mark 8:34-38. “*Anyone who wants to be my follower must renounce self. Then he must take up his cross and follow me.*”

Matthew 11:2-30. Only the simple can recognize the Messiah. The world can't understand. With my heart longing for companionship and intimacy, I welcome the invitation of Jesus to share His rest as He shares my burden. I ardently desire to give myself totally to the love and service of Jesus and His people.

Matthew 26: 26-31. *As they were eating, Jesus took bread and He blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples saying, "Take, eat; this is my body."*

John: 13:1-17. *When He had washed their feet and taken His garments, He resumed His place and said to them, "Do you know what I have done for you?"*

Colloquy: As in human situations of taking care of the sick and dying, our personal presence is often more important than our faltering words or awkward actions. It is the same as we follow Jesus Christ in word and action. We previously described the colloquy as an intimate conversation between friends. Expand that description now to include the depth of feeling, love, and compassion which allows us just to be present with Jesus. Ask Him once more, as you wish, to be accepted under His banner, the standard of the Cross. End with the "Our Father."

Day 19 Some Ignatian hints for today: *What should be our Principle and Foundation in life?*

The Principle and Foundation (paraphrased by David L. Fleming, sj.): St. Ignatius begins his *Spiritual Exercises* with *The First Principle and Foundation*. While not typically thought of as a prayer, it still contains much that is worth reflecting on.

The Goal of our life is to live with God forever. God, who loves us, gave us life. Our own response of love allows God's life to flow into us without limit. All the things in this world are gifts from God, presented to us so that we can know God more easily and make a return of love more readily. As a result, we appreciate and use all these gifts of God insofar as they help us to develop as loving persons.

But if any of these gifts become the center of our lives, they displace God and so hinder our growth toward our goal. In everyday life, then, we must hold ourselves in balance before all of these created gifts insofar as we have a choice and are not bound by some obligation. We should not fix our desires on health or sickness, wealth or poverty, success or failure, a long life or a short one. For everything has the potential of calling forth in us a deeper response to our life in God.

Our only desire and our one choice should be this: I want, and I choose what better leads to God's deepening his life in me.

An example of this Principle and Foundation lived on a real life is a Jesuit saint patron of the Catalan Jesuit Province. The extraordinary figure of Saint Peter Claver can be summed up in three stages.

1.- To begin, he was baptized on the 26th of June 1580, as it is shown in the Baptismal Registry kept in the Parish Archives in the town of Verdú. The good pastor added to the inscription these words: **"May God make him a good Catholic."** And thus, it was. Following his desire to become a priest, at the age of 17 he moved to Barcelona. There, at the age of 22, he entered the Society of Jesus. He was assigned to the Jesuit College in Palma de Mallorca, where he spent 3 years. While there, Alonso Rodriguez, the door keeper, who was known as a saintly person, became his friend and teacher. He influenced him greatly, and encouraged him to work in the American continent, discovered by Europeans in the previous century. So it was that Peter Claver sailed from Seville on April 15, 1610, and landed in Cartagena de Indias, in what is now known as Colombia.

2.- This was a dark time in history, stained by the injustice and cruelty of slavery. Peter Claver was a witness to the arrival of slave ships and saw how the slaves were treated. He began to go to the port when a ship arrived, welcoming them with an open heart and a smile on his lips, at the same time distributing clothing, food, drink and sweets. As he himself wrote, he spoke to them not with words but with his hands and work. It was useless to speak to them any other way. He would kneel beside the sick, wash them, tend to them, and try to make them happy with as many demonstrations of care that human nature can show to help lighten the burden of a sick person. His life was a beautiful example of human and evangelical love for his dear slaves. He cared for them materially, instructed them in the faith, and baptized them, always considering himself their servant. On April 3, 1622, he made a solemn commitment which he expressed with the following words: **"Slave of the Black Slaves forever."** He signed it and fulfilled it with his life.

3.- He was canonized by Pope Leo XIII, who said that **"since the life of Christ, no life had moved him so deeply as the life of Peter Claver"**.

He lived on earth in poverty and freedom, for 74 years, suffering with those who suffered, a white man among black men, always as a slave of the slaves. He was a Catalan of few words, but prodigious in heroism.

"Seek God in all things and we shall find God always by our side."



-St. Peter Claver SJ. (1580-1654). Encouraged by the advice of Saint Alphonsus Rodriguez SJ. to volunteer to work in the Americas, Peter Claver spent the remainder of his life in Cartagena (in present-day Colombia) teaching and ministering to the enslaved African, of whom it is said to have baptized over 300,000.

Day 19:

Notes: We walk with Jesus on the way to His death. Pay attention to the "introductory prayer": we ask once again that our lives be directed to the will of God, the only source of our happiness and Resurrection. Recall that the final colloquy is very important: we draw closer to the suffering Jesus and ask Him to strengthen us for our personal life commitments. Make this colloquy at the end of the prayer and often during the day.

Grace: I as the Father for this gift: to feel sorrow with Christ in sorrow; to experience anguish with Christ in anguish; and even to experience tears and interior grief because of all the sufferings Christ endures for me at the end of His life.

Reflections: After His last supper, Jesus experiences agony while praying in the garden.

He seems to wish that he could avoid the suffering He is about to undergo. He is betrayed by Judas. He is abandoned by the very friends and disciples who had been his closest companions for the last three years. He is publicly humiliated. His life mission seems to end in failure and ridicule. None of this is an "act." Christians do believe that Jesus, though always God, actually became "fully human" in nature. Thus this particular moment reveals Jesus' total solidarity with the human condition. Each of us suffers humiliation, rejection, doubt, as well as our own personal agonies. While inserting yourself into this narrative, pray to experience great solidarity with Jesus and great compassion for Him. Take special note of Jesus' ultimate and utter faithfulness to His mission, to His Father, and, by extension, to us. Jesus is the one who remains faithful to what He is called to accomplish. He also remains faithful to each of us in our personal moments of grief, pain, and uncertainty.

Use the Ignatian contemplation as you follow Jesus with the disciples to Gethsemane. Stay with them as they wait for Jesus. Or just go there and watch Jesus praying to His Father. We follow Jesus in embracing the Father's will, experiencing His humiliation, darkness, and doubt. Look at Judas arriving with astonishment and pride, not really understanding the role he is playing. Feel the emotion of this situation. Stay close to Jesus in the house of Caiaphas. Keep your eyes on Jesus: What is He feeling? What is He thinking? How does He respond in this moment? Stay close to Jesus and look at the people who are speaking. What are they saying? What do you feel in this moment? Move forward and follow Peter outside of the house. Watch Jesus here since He knows that Peter will betray Him. Experience the pain of betrayal through some sign of affection. Notice how Jesus regards Peter. Jesus has been denied by the very one whom Jesus had called "Rock" – this is the lot of Jesus which I am invited to share. For me this is a moment of personal truth – How do I feel?

The crucifix, suspended over the altar of every Catholic Church, reminds us that the Mass is a remembrance and re-living of Jesus' own offering of Himself for each of us – Jesus poured out for us, unto death. At times we can over-intellectualize the crucifixion, pondering the theological mystery of Jesus' death. Sometimes we have changed the Crucifixion into a "golden cross," even with gemstones. We are invited these days to "keep it real." In your imagination spend time with the human Jesus who died a painful, slow, and humiliating death, hanging between two criminals. Spend time beside His mother, who had to watch her son die. We current-day Christians know that this drama ends in Jesus' resurrection. Mary and the apostles did not. In my Ignatian contemplation, I accompany Mary, Jesus' mother, as she moves away from the tomb, back to the

house where she is staying. I stay with her. I wait with her. I listen to her as she shares with me all those realities she has pondered in her heart. I listen to her memories of her Son. I weep with her; I hope with her. And I tell her who I am – a companion and follower of her Son! Ignatius invites us to identify as closely as possible with Jesus, by experiencing “*sorrow with Christ in sorrow*”: a broken spirit with Christ also so broken. And interior strain because of the great suffering which Christ endured for me. Consider also Our Lady’s personal loneliness, along with her deep grief and fatigue. I can also ponder the fatigue of the disciples. Everything has finished. It is the end.

Christ our Lord and King continues to labor in our world to save all men and women. Jesus continues to be tortured in His brothers and sisters. He continues to be led to His cross. Take some moments of reflection about the situation of our personal humanity. Ask the Father to place you with Christ crucified in the world today.

Scripture:

Matthew 26:30-75. “*Then Jesus came to the disciples and said to them: ‘Still asleep? Still resting? The hour has come!’*”

Matthew 27:1-66. “*Crucify him!*” “*Why, what harm has he done?*” “*Crucify him!*”

Psalms 22. “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*”

«My God, my God, why are you turned away from me? why are you so far from helping me, and from the words of my crying? O my God, I make my cry in the day, and you give no answer; and in the night, and have no rest. But you are holy, O you who are seated among the praises of Israel. Our fathers had faith in you: they had faith and you were their saviour. They sent up their cry to you and were made free: they put their faith in you and were not put to shame. But I am a worm and not a man; cursed by men, and looked down on by the people. I am laughed at by all those who see me: pushing out their lips and shaking their heads they say, He put his faith in the Lord; let the Lord be his saviour now: let the Lord be his saviour, because he had delight in him. But it was you who took care of me from the day of my birth: you gave me faith even from my mother's breasts. I was in your hands even before my birth; you are my God from the time when I was in my mother's body. Be not far from me, for trouble is near; there is no one to give help. A great herd of oxen is round me: I am shut in by the strong oxen of Bashan. I saw their mouths wide open, like lions crying after food. I am flowing away like water, and all my bones are out of place: my heart is like wax, it has become soft in my body. My throat is dry like a broken vessel; my tongue is fixed to the roof of my mouth, and the dust of death is on my lips. Dogs have come round me: I am shut in by the band of evil-doers; they made wounds in my hands and feet. I am able to see all my bones; their looks are fixed on me: They make a division of my robes among them, by the decision of chance they take my clothing. Do not be far from me, O Lord: O my strength, come quickly to my help. Make my soul safe from the sword, my life from the power of the dog. Be my saviour from the lion's mouth; let me go free from the horns of the cruel oxen. I will give the knowledge of your name to my brothers: I will give you praise among the people. You who have fear of the Lord, give him praise; all you seed of Jacob, give him glory; go in fear of him, all you seed of Israel. For he has not been unmoved by the pain of him who is troubled; or kept his face covered from him; but he has given an answer to his cry. My praise will be of you in the great meeting: I will make my offerings before his worshippers. The poor will have a feast of good things: those who make search for the Lord will give him praise: your heart will have life forever. All the ends of the earth will keep it in mind and be turned to the Lord: all the families of the nations will give him worship. For the kingdom is the Lord's; he is the ruler among the nations. All the fat ones of the earth will give him worship; all those who go down to the dust will make themselves low before him, even he who has not enough for the life of his soul. A seed will be his servant; the doings of the Lord will be made clear to the generation which comes after. They will come and make his righteousness clear to a people of the future because he has done this.»

Isaiah 42:1-9. “*Here is my servant whom I uphold.*”

«See my servant, whom I am supporting, my loved one, in whom I take delight: I have put my spirit on him; he will give the knowledge of the true God to the nations. He will make no cry, his voice will not be loud: his words will not come to men's ears in the streets. He will not let a crushed stem be quite broken, and he will not let a feebly burning light be put out: he will go on sending out the true word to the peoples. His light will not be put out, and he will not be crushed, till he has given the knowledge of the true God to the earth, and the sea-lands will be waiting for his teaching. God the Lord, even he who made the heavens, measuring them out on high; stretching out the earth, and giving its produce; he who gives breath to the people on it, and life to those who go about on it, says: I the Lord have made you the vessel of my purpose, I have taken you by the hand, and kept you safe, and I have given you to be an agreement to the people, and a light to the nations: To give eyes to the blind, to make free the prisoners from the prison, to let out those who are shut up in the dark. I am the Lord; that is my name: I will not give my glory to another, or my praise to pictured images. See, the things said before have come about, and now I give word of new things: before they come I give you news of them.»

Psalms 54. “*Save me, God!*”

«Let your name be my salvation, O God; let my cause be judged by your strength. Let my prayer come before you, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth. For men who are going after me have come out against me, violent men are purposing to take my soul; they have not put God before their eyes. (Selah.) See, God is my helper: the Lord is the great supporter of my soul. Let the evil works of my haters come back on them again; let them be cut off by your good faith. Freely will I make

my offerings to you; I will give praise to your name, O Lord, for it is good. Because it has been my saviour from all my trouble; and my eyes have seen the punishment of my haters.»

Isaiah 50:4-9. *“The Lord God is my helper.”*

«The Lord God has given me the tongue of those who are experienced, so that I may be able to give the word a special sense for the feeble: every morning my ear is open to his teaching, like those who are experienced: and I have not put myself against him, or let my heart be turned back from him. I was offering my back to those who gave me blows, and my face to those who were pulling out my hair: I did not keep my face covered from marks of shame. For the Lord God is my helper; I will not be put to shame: so I have made my face like a rock, and I am certain that he will give me my right. He who takes up my cause is near; who will go to law with me? let us come together before the judge: who is against me? let him come near to me. See, the Lord God is my helper; who will give a decision against me? truly, all of them will become old like a robe; they will be food for the worm.»

Colloquy: We stay with Jesus, just as we did yesterday. Our presence is more important than any of our faltering words or awkward actions. We bring our personal depth of feeling, love, and compassion into our prayer. This allows us to accompany Jesus at a greater depth. End with the “Our Father.”

Day 20:

Notes: We now enter the final stage of our pilgrimage: the “fourth week” of the Spiritual Exercises. The mood shifts as we now enter into the contemplation of God’s life in all its fullness. We experience with Jesus and the disciples that the final door has been opened. There is nothing that can stop us now in our journey to freedom and eternal happiness in the Love of God. This final week is a time full of grace and light. We rejoice in each small flower, bird, smile, and extended hand. Remember the “introductory prayer” as you enter into prayer; use it as well throughout the day. Pay attention to the final colloquy: we draw closer into this interior knowledge of the risen Jesus who strengthens our commitment to life forever. We discuss this desire with our “friend” Jesus at the end of the prayer and as the day moves along.

Grace: I ask the Father for this gift: to enter fully into the joy of the risen and victorious Christ. To be able to grasp the fullness of life that Jesus has achieved for us. To rejoice deeply with Christ, with Mary, and all his disciples.

Reflections: Today and in the days to follow, Ignatius invites us to “ask for the grace to be glad and to rejoice intensely because of the great glory and joy of Christ our Lord” who is risen from the dead. No one could imagine what was going to happen, even though Isaiah the prophet had already announced that “My servant will prosper; he will be raised high and greatly exalted.” But the last days of Jesus were so hard to endure. His death was so incomprehensible that it was impossible to imagine how God was still present. Everyone was perplexed and demoralized. More than once throughout the Bible a barren, elderly woman found herself with child unbelievably, against all odds. Yes, Scripture writers remind us that “nothing is impossible with God.” Yet it was still hard to believe: even though the guards explained all the details to the chief priests and the elders, nobody accepted their story. But today we believe that the resurrection is the ultimate truth of God’s extraordinary power and goodness. God has the power to liberate us from death, every kind of death.

Sometimes our faith is all too weak. The God who transformed Jesus from death to life can surely transform us as well. Still we are often tempted to feel discouraged and even hopeless in the face of whatever problems, fears, sinfulness, or grief take hold of us. The risen Jesus is transformed forever; by this same fact, each of us is also transformed interiorly since we hold the seed of Resurrection within us. Jesus is alive and with us forever, even though we sometimes find it hard to believe it.

The disciples going to Emmaus got that message. It is also the experience of Mary, the mother of Christ. She understood from the very beginning that Jesus was alive. As Ignatius tells us: she was certainly the first person to experience the His Resurrection. And from that moment she draws closer to the disciples, helping them overcome their own sadness and disappointment. Yes, the Risen Lord is with us as He promised, consoling us and offering His gifts, so that we in turn may console those suffering throughout the world.

When the women approached the empty tomb, unable to accept the possibility that Jesus had risen, the watchman simply says: "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" The same is said to us: too often we cannot believe the good news about ourselves and our world. Once again Jesus confounds our expectations in so many ways! Today we recognize that the Risen Jesus does not show himself first to the apostles like Peter, Matthew or John, but rather to the women, the most courageous and faithful of all the disciples.

In this contemplation let us enter inside the scene personally and experience vividly Jesus' resurrection from death. I listen, I observe, I speak, I entreat, I touch...I am actually inside the event. We pray for the resurrection of every death within us and among all those we love. Today Mary understands us very well!

Scripture:

Isaiah 52:13-53:12. "Who could have believed what we have heard?"

«See, my servant will do well in his undertakings, he will be honoured, and lifted up, and be very high. As peoples were surprised at him, and his face was not beautiful, so as to be desired: his face was so changed by disease as to be unlike that of a man, and his form was no longer that of the sons of men. So will nations give him honour; kings will keep quiet because of him: for what had not been made clear to them they will see; and they will give their minds to what had not come to their ears. Who would have had faith in the word which has come to our ears, and to whom had the arm of the Lord been unveiled? For his growth was like that of a delicate plant before him, and like a root out of a dry place: he had no grace of form, to give us pleasure; Men made sport of him, turning away from him; he was a man of sorrows, marked by disease; and like one from whom men's faces are turned away, he was looked down on, and we put no value on him. But it was our pain he took, and our diseases were put on him: while to us he seemed as one diseased, on whom God's punishment had come. But it was for our sins he was wounded, and for our evil doings he was crushed: he took the punishment by which we have peace, and by his wounds we are made well. We all went wandering like sheep; going every one of us after his desire; and the Lord put on him the punishment of us all. Men were cruel to him, but he was gentle and quiet; as a lamb taken to its death, and as a sheep before those who take her wool makes no sound, so he said not a word. They took away from him help and right, and who gave a thought to his fate? for he was cut off from the land of the living: he came to his death for the sin of my people. And they put his body into the earth with sinners, and his last resting-place was with the evil-doers, though he had done no wrong, and no deceit was in his mouth. Yet the Lord took thought for his oppressed servant and healed him who had given himself as a sacrifice for sin. He will enjoy long life and see his children's children and in his hand the Lord's purpose will prosper. By his humiliation my servant will justify many; after his suffering he will see light and be satisfied: it is their guilt he bears. For this cause he will have a heritage with the great, and he will have a part in the goods of war with the strong, because he gave up his life, and was numbered with the evil-doers; taking on himself the sins of the people, and making prayer for the wrongdoers.»

Matthew 28:1-15. "Do not be afraid; I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; he has been raised, [just as he promised.]"

Luke 24:13-35. Jesus, my companion all along this pilgrimage, explains to me how He has been part of my history and even my pre-history. Consoled in this way, I want to proclaim to others just as the Emmaus disciples did: "The Lord has been raised!"

Final Colloquy: At this point in our inner pilgrimage, we are already accustomed to walk with our friend and Lord Jesus Christ, speaking freely as one friend does to another. If in your heart you feel the strength and grace to do so, invite Jesus to accept you for service under His banner, joining at His side to build the Kingdom of God. Conclude with the "Our Father."

A Prayer for Spiritual Freedom

O Spirit of God, we ask you to help orient
all our actions by your inspirations,
carry them on by your gracious assistance,
that every prayer and work of ours
may always begin from you
and through you be happily ended.

Day 21 Some Ignatian hints for today: Autobiography: Iqualada

It appears that the town of Iqualada is the place where Ignatius decided to buy his pilgrim garb, as described several years later:

«Arriving at a large village not far from Montserrat, he decided to purchase a garment to wear on his journey to Jerusalem. He therefore bought a poorly-woven piece of sackcloth, filled with prickly wooden fibers. Out of this he made a garment that reached his feet. He also bought a pair shoes of coarse material often used to make brooms. He never wore but one shoe, not for the sake of the comfort he derived, but because this leg would be quite swollen from riding on horseback all day since for mortification, he wore a cord tied tightly just below the knee. For this reason, he felt he ought to wear a shoe on that foot. He also bought a pilgrim's staff and a gourd to drink from. These he tied to his saddle.»

Let us pay close attention at this point. It may be helpful to reflect on all that we "carry with us" and anything else that is burdensome. What are my "good-looking clothes" and other "valuables" that I could "leave" at the feet of the Virgin of Montserrat? Is it possible for me to adopt a lifestyle more in keeping with the pilgrimage that we are making? For me, what would be the equivalent of a pilgrim's sack cloth and sandals? What can I leave behind, and what do I not want to let go of? This journey has surely helped us to put many things into perspective and to question other realities. What do I leave permanently before the Virgin? Certainly not mere accessories, but rather anything that prevents me from following Jesus more closely — right?

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me.

I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore, will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Amen.

Day 21:

Notes: We maintain the same positive spirit as we continue to contemplate the life of God in all its fullness. There is nothing that can hinder us on our path to freedom and eternal happiness in God's love. Live this last week full of grace and full of light. We rejoice in every flower, bird, smile, extended hand. Remember the "introductory prayer" as we enter into prayer, as well as throughout the day. Pay attention to the final colloquy: we ask an interior knowledge of the risen Jesus who strengthens our commitment to life eternal. We discuss this with our "friend" Jesus in the colloquy at the end of prayer, and during the day. At this point, pay attention to the Ignatian tips referring to St. Peter Claver. Peter Claver was a follower of Jesus Christ and a Jesuit missionary in Latin America; he was often called the "slave of slaves."

Grace: I beg the Father for this gift: to enter into the joy of the risen and victorious Christ. To be able to contemplate the fullness of life that Jesus has achieved for us. I ask to rejoice deeply with Christ, and to be sent into the world to serve the mission of Jesus Christ.

Reflections: The grace of being alive, the grace of experiencing the resurrection within you is not just a personal gift. Rather, with great energy, this grace must be shared with others and placed at the service of Jesus' Mission: to spread the Good News of the Kingdom of God. Today we feel renewed as in the same moment we commit ourselves with Jesus, our best "friend," to help realize His mission on earth. The Father continues to pour out the Spirit of Christ upon the men and women of our day. Jesus consoles us always and sends us forth on mission to console the suffering, the poor, and all who long for salvation. As it is written: "When you send forth your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth. (Psalm 104:30). We pray today to our God that we may enter into the joy and consoling mission of the Risen Jesus.

In Matthew's gospel we find Jesus asking the disciples to go to Galilee and assist him there. The disciples were those sinners He had invited to become His companions, the same ones who were traitors at the very end. We are now one with them, as disciples in our pilgrimage to the Kingdom. We are also united with others, perhaps more sinful or more faithful than ourselves. But this doesn't really matter since our strength and wisdom is centered in Christ. Do not be afraid to answer His call. We gather now at the mountain, that meeting place between God and His people. For us this place can be a slum, a lab, a church, a clinic, an office, a parlor, a classroom. Jesus gives us our mission: go forth, baptize, teach, love, and bring God's Compassion as reconciliation for all of humanity. We are invited to fulfill this mission in every moment and circumstance of life. And Jesus speaks the most wonderful words to us: He promises that He will be with us always, in each joyful and painful moment. Even though I may not feel worthy to accept His presence, Jesus will always stay close to me. Even if I am a sinful person, unfaithful and limited, Jesus is going to send His Spirit to transform every human situation as an experience of growth.

Even though our faith may be small, Jesus counts on us. Thomas had to recognize his lack of faith before being sent to the world. We pray to answer the call of Jesus, inviting us to follow him to the beach and stay with Him. We join the disciples there in receiving His commission and His blessing.

Scripture:

Matthew 28: 16-20: "I will be with you always, until the end of time."

John 20: 24-29: Tolerant of my darkness and unbelief as He was of Thomas, Jesus delights in consoling me with the gift of renewed faith. In His loving presence, I say: "My Lord and my God!"

John 21: 1-17: A moment of joy – "It is the Lord!" A moment of companionship – "Come and eat your meal." A moment of intimacy and decision – "Do you love me?" A moment of mission – "Feed my sheep!"

Final Colloquy: At this point in our interior pilgrimage, we are accustomed to walk with our friend and Lord Jesus Christ, speaking freely just as one friend does with another. If you honestly experience the strength and grace within you, beg Jesus to accept you under His banner, thus to build the Kingdom of God at His side. Finish with the "Our Father."

Day 22:

Note: We maintain the same positive spirit as we continue in our “fourth week,” since we feel more and more united with Jesus Christ in His mission. Indeed nothing can hinder our progress towards freedom and eternal happiness in the love of God. Remember the “introductory prayer” and the final colloquy – at the end of the prayer as well as during the day. Rejoice in Christ’s Resurrection! Songs, light, flowers, water, and friends are welcome!

Grace: I beg God to rejoice deeply with the Risen Christ since I have been sent into the world to serve His mission. I pray to recognize His transfigured presence in my life, accompanying Him on his mission to reconcile and give life to all people.

Reflections: Jesus needs our hands to welcome those men and women who need care, reconciliation, Love and Life. Jesus needs our wills, our desires to move forward and build, to continue creating the Kingdom among us. The Risen Jesus calls us to follow Him and to participate with Him in the [gospel] transformation that has already begun in the World. In the gospels, Jesus explicitly calls several people by name. As we contemplate the mysteries proposed today, we hear our own name and discover that our hearts are also stirred. How do I feel as I am called by name today, just as Zacchaeus was? How do I feel invited to climb the mountain of Tabor with Jesus? What does it mean for me to feel close to Jesus?

The story of Jesus’ transfiguration on Mount Tabor proclaims the truth hidden deep within our own humanity, unclear as this may be. The Light is certainly within us. The Divine Essence inhabits us and is noticeable from the first moment of our conception. Our human condition is sometimes a “dark filter” to the Divine Light. But nonetheless we must turn “black holes” into “bright stars.” The suffering, the injustice, and the absurdity that surround us in so many situations ... these create the “filter” that can switch off the smallest spark of light. But in the Risen Jesus we discover that, despite all the turmoil in which we live, the Light of Jesus still burns within us – and this experience transforms us. Nothing indeed can separate us from God’s Love. Everything can be transfigured in His Love.

The Risen Jesus is God alive within us. Whoever communicates this message with their time and talents will not fail. What needs to be transformed in my life? What prevents the divine light from shining through me?

Scripture:

Luke 19:1-10. Jesus calls out to Zacchaeus and invites him to “descend” from his concerns and lifestyle. If you want to see Jesus, leave behind the fabrications you have made. If you want to meet Jesus in your life, return to your home. He awaits you there. Open your heart to Him, that this reunion will be generous and transforming.

Romans 8:31-39. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Matthew 17:1-13. Jesus calls his disciples and invites them to accompany him on his journey of transfiguration. I also need to go up the mountain with Him. So much pain and so many difficulties can undermine our faith and determination. But if we believe in the Resurrection, we also believe that Life has no ending. Nothing can hide the Light within us. Nothing can silence the Word [of God] within us?

Matthew 17:14-21. Called to serve Jesus Christ and to share together in mission, our faith cannot be weak. If we believe in Jesus we will not fail. If we believe only in ourselves and our possibilities, we will achieve nothing – even if we bear His name.

Final colloquy: At this point in our interior pilgrimage, we are accustomed to walk with Jesus Christ, our friend and Lord, speaking freely with Him as one friend does with another. If you are personally able to find the strength and grace within you, beg Jesus to be accepted under His banner and thus to build the Kingdom of God at His side. Conclude with the “Our Father.”

Day 23:

Notes: Great joy stays with us during this final stage of the “outer” journey. The long cherished goal of Manresa is at hand! Remember the “introductory prayer” and the final colloquy both at the end of the prayer and also during the day. May our hearts be filled with the strength of the Holy Spirit, and may the Spirit’s strength go with us on this milestone day in our lives. The Ignatian path for today invites us to continue our inner pilgrimage.

Grace: I beg God that I may rejoice deeply with the Risen Christ since I have also been sent into the world to serve His mission. I pray to receive the Holy Spirit so I can better accompany Jesus in His mission to reconcile the world and bring life to all persons.

Reflections: the Spirit of God confirms us in the mission we have received from Christ. Moreover, the same Spirit remains with us and strengthens us in any difficulties that come our way. We follow the dynamics of previous weeks: the true King invites us to accompany him in his conquest of good against the absurd destruction of all that is human. The Spirit strengthens us in our journey across the world, preaching the Good News.

The Spirit breaks down barriers and opens pathways. The Spirit creates fraternity, creates community, and brings forth the Image of God in the world. The Spirit awakens us, enlightens us, and removes our deafness and blindness. The Spirit launches us and pushes us forward, and does not allow us to sit still for very long. The Spirit challenges us, pulls us away from our creature comforts, and breaks through our well-planned schemes. The Spirit fills us with compassion, love, and the desire for solidarity. The Spirit raises us up, helps us to dream, and exalts us. In the Spirit we can hope for everything, we can bear everything, we can accomplish everything. The Spirit is the actual presence of God in our daily lives.

Throughout our pilgrimage we have been “breathing in” the Spirit. Today we beg for a deep awareness of the Holy Spirit’s presence within us. Where do I find the Spirit working within me? Within others? Do I recognize the “action” of the Spirit within the world? Remember to beg for this important grace.

Scripture:

John 16:5-15. I recall the words of Jesus about the work of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:1-21. The promise of the Spirit’s coming is fulfilled on the day of Pentecost.

Acts 10:44-48. While Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit came down upon all those who were listening. The work of evangelization had begun. I ask to embrace this challenge with energy and commitment.

Luke 4:14-20. Jesus returned to Galilee, filled with the power of the Spirit. I pray that my return home will also be filled with the Spirit. I need God’s Holy Spirit to fulfill the mission of God’s Kingdom.

Final colloquy: At this stage of our interior pilgrimage, we are accustomed to walk with our friend and Lord, Jesus Christ, speaking freely as one friend does with another. Conclude with the “Our Father.”

Personal reflection at any time during the day: Ignatian Binary’s

We make a short recollection of our life. As Ignatius, symbolically the past will rest at the feet of Our Lady. A new life begins.

Like the disciples, we are called to go back to Galilee after our arrival to Manresa, we are called to go back to our “regular life”, back to the old days. But we have a mission: to work for the Kingdom as Jesus did. We are called to work for the Kingdom in our daily and worldly lives.

How will you use your power, gifts, talents, and resources? This is the fundamental question of Jesus’ temptation in the desert. We’re told that Evil showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and said, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” The answer was: “You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.” This moment of crisis in the wilderness is the same moment of crisis that we all face constantly. Can we keep our desires and needs for praise, adulation, power, and comfort ‘in order’? Will our lives be all about using our powers to serve ourselves, or will we make our lives about contributing to the society and world we’ve inherited? Bring to mind the temptations that afflict you; ponder that Jesus too, fully human, might likewise have suffered any one of these temptations, as shameful as they may be. Jesus’ solution to temptation was the appreciation to rely on God; we too can bring our temptations to Jesus. Let’s pray that we find ourselves so close to Jesus that we want to choose what He chooses.

As we know already, Jesus doesn’t choose “perfect men and women” in order to become His disciples. He knows us pretty well. Considering the kind of persons Jesus chose, Ignatius invites us to think, “*how they came from a rude and lowly condition*

of living; second, the dignity to which they were so gently called.” That’s our mystery: being so low, asked to so high service. Temptation is at our door. That’s normal!

Ignatius poses a meditation on three kinds of responses to Jesus’ invitation to follow Him in the mission. Ignatius is challenging us to think about what it means to be truly spiritually free to journey alongside Jesus in Jesus’ mission. We talk about true freedom, the freedom that leads to God’s action in the world. All of us experience attractions that can get in the way of our serving God and the world well: we may love money, sex, power, our good looks, being well clothed, having great cars or other stuff. Some folks have good intentions; but they never manage to act in order to change his way of life until the day before their death. Others, deep down, know that something is not quite right, but they keep finding excuses and rationalizations to keep doing in the same way and even try to convince God that it is not that bad. Others are free: they could be contentedly rich, if this is God’s will and for God’s service; but they can also be happy as poor and stop doing what they are involved at. They can accept graciously accept prestige insofar as it helps mission to serve, but they don’t crave and chase prestige for its own sake, and can easily live without it. It’s entirely human to have attachments which collapse our freedom; perhaps it’s enough for today’s meditation to simply recognize those attachments and desire to be more free from Evil temptations and beg for God’s light.

So... each of us we must make our choices: make your personal offering... it is up to you.

Day 23 Some Ignatian hints for today: Autobiography, Montserrat

Drawing closer to Montserrat we reach a very special place for Ignatius of Loyola and many other pilgrims of his time. The mountain of Montserrat is recognized by many as a place of great spiritual presence. Called “Magic Mountain” by some, tradition remembers it as a place where the presence of the Spirit is “natural.” Let each of us be carried forward by the flow of this same spiritual force as was Ignatius. Let us present to the Black Madonna our personal offering to follow Jesus, with great freedom of heart for his greater service.

«He continued on his journey to Montserrat, thinking as usual of the great deeds he was going to do for the love of God. As his mind was filled with the adventures of Amadis of Gaul and such books, thoughts about these adventures came to his mind. He determined, therefore, to spend the entire night in a watch of arms, without ever sitting or lying down, but standing a while and then kneeling before the altar of Our Lady of Montserrat. There he would lay aside his fine attire and clothe himself with the armor of Christ. When he arrived at Montserrat, he spent a long time in prayer. With the consent of his confessor, he spent three whole days writing a general confession of his sins. With the permission of his confessor he arranged to give up his horse and to hang up his sword and his dagger in the church, at the altar of Our Lady. This confessor was the first person he told about his resolution to devote himself to the spiritual life. Up to then he had not revealed this purpose to any confessor.

On the eve of the Annunciation of Our Blessed Lady, March 24 in the year 1522, he approached a beggar. He removed his costly clothes and gave them to this man. He then put on the pilgrim’s robe he had previously bought and went to kneel before the altar of Our Lady. Alternating between kneeling and standing, he spent the entire night with his staff in hand.»

Spend a longer period of prayer in the chapel of the Virgin of Montserrat. Pray with the text of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, begging God to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives, all for the greater glory of God. Here we also change our old clothes and put on those which we “discovered” in Iguadala: a new life needs new clothes! What do I leave behind here in Montserrat? What am I going to bring back home?

The basilica of Montserrat was destroyed and rebuilt at various times in its history, following the rhythm of the wars that plagued the region. Each time the church was rebuilt a little further back, closer to the mountain. At the entrance portico by the atrium of the current church, near the statue of Ignatius, you will see a black circle on the ground with a worn quote written on the floor that reminds us that it was here that Ignatius made his offering to the Virgin.

A Prayer of Reconciliation

Lord Christ, help us to see what it is
that joins us together, not what separates us.
For when we see only what it is that makes us different,
we too often become aware of what is wrong with others.
We see only their faults and weaknesses,
interpreting their actions as flowing from malice or hatred rather than fear.
Even when confronted with evil, Lord,
you forgave and sacrificed yourself rather than sought revenge.
Teach us to do the same by the power of your Spirit.

-William Breault SJ, is a writer and artist who resides in California. He has published books of prayerful reflections.

Day 24 Some Ignatian hints for today: Autobiography: Manresa

We are now on the road to Manresa, with a new outfit and a deep inner desire to do everything for the greater glory of God. Yet we also experience quite strongly that good resolves are never easy, even when they are made with best intentions of the heart.

«After receiving the Blessed Sacrament, he left at daybreak. To avoid being recognized he avoided the direct route that leads to Barcelona since he might have met those who knew him and honored him. Instead, he took a byway that led him to a town called Manresa. Here he decided to stay a few days in the hospital and to write down some notes in a small book which for his own consolation he very carefully carried with him. About three miles from Montserrat, he was overtaken by a man who came after him in great haste. This man asked whether he had given some clothing to a poor man, as the man said he had. Ignatius answered that he had in fact given them to a beggar. When he learned that this man had been ill-treated because he was suspected of stealing the clothes, Ignatius' eyes filled with tears of compassion for this beggar. And no matter how much he tried to avoid praise and esteem, it did not take long in Manresa before people began telling great things about him because of what happened at Montserrat. His reputation increased day by day. It was not long before people were saying more than was true, declaring that he had given up a large fortune, and similar things that were not factual.

Every day he begged alms at Manresa. He never ate meat nor drank wine, even though both were offered to him. On Sundays he did not fast and drank sparingly if wine was offered to him. Formerly he had been quite careful about his hair and wore it in the fashionable manner adopted by young men of his age. Now he made up his mind to neglect it and let it grow wild, without combing it or cutting it or covering it either day or night. For the same reason, he allowed the nails of his hands and feet to grow since here too his care had been excessive.»

The "some days" that Ignatius first planned to spend in Manresa became more than ten months of personal growth. God was in no hurry with him and, thanks be to God, Ignatius was not overly eager to leave this city that welcomed him with open arms despite his eccentricities. The Ignatian pilgrim may well want to imitate some qualities of this "converted gentleman." Perhaps it is time to stop at a barber shop to get a good haircut.

Day 24:

Notes: Easter joy continues within us. Remember to begin with the "introductory prayer" and to conclude with the final colloquy, and to pray it throughout the day. Live the joy of Christ's Resurrection!. Songs, light, flowers, water and friends are welcome! Our Ignatian journey invites us today to do as Ignatius did: spend some special prayer time with the Black Virgin of Montserrat.

Grace: I beg God to give me an intimate knowledge of the many gifts I have received. Filled with gratitude for these many gifts, may I love and serve the Divine Majesty.

Reflections: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are always at work sharing themselves with us. This sharing empowers us to be contemplatives-in-action, finding God in all things. The Jesuits decreed in their 32nd General Congregation that "each member of every Jesuit community must be mindful of what St. Ignatius says about love – that it consists in sharing what one has, who one is, and all those whom one loves. Today will focus our meditation on this experience of love as an exchange of who one is and what one shares with the beloved. In the Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius invites us to understand just how God's Love

is given to us and shared so generously out of God's great goodness. With this cascade of gifts and graces, we must also respond in a generous and loving way. We will follow the directions of Ignatius to let our hearts expand in the Love of God. The steps of this Ignatian contemplation are as follows:

CONTEMPLATION TO ATTAIN LOVE.

Two things should be noted: The first is that love is expressed more in actions than in words. The second is that love is a communication between two persons. It is to know, to give, and to communicate from the lover to the one loved, and vice versa, whatever one has or is able to have. So, if one has wisdom, he shares this with the one who has not, or honors and riches from the one who has to the one who does not.

Then I return to the introductory prayer and ask that everything be directed to God's will. Next I center myself within the prayer. I imagine that I stand before God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Spirit of Love who created me in my humanity. I call to mind today's conscious desire: I ask the Father to give me an intimate knowledge of the many gifts I have received so that, filled with gratitude for all of them, I may love and serve the Divine Majesty in every way.

And I begin my contemplation. **The first point** is to call to mind the benefits received from God: the fact of being born and of being saved by Jesus, as well as for all those personal gifts I enjoy. I consider all that God our Lord has done for me and how much of Himself God has shared with me. Aware of this reality, I ponder with much reason and justice what I might offer and return to His Divine Majesty, that is to say all my possessions and all of myself.

Then, as you wish, consider that anyone who desires to be more responsive to God will make the following self-offering: *"Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will – all I have and call my own. You have given everything to me. So I return it, to be used according to your will. Give me only your love and grace. These are enough for me."*

Completing the first point, Ignatius proposes a **second point**: notice how God dwells in all of creation and in all living creatures: giving life to all natural elements, bringing vegetation to the plants, sense to the animals, and understanding to humans. God also gives me life, encouragement, direction, and understanding. God also makes me a holy temple, created in His likeness and Divine image. I then reflect on myself --how I live, what I accomplish, and how I may serve. I end this point by returning to the previous prayer of self-offering: "Take Lord and receive..."

The third point is to consider how God actually works and labors for me in all created things: everything in the heavens and the elements, plants, fruits, animals, etc. God gives and preserves all life, giving awareness, vegetation, etc. Then I think about myself: what can I do to return this love I have received. I finish this point by returning to the previous prayer of self-offering: "Take Lord and receive..."

The fourth: notice how every good gift descends from above, and my own strength comes only from God's infinite power. Thus justice, goodness, mercy, all other good gifts that I recognize in myself as well as in the world (like the rays from the sun, our water supply, etc.) all come from God. After considering the origins of all that is good, I consider myself and the way I will make a return for all that I have received. I end this reflection by returning to the self-offering prayer above: "Take Lord and receive ..." Finish with the usual colloquy and the "Our Father."

Final colloquy: At this point in our inner pilgrimage, we are accustomed to walk with our friend and Lord Jesus Christ, speaking freely as one friend does with another. Conclude with the "Our Father."

Center of Our Hearts

O God, what will you do to conquer
the fearful hardness of our hearts?
Lord, you must give us new hearts,
tender hearts, sensitive hearts,
to replace hearts that are made of marble and of bronze.
You must give us your own Heart, Jesus.
Come, lovable Heart of Jesus.
Place your Heart deep in the center of our hearts
and enkindle in each heart a flame of love
as strong, as great, as the sum of all the reasons that I have for loving you, my God.
O holy Heart of Jesus,
dwell hidden in my heart,
so that I may live only in you and only for you,
so that, in the end, I may live with you eternally in heaven. Amen.

-St. Claude La Colombiere SJ (1641-1682) confessor of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque. He was a missionary and ascetical writer who left a large number of writings.

Day 25:

Notes: The practice of these spiritual exercises has already given each of us a personal experience. Each pilgrim has found his or her own way forward along this “inner pilgrimage.” At the “Cave of Manresa” you will find a lot of materials that can help you continue to grow in Ignatian spirituality. Seeking such advice is always helpful!

Grace: I ask the Father to give me an interior knowledge of the many gifts I have received from God. Filled with gratitude for these blessings, I pray that in all things I may love and serve the Divine Majesty. I also pray that the spiritual experience of St. Ignatius of Loyola will help guide me along my own path of life.

Reflections: Today we repeat the same meditation as we made in Montserrat, focusing this time on the pilgrimage we have completed. The Ignatian Way has certainly offered us an experience of God’s love in its many forms. So we spend our prayer time using this contemplation of God’s love to review the various stages of our journey. We thank God for so many experiences and blessings as we prepare to return to our everyday routine.

CONTEMPLATION TO ATTAIN LOVE in our pilgrimage.

Two realities should be noted at the outset: The first is that love is expressed more in actions than in words. The second is that love is a communication between two persons. It is to know, to give, and to communicate from the lover to the one loved, and vice versa, whatever one has or is able to have. So, if one has wisdom, he shares this with the one who needs it, or honors and riches from the one who has to the one who does not. Then go back to the introductory prayer and ask that everything can be directed to God’s will.

Next I center myself in the prayer. I imagine that I stand before God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Spirit of Love that created me in all my humanity. Today I ask the Father to give me an intimate knowledge of the many gifts I have received so that, filled with gratitude for all of these, I may love and serve the Divine Majesty in everything I undertake.

I begin the prayer. **The first point** is to call to mind all the blessings I have received from God throughout this time of pilgrimage. I recall both the ones that seemed good to me from the very beginning and others that I now realize were really not so bad after all. Aware of this personal reality, I consider with much reason and justice what I must give of myself as an offering to His Divine Majesty – that is to say all my possessions and all of my life. Also, as you wish, consider that anyone wanting to be more responsive to the Lord will make the following loving response: *“Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will – all I have and call my own. You have given everything to me. To You, Lord, I return it to do with as you will. Give me only your love and grace. This is enough for me.”*

Completing the first point, Ignatius proposes a **second point**: notice how God is present and alive in each meeting and experience, around me and inside of me as I think about myself and the way I live, in all that I accomplish and in those I serve. Finish this point by returning to the previous prayer of self-offering: "Take Lord and receive..."

In **the third point**, I consider how God has labored for me in all created things and persons I have met on this pilgrimage. After considering this point I ask myself what I can do to become a more loving person. I conclude this third point by returning to the prayer of self-offering: "Take, Lord, and receive..."

The fourth: notice how every good gift descends from above, and my own strength comes only from God's infinite power. Thus justice, goodness, mercy, all other good gifts that I recognize in myself as well as in the world (like the rays from the sun, our water supply, etc.) all come from God. After considering the origins of all this goodness, I consider myself and the way I will make a return for all that I have received during this pilgrimage. I end this reflection by returning to the self-offering prayer above: "Take Lord and receive ..."

Final Colloquy: Summarize your thoughts during this time of prayer, speaking with Jesus as one friend does with another. Be honest with him about the desires and decisions you found in your heart during these days of pilgrimage and prayer. Conclude with the "Our Father."

A Hollowed Space to Be Filled

A cup must be empty before it can be filled.
If it is already full, it can't be filled again except by emptying it out.
In order to fill anything, there must be a hollowed-out space.
Otherwise it can't receive.
This is especially true of God's word.
In order to receive it, we must be hollowed out.
We must be capable of receiving it,
emptied of the false self and its endless demands.
When Christ came, there was no room in the inn.
It was full. The inn is a symbol of the heart.
God's word, Christ, can take root only in a hollow.

-William Breault SJ

To See Everything New

Grant me, O Lord,
to see everything now with new eyes,
to discern and test the spirits
that help me read the signs of the times,
to relish the things that are yours,
and to communicate them to others.
Give me the clarity of understanding that you gave Ignatius.

-Pedro Arrupe SJ (1907-91) was the superior general of the Society of Jesus from 1965 to 1983.

Help Us to Remain Close to You

Lord Jesus, we ask you now
to help us to remain with you always,
to be close to you with all the ardor of our hearts,
to take up joyfully the mission you entrust to us
and that is to continue your presence
and spread the good news of your Resurrection.

-Carlo Maria Martini SJ

Appendix

Magis-driven heroic leadership is a daily personal pursuit

The magis drives a person toward something more, something greater. Chris Lowney describes what the magis can mean for leaders on a daily basis.

Most people wonder about their capacity to act heroically should a momentous opportunity suddenly present itself. Loyola's Spiritual Exercises forced recruits to consider instead their capacity for heroism on a daily basis. Jesuit heroism is not just a response to a crisis but a consciously chosen *approach to life*; it is judged not by the scale of the opportunity but by the quality of the response to the opportunity at hand. For the Jesuit teacher, every day presented a choice, summed up by [Pedro] Ribadeneira: either another day spent with brats, "so frivolous, so restless, so talkative, and so unwilling to work, that even their parents cannot keep them at home" or another day devoted to a business so vital that "all the well-being of Christianity and of the whole world" depended on it. Every pursuit offers its own version of the same choice. How one chooses profoundly affects personal satisfaction and performance quality; after all, how can you not be motivated when the "wellbeing of the whole world" depends on what you do?

This mindset wasn't a mental trick they played on themselves. They were consciously committed to extracting every kernel of potential from every moment and had the foresight to see what could happen when that commitment was multiplied many times over. So one teacher at a time, one student at a time, one year at a time, one school at a time, they created the world's most extensive and highest-quality education network. If all politics is local, as Jesuit-educated Tip O'Neill once observed, so too is all heroic leadership. Great results emerge one motivated individual at a time.

Magis-driven leadership inevitably leads to heroism. Heroism begins with each person considering, internalizing, and shaping his or her mission. Whether one works within a large organization or alone, no mission is motivating until it is personal. And it is sustainable only when one makes the search for *magis* a reflexive, daily habit. A *magis*-driven leader is not content to go through the motions or settle for the status quo but is restlessly inclined to look for something more, something greater. Instead of wishing circumstances were different, *magis*-driven leaders either make them different or make the most of them. Instead of waiting for golden opportunities, they find the gold in the opportunities at hand.

Heroes lift themselves up and make themselves greater by pursuing something greater than their own self-interest. Our classic heroic role models often do so through extraordinary bravery at uniquely critical moments. But heroism is not limited to these rare and privileged opportunities. They are also heroes who demonstrate the courage, nobility, and greatness of heart to pursue a personal sense of *magis*, to keep themselves pointed toward goals that enhance them as people.

(By Chris Lowney, from *Heroic Leadership: Best Practices from a 450-Year-Old Company That Changed the World*)

God Wants Our Friendship

(By William A. Barry, sj. from *A Friendship Like No Other: Experiencing God's Amazing Embrace*;
<http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer>)

What does God want in creating us? My stand is that what God wants is friendship.

To forestall immediate objections, let me say that I do not mean that God is lonely and therefore needs our friendship. This is a romantic and quite unorthodox notion that makes God ultimately unbelievable. No, I maintain that God—out of the abundance of divine relational life, not any need for us—desires humans into existence for the sake of friendship.

Better than He's made out to be

This thesis may sound strange, because it runs counter to much teaching about God. To be honest, I questioned it myself when I first began to think it through. Mind you, I have been writing about prayer as a personal relationship for many years, maintaining that God wants such a relationship with us, and I have used the analogy of a personal relationship between two people to describe the developing relationship between God and us. But the notion that God wants our friendship did not easily follow. Whenever it reared its head, I shrugged it off as a fancy not to be taken seriously. After all, I had been raised with the standard catechism answer: "God made me to know him and love him and serve him in this world and to be happy with him forever in the next." As far as I can remember, no one ever interpreted this as implying that God wants my friendship.

But over the past few years, as my own relationship with God has deepened and I have listened to people talk about how God relates to them, I have become convinced that the best analogy for the relationship God wants with us is friendship. I began to use this kind of language in talks and articles and found that it resonated with others. I hope that you will find similar resonance and will trust your experience more fully. I can think of nothing that would please me more than to hear that you, and many others, have come to find God "better than he's made out to be," as my Irish mother once put it. I believe that God would also be pleased.

Fear or Friendship?

But in order for us to trust this experience of God as friend, we must move beyond our feelings of fear of God. The teaching that most older Christians received about God induced fear of God rather than the feelings invoked by the term *friend*. I still meet more people who fear God rather than feel warm and friendly toward God. Does the idea of friendship with God figure into your experience of religious teaching and worship? I suspect that it does not.

The idea, however, has an ancient heritage. It can be defended as orthodox, perhaps even as the best reading of the developing revelation of God contained in the Bible. I was encouraged to undertake this book, after a number of false starts, by reading Liz Carmichael's *Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love*, a scholarly book that shows that there is an enduring tradition of identifying *caritas* (love or charity) with friendship, and thus defining God as friendship.

Two examples of this tradition cited by Carmichael will suffice. Aelred, the twelfth-century English Cistercian abbot of Rievaulx, developed his own variant of John's "God is love" (1 John 4:16): "Shall I say . . . God is friendship?" A century later, Thomas Aquinas defined *caritas* as friendship with God. Both writers knew the text from the first letter of John in its Latin form: "Deus caritas est."

An idea whose time has come

This notion of friendship with God seems to have waxed and waned throughout history. It is possible that preachers and teachers of religion fear that embracing the idea of friendship with God may lead to effacing the mystery and awesomeness of God, and so they hesitate to talk about it. But I am convinced, as is Carmichael, that this is an idea whose time has come, and none too soon for the future of our world—as I hope will become clear as we proceed. For one thing, fear of God has closed off a closer relationship with God in many people I have met, and they seem drawn by the notion of friendship. For another, friendship with God leads to a wider and wider circle of friends as we realize that God's desire for friendship includes all people.

As noted, much of our teaching about God has stressed fear of God. And why not? The psalmist writes: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:10). But the fear of the Lord extolled in the psalm is a far cry from the fear instilled by religious teaching, which leads people to keep their distance from God. The psalms surely were not written to keep people far from God, but just as bad news sells better than good in the media, so, too, hellfire and brimstone make for more compelling teaching and preaching. But God, I believe, is shortchanged by such teaching and preaching tactics, and so are we.

The downside of fear

The emphasis on hellfire may have salutary effects on the spiritual life in the short haul, but it can be argued that the long-haul effects leave something to be desired, especially when the threats no longer seem to hold. Witness what happened to

the practice, among Roman Catholics, of the sacrament of reconciliation (called confession prior to the Second Vatican Council): as soon as Catholics learned after Vatican II that they would not go to hell as easily as they had been taught and that confession was necessary only if they had committed serious sins, they drifted away from its use in huge numbers and have not returned, in spite of much hand-wringing on the part of bishops and priests and the real benefits that can come from a healthy use of this lovely rite. If fear is the principal factor used to enforce a religious practice, the practice will end when the fear is removed, and it will be difficult indeed to bring about its renewal.

Worse still, the emphasis on hellfire and brimstone gives God a bad name. One can read the Bible as a story of the progressive revelation of God—a God of compassion. Jesus' use of the tender word *Abba*—"dear Father"—for God is the culmination of this progressive revelation.

The "fear of the Lord" that is the beginning of wisdom is a healthy realization of God's awesomeness. God is fascinating and awe-inspiring, even terrifying, as the theologian Rudolf Otto put it. But suppose for a moment that God, who is Mystery itself—awesome, terrible, and unknowable—wants our friendship. Then the beginning of wisdom might be an acceptance of God's offer, even though accepting it proves to be daunting, challenging, and even a bit frightening.

An invitation to friendship

What I hope you will find in this book is an invitation to engage in a relationship of friendship with God and in a dialogue with me. In the book, I do not provide answers so much as make suggestions and ask you to either try a suggested approach or reflect on your own experience in light of my suggestions. I hope that this will help you become a friend of God; the book will not attain my purpose if all you get out of it are ideas.

In part 1 of the book, I will first examine human friendship as the best analogy for what God wants with us, and then I will offer some exercises to help you determine if the notion of friendship fits your relationship with God or to motivate you to try such a way of relating to God. In part 2, I will provide meditations on questions and issues that I have had to confront as I have reflected on the conviction that God wants my friendship. I hope that they will be helpful to you as you confront your own questions. Finally, in part 3, I will take up the questions of where we find God and how we distinguish the influence of God's Spirit on our experience from other influences.

Vigil of Our Lady following Ignacio

« *[In Manresa] He was accustomed to hear Mass daily, and to assist at Vespers and Compline—devotions from which he derived much consolation. During Mass, he always read over the history of the Passion, and his soul was filled with a joyful feeling of uninterrupted calm.* » *Autobiography of St. Ignatius, chapter 2, 20.*

Prayer in Montserrat, close of our Lady of Montserrat – the Moreneta (Brunette)

We walk with Mary and Ignatius following Jesus on his Way of the Cross

(Reflections from "The Way of the Cross" from Hans-Urs Von Balthasar, and the Collaborative Ministry from www.creighton.edu)

Mary takes us through the Passion of Christ: we join Mary for a reflection on the Stations, as she guides us through the Stations through her eyes then, and through her eyes now

STARTING PRAYER (together)

Grant, O Lord, that in our contemplation of the mystery of your Passion
we do not run away from the essential things.
Help us to contemplate you,
your Eucharistic love,
your crucified love as the sum reality necessary to understand all the rest,
as the one reality from which
all the others receive light and clarity.

We ask you this through the intercession
of the one who had the eye to see all essential things: Mary, your mother.

-Carlo Maria Martini SJ (1927-2012), Prayer to Mary to Understand the Cross

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, every day we receive in the holy Eucharist the body and blood which you left us as a memorial of your passion and death on the cross. Often we do not consider how much this great gift to your Church had cost you. You accept us with the same love with which you embraced the cross. Give us now the courage to reverently follow in your footsteps so that we may come to share in the fruits of your redemption.

Holy and merciful Father, grant that we may follow the way of the cross in faith and love, so that we may share in Christ's passion and together with him reach the glory of your kingdom. We ask you this through your son Jesus Christ. Amen.

The First Station: Jesus is condemned to die

V/ We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

R/ Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

"Pilate, wishing to please the multitude, released Barabbas to them, and handed over Jesus, when he had flogged him, to be crucified." (Mk 15:15)

My Son stood before Pilate as an innocent man. But, throughout his life he entered more and more deeply into the condition of sinful flesh. It was not enough that he was born of a human mother like me. He grew up in obscurity in Nazareth. And, they always judged him there. They always judged that it wasn't right that he was conceived before Joseph and I were married. Even when he began his public ministry, the religious leaders didn't accept him. His reflection of God didn't fit their self-serving picture of God. Finally, his own followers abandoned him. I never imagined he would have to experience solidarity with prisoners beaten and tortured, but he did. I'll never forget the blood he shed and the pain he experienced at the hands of the Roman guards. Jesus began this journey by becoming one with every powerless person, mocked and made fun of by others. He did nothing that deserves capital punishment, or the abuse he was given.

His "yes" – his surrender to God's will - ultimately destroyed the power of sin and death. While he was growing up, I told him many times how I had been graced to say "let it be done to me, according to your word." I never could have imagined that this would be the sword that would ultimately pass through my heart: to watch my Son say Yes to God, so completely and fully, for the salvation of the world.

Now that he is condemned to death, reflect with me on each station of his journey – entering more and more completely into our humanity and death itself. Let us ask for God's grace to be with him and to accompany him on his journey to more fully understand it and be more fully grateful for its gift.

Silence // Our Father...

*V/ At the cross her station keeping
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.*

The Second Station: Jesus Carries His Cross

V/ We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

R/ Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

"He went out, bearing his cross, to the place called "The Place of a Skull", which is called in Hebrew, "Golgotha"" (Jn 19:17)

My Son was forced to carry the cross on which he would be nailed, ridiculed and executed. We must pause here to remember what it represents. For this journey, he takes up the weight of all of our crosses, all of our senseless

suffering, and the weight of all of the sin in the world – past, present and future. Each step he took cut deeply into his already battered shoulders. I couldn't believe he could manage even a few steps.

We can look back now and remember that this is all for us. Each of us can say it was "for me." As we imagine each step he takes, we can pause now to say "thank you," in our own words, deep in our hearts.

Silence // Our Father...

V/ Through her heart, his sorrow sharing,
All his bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword had passed.

The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time.

V/ We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

R/ Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

"Most certainly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit." (Jn 12:24)

I can barely express to you what it was like to see my Son fall under the weight of that cross. Everything within me wanted to make them stop. This was already too much. But, there was nothing I could do but watch him lay on the ground.

Of course, I now know that if he was to enter completely into our lives, he would have to surrender to the crushing weight of the burdens so many in their world suffer. All the people of the earth who are overcome by unfair burdens will always know that, laying there on the ground, Jesus knew and would always understand their powerlessness. Unable to get himself up, he entered into and forever understands our fatigue and whatever unfairly defeats us.

I understand your sorrow and feeling of guilt at reflecting upon my Son's way to Calvary. Please, just be grateful. My Son simply wants us to remember how he loved then and loves us now. This is all about his mercy and the gift of life we have in him.

Silence // Our Father...

V/ Oh, how sad and sore distressed
Was that Mother highly blest
Of the sole-begotten one!

The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother.

V/ We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

R/ Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

"Simeon said to Mary, Jesus mother, "Behold, this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which is spoken against. Yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." (Lk 2:34-35)

As I pushed and shoved to move through the crowds to be as close to my Son as I could, we came to a place in the road where he stopped. He saw me. And we looked into each other's eyes. I didn't want him to see my tears or know my pain, but I long ago accepted how thoroughly he knew me. The love from my heart poured out in the

only embrace I could give him. My lips quietly said the prayer he taught us: "Father, may your Kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." He nodded so slightly, took a deep breath and moved on up the hill. The sword passing through my heart had blessed his mission, and I knew he knew it.

Thank him with me, even now, that he took up that mission for us. Thank him that he has tasted the separation and loss that every person in the world knows who has lost a loved one. And, he has understood the heart of every loving mother who grieves at the suffering of her children. He has become so completely one with us.

Silence // Our Father...

V/ Christ above in torment hangs,
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying glorious Son.

The Fifth Station: Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross.

V/ *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*
R/ *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

"They compelled one passing by, coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to go with them, that he might bear his cross." (Mk 15:21)

Now reflect with me on what it must have been like for my Son to simply not be able to carry the cross any further alone. I was so relieved that he was getting help at the time, even though my heart went out to Simon who was drawn into Jesus' journey.

As we look back, we can give thanks that Jesus entered into our life, even in this gesture of help. Jesus came to know the experience of all of us who must depend upon others, who can't make it alone. Even in this final journey, Jesus would not even have the satisfaction of being able to do this on his own.

Let's pause for a moment to express to him now, whatever is in our hearts.

Silence // Our Father...

V/ Is there anyone who would not weep,
Whelmed in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear Mother to behold?

The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus.

V/ *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*
R/ *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

"He has no good looks or majesty. When we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised, and rejected by men; a man of suffering, and acquainted with disease. He was despised as one from whom men hide their face." (Is 53:2-3)

I can't describe his face, with the blood and the sweat, and the bruises and swelling from the beatings. As a mother, I can hardly tell you that there was even spit on his face. It was the face of solidarity with all who have ever experienced abuse and violence. Then, out of the crowd came a woman whose compassion for my Son was so great that she pushed passed the Roman soldiers and wiped his face with her veil. Oh, how I loved her for that.

The look between them touched me deeply. His clean face, for a moment, revealed the loving face of the Son I loved.

As he smiled at the woman and continued on the journey, those of us nearby looked at her veil and saw the gift he gave her. There on her veil was a stunning likeness, a true icon of the cost of his sacrifice and the depth of his solidarity with all who suffer. This image is his gift to us forever, to always contemplate his likeness, his union with us in our worst rejection and suffering.

As you remember with me how his face was so covered with punishment and violence, let us give thanks for his solidarity with us in every aspect of our lives.

Silence // Our Father...

V/ Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?

The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time.

V/ *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*
R/ *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

"Jesus said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death." ...Jesus went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him." (Mk 14:34-35)

When my Son fell the second time, my heart sank as he seemed to just lose control and stumble and crumble to the ground. The way he fell to his knees on the hard stones, I could feel the jarring pain through my whole body. Helpless to help him, I again wondered if he could make it.

As I look back with you today, I imagine that this fall placed him together with people with disabilities, with people suffering from all kinds of physical diseases that weaken them, and with all who are aging and must confront the limits of their bodies. My prayer is that all God's people who know the suffering of these disabilities might know that they can always turn to my Son for understanding and comfort.

With gratitude in our hearts, we take a few moments to find the words to express our feelings to him.

Silence // Our Father...

V/ Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled
She beheld her tender Child
All with bloody scourges rent.

The Eighth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem.

V/ *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*
R/ *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

"A great multitude of the people followed him, including women who also mourned and lamented him. But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, don't weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." (Lk 23:27-28)

This moving scene filled my mother's heart with even more love for him. As I had seen him comfort so many groups of people during his life, now he comforts this group of women and children in Jerusalem. They aren't here to condemn him. What a remarkable meeting. They try to comfort him, as he looks on them with love and compassion. During his ministry he had come to grieve for Jerusalem. Now, my son gives them a special mission. Soon they would understand that this suffering they witnessed so closely was for them. Soon they would witness the suffering of Jerusalem and have their chance to bring their compassion and faith to their children and the people of their city.

It is good to reflect here, with him, on the mission each of us has that can be shaped by this encounter with his suffering, death and resurrection "for me." Thank him for this brief time to recall the gift we have received.

Silence //

O Mary our mother,
you too wept and lamented
on Calvary with the women
of Jerusalem.

You weep not for yourself,
because, in faith and in obedience,
you did the Father's will;
nor did you lament over
the death of your Son,
the innocent and holy One.

You weep instead for the sins
of your children.
We have seen your tears,
heard your warnings and entreaties:
"do not suppress truth,
do not persecute the innocent,
do not smother love".

Our Father...

V/ Let me share with you his pain
Who for all my sins was slain
Who for me in torment died.

The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time.

V/ We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

R/ Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

"Come to me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Mt 11:28-30)

I will always remember this final fall. Having endured such a beating and having lost so much blood, my son simply collapses. I saw him lay there on the ground and I thought he was dead. His arms spread out and his face in the dirt, Jesus found himself in solidarity with all who fall in any way.

Contemplating how the soldiers roughly pulled Jesus up and made him take the last steps to Calvary, take a few moments to speak with him, expressing your gratitude for his understanding for every weakness or failure you have ever experienced.

Silence // Our Father...

V/ O my Mother, found of love,
Touch my spirit from above;
Make my heart with yours accord.

The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped.

V/ *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*
R/ *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

“Crucifying him, they parted his garments among them, casting lots on them, what each should take.” (Mk 15:24)

The sword passed through my heart again to watch my son so violated this way. They intended to shame him even more by executing him naked. They simply had to strip him of any dignity a human being could have left. I remember looking at this body I had bathed and cared for, now with all his wounds re-opened and bleeding, so exposed for everyone to see. Now I see all the people in the world who are vulnerable and without any defense, all those whose dignity is violated, and I see this act of stripping as placing my son so completely with those who suffer. His incarnation was about to be complete.

Please pause to express what is in your heart and to give him thanks that this is all so that you might be free from the power of sin and death.

Silence // Our Father...

V/ Make me feel as you have felt,
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ my Lord.

The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross.

V/ *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*
R/ *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

“It was the third hour, and they crucified him. The superscription of his accusation was written over him, “THE KING OF THE JEWS.” 27 With him they crucified two robbers; one on his right hand, and one on his left.” (Mk 15:25-27)

Today, as I remember him lying on the cross, with his arms outstretched, it is the sound of the hammer hitting the nails that stays with me. I remember pulling the first of many wood splinters from his fingers as a child working in Joseph’s shop. Against his precious hands and wrists, that touched and healed so many, a nail was placed, and a hammer pounded the nail through his flesh and into the wood of the cross. The sound – metal against metal – that ring – and the look on his face – the spasm of his whole body – I will never forget. Then, the other hand and finally his feet are nailed to the cross.

Spend some time with him now, imagining how they lifted him up on the cross, nailed there, that you might be free.

Silence // Our Father...

V/ Holy Mother, pierce me through;
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Saviour crucified.

The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross.

V/ We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

R/ Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

“When the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” which is, being interpreted, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Some of those who stood by, when they heard it, said, “Behold, he is calling Elijah.” One ran, and filling a sponge full of vinegar, put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Let him be. Let’s see whether Elijah comes to take him down.” Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and gave up the spirit. The veil of the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom. When the centurion, who stood by opposite him, saw that he cried out like this and breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!” (Mk 15:33-39)

The sword of helplessness split my heart in two as I watched him struggle to breathe, pulling himself up to let air out of his lungs. With incredible courage and compassion, he spoke of mercy and love. There on that cross he gave me to John, and gave me to the Spirit filled Church that would be born on Pentecost. Then, after he gave himself into God’s hands one last time, he took his last breath and he died. It is unforgettable to watch life leave the body of someone you love.

At the foot of his cross today, listen to my son tell you of his love for you. Speak to him from your heart.

Silence //

Holy Mary, Virgin of the cross:
by the tree of life, you are humanity itself:
obedient and faithful, receptive to the word,
resolute and dutiful, open to the Spirit.

Reveal to us the mystery of the “Hour” of your Son:
of his glory in disgrace,
of his majesty in service,
of our life in his death.

But it is also your “Hour”, O Virgin Mary:
the hour of birth – in faith, in pain, in the Spirit;
for that new birth, Jesus, dying on the cross,
said: “Woman, behold your son.”

Our Father...

*V/ For the sins of his own nation
She saw him hang in desolation
Till his spirit forth he sent.*

The Thirteenth Station: Jesus Is Taken Down From The Cross.

V/ We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

R/ Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

“But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene... the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who was crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was already dead, they didn’t break his legs. However one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out... After these things, Joseph of

Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked of Pilate that he might take away Jesus' body. Pilate gave him permission. He came therefore and took away his body." (Jn 19:25.32-34.38)

We waited what seemed like a long time before we had permission to take his lifeless body off that cross. And, it took so long to remove the nails, and to finally lower his body to the ground. Someone removed that horrible crown of thorns from his head. They pulled his hair back and wiped his face clean before letting me hold his body one last time. He had been given to me for only a brief time. When he left home three years before, I was so proud of him and excited to experience what God would do through him. There at the foot of the cross, my heart torn by grief, but always trusting in God's promise, I asked only to be God's servant for what was ahead. After the Ascension, when we would gather in homes for the Breaking of the Bread, I again held his broken body in my hands, now full of consolation that his promise was fulfilled: he would always be with us.

Let yourself join me in receiving this mystery of the death of Jesus being so real and complete. Knowing the rest of the story, join me in speaking with him, heart to heart, about our gratitude for how he has transformed the power of death.

Silence //

Holy Mary,
in your virginal bosom,
lies your dead Son;
you are the living *pieta*,
who maternally embrace
all your lost children,
the wounded, and the dead.

Teach us, O Mary,
how to show true compassion,
a compassion nourished
by love alone;
that immense compassion
which knows no bounds;
active compassion which –
gazing on human suffering –
raises suppliant eyes to heaven.

Our Father...

V/ Let me mingle tears with you
Mourning him who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live.

The Fourteenth Station: Jesus Is Laid In The Tomb.

V/ *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

R/ *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

"When he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. He bought a linen cloth, and taking him down, wound him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb which had been cut out of a rock. He rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Joseph, saw where he was laid." (Mk 15:45-47)

No mother should ever have to bury a child. Just a short time before this day, Jesus looked into Lazarus' tomb. He must have known he would be laid in a tomb like that soon. And when he thanked God for hearing his prayer, he

must have known that the Father who sent him would give him life that would never die. In just a few days, this tomb would be empty and forever a sign of Jesus' surrender to the forces of sin and death, for us.

As we picture this scene, let us place the image of the empty tomb before our eyes. Whenever you are tempted to stand outside any tomb and grieve, remember this empty tomb and know that, through the eyes of faith, all tombs are empty. Today, join me in giving him thanks. Join me in signing ourselves with the sign of his cross, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Silence // Our Father...

V/ While my body here decays,
May my soul your goodness praise,
Safe in paradise with you. Amen.

Closing prayers (together)

Holy Mary, my Queen, I recommend myself
to your blessed protection and special keeping,
and to the bosom of your mercy,
today and every day and at the hour of my death.
My soul and my body I recommend to you.
I entrust to you my hope and consolation,
my distress and my misery, my life and its termination.
Through your most holy intercession
and through your merits may all my actions
be directed according to your will and that of your Son. Amen.



My Mother, of St. Aloysius Gonzaga SJ (1568-91) came from a noble background to become a Jesuit. During his studies he begged alms for the plague-stricken and worked directly with the sick. He died after becoming infected with the disease.

