

A portrait of St. Ignatius of Loyola, a Spanish Jesuit, depicted in full plate armor. He is shown from the waist up, holding a sword across his chest. The background is dark with a faint coat of arms and the text 'DIGNACIO DE LOYOLA' in the upper right corner.

THE
SPIRITUAL
EXERCISES
OF
ST. IGNATIUS
OF LOYOLA

Ignatius of Loyola

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola

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e-artnow, 2021

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PAUL III, POPE FOR A PERPETUAL REMEMBRANCE

The cares of the pastoral charge of the whole flock of Christ entrusted to Us and Our devotion to the glory and praise of God impel Us to embrace what helps the salvation of souls and their spiritual profit, and cause Us to hearken to those who petition Us for what can foster and nourish piety in the faithful.

So Our beloved son, Francis de Borgia, Duke of Gandia, has lately brought it to Our notice that Our beloved son Ignatius de Loyola, General of the Society of Jesus, erected by Us in Our beloved City and confirmed by Our Apostolic authority, has compiled certain instructions, or Spiritual Exercises, drawn from Holy Writ and from experience in the spiritual life, and has reduced them to an order which is excellently adapted to move piously the souls of the faithful, and that they are very useful and wholesome for the spiritual consolation and profit of the same. This the said Duke Francis has come to know by report from many places and by clear evidence at Barcelona, Valencia and Gandia.

Hence he has humbly begged Us to cause the aforesaid instructions and Spiritual Exercises to be examined, so that their fruit may be more spread, and more of the faithful may be induced to use them with greater devotion. And he has begged Us, should We find them worthy, to approve and praise them and out of Our Apostolic goodness to make other provision in the premisses.

We, therefore, have caused these instructions and Exercises to be examined, and by the testimony of and report made to Us by Our beloved son John Cardinal Priest of the Title of St. Clement, Bishop of Burgos and Inquisitor, Our

venerable Brother Philip, Bishop of Saluciaae, and Our Vicar General in things spiritual at Rome, and Our beloved son Aegidius Foscararius, Master of Our Sacred Palace, have found that these Exercises are full of piety and holiness and that they are and will be extremely useful and salutary for the spiritual profit of the faithful.

We have, besides, as We should, due regard to the rich fruits which Ignatius and the aforesaid Society founded by him are constantly producing everywhere in the Church of God, and to the very great help which the said Exercises have proved in this.

Moved, then, by this petition, with the aforesaid authority, by these presents, and of Our certain knowledge, We approve, praise, and favor with the present writing the aforesaid instructions and Exercises and all and everything contained in them, and We earnestly exhort all and each of the faithful of both sexes everywhere to employ instructions and Exercises so pious and to be instructed by them.

[Here follow regulations for the diffusion of the book, and then confirmatory clauses.]

Given at St. Mark's in Rome under the seal of the Fisherman, 31 July, 1548, in the 14th year of Our Pontificate.

Blo. el. fulginen.

PRAYER OF FATHER DIERTINS

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Rouse up, O Lord, and foster the spirit of the Exercises which Blessed Ignatius labored to spread abroad, that we, too, may be filled with it and be zealous to love what he loved and do what he taught! Through Christ our Lord. AMEN.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES OF ST. IGNATIUS

ANNOTATIONS

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TO GIVE SOME UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES WHICH FOLLOW, AND TO ENABLE HIM WHO IS TO GIVE AND HIM WHO IS TO RECEIVE THEM TO HELP THEMSELVES

First Annotation. The first Annotation is that by this name of Spiritual Exercises is meant every way of examining one's conscience, of meditating, of contemplating, of praying vocally and mentally, and of performing other spiritual actions, as will be said later. For as strolling, walking and running are bodily exercises, so every way of preparing and disposing the soul to rid itself of all the disordered tendencies, and, after it is rid, to seek and find the Divine Will as to the management of one's life for the salvation of the soul, is called a Spiritual Exercise.

Second Annotation.¹ The second is that the person who gives to another the way and order in which to meditate or contemplate, ought to relate faithfully the events of such Contemplation or Meditation, going over the Points with only a short or summary development. For, if the person who is making the Contemplation, takes the true groundwork of the narrative, and, discussing and considering for himself, finds

something which makes the events a little clearer or brings them a little more home to him—whether this comes through his own reasoning, or because his intellect is enlightened by the Divine power—he will get more spiritual relish and fruit, than if he who is giving the Exercises had much explained and amplified the meaning of the events. For it is not knowing much, but realising and relishing things interiorly, that contents and satisfies the soul.

Third Annotation. The third: As in all the following Spiritual Exercises, we use acts of the intellect in reasoning, and acts of the will in movements of the feelings: let us remark that, in the acts of the will, when we are speaking vocally or mentally with God our Lord, or with His Saints, greater reverence is required on our part than when we are using the intellect in understanding.

Fourth Annotation. The fourth: The following Exercises are divided into four parts:

First, the consideration and contemplation on the sins;

Second, the life of Christ our Lord up to Palm Sunday inclusively;

Third, the Passion of Christ our Lord;

Fourth, the Resurrection and Ascension, with the three Methods of Prayer.

Though four weeks, to correspond to this division, are spent in the Exercises, it is not to be understood that each Week has, of necessity, seven or eight days. For, as it happens that in the First Week some are slower to find what they seek—namely, contrition, sorrow and tears for their sins—and in the same way some are more diligent than others, and more acted on or tried by different spirits; it is necessary sometimes to shorten the Week, and at other

times to lengthen it. The same is true of all the other subsequent Weeks, seeking out the things according to the subject matter. However, the Exercises will be finished in thirty days, a little more or less.

Fifth Annotation. The fifth: It is very helpful to him who is receiving the Exercises to enter into them with great courage and generosity towards his Creator and Lord, offering² Him all his will and liberty, that His Divine Majesty may make use of his person and of all he has according³ to His most Holy Will.

Sixth Annotation. The sixth: When he who is giving the Exercises sees that no spiritual movements, such as consolations or desolations, come to the soul of him who is exercising himself, and that he is not moved by different spirits, he ought to inquire carefully of him about the Exercises, whether he does them at their appointed times, and how. So too of the Additions, whether he observes them with diligence. Let him ask in detail about each of these things.

Consolation and desolation are spoken of on p. 170; the Additions on p. 22.

Seventh Annotation. The seventh: If he who is giving the Exercises sees that he who is receiving them is in desolation and tempted, let him not be hard or dissatisfied with him, but gentle and indulgent, giving him courage and strength for the future, and laying bare to him the wiles of the enemy of human nature, and getting him to prepare and dispose himself for the consolation coming.

Eighth Annotation. The eighth: If he who is giving the Exercises sees that he who is receiving them is in need of instruction about the desolations and wiles of the enemy—and the same of consolations—he may explain to him, as far as he needs them, the Rules of the First and Second Weeks for recognising different spirits. (P. 177).

Ninth Annotation. The ninth is to notice, when he who is exercising himself is in the Exercises of the First Week, if he is a person who has not been versed in spiritual things, and is tempted grossly and openly—having, for example, suggested to him obstacles to going on in the service of God our Lord, such as labors, shame and fear for the honor of the world—let him who is giving the Exercises not explain to him the Rules of the Second Week for the discernment of spirits. Because, as much as those of the First Week will be helpful, those of the Second will be harmful to him, as being matter too subtle and too high for him to understand.

Tenth Annotation. The tenth: When he who is giving the Exercises perceives that he who is receiving them is assaulted and tempted under the appearance of good, then it is proper to instruct him about the Rules of the Second Week already mentioned. For, ordinarily, the enemy of human nature tempts under the appearance of good rather when the person is exercising himself in the Illuminative Life, which corresponds to the Exercises of the Second Week, and not so much in the Purgative Life, which corresponds to those of the First.

Eleventh Annotation. The eleventh: It is helpful to him who is receiving the Exercises in the First Week, not to know anything of what he is to do in the Second, but so to labor in

the First to attain the object he is seeking as if he did not hope to find in the Second any good.

Twelfth Annotation. The twelfth: As he who is receiving the Exercises is to give an hour to each of the five Exercises or Contemplations which will be made every day, he who is giving the Exercises has to warn him carefully to always see that his soul remains content in the consciousness of having been a full hour in the Exercise, and rather more than less. For the enemy is not a little used to try and make one cut short the hour of such contemplation, meditation or prayer.

Thirteenth Annotation. The thirteenth: It is likewise to be remarked that, as, in the time of consolation, it is easy and not irksome to be in contemplation the full hour, so it is very hard in the time of desolation to fill it out. For this reason, the person who is exercising himself, in order to act against the desolation and conquer the temptations, ought always to stay somewhat more than the full hour; so as to accustom himself not only to resist the adversary, but even to overthrow him.

Fourteenth Annotation. The fourteenth: If he who is giving the Exercises sees that he who is receiving them is going on in consolation and with much fervor, he ought to warn him not to make any inconsiderate and hasty promise or vow: and the more light of character he knows him to be, the more he ought to warn and admonish him. For, though one may justly influence another to embrace the religious life, in which he is understood to make vows of obedience, poverty and chastity, and, although a good work done under vow is more meritorious than one done without it, one should carefully consider the circumstances and personal

qualities of the individual and how much help or hindrance he is likely to find in fulfilling the thing he would want to promise.

Fifteenth Annotation. The fifteenth: He who is giving the Exercises ought not to influence him who is receiving them more to poverty or to a promise, than to their opposites, nor more to one state or way of life than to another. For though, outside the Exercises, we can lawfully and with merit influence every one who is probably fit to choose continence, virginity, the religious life and all manner of evangelical perfection, still in the Spiritual Exercises, when seeking the Divine Will, it is more fitting and much better, that the Creator and Lord Himself should communicate Himself to His devout soul, inflaming it with His love and praise, and disposing it for the way in which it will be better able to serve Him in future. So, he who is giving the Exercises should not turn or incline to one side or the other, but standing in the centre like a balance, leave the Creator to act immediately with the creature, and the creature with its Creator and Lord.

Sixteenth Annotation. The sixteenth: For this—namely, that the Creator and Lord may work more surely in His creature—it is very expedient, if it happens that the soul is attached or inclined to a thing inordinately, that one should move himself, putting forth all his strength, to come to the contrary of what he is wrongly drawn to. Thus if he inclines to seeking and possessing an office or benefice, not for the honor and glory of God our Lord, nor for the spiritual well-being of souls, but for his own temporal advantage and interests, he ought to excite his feelings to the contrary, being instant in prayers and other spiritual exercises, and