



Ignatius at the Cardoner, Galina Oussatcheva (Cardoner House, Toronto)

The Gift of Ignatian Spirituality in a World Experiencing Crisis

Ignatian Year Retreat 2021-2022

Our Lady of Hope Retreat House, Bayview, Stanley Bridge (Breadalbane), PEI

July 25-29, 2022



This icon, commissioned by the Cardoner Jesuit Community (Toronto) for its chapel, shows Ignatius at the moment of the Cardoner illumination, gazing up into the face of Holy Wisdom manifesting the Word. The understanding given him at this time, he said, was so great that all other gifts given afterwards, if they were combined, could not equal to it. The dynamism borne of this illumination by the Cardoner River would eventually give birth to the Society of Jesus, and to the gift of Ignatian spirituality.

Images from Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*, which can help us to be more discerning in daily life.

1: A balance at equilibrium: this image comes from Annotation 15 of the introductory observations of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Ignatius is offering advice on the relationship between the spiritual director and the person going through the *Exercises*. He says, "The director of the *Exercises*, as a balance at equilibrium, without leaning to one side or the other, should permit the Creator to deal directly with the creature, and the creature directly with the Creator and Lord." What he means is that the director should not sway the person praying with the *Exercises*. I should not interfere with their prayerful relationship with God. I can build it up by affirming what I am hearing, but I should not get in the way. That's not a bad image to relate to other dimensions of life. It's helpful to ask when our words or actions can interfere with the path that a person is on.

2: Presupposition of good intentions: immediately before Ignatius starts the actual *Exercises*, he offers an important presupposition to allow better cooperation between the retreat director and the retreatant. "It is necessary to suppose that every good Christian is more ready to put a good interpretation on another's statement, than to condemn it as false."

Can you imagine how much smoother Franciscan congregational dialogue would be if we came to the table with this spirit of trustful listening? Obviously Ignatius doesn't imply that the parties wholeheartedly accept the others' views, but he envisions a dialogue that leads to deeper understanding and it is marked by kindness.

Introduction to the Retreat

The Gift of Ignatian Spirituality in a World Experiencing Crisis

The year 2021 marked the 500th anniversary of the conversion of Saint Ignatius, a date that is of particular significance particularly for the Society of Jesus and institutions and movements associated with it. The Jesuits are observing an Ignatian Year, beginning on May 21, 2021 and ending on July 31, 2022.

In this context, Jesuits are renewing their commitment to the *Spiritual Exercises* to share the Ignatian legacy with others. The theme for this particular retreat has been shaped by the experience of living in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, the social and cultural breakdowns it brought to light and the effects of these on community life.

Ignatian spirituality is a gift from Ignatius to the Church in every era and speaks in this our time. Jesuits see it as rooted in an experience of "friendship in the Lord" (as the early companions of Ignatius described their shared religious and community experiences). It yearns to foster the building up of apostolic relationships that are outward looking, striving for an experience of reconciliation and of being "gathered together by the great love of God" with others.

In his process of conversion, Ignatius day-dreamed of doing like Francis and Dominic in his following of Christ. So, in keeping with that desire of Ignatius, this retreat based on the Ignatian charism is offered to the Franciscans of Halifax and their associates and to all who would like to profit from it. The retreat features a number of spiritual "movements" that correspond to the four weeks of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

It will not always be possible to use all the materials proposed as part of a particular movement; it is part of the prayerful discernment of the individual retreatant with their spiritual companion or guide to listen to the promptings of the Spirit and make a wise selection for prayer, keeping in mind that Saint Ignatius always encouraged the use of repetition to go deeper (that is to say, going back to something that struck me in an earlier period in prayer or in my life of faith). Ignatius would often say, it is not the *consuming* of many things in the spiritual life, but the *savouring* of a few things deeply that can lead an individual to God in a way appropriate for him or her. Similarly, allowing the Spirit to lead one to remember one's experience in prayer and to shed new light by discussing them with a guide during or after the retreat can be life-giving.

Each movement is presented in classic Ignatian fashion, with a preparatory prayer, a composition of place, a suggestion of the grace to be sought (which should be adapted to the individual's personal sense of a spiritual need), suggestions for prayer, and proposals for the time of the colloquy, with which each prayer period concludes.

The suggestions for prayer are taken from Scripture mainly as well as Ignatian and other spiritual writings, including religious founders inspired by the Ignatian charism.

Prelude: The Opening Conference of this time of retreat

«Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart» (Luke 2.19)

PREPARATORY PRAYER "I offer myself to you, Lord, for this time of prayer: my desires, my intelligence, my will. Send your Spirit, kindle the fire of your love in my heart."

COMPOSITION OF PLACE

In these days which follow Grandparents and Elders Day and when Pope Francis is due to come to Canada and celebrate St. Anne's Day with the Indigenous Peoples of Canada, I choose to place myself with an image of the Holy Family (for example, in Bethlehem with the shepherds or the Magi; in the flight and stay in Egypt and the return to Nazareth or in the journey of the Holy Family from Nazareth to Jerusalem to find Jesus in the Temple). In any case, I spend time contemplating Jesus, his Blessed Mother and St. Joseph. I allow Our Lord or Mary to gaze at me with affection and compassion, ready to help lift the burdens of my ministry and community life, particularly in this time of the recovery from the pandemic and looking to the future. I take the time to recall my own call to know Jesus and to serve beside him in his mission to draw all people to himself.

THE GRACE I SEEK

Exploring my present status as I come to retreat, to ask for the knowledge of what I truly need or desire in continuing to follow the call that is manifest in the gaze of Christ or Mother Mary on me, my gifts and my limitations and to find peace and consolation therein.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

- Psalm 139
- Matthew 2.1-12; 6.25-34
- Luke 2.1-21; 12.22-34
- 2 Corinthians 1.3-7
- Some other text from Scripture that has been important in my spiritual journey.

DIALOGUE (CONCLUDING PRAYER OR COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation friend to friend. I conclude my prayer with the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Anima Christi or some other prayer I prefer.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements that I can bring to spiritual conversation now or with my director or my support group after the retreat.

The First Movement "Foundation" as expressed by St. Ignatius (translation by Pohn)
«How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! »

PREPARATORY PRAYER "I offer myself to you, Lord, for this time of prayer: my desires, my intelligence, my will. Send your Spirit, kindle the fire of your love in my heart."

COMPOSITION OF PLACE

Reading and rereading the Scripture text, I imagine myself embraced by Trinitarian love, in right relation with others and with all creatures (e.g. how the Trinity collaborates in the Incarnation, celebrated in the mystery of the Incarnation [Birth of Christ in poverty and humility]). Trinitarian communion is both the origin and purpose of creation. I take the time to remember the communities I have been part of since I was born: my family, school, parish, sports teams, etc.

THE GRACE I SEEK

To experience myself as beloved of God in communion (belonging) with others and with creation.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

- Psalm 133
- Isaiah 43.1-7, *remembering that this is a passage about Israel as a people, and their mission to help bring about the gathering of all nations into God's great love.*
- Sirach 17.1-15, *the beauty and harmony of creation, and of right relation with God, the neighbor and all creatures, under conditions of original justice*
- Principle and Foundation, *Spiritual Exercises #23 (see the next page)*
- KEEP IN MIND that the Spirit may lead me into an Ignatian "repetition" of a meaningful experience

DIALOGUE (COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation friend to friend. I conclude my prayer with the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Anima Christi or other prayer I prefer.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements that I can bring to spiritual conversation now or with my director or my support group after the retreat.

“The Principle and Foundation” as expressed by St. Ignatius (translation by Puhl [adapted]):

We are created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save our soul.

The other things on the face of the earth are created for us to help us in attaining the end for which we are created.

Hence, we are to make use of them in as far as they help us in the attainment of our end, and we must rid ourselves of them in as far as they prove a hindrance to us.

Therefore, we must make ourselves indifferent to all created things, as far as we are allowed free choice and are not under any prohibition. Consequently, as far as we are concerned, we should not prefer health to sickness, riches to poverty, honour to dishonour, a long life to a short life. The same holds for all other things.

Our one desire and choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which we are created.

A Communal Version—Suitable for Franciscans in Community— of “The Principle and Foundation” (John Wickham, SJ [adapted])

So that we may better fulfil the divine purpose of human existence, the common task assigned to us in creation is to build on earth, co-creatively with God, new ways of living together in justice and love.

With the help of God’s grace, this will draw humanity closer to God in this world and in the next.

At present it means that the Creator calls upon us to give our best efforts to the common task of striving for better (more loving and more just) ways of living on earth. Lest our common destiny and all that human beings need to do together may seem too vast, too much beyond our vision, perhaps we can start by focusing on our families, our work and our personal ways of coping, of affirming others and of sharing one another’s struggles. We should be ready, however, to take part in larger affairs whenever an opportunity arises, in spite of our fears and limitations. Whatever the task presented to us, we choose that which contributes more to the coming of God’s Reign and turn away from what impedes that Reign.

Our desire should be to allow our life work and every practical task to receive value from the larger destiny God has given to us.

BRIEFLY

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements I wish to bring to spiritual conversation with my director or my group.

Second Movement

«For God so loved the world...»

PREPARATORY PRAYER as usual ["I offer myself to you, Lord, for this time of prayer: my desires, my intelligence, my will. Send your Spirit, kindle the fire of your love in my heart."}]

PART I "Lord, the one you love is sick" (John 11.3)

COMPOSITION OF PLACE

I imagine the infection that begins to spread at the dawn of human history, from the betrayal of Adam and Eve, through the murder of Abel by Cain, the pride of Babel, the Golden Calf.... I see myself caught up in a web of deceit, violence and lies. I gaze upon the present world crisis and what it reveals of our divisions and the injustice rooted in structures of oppression from which I [and my associates in community and ministry] benefit and to which we all contribute.

THE GRACE I SEEK

To experience myself as part of a web of brokenness in a world in crisis, but rescued and called by Jesus

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

- Luke 15.11-32, noting that the father not only welcomes the younger son, but seeks to bring about the reconciliation of both his sons.
- John 3.16-21, praying that the gentle light of Christ might reveal the lie and deceit in which I am caught up, and the salvation the Son brings
- John 11:1-44. The raising of Lazarus helps us enter into Christ's overcoming of sin and death by love

Here I should keep in mind that the Spirit might lead me into an Ignatian repetition of a meaningful experience; accordingly, I should strive to finish the movement with a spiritual exercise (reflection) such as that on the Call of God's Reign found on the next page.

DIALOGUE (COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation speaking as friend to friend.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements I wish to bring to spiritual conversation with my director or my group.

PART II *The Call of God's Reign*

COMPOSITION OF PLACE

"The Reign. I have chosen a ridiculed and scourged King who was betrayed by the courts of justice: Herod and Pilate; who was betrayed by love: Peter, Judas, the apostles... I have chosen a King, a crucified spouse, I chose him freely, desiring to share his life. It is no longer necessary to make the choice; though I made the choice poorly, I have finally begun to take the first steps on the royal road of the cross. All that remains is for me to make offerings of greater value. Lord, I ratify with my will all my past offerings, I ratify them with my heart that wants to love you more."
(From the writings of *Claire Monestès, foundress of the Xavières*)

In 1609 based in London and still discerning her way forward, Mary Ward was under pressure to ~~at~~the Carmelites. On this particular morning while brushing her hair,

"something very supernatural befell me ... I was abstracted out of my whole being and it was shown to me with clearness and inexpressible certainty, that I was not to be of the order of St. Teresa, but some other thing was determined for me, without all comparison more to the glory of God than my entrance into that holy religious order. I did not see what the assured good thing would be, but the glory to God which was to come through it, showed itself inexplicably and so abundantly as to fill my soul in such a way that I remained for a good space without feeling or hearing anything but the sound: GLORY, GLORY, GLORY. I found my heart full of love for this thing, accompanied by such glory that not yet can I comprehend what it is."

THE GRACE I SEEK

To experience myself as called by Jesus with others into friendship in the Lord to journey with him through suffering to glory

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

- Mark 9.30-41, *as Jesus calls his own to humble service of each other, in vulnerability and powerlessness* OR
- Matthew 16.13-24, *the service of God's Reign passes through self-sacrifice rather than self-will* OR
- Matthew 10.1-14, *a model of pilgrimage in poverty for Ignatius and the First Companions (as well as in the tradition of Francis and Clare of Assisi).*

DIALOGUE (COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation friend to friend.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements I wish to bring to spiritual conversation with my director or my support group.

Third Movement

The Incarnation and the Holy Family

PREPARATORY PRAYER as usual

COMPOSITION OF PLACE

With my mind's eye I gaze upon the Most Holy Trinity gazing upon the world. I notice the fullness of love of the Father, the total self-emptying of the Son, the desire of the Spirit to fill many souls. At the Incarnation, a new and created trinity comes into being: Jesus, Word made flesh, filled with zeal for souls; Mary ever-faithful to every inspiration of grace; and Joseph, filled with loving care for Mary, Jesus and every dear neighbour. The painting on the next page may help me in this contemplation (see image on the next page for help in entering into the scene).

THE GRACE I SEEK

To know Jesus more intimately, who becomes human for us in a human family, that I may follow him more closely and love him more.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

- The Contemplation on the Incarnation from the *Spiritual Exercises*, using the composition of place and Luke 1.26-38.
- Luke 2.1-20, noting how, for Luke, the birth itself restores right relationship among God, human beings, and all creation
- Luke 2.42-52, the finding in the temple, noting especially the manner in which the Holy Family traverses this time of crisis and potential conflict
- I should keep in mind that the Spirit might lead me into an Ignatian repetition of a meaningful experience in my life.

DIALOGUE (COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation friend to friend.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements I wish to bring to spiritual conversation with my director or my group.

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Fourth Movement

Two Standards (a consideration from the *Spiritual Exercises*)

PREPARATORY PRAYER as usual

COMPOSITION OF PLACE

Consider the chief of the enemy seated on a high throne, dominating everything. Consider how he summons many to scatter them to all parts of the world to sow hatred and division. They are to tempt people to covet riches (to be possessed by created goods) that they may more easily covet the empty honours of this world (to be possessed by the opinion of others) and then come to overweening pride (to be possessed by my own willfulness).

Consider Christ our Lord standing in a lowly place, his appearance beautiful and attractive. Consider how he gathers together so many persons to send them throughout the world to share the Good News. Consider the address he makes to these friends whom he sends on this enterprise, recommending to them to seek to help all, first by attracting them to the highest spiritual poverty (freedom before created goods), to a desire for insults and contempt (freedom before the opinion of others), and to a genuine humility (freedom before my own self-will).

THE GRACE I SEEK PRAYER

A deeper knowledge of the deceits of the enemy and help to guard me and my community against them. Also, I ask for a deep-felt knowledge of Jesus' strategy since he is "the way, the truth and the life," with a growing desire to imitate him by adopting his strategy and following the lead of his Spirit.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

- Matthew 4.1-11: in living through the temptations, Jesus learns the freedom to serve the Father alone
- Galatians 5.13-26, the fruits of the Spirit and works of the flesh
- I might decide to pray slowly and meditatively the "Litany for Humility".
- I should keep in mind the possibility of Ignatian repetition of a key experience of this kind in my spiritual journey

DIALOGUE (COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation friend to friend.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements I wish to bring to spiritual conversation with my director or my group.

Fifth Movement

Partners in Christ's Mission

PREPARATORY PRAYER as usual

COMPOSITION OF PLACE

As you read and re-read the Scripture, become present to the place where Jesus and his friends are, its length and breadth, whether a village, a town or a deserted place, and so on. Is the day warm or cool, sunny or grey? Are there many people, or just a few? It may be helpful to notice if you are in the scene.

THE GRACE I SEEK

To experience myself as participating intimately in Christ's reconciling mission, as a member of a community built on spiritual conversation and apostolic discernment.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

- Mark 1.16-39, as *Jesus gathers friends and journeys with them*
- John 4.1-42, as *Jesus crosses boundaries and empowers the Samaritan woman to share in his proclamation of God's Reign*
- Luke 9.1-6 with verse 9.10, *noticing Jesus' desire to share in spiritual conversation with the twelve.*
- Matthew 16.13-20: *in a deserted place, Jesus draws the Twelve into deeper discernment*
- I may consider the various formulae of Ignatian-inspired communities, drawing consolation and fruit from them (*on the next page*)
- I should keep in mind the possibility of Ignatian repetition concerning such experiences in my vocational journey

DIALOGUE (COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation friend to friend.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements I wish to bring to spiritual conversation with my director or my group.

WAYS IN WHICH INSTITUTES WITH THE IGNATIAN VISION EMBODY THE TEACHING OF THE KINGDOM AND OUR LORD'S RECONCILING MISSION:

FORMULA OF THE JESUIT INSTITUTE (SJ 1550)

.... He is a member of a Society founded chiefly for this purpose: to strive especially for the defense and propagation of the faith and for the progress of souls in Christian doctrine, by means of public preaching, lectures, and any other ministration whatsoever of the Word of God, and further by means of the *Spiritual Exercises*, the education of children and unlettered persons in Christianity, and the spiritual consolation of Christ's faithful through hearing confessions and administering the other sacraments. Moreover, he should show himself ready to reconcile the estranged, compassionately assist and serve those who are in prisons or hospitals, and indeed to perform any other works of charity, according to what will seem expedient for the glory of God and the common good.

FORMULA OF THE INSTITUTE (Faithful Companions of Jesus) 1826, updated 1985

.... Like Mary, Mother of Jesus and Mother of the Church, and like the holy women, messengers of the Good News, we are sent to proclaim the Truth, Jesus who is alive and lives among us, who is Son of God and Savior of the world.

.... According to place and circumstance we may engage in whatever work contributes to the salvation of souls and in the manner which appears most conducive to the service and glory of God and the good of the neighbor.

We particularly devote ourselves to certain ministries confided to us by our foundress, 'the education of youth, especially the poor, the work of retreats and missions.' Above all, we are Companions of Jesus whose lives must reveal him to the world.

Images from Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*, which can help us to be more discerning in daily life.

3: The offering of dishes to a prince, and other ways of guided imagery: Ignatius is astute about the different ways we make decisions. Some decisions are no-brainers, and we know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, what we have to do. Others are gradually made because we discern different spiritual movements and come to a more certain sense of what we have to do. There's another situation, where the person really is stuck and just can't decide. Ignatius offers several methods for loosening a person's imagination: What advice would I offer to someone in my situation? Imagining myself on my deathbed, what choice would I have liked to make? Likewise, he suggests that I picture myself at the judgment day? Another example isn't in the *Exercises*. It comes from a later document by Ignatius. He suggests that I imagine myself offering two dishes to a prince. The prince can't take both. He has to choose. Which one is it? That's a good image, because discernment is often about choosing between two or more good things. I can't choose all of them—only one. Which is the greater good?

Sixth Movement

"That they may be one as we are one"

PREPARATORY PRAYER as usual

COMPOSITION OF PLACE

The celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of apostolic community life. We stand at the foot of the cross of Jesus uniting ourselves with the redemptive offering of the risen, glorious Christ that we may become a community of his faithful companions in spirit and in truth. (*Formula Faithful Companions of Jesus*)

THE GRACE I SEEK

To experience myself as rooted in a union of mind and heart with and in Christ, living out community as a mission shared with others.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

- Matthew 26.20-30 OR Luke 22:14-27
- John 17.20-24
- John 13.34-35
- I keep in mind the possibility of Ignatian repetition regarding a significant experience of the Eucharist

DIALOGUE (COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation friend to friend.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements I wish to bring to spiritual conversation with my director or my group.

SOME JESUIT ARTICULATIONS OF THE CENTRALITY OF THE EUCHARIST (FOR ADAPTATION TO THE FRANCISCAN WAY OF COMMUNITY LIFE)

UNION OF MINDS AND HEARTS

12. Every Jesuit community is a faith community, and it is in the Eucharist that those who believe in Christ come together to celebrate their common faith. Our participation at the same table in the Body and Blood of Christ, more than anything else, makes us one companionship totally dedicated to Christ's mission in the world. (General Congregation 32 [1974], Decree 11).

GC35, DECREE 2: A FIRE THAT KINDLES OTHER FIRES

19. Our life together testifies to our friendship in the Lord, a sharing of faith and life together, above all in the celebration of the Eucharist. Following Jesus together acts as a pointer to the disciples *en mouvement* with their Lord. Jesuit identity and Jesuit mission are linked by community; indeed, identity, community, and mission are a kind of triptych shedding light on how our companionship is best understood. This companionship shows how people different in background and diverse in talent can live together as true "friends in the Lord." Jesuit identity is relational; it grows in and through our diversities of culture, nationalities, and languages, enriching and challenging us. This is a process that we enter upon as we join the Society, and we grow in it every day....

DIALOGUE (COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation friend to friend.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those [unseen] demands I wish to bring to spiritual conversation with my director or my group.

Seventh Movement

"I thirst" (John 19:28)

PREPARATORY PRAYER as usual

COMPOSITION OF PLACE

As I read and re-read the Scripture, I strive to become present by my imagination to the people and places of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus. I strive to see myself at the foot of the Cross with the Mother of Jesus, the faithful women and the Beloved Disciple.

THE GRACE I SEEK

To know Jesus more intimately as he suffers with the persecuted and makes friends of enemies, that I may be united to him in his compassion for all.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

- John 13.1-17
- Luke 23.7-12: *already in his Passion, Jesus makes friends of enemies!*
- John 19.16-37
- Philippians 2.6-11
- I explore the image of the passion where Father Arrupe is present to Christ crucified (next page)
- #101-102 of the General Examen of the Ignatian Constitutions
- I keep in mind that there is the possibility of an Ignatian repetition of my experience of the Cross that I have lived out

DIALOGUE (COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation friend to friend.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements I wish to bring to spiritual conversation with my director or my group.

The General Examen of the Ignatian Constitutions

[101] It is likewise very important to bring to the attention of those who are being examined, emphasizing it and giving it great weight in the sight of our Creator and Lord, to how great a degree it helps and profits in the spiritual life to abhor in its totality and not in part whatever the world loves and embraces, and to accept and desire with all possible energy whatever Christ our Lord has loved and embraced. Just as those of the world who follow the world love and seek with such great diligence honors, fame, and esteem for a great name on earth, as the world teaches them, so those who proceed spiritually and truly follow Christ our Lord love and intensely desire everything opposite. That is to say, they desire to clothe themselves with the same garb and uniform of their Lord because of the love and reverence owed to him, to such an extent that where there would be no offense to his Divine Majesty and no imputation of sin to the neighbour, they desire to suffer injuries, false accusations, and affronts, and to be held and esteemed as fools (but without their giving any occasion for this), because of their desire to resemble and imitate in some manner our Creator and Lord Jesus Christ, by putting on his garb and uniform, since it was for our spiritual profit that he clothed himself as he did. For he gave us an example that in all things possible to us we might seek, with the aid of his grace, to imitate and follow him, since he is the way which leads all to life. Therefore, candidates should be asked whether they find themselves with such desires, which are so salutary and fruitful for the perfection of their soul.

[102] Where through human weakness and personal misery candidates do not experience in themselves such ardent desires in our Lord, they should be asked whether they have any desires to experience them. If they answer affirmatively that they do wish to have such holy desires, then, so that they may the better reach them in fact, they should be questioned further: Are they determined and ready to accept and suffer with patience, with the help of God's grace, any such injuries, mockeries, and affronts entailed by the wearing of this uniform of Christ our Lord, and any other affronts offered them, whether by someone inside the house or the Society (where they desire to obey, live humbly, and gain eternal life) or outside it by any persons whatsoever on earth, returning them not evil for evil but good for evil?

Entering into the Passion: Reflections on a Painting

In the Chapel of the Passion in Rome's Church of the Gesu are venerated the remains of St. Joseph Pignatelli (1737-1811), who was an undisputed protagonist of the Re-constitution of the Society of Jesus, as well as the mortal remains of the Servant of God Father Jan Philip Roothaan (1785-1853), the second General of the reborn Society of Jesus. In the same chapel repose also the mortal remains of Father Pedro Arrupe (1907-1991), who was the Superior General and a decisive figure in the updating of the Society of Jesus after the Second Vatican Council.

In the canvas which one can now admire the artist has represented, as in the deposition of the body of the Lord from the cross; but the inspiration is entirely new. One notices immediately, both by the faces as well as the clothing that the men represented are the same as those whose remains rest in the chapel.

This substitution of the persons in the evangelical account is an illustration of the contemplation of the mysteries of the life of Christ suggested in the *Spiritual Exercises*, in which the one who contemplates takes part in the action. The spiritual fruit is conversion, from which arises the desire to serve Christ poor and humble, sharing the mission and, finally, apostolic creativity. The invitation to contemplate and then to produce fruits of apostolic charity reaches the one who looks on, who discovers how the work can be a pedagogy for contemplative prayer which focuses on the mystery represented and on the gestures and objects, gathering from them their significance as from pregnant symbols.

The scene is taken from the moment in which, with effort, the body of the Lord is being brought down from the cross, having been just freed from the nails. The vertical stake of the cross, the hanging cords, the ladder resting on the cross, the effort of the persons to carry the weight of the dead body, all make one think of a "workshop" in which something of unique importance is being constructed. It is the demanding and all-encompassing workshop in which the disciples learn the lesson of loving action which builds the Church.

The deposition of the body of the Lord and the care that the friends take with it is the gesture which inaugurates the care of sick and humiliated humankind. Here the three "friends in the Lord" united in their common affection for the Son of God and in the pious care of his body represent the Society and its desire to serve without sparing itself. Through this gesture the friends of the Lord, as happens through the persons in the gospels, reveal themselves as disciples and enter actively into the passion of Christ for man, determined to be associated to his fate, because in the cross of Jesus they have found perfect liberty and in faith in him, the pearl of great price. The friends remove from the cross and embrace with profound respect the body that had been stripped, torn, and exposed to mockery; they desire to restore the dignity which had been denied to him and hasten to repeat for him the gesture of humble love that Jesus had taught them: they wash the feet and limbs of the Messenger of good news who announces peace.

According to John's Gospel and the ancient liturgical tradition, the Mother of the Lord stood beneath the cross of her Son, pierced by sorrow but certain of the fidelity of God who hears the cry of the humiliated. Mary does not take her gaze from the tortured body of Jesus but does not take part: her being in her place sustains those whom she was given as sons and daughters by her dying Son in that school of loving service. She is the great Woman who now gives birth in a sorrow full of hope to the Church born from the pierced side: she is the Mother of the Church, of Jesus and therefore, implicitly Mother of the Society of Jesus or of a diocese, parish, the Franciscans of Halifax, etc.

On the ground are the symbols of service: the basin and the towel, similar to the one which Jesus wrapped around his waist before washing the feet of the disciples to teach them the love and availability to become the least and the servant of all. Lying on the ground is also the white garment that the victorious King will soon put on at his resurrection, and the crown of the passion, become the sign of his reign and of the glory that the Father has reserved for him. He who was enthroned on the cross now sits as king forever and beside him will sit those who have resolved to carry to the end, behind him, their own crosses, with the certainty that the more they have become like him in the passion of their daily lives, the more they will be able to administer to men and women the richness of his mercy.



Eighth Movement

"The whole group of believers were of one heart and mind"

PREPARATORY PRAYER as usual

COMPOSITION OF PLACE

As I read and re-read the Scripture I have chosen, I become present by my imagination to the people and places of the resurrection appearances of Jesus. I strive to experience the radical joy of Easter at work in the early Christian community, gathering them together and sending them out on a "reverse pilgrimage" from Jerusalem to the nations.

THE GRACE I SEEK

To share in the joy of the Risen Jesus, so as to share that joy with others as a community of love sent on mission.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

- John 20.11-18
- Luke 24.13-35
- Matthew 28.16-20
- Acts 2.41-47 and 4:32-35
- *Contemplatio ad amorem* (Spiritual Exercises #230) (on the next page)
- I keep in mind the possibility of an Ignatian repetition of Easter joy in my life

DIALOGUE (COLLOQUY)

I speak with the Lord about my desires, and I listen to him, in a conversation friend to friend.

REVIEW

After the time of prayer has come to an end, I note those essential elements I wish to bring to spiritual conversation with my director or my group.

Images from Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*, which can help us to be more discerning in daily life.

4: The office of consoler exercised by the Risen Christ: Ignatius includes this image of Christ when he invites the retreatant to meet the Resurrected Lord in prayer. "Consider the office of consoler that Christ our Lord exercises, and compare it with the way in which friends are wont to console each other." I think that this sums up in a few words the witness of religious life or the apostolic, priestly ministry to one's collaborators. The office of consoler is exercised through attentive listening, wise counsel, words of encouragement, and so on.

***Contemplatio ad Amorem* (A Contemplation to Attain Divine Love)**

Love ought to manifest itself in deeds rather than in words.

Love consists in a mutual sharing of goods, for example, the lover gives and shares with the beloved what he possesses, or something of that which he has or is able to give; and vice versa the beloved shares with the lover... Thus, one always gives to the other.

[At this point, a review of the graces of the retreat and the blessings of the past year might be appropriate]

I will ponder with great affection how much God our Lord has done for me, and how much he has given me of what he possesses, and finally, how much, as far as he can, the same Lord desires to give himself to me according to his divine decrees.

Then I will reflect on myself, and consider, according to all reason and justice, what I ought to offer the divine majesty, that is, all I possess and myself with it.

Images from Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*, which can help us to be more discerning in daily life.

5: Love ought to manifest itself in deeds: A beautiful exercise closes the *Spiritual Exercises*.

The Contemplation to Attain the Love of God often helps a person to review all that has been experienced in the *Exercises*. Ignatius prefaces it with two notes about love.

The first reminds us that, "love ought to manifest itself in deeds rather than words." We know that with absolute clarity. A friend can use all kinds of words to describe her care for me, but her actions will speak more powerfully. His second note is a good image of how family, friendship or Christian community should work: "Love consists in a mutual sharing of goods, for example, the lover gives and shares with the beloved what he possesses, or something of that which he has or is able to give; and vice versa, the beloved shares with the lover."

Envoi: A Contemporary Image of St. Ignatius Loyola

Íñigo de Loyola was a proud man who saw great things for his future. He imagined a life filled with adventure, fame and riches – dreams of life at court and all the honours that accompanied them. Those dreams came to an end in 1521 when, badly wounded and subjected to an excruciating convalescence, Ignatius was transformed in a process of gradual self-discovery, grace and conversion.

The bronze working of Canadian sculptor William McElcheran (1927-1999), *Saint Ignatius the Pilgrim*, is a fine reflection of this relationship. It is a work of art that represents Ignatian vulnerability because it focuses not only on the bodily wound of Pamplona but also conveys an interior struggle: simultaneously drawing the attention of the viewer both deeper and to the surface.

Ignatius moves forward. Always with one foot in front, always on the way, both outwardly and inwardly. He defines himself as a pilgrim: the way opens up, step by step. He is not alone, although it may seem so: he tenderly bends his face to meet others, to raise spirits and help souls, contemplative in action, anchored in movement. He wears only a cloak to protect himself from the elements: he goes, vulnerable, to where he did not know: He follows the Spirit, he does not go ahead of him [...], wisely ignorant, with his heart simply set on Christ.

At the base of this inclination is the wound of Ignatius, not only the one of Pamplona, but the most interior and lasting one, the *incurable* one, the one that kept him always inclined and on that path both interiorly and exteriorly. After being cured, the great existential wound that he must face is that of voluntarism and narcissism. He wants to go to Jerusalem, but in the way he wants, by mortifying himself. An exhausted body is the only thing he earns in his eagerness to imitate the saints.

He does not close himself in his wounds. In his fragility, God meets him. The wound of scruples opens a new path for him, from voluntarism to availability. Integrating his sufferings makes him more available: he chooses and turns this fragility towards another, in an apostolic and fraternal way. God frees him from his ego, making him a free and generous person. It is the difference between *becoming* a saint by oneself and *letting oneself* be molded by God: Ignatius discovers what it is to be imperfect, a saint with cracks and weaknesses. He becomes more sincere and humble.



...and Jesus said to the disciples gathered in the Upper Room,
"Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation." (Mark 16:15)

May 21, 1521



Ignatius

to see all things
new in Christ