

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola

ENDORSEMENTS

“There’s nothing like holding a fine hardcover volume in hand, but from the first page, Sean Salai, S.J., brings the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius alive in a fresh and attractive way, along with a handy ribbon to mark your journey of prayer.”

—Bishop Robert P. Reed, President, CatholicTV
Network, Archdiocese of Boston

“We should be grateful to Fr. Salai for producing, in an accessible and enriched form, this classic translation of the Spiritual Exercises. For those who cannot attend preached or guided retreats, this method for making the Exercises in a self-guided manner could change their lives.”

—Fr. Gerald O’Collins, S.J., Theologian and
Author, *The Beauty of Jesus Christ*

“This most beautiful edition of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius is a priceless gift for anyone sincerely seeking to follow Christ. Enriched with scholarly and spiritually discerning annotations, it will be a powerful instrument of grace, a sure guide to prayer and growth in faith, a great light in a darkening age, for this generation and for those who are yet to be born.”

—Michael D. O’Brien, Author, *Father Elijah* series

“For hundreds of years, Christians have used the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius to deepen their prayer lives. In this edition, Fr. Salai’s notes and insights gathered from Jesuit spiritual masters who themselves were formed by the Exercises offers a deeply faithful and fresh presentation, helping further illuminate the way to a deeper friendship with Christ.”

—Amy Welborn, Writer and Speaker

“The Spiritual Exercises of the soldier saint Ignatius Loyola have provided discipline and direction for those engaged in spiritual warfare for five hundred years. Fr. Salai has had the foresight to include reflections and recommendations throughout the book from an army of sane and saintly Jesuits. This new edition dishes out solid substance for spiritual growth for a new generation of spiritual warriors.”

—Fr. Dwight Longenecker, Author, *Praying the Rosary for Spiritual Warfare*

“The painstaking work Fr. Salai has devoted to this text is evident from the start, and the result is a vibrant and deftly rigorous edition of St. Ignatius of Loyola’s masterpiece of spiritual enlightenment. Through his contemporary annotations, Fr. Salai guides us through this often-challenging text with a gentle and encouraging spirit — bringing a semblance of having a trusted retreat master by our side as we journey into a deeper understanding of God’s love.”

—Paolo Dy, Writer-Director, *Ignatius of Loyola* movie

“This new edition of the Spiritual Exercises unites indispensable lessons from the first generations of Jesuits with voices from the most faithful sons of Ignatius today, reminding us that Christ’s Church truly is ever ancient and ever new. Fr. Salai’s selections will assist any serious person of prayer in the Holy Spirit’s gifts of self-knowledge, discernment, freedom and a greater sanctifying love of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only true giver of the Exercises.”

—Fr. David Meconi, S.J., Director of Catholic Studies Program at Saint Louis University and Editor, *Homiletic & Pastoral Review*

“Father Salai has done the Church a great service in editing and republishing this classic French version of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola. Not a substitute for making an Ignatian retreat, it is a very attractive entrée and resource for both the retreat master and the retreatant — a timely response indeed to our Jesuit Father General’s recent decision to make the Spiritual Exercises an Apostolic Priority for the whole Order.”

—Bishop Michael C. Barber, S.J., Diocese of Oakland

“In this terrific edition of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, Fr. Sean Salai, S.J., draws on numerous Jesuit saints and scholars to illuminate the meaning of the text. This book may be the most useful edition of the Spiritual Exercises available today.”

—Dr. Christopher Kaczor, Professor of Philosophy, Loyola Marymount University, and Author, *The Gospel of Happiness*

THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES OF ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

With Points for Personal Prayer From Jesuit
Spiritual Masters

Edited and Annotated by Fr. Sean Salai, SJ

Being a twenty-first century updating of Fr. Charles
De Place's "Manresa: The Spiritual Exercises of St.
Ignatius—For General Use" (1914 English edition
published by Frederick Pustet & Co.)

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IMPRIMI POTES:

Very Reverend Ronald A. Mercier, S.J.

Provincial of the United States Central and Southern Jesuits

March 21, 2019

NIHIL OBSTAT:

After review, I have concluded that the materials presented in this work are free of doctrinal or moral errors.

Reverend Charles N. Rowe, S.T.D.

Censor Librorum

April 1, 2019

IMPRIMATUR:

In accord with 1983 CIC 827 permission to publish this work is hereby granted.

Most Reverend James V. Johnston, Jr., D.D., J.C.L.

Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph

April 1, 2019

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With gratitude to our loving Creator, I dedicate this edited and annotated devotional edition of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola to my Jesuit brothers and all who seek Jesus Christ with a sincere heart. I offer it particularly for all who desire to use the Exercises for personal prayer, but who lack the resources and time in our frantic age to encounter them in a formal retreat house setting. Through the intercession of St. Ignatius, may the Lord bless our good desires to grow in his friendship, and may this edition serve as a one-stop compendium of Ignatian wisdom and self-guided prayer helps on the Exercises.

—Editor

+Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam+

*For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole
world, and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what
exchange shall a man give for his soul?*

—Matthew 16:26

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Acknowledgments

I want to thank Fr. Claude Pavur, S.J., able Latinist of the Institute of Advanced Jesuit Studies at Boston College, for identifying Fr. Charles De Place (also spelled Deplace) as the original editor of this translation of the Spiritual Exercises and for supplying his biographical information. Thanks also to Fr. Joe Tetlow, S.J., for reviewing the text in light of his expertise with the Exercises, and to my America Media colleague Joseph McAuley for his copy edits especially on Bible citations.

Preface to the 2020 Edition

THE ENDURING LEGACY OF CHARLES DE PLACE

In 1808, Charles De Place came into the world as a Frenchman, born at a time when the Society of Jesus had been suppressed universally since 1773 and in France since 1764. In 1814, the year Charles turned six, Pope Pius VII restored the Society. European nobles who had capitulated to Enlightenment pressure to suppress the Jesuits for political reasons, now chastened by atheist revolutions, wept openly at the ceremony restoring the sons of Ignatius. Ten years later, at age sixteen, Charles entered this restored Jesuit order.

Upon entering the Society in 1824, young Charles made the full thirty-day silent form of the *Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, placing himself with Jesus in the Gospel scenes as he prayed to discern God's will in his life. But times had changed during the half-century that the suppressed Jesuits had survived as a small remnant in Russia, isolated from the rest of Europe yet preserved from total destruction by a canonical technicality. The Jesuits of De Place's day, slowly rebuilding a vast educational and missionary network from its lowest ebb since Pope Paul III formally established the order in 1540, soon discovered a growing demand

by clerics, vowed religious, and laypeople for access to the Exercises. Although the book of the Exercises had long been treated as a retreat manual, published primarily in its Latin typical edition and restricted to authorized directors, people from all walks of life now wanted to pray with the masterwork of Ignatius—and the restored Society lacked a critical mass of experienced spiritual fathers to guide everyone.

Within this context, as popular demand for Ignatian spirituality outpaced the supply of trained guides in the depleted ranks of the restored Society, French Jesuits began to favor preaching the Exercises over individually directing them. Although Jesuits including St. Ignatius had preached the Exercises from the very beginning, and had never merely led individuals through them, the restored Society leaned more heavily than ever into preaching them to reach this growing audience. Informed by nineteenth-century French piety, rooted in personal religious experience, Jesuit writers popularized the Exercises by putting these preached retreats into book form for general readers. With supplemental meditations and instructions for eight-day, fifteen-day, and thirty-day retreats, new vernacular translations of the Exercises soon appeared, rearranged pastorally and annotated to facilitate personal use of the text. While these early vernacular translations of the Exercises came from the Latin *typica*, the Spanish-language autograph of St. Ignatius (itself the basis for the official Latin text) later became the preferred source, remaining the basis of most vernacular translations through our own times.

Such was the soil that gave root to Charles De Place's "Manresa," about which we know little beyond the bare

facts of its popularity and continued existence. At some point during his twenty-two years in the Society of Jesus, Fr. De Place received permission from his Jesuit superiors to make a French translation of Exercises from the Latin typical edition for general readership, liberally paraphrasing the text to minimize the retreat director's role and annotating it with additional exercises based on the spirit of Ignatius. He published the first edition in 1845. Then one year later, in 1846, De Place left the Society of Jesus at age thirty-eight to become a member of the secular (diocesan) clergy. Rising to become a canon and archpriest of the cathedral church of Paris, the Abbot De Place (as he was later known by the honorific *abbé* for drawing a monastic income) continued to produce Christocentric spiritual works of "elevated piety" (*The Dublin Review*, vol. 128, p. 178). He finally died in 1871, by then in his early sixties.

But his work did not die with him. Indeed, Fr. De Place's translation survived his Jesuit vows and took on new life. According to Jesuit Father Joseph De Guibert's posthumous study *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice* (p. 494, footnote 139), De Place's "Manresa" proved so popular that it went through thirty-three editions in France by 1890. In the words of St. Ignatius's spiritual inspiration, the *Vita Christi* (*Life of Christ*) by fourteenth-century Carthusian monk Ludolph of Saxony, De Place's edition evidently helped many readers "to always be thinking somehow about Jesus," encountering the Lord in personal prayer as St. Ignatius did at the cave of Manresa where he wrote the Exercises.

Other French translations of the Exercises appeared during this same period, including Jesuit Father Pierre Jennesseaux's

edition with posthumous notes and supplemental meditations by Father General Jan Roothaan (Jesuit superior general, 1829–1853) in 1854. So De Place was hardly alone in popularizing the text. Yet no French translation of the Exercises has proven as popular or long-lasting as Fr. De Place's book, revised in 1868 by Jesuit Father Adrien Nampon and again in 1948 by H. Pinard de la Boullaye.

We may therefore consider it a historical irony that only De Place's text, the work of a former Jesuit rather than the edition with Father General Roothaan's notes, eventually traveled from nineteenth-century France to the English-language market. In 1881, the Catholic Publication Society in New York published the first English translation of De Place's book under the title *Manresa, or the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius: for general use*, without crediting him or even acknowledging the French source text. While no English translator or editor has ever been named for "Manresa" in bibliographies, this Catholic Publication Society translation entered public domain and multiple publishers reprinted it. In 1914, Frederick Pustet & Co. published its own edition of the work, reissued several times by TAN Books beginning in 1999 as a version of the Exercises "explained step-by-step for independent use."

So before this deluxe devotional edition of the Spiritual Exercises that you now hold in your hands, American readers of "Manresa" have been unaware they were using an English translation of De Place's French paraphrase of the Latin *typica*, itself a translation of the Spanish autograph; that is, a copy of a copy of a copy of the original text. From 1881 to now, US publishers have simply reissued the English

translation of De Place's text—complete with his preface, notes, and copious Bible citations not present in Ignatius—without attributing the work to him or identifying the source text. The reason for not crediting him or the French source in English editions remains a mystery. But today it hardly seems necessary, or academically responsible, to conceal these origins. So here, for the first time, we present the English translation of “Manresa” correctly attributed to Fr. Charles De Place, erstwhile member of the Society of Jesus.

THE 2019 REVISION

While an academic study of the “Manresa” manuscript tradition lies beyond the scope of this preface, I want to say a few words about my work to restore the text as closely as possible to the format of St. Ignatius and to re-annotate it for personal devotion, aligning this deluxe edition with today's standards. This work posed certain problems to me as editor. Here we have the language of St. Ignatius, with its own vocabulary bound to late-medieval scholasticism and Spanish piety, washed through a nineteenth-century French paraphrase and an English derivative that contains unexplained omissions and deviations from the Latin *typica*, its ostensible source. Although published as *The Spiritual Exercises*, De Place rearranged and selectively paraphrased the text according to his own pastoral judgment, freely glossing certain sections while adding uncredited supplementary exercises and rearranging the paragraph order.

Like many nineteenth-century translations, “Manresa” prefers the spirit over the letter of its source. Yet despite

being a free paraphrase rather than a word-for-word translation, “Manresa” remains a highly readable, eminently pastoral English reading of the Exercises. So while I have edited and rearranged the English text in a way that minimizes its nineteenth-century accretions and conforms to now-standard usage, I have retained the core translation and supplemental exercises, inserting clarifications of what St. Ignatius did not actually write. My edits clarify what St. Ignatius wrote, delete De Place’s preface and several appendices, and restore the original paragraph order with its now-standard numbering inserted.

One unexpected problem with the text proved to be its biblical citations. When the Catholic Publication Society translator(s) rendered Fr. De Place’s “Manresa” into English, the new American text used the then-standard Douay-Rheims edition of the Holy Bible for quotations. Besides its numbering of the psalms that differs from more recent editions like the RSV and NABRE, the Douay-Rheims also numbers its verses somewhat differently, with minor variations from the way our more recent translations number them since the 1946 discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. But the bigger and more surprising problem turned out to be that the Pustet version upon which TAN relied, the basis of this book, actually cited the wrong chapter for several Scripture references even in the Douay-Rheims. For example, in number 278 of the Exercises where St. Ignatius gives his prayer points for the Sermon on the Mount, the English edition of De Place incorrectly refers to Luke 7:17–49 when the story in fact occurs in Luke 6:17–49.

In editing this new deluxe devotional edition, I therefore opted to add italicized references to the psalm numbering in more recent English-language Bibles. With flatly incorrect references to the Douay-Rheims books and chapter numbers, I simply corrected the original English editor's mistake without noting any change. But with the verse discrepancies for citations, which differ even between more recent Bible translations like the RSV and NABRE, I left the original verse numbering intact as referring correctly to the Douay-Rheims translation. Readers using newer Scripture translations should realize that a passage may start or stop at different verses and adjust their prayer accordingly.

Another problem arose from the realization that Fr. De Place failed to translate several paragraphs in the Exercises, omitting in particular various notes and other texts aimed more at the potential director of the Exercises than at the one who prays them. He also mashes sections of text together according to an inscrutable fancy, substituting his own nineteenth-century language for the saint's words. Without bogging down the reader with distracting footnotes, I thought it important to acknowledge these omissions and glosses, summarizing what "Manresa" cut out. So in areas where the "Manresa" translation differs significantly from the Exercises source text, I have noted the departures, adding bracketed italicized summaries of missing paragraphs and occasionally interrupting the text to suggest that readers might consult a more literal translation for comparison. I recommend that readers breeze through these italicized summaries lightly, resisting any temptation to get bogged down in analysis that stunts prayer, and that they move quickly past anything they

don't understand. But in some of these areas, especially for more experienced retreatants, it might be helpful to check out newer translations of the Exercises.

NEW PRAYER POINTS FROM JESUIT MASTERS

Besides this necessary editing, I have added supplemental material for personal prayer. It consists of short introductions ("prelections") to key sections of the Exercises. Each prelection includes a relevant quote from a Jesuit spiritual master, a brief context for this quote connected to the exercise or text that follows, and some reflection questions to journal about in praying with the words of St. Ignatius. To distinguish these proleptic annotations from the text of Ignatius, I have placed this word "prelection" (referring to the Jesuit pedagogical practice of reading out a lesson) in these places to indicate a break from the text of Ignatius. The text of Ignatius always resumes right after the journal questions.

Readers may treat my own annotations as equivalent to the introductions and notes in the New American Bible Revised Edition, using or discarding them as helpful. There can be no question about which contributions remain primary in a work that comes redacted from St. Ignatius, Fr. De Place, subsequent French editors who may have introduced changes before "Manresa" entered the US market, the Catholic Publication Society's English translator or translators, Jesuit saints and scholars, and my own updated annotations for personal devotion. I am not at the top of that list in any possible universe.

Likewise, readers may find that the usefulness of my edits depends on their level of experience with Ignatian vocabulary. While the Exercises do not comprise a theological treatise, they often challenge spiritual newcomers with distinctive vocabulary (powers of the soul, consolation, desolation, etc.) and images (kings, battle flags, one unflattering analogy to a certain kind of woman, etc.) tied to their author's late-medieval masculine imagination. St. Ignatius often uses terms (like memory, understanding, and will in the *Suscipe* prayer) drawn from scholastic theology that he simply assumes readers know. Emerging from his intense prayer and discernment in the cave at Manresa on the Cardoner River, he intended these Exercises primarily as a manual of notes for retreat directors, not as a text for popular reading.

Unlike the *Autobiography of St. Ignatius*, the Exercises accordingly lack a linear narrative, and do not fit the pietistic genre of sixteenth-century Spanish mystical treatises like *The Dark Night of the Soul* by St. John of the Cross or *The Interior Castle* by St. Teresa of Ávila. Rather, St. Ignatius aspires to a principle of adaptation, seeking to offer a compendium of prayer methods following a loose four-part structure that he intended to be fluid for each person rather than a homework assignment to be completed from cover to cover. In writing the book, Ignatius himself did not follow this four-part structure with chronological fidelity, but placed much of the material in appendices, presuming wise directors would adapt everything to retreatants.

That in itself discourages spiritual newcomers from using it for self-directed prayer. To St. Ignatius, a “self-directed retreat” with this text in its full thirty-day form would have

been quite impossible, even though he might have allowed that experienced Christians could pray some of the exercises by themselves with profit as part of a self-guided retreat. His casual indifference to linear narrative or self-directed readers permeates the entire book. Far from intending the Exercises as a treatise of mystical theology for people to study for the sake of internalizing spiritual insights, he proposes them as a means to the end of deepening our personal relationship with God, a method of discernment that yields a *behavior-changing* experience unique to each of us.

For this reason, the Exercises have often confounded people who, as they do with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, buy the book and never read it because they learn it's not like *The Imitation of Christ*. Yet just as dedicated Catholic laypeople still draw profit from reading the Catechism without a theology degree, I hope this revision of "Manresa" makes it easier for readers to draw spiritual fruit from praying with the Exercises as a devotional text. It's not milk and honey for the spiritually immature, but a serious meal for maturing Christians poised to go deeper in their faith. This English translation of Fr. De Place, insofar as it softens the manualistic style of the Exercises by paraphrasing and glossing the parts most relevant to novices in prayer, makes the book more "do-it-yourself." But it also creates additional textual mysteries that an editor must resolve in restoring the text to its standard format.

ADDITIONAL MYSTERIES IN DE PLACE

In stripping the “Manresa” translation of its nineteenth-century French varnish to uncover the heart of what St. Ignatius wrote, we discover a serviceable pastoral interpretation of the saint’s text underneath, albeit one that takes many unexplained liberties with the original to serve general readers. Despite its age, the Catholic Publication Society’s English translation of *De Place* holds up remarkably well, comparing favorably to recent translations from the autograph despite being filtered through French and rearranged without the standard numbering. In many places, “Manresa” even summarizes the ideas of Ignatius more succinctly than newer translations.

To take one example of the “Manresa” translation’s pastoral approach, here is the Spanish-language autograph text of the first introductory observation—or “annotation”—of St. Ignatius that opens the Exercises (no. 001) following the *Anima Christi* prayer:

La primera anotación es, que por este nombre, ejercicios spiritual les, se entiende todo modo de examinar la consciencia, de meditar, de contemplar, de orar vocal y mental, y de otras spirituales operaciones, según que adelante se dirá. Porque así como el pasear, caminar y correr son ejercicios corporales; por la mesma manera, todo modo de preparar y disponer el ánima para quitar de sí todas las afecciones desordenadas y, después de quitadas, para buscar y hallar la voluntad divina en la disposición de su vida para la salud del ánima, se llaman ejercicios spirituales.

For a close rendering of these words written by St. Ignatius in Spanish, we'll find no better work than Jesuit Father Louis J. Puhl's literal translation from 1954. Still commonly used in Ignatian circles, Puhl afforded me a useful comparison text in my edits and summaries of untranslated sections throughout this new TAN deluxe edition. Drawing on the Spanish autograph, Fr. Puhl translates this first annotation as follows:

By the term "Spiritual Exercises" is meant every method of examination of conscience, of meditation, of contemplation, of vocal and mental prayer, and of other spiritual activities that will be mentioned later. For just as taking a walk, journeying on foot, and running are bodily exercises, so we call Spiritual Exercises every way of preparing and disposing the soul to rid itself of all inordinate attachments, and, after their removal, of seeking and finding the will of God in the disposition of our life for the salvation of our soul.

While Fr. Puhl breaks this Spanish line into two sentences, the Latin-to-French-to-English translation of "Manresa" that we reproduce in this deluxe edition summarizes the same section in a concise single sentence that omits some of the saint's metaphors:

By Spiritual Exercises is understood certain operations of the mind and heart, such as the examination of conscience, meditation, contemplation, mental and vocal prayer, which are employed in order to free the soul

from its irregular affections and so to put it in the way of knowing and embracing the will of God toward it.

As we see, Fr. Puhl follows the Spanish original more closely, including words like “walk” (*caminar*) and “run” (*correr*) that “Manresa” omits. Yet by opting for a simplified reading, “Manresa” captures the essence of Ignatius in a more direct style. For this deluxe devotional edition of the Exercises, “Manresa” thus serves our pastoral purpose well, making Ignatius more readable and concise while stopping short of paraphrasing the text too loosely.

By comparison, the late Jesuit Father David Fleming’s contemporary paraphrase of this same annotation goes on at greater length than both De Place and Puhl while straying further from the literal sense of words. In his 1996 book *Draw Me Into Your Friendship: A Literal Translation and a Contemporary Reading of the Spiritual Exercises*, first published in 1978 under a different title, Fr. Fleming prints this “contemporary reading” side-by-side with his literal translation to give retreatants alternatives to pray over, an editorial choice I have rejected here to keep this deluxe edition to a manageable size. Fleming paraphrases the annotation as follows:

The phrase “spiritual exercises” takes in all the formal ways we have of making contact with God, such as meditation, contemplation, vocal prayer, devotions, examination of conscience, and so on. We are familiar with the great variety of physical exercises, such as walking, jogging, playing games such as handball, golf, or even the demands of yoga and isometrics. These

physical exercises are good for tuning up muscles, improving circulation and breathing, and in general for the overall good health of the body. So, too, what we call spiritual exercises are good for increasing openness to the movement of the Holy Spirit, for helping to bring to light the darkneses of sinfulness and sinful tendencies within ourselves, and for strengthening and supporting us in the effort to respond ever more faithfully to the love of God.

Here we see different translation philosophies operative in the “Manresa” and Fleming paraphrases. While “Manresa” reduces wordiness to present the main idea more clearly and accessibly, and later provides supplemental exercises implied but not written by St. Ignatius, Fleming actually complicates the text by transposing Ignatian images of walking and running into modern images of “yoga and isometrics.” (Although I’m a young American with years of schooling, I had to look up “isometrics” in the dictionary while writing this preface, and I’ve never done yoga.) This illustration suggests that the English translation of De Place that forms the basis of TAN’s deluxe devotional edition of the Exercises offers a happy compromise between a literal reading and the loose contemporary take of someone like the late Fr. Fleming, who believed in the sincerity of his heart that referring to yoga and isometrics would make St. Ignatius more understandable to ordinary people.

Yet despite its concision and readability, “Manresa” smashes together chunks of text that now-standard editions of the Exercises have carefully numbered and divided, and it

rearranges the saint's words to suit De Place's pastoral judgment. In choosing paraphrase over word-for-word fidelity, "Manresa" dispenses with the standardized numbering of paragraphs, deleting sections or rewording them in ways more suitable to lay readers than to retreat directors. Facilitating use of the book as a do-it-yourself retreat, De Place omits certain sections addressed to the retreat director (see nos. 009–010 and 015 in the introductory observations, for example) or else rewords them (see nos. 007 and 017 in the same) to redirect their focus from the director to the retreatant. Further facilitating private use, "Manresa" also adds supplementary exercises for repetitions that St. Ignatius himself recommends but leaves to the individual's imagination. In their style and format, these supplemental guided prayer exercises resemble the sort of talks that Jesuits commonly give as preached "retreat conferences."

To twenty-first-century readers expecting even a paraphrase to translate every paragraph and respect the original text order, as Fleming does, "Manresa" may feel less satisfactory in these areas than it did to nineteenth-century readers. Because of my desire to update this work as a true contemporary edition of *The Spiritual Exercises*, and not as another reprint of the "Manresa" text that rearranges the Exercises by its own lights, I have inserted the Society's standardized numbering of sections in square brackets where they traditionally go—for example, [001] for the first annotation we examined above—in addition to my italicized summaries of all untranslated paragraphs. To restore the format of the saint's text and of later English translations, I have likewise indented the De Place text to separate the numbered sections

as Puhl does. In places where sections of “Manresa” depart from the order of St. Ignatius, I have simply rearranged the text according to the inserted numbering system.

In all of these edits, I have labored to make this edition of the Exercises better fulfill Fr. De Place’s project to help readers use the text for self-guided prayer, but also to make it useful for people attending preached or directed retreats today who know the unabridged text. Although I could not identify every departure of De Place from the words of St. Ignatius, at least not without burdening the reader with distracting footnotes, I have more clearly distinguished the text of St. Ignatius from the most obvious nineteenth-century glosses and supplemental materials, making it sensible to people who have prayed with more literal renderings. For the excerpts from Jesuit spiritual masters and other sources in my own added material, I have used in-text citations to keep the size of this edition small, writing “editor” to indicate where my commentary intrudes. In this way, I have noted for the first time in any edition of “Manresa” where the words of St. Ignatius leave off and the words of others (myself, the Jesuit spiritual masters, and De Place) pick up.

I hope my edits will appear seamless in context and unobtrusive to prayer. Readers who prefer the original “Manresa,” warts and all, may still consult the reprints issued by TAN since 1999. Readers may also wish to skim the whole book before plunging in, noting where things relate to each other. For the sake this edition, I found it helpful in repurposing the text for twenty-first-century devotion to minimize the changes of De Place, honoring the spirit of his work over the letter by streamlining the manuscript for current readers and

enhancing it with updated commentary from Jesuit spiritual masters.

POPULARIZING THE TEXT

At this point, we might reflect briefly on an old question that Fleming and De Place revive: Should the *Spiritual Exercises* be available in this kind of popular edition for anyone to use? Or should the book remain available only in its highly technical original format, geared to a retreat house setting, as in Puhl's literal English translation (reprinted by Loyola Press and used in my own novitiate on our thirty-day retreat in 2005) from the Spanish autograph? Given the nature of the text, is there even a market for a devotional edition of the Exercises?

Editors and publishers do experience a certain tension in presenting to people a five-hundred-year-old handbook—even if elegantly translated—in the belief that reading it will lead them to prayer and closer to God. Yet this text seems too fruitful to leave only in a technical format—and De Place did an excellent thing in making it more available. So how do we address that tension?

As a handbook, this text in its original format seeks to “guide the guide” of a retreatant praying for a month-long period to make a serious choice about how to live. As St. Ignatius intended it, the guide himself or herself had first to go through this experience, which the casual reader cannot be expected to have done. When someone who has not made the “long retreat” (full thirty-day form) picks up a literal translation of the book, this is what often happens: A

very serious man who has made many weekend retreats buys the book, reads it, and says he doesn't get much out of it. That's why we Jesuits have not aggressively sought to put the book into just anybody's hands.

Indeed, St. Ignatius refused for fifteen years to give his "notes" (what we now call the *Spiritual Exercises*) even to his closest companions. He was not hiding the text; he simply held the conviction that each one who has made the Exercises must pass them on to the next person from his own experience. When pressure from critics finally forced his hand, he had five hundred copies printed and placed in his office. But he decided who would get one—and he refused more than one person who asked. Such was the fundamental conviction behind Jesuit wishes to keep the text sacred. (We might add that, over the centuries, people were not clamoring in droves for this text any more than for that of *The Canon of St. Andrew*.)

On the other hand, historians often credit the early Jesuits with promoting general literacy, which they did with secular literature. And even revered texts like the Exercises brought laypeople closer to previously restricted information. What De Place did by editing the text for personal devotion differed from simply "giving the text" to people—it made the text more accessible, a project that remains worthwhile. Especially today, when so many laypeople direct the eighteenth annotation (preached) and nineteenth annotation (individually directed in daily life) forms of the Exercises, it seems important to share the text more generously for God's greater glory.

I likewise believe people who actually want to read the Exercises (perhaps fewer than we Jesuits flatter ourselves to imagine) tend to be smart enough to pray with the text on their own, albeit with some supplemental commentary from Jesuit masters to understand the text according to its Ignatian tradition. Just as with any other book by a saint, I believe “self-praying” the Exercises can benefit an educated soul who draws his own meaning from them. But I also affirm the need for wisdom from our spiritual fathers to help us on the journey, always a delicate issue when one picks up this kind of book without face-to-face guidance. Thus I offer my revision of “Manresa” as a compromise that restores some of its technical apparatus, but still seeks to help readers use at least some of the Exercises responsibly for self-guided prayer in our troubled age.

CONCLUSION: HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

As the number of Jesuits and Ignatian retreat houses continues to shrink worldwide, this edition of the *Spiritual Exercises* accepts the reality that we seem to be reaching a moment where popular desire for Ignatian spirituality again outpaces the number of trained directors. In an age of declining religious vocations and Jesuit presence, this return by TAN to a popularization of the text seems a timely response to the signs of the times, a fitting pastoral adaptation to the fact that lay ecclesial movements (Focolare, Opus Dei, Sant Egidio, Taizé, etc.) and spirituality have largely surpassed the prominent role once played in Catholic life by missionary teachers like the Jesuits. Founded in the whirling eddies of

the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation and age of exploration, the Jesuits and other Apostolic religious orders themselves replaced the Mendicant orders of the Middle Ages (Franciscans, Dominicans, etc.) and the Monastic orders (Benedictines, Cistercians, etc.) of late antiquity in bringing new energy to the faithful in response to the pastoral needs of their times. But that age seems to have passed, too, yielding to a time when laypeople now dominate the face of Catholicism without necessarily possessing the time and resources in our frantic age to seek out the spiritual wisdom of old.

Perhaps we Jesuits might therefore acknowledge that our own prominence lies more in the past than in the present, that the Jesuit Pope Francis represents a certain historical peak of our influence in the Catholic Church, and that God now calls us to join our elder siblings in religion (the Franciscans, Dominicans, Benedictines, etc.) by adapting to humbler roles forming the talented laity who now form the majority of staff in our Catholic institutions. Especially since the 1970s, Jesuit institutions and freestanding programs of the Exercises have already been doing so, while continuing to promote celibate vocations to priesthood and religious life with all their might. The Exercises, like a gleaming diamond in the rough calling out to be discovered, continue shining out from the cave of Manresa like a light to illuminate the darkened spiritual paths of millions.

That light cries out for new opportunities to shine more widely. Simply looking at the format of various English translations by Jesuits like Fr. Puhl and Fr. George Ganss, S.J., we find the Exercises still come packaged in large

paperback editions resembling college textbooks more than prayer books. If Marshall McLuhan spoke truthfully in saying “the medium is the message,” then current US print editions of the Exercises seem to tell readers: “You won’t enjoy reading this book. It’s not for your personal use.” In other words, stay away, because the Exercises remain analogous to a medical textbook we Jesuits don’t want non-specialists to read. Too often, we continue to present them in this way as the theological equivalent of steamed broccoli, serving them plain without any flavor.

Yet the Exercises remain St. Ignatius of Loyola’s gift to the whole Church, a gift God gave him in mystical revelations, and a manual of arms that has formed countless disciples for spiritual warfare in our struggle to receive good and resist evil. At the start of the Exercises, St. Ignatius exhorts retreatants in his Presupposition (no. 022) to always be more ready to put a good interpretation than a bad one on our neighbor’s actions. So in that spirit, I remain committed to the proposition that all people of good will may read the Exercises for personal prayer and devotion, profiting from trying at least some of the meditations and contemplations even if they do not pray through the full retreat with a spiritual director in the traditional way.

On that point, I offer a few disclaimers. Readers will not be struck by lightning for daring to touch this book without the Jesuit general’s permission, will not hurt themselves by struggling imperfectly to use parts of it on their own, and will not especially hurt anyone else by drawing their own spiritual lessons from it. Like the nineteenth-century French Jesuits who first produced these annotated translations of

the Exercises for general use in a vacuum of trained directors after the Restoration, I hope my stewardship of this edition presents the text anew in a way that makes it more widely available for people who need it, to the greater glory of God and the help of souls. At the same time, I say sincerely to the reader: Handle with care.

You *will* get lost and confused in reading this text. If you think you will be self-directing yourself on a thirty-day retreat with it, you may want to soften your expectations, as it may be difficult to follow even though I have cross-referenced the text to facilitate chronological reading. But read the whole text prayerfully, keep a pen and journal handy to do the prelection exercises, try any exercises of the text that you feel comfortable making, talk to God about your experiences, and write down anything stirring you after each exercise. When in doubt, write down your specific questions or confusions and consult a spiritual person for feedback before attempting particular exercises. Or use resources, like libraries and trusted internet sources, to look up terms or practices you do not understand. Don't worry about "finishing" or doing it "right;" there is no such thing. As the Holy Spirit guides you, use this book for occasional prayer and reflection, or use it for a self-structured private retreat, but please seek out spiritual conversations about your experiences with a trusted mentor or friend in the Lord.

Freshly annotating the Exercises for twenty-first-century readers in this deluxe devotional edition, with points drawn from Jesuit spiritual masters, may feel to some readers like a naive return to simpler times, to an age when members of a restored yet diminished Society of Jesus annotated and

released popular versions of the text to make it more accessible to laypeople only because they had no other choice. But pastoral necessity can sometimes be the mother of invention, as Jesuit missionaries have long known, and St. Ignatius did not look for reinforcements before leaping into the breach at Pamplona in the face of deadly enemy fire. Sometimes, too, we find in life that everything old feels new again—much like the ancient Faith that more than 350 Jesuit saints and martyrs have now bled, burned, lived, and died to spread out of love for Jesus of Nazareth, the gentle Savior whom they chose to follow as a friend in these *Spiritual Exercises*.

Father Sean Salai, S.J.

July 31, 2019

Feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola, patron saint of retreats

Prayer of St. Ignatius, “Anima Christi”

[Editor: This prayer has appeared in printed editions of the Exercises since 1583, but did not appear in the Spanish autograph or first Latin editions, and remains a prayer “of” St. Ignatius insofar as he frequently used it himself and recommended it at different points in the book.]

Latin:

Anima Christi, sanctifica me.
Corpus Christi, salva me.
Sanguis Christi, inebria me.
Aqua lateris Christi, lava me.
Passio Christi, conforta me.
O bone Jesu, exaudi me:
Intra tua vulnera absconde me:
Ne permittas me separari a te:
Ab hoste maligno defende me;
In horâ mortis meæ voca me,
Et jube me venire ad te,
Ut cum sanctis tuis laudem te.
In sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

English:

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water out of the side of Christ,
wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me;
Hide me within Thy wounds;
Suffer me not to be separated
from Thee;
Defend me from the malignant
enemy;
Call me at the hour of my death,
And bid me come unto Thee,
That with Thy Saints I may
praise Thee
For all eternity. Amen.

Introduction

PRELECTION: INTRODUCTORY ANNOTATIONS OF ST. IGNATIUS

“**S**piritual Exercises: Any set program of religious duties, notably the prayers, meditations, and spiritual reading required of persons following a rule of life. Also the period of silence and prayerful reflection practiced annually (or more often) in a retreat. Particularly the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, drawn up as a method of arriving at an amendment of one’s life and resolving on a determined way of holiness. The Exercises of St. Ignatius were first composed by him in a cave at Manresa, in Spain, after his conversion. They have been recommended by successive popes as a most effective program of spiritual renewal for priests, religious, and the laity.”

—Servant of God John Hardon, S.J., *Catholic Dictionary: An Abridged and Updated Edition of Modern Catholic Dictionary*, p. 481

Editor: The American theologian Fr. John Hardon, S.J. (1914–2000), founded the Marian Catechist Apostolate and wrote many popular Catholic books. The Archdiocese of St. Louis opened his cause for sainthood in 2005. Concerned

about New Age spirituality and doctrinal confusions after Vatican II, Fr. Hardon believed in the value of defining terms. In this excerpt from his popular *Catholic Dictionary*, he identifies discernment as the goal of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius; that is, to know God's will and do it in our lives. Rooted in the experience of St. Ignatius, a vain Spanish soldier who spent several months rethinking his life after a cannonball shattered his leg in battle at Pamplona, the Exercises have inspired people from all walks of life for five centuries. Before entering the cave at Manresa to pray, St. Ignatius derived a Christ-centered spirituality from reading Ludolph of Saxony's *Life of Christ* on his sickbed. He also read the lives of the saints, told in *The Golden Legend* by Bl. Jacobus de Voragine, O.P., who writes in his prologue: "The time of pilgrimage is that of our present life, for we are on pilgrimage and constantly engaged in warfare." Saint Ignatius, a man of late-medieval imagination, synthesized the best of monastic (Carthusian, Benedictine) and mendicant (Dominican, Franciscan) wisdom in an apostolic zeal of radical availability to God's will. The saints who engaged in pilgrimage and spiritual warfare spoke deeply to his soul's painful experience at Manresa that formed the basis of his Spiritual Exercises.

Ignatius begins the Exercises by defining his terms, offering the following introductory "annotations", that is, notes or observations. As you enter prayerfully into the riches of this text, please keep a pen and notebook handy as your Spiritual Exercises prayer journal, writing down your responses to the prelection questions and any significant things you notice after praying each exercise. How long to pray will be

a very practical question for beginners. Try starting out with fifteen minutes, expand to thirty when that seems right, and work your way up to an hour, without ever spending longer than one hour on an exercise.

While reading the following words of St. Ignatius's own introduction to the Exercises, reflect on these questions in your prayer journal: What words or phrases from these introductory notes speak to me and why? In what ways am I satisfied and dissatisfied with my prayer life? What do I want from God that might help my earthly journey?

[001] INTRODUCTION

Being Instructions for Persons Making a Retreat: Teaching Them What They Are About to Do and the Rules They Should Observe During the Exercises

I. By Spiritual Exercises is understood certain operations of the mind and heart, such as the examination of conscience, meditation, contemplation, mental and vocal prayer, which are employed in order to free the soul from its irregular affections and so to put it in the way of knowing and embracing the will of God toward it.

II. [002] As it is the soul that is to be exercised in making a retreat, we must seek from our spiritual guide only what is necessary to enable it to act with uprightness and certainty. We must not expect from him many words or long explanations, nor to hear long sermons or interesting lectures. It is

not the quantity of food but a healthy digestion, which nourishes the body; so it is not the great amount of knowledge communicated but the manner in which the heart receives it, and is nourished by it, that satisfies the needs of the soul. Moreover, experience proves that the heart will receive with delight, and with greater real profit, what it discovers for itself, either by its own reflections or by the light shed upon it by Divine grace, than what is presented to its intelligence by lengthened discourses.

III. [003] These Exercises engage both the understanding and the will of man. The understanding seeks by reasoning to obtain the full knowledge of the subject proposed to it; the will produces the various affections that result from the knowledge acquired. In these acts of the heart, wherein it approaches God and converses with Him, the faithful soul ought to be careful never to forget the inward as well as the external respect that the presence of the Divinity requires.

IV. [004] Although [the Exercises are divided] into four series or weeks, each consecrated to a special work of reform, or a distinct study of Our Lord Jesus Christ, it must not be supposed that these weeks are necessarily of seven days. Each one ends when its aim is attained: this happens soonest to the most diligent and those whom the grace of God influences most quickly; later to those who, notwithstanding their goodwill, are longer tried by contending feelings. Generally, the complete course of these Exercises requires about thirty days.

V. [005] The person in retreat will find everything easy, and himself wonderfully assisted by grace, if from the beginning he brings to God a large and generous heart; if he abandons himself with all his wishes and all his liberty to the action of his Creator; if he is disposed to allow his Sovereign Lord to order him, and all that concerns him, according to His good pleasure.

[VI.] [006] If he feels neither consolation, nor sadness, nor other movements of the heart, he must examine himself carefully on the manner in which he performs these Exercises. Does he perform them at the time prescribed and in the manner pointed out? Does he observe the methods and rules traced out for him?

[VII] [007] In moments of temptation and dryness let him encourage himself; let him reassure himself with the hope of soon being consoled; let him, moreover, have recourse to the counsels of his spiritual director.

[VIII.] [008] The rules that are given for the discernment of spirits [nos. 313–27 and 328–36] will assist the soldier of Jesus Christ—sometimes consoled by Heaven as he will be and sometimes a prey to desolation—to know and avoid the snares laid for him by his enemies.

[IX.] [009] *[Editor: Here St. Ignatius recommends that inexperienced retreatants struggling on the purgative way with obvious temptations to evil review the rules of discernment for the First Week found in nos. 313–27, but omit the Second Week rules in nos. 328–36 about different spirits.]*

[X.] [010] *[Editor: Here St. Ignatius recommends that more experienced retreatants, who find themselves struggling on the illuminative way with subtle temptations to evil under the appearance of good, review the rules of discernment for the Second Week found in nos. 328–36.]*

[XI.] [011] It is well for the person in retreat to concentrate his thoughts on the subject presented to him at the moment, without preoccupying himself at all about the day or the week that is to follow.

[XII.] [012] Let him give an hour to each of the Exercises of the day; and as the evil one uses every means to make us shorten this time, let him take care to be able to reassure himself always with the thought that he has lengthened rather than shortened it.

[XIII.] [013] The time will appear short if it pass in the midst of consolation but very long in moments of desolation and dryness. It is at these times that it would be well to prolong the Exercise, to conquer ourselves and to show the enemy that his attacks are not only resisted but also turned to the advantage of our souls.

[XIV.] [014] When consolation is abundant, no vow or promise should be made without having taken time to reflect and consult.

[XV.] [015] *[Editor: Here St. Ignatius emphasizes that the Creator (God) deals directly with his creature (the retreatant) in prayer. Retreat directors, if guiding the reader with this text, must stay out of God's way as much as possible.]*

[XVI.] [016] When the soul, on the contrary, feels inclined toward things inferior or less perfect, every effort must be made to elevate it and give it a contrary direction. To obtain this grace from the God of all goodness, besides assiduous prayer, let other pious exercises be added; beg Our Lord not to allow us to obtain or keep anything, whether honors, riches or happiness, until our irregular inclination for these things has been reformed and rendered subordinate to the interests of His service and glory.

[XVII.] [017] That the director may guide with certainty the soul placed under his care and judge of its spiritual progress, we must faithfully tell him, not precisely our own thoughts and opinions, or our sins (the latter will be told in confession) but the agitations and different movements that the Spirit of God, or the evil spirit, may produce in us.

[XVIII.] [018] In order that the number, the length and the nature of the Exercises may be suited to the age, capacity and inclination of the person in retreat and that no one may be overburdened and all may have what is suitable to their particular dispositions and wants at the time, each one will receive from his director, at the beginning, a rule fixing the hours of rising, of meditation, of meals and the other exercises and occupations of the day. His spiritual guide also will visit him as often as he thinks requisite, setting him the employment for each day as well as the directions, advice and encouragement that he judges to be suitable and useful.

Others again must be satisfied with less. To these the commandments of God and the Church, and the method

of examining their consciences and going to confession, will be explained; they will be instructed in the three methods of prayer [no. 238] that are mentioned further on. It is desirable that such persons should devote half an hour every morning to these Exercises and that they should approach the Sacraments every week or fortnight.

The Exercises of the first week are those that are suited to the capacity and devotion of the greater number. Such will come out of the retreat with a deeper fear of God having made a good general confession, knowing how to examine their consciences well and to approach the Sacraments more regularly.

[XIX.] [019] The author of the Exercises, like the Apostle, made himself all things to all men. To strong, able, generous-minded men and to those who are masters of their time and of their state of life, he recommends four meditations a day of an hour each; another meditation of an hour in the middle of the night; an examination of conscience in the middle of the day and another before going to rest.

Some relaxation will be allowed these persons, if required, during this laborious course. Persons who unite all these conditions, except the time, and who cannot give more than an hour or an hour and a half a day, the rest of their time being occupied in their ordinary avocations, will receive directions how to occupy themselves each day for an hour. By these means they will advance more slowly, but nevertheless in order, and will secure the continuity of the Exercises by one or two repetitions of each meditation.

[020] But those who have their time at their disposal and who wish to derive all the benefit possible from these Exercises must perform them exactly as they are laid down. They must place before their eyes, either written or printed, the principal points of the Meditations and the abridgment of the methods, that they may not escape their memory.

Their progress in the spiritual life will be the more rapid according as they more completely separate themselves from their acquaintances and friends and from worldly thoughts and business. Therefore such must, if possible, leave their homes and retire to a more solitary room or house and only come out to assist at Mass and the Offices of the Church, so as not to meet with interruptions.

This solitude will procure, among others, three great advantages: first, in separating in this manner from friends, relations and worldly affairs, we shall obtain abundant grace from Heaven.

Then, as the mind is less distracted during this voluntary retreat and not drawn off to other subjects, the thoughts are more easily fixed and concentrated on the one thing necessary—the service of God: and the will follows the subject that the understanding offers to it with all the liberty and energy of its nature.

In fine, the more the soul is disengaged and separated from creatures, the more she is at liberty to follow and attain to her Creator and Master, who only approaches her to enrich her with the infinite gifts of His bounty.

PRELECTION: PREMISE OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

“Its basic premise, repeated over and over, is that growth in aliveness of the spirit is made only in proportion to the surrender of self-centeredness; there is only one Center. Over four weeks the retreatant ponders the purpose and fulfillment of human life and the sin which prevents it. He ponders Christ living human life to its fullest, loving his brothers and sisters even to the ultimate sacrifice of himself. He ponders Christ’s sacrifice of himself leading to the resurrection of a new self born free of time and space, free of selfishness and death, free to love.”

—Fr. William J. O’Malley, S.J., *The Fifth Week*, p. 10

Editor: Father William J. O’Malley, S.J. (1931–present), taught in Jesuit high schools for decades. A popular Catholic author, he costarred as the fictional Georgetown University Jesuit Father Joseph Dyer in William Friedkin’s horror movie *The Exorcist* (1973), based on the William Peter Blatty novel of the same name and inspired by the real-life exorcism that American Jesuits administered to a fourteen-year-old St. Louis boy in 1949.

In this excerpt from his book *The Fifth Week*, O’Malley notes that the real battle against evil in the Spiritual Exercises consists not in throwing holy water at people with spinning heads, but in putting Jesus instead of ourselves at the center of our lives. Rather than fixate on people’s bad behavior, the Exercises invite us to become aware of the Evil Spirit’s temptations while nevertheless keeping our eyes fixed on the example of Jesus Christ, turning our gaze from our problems

to him. Mindful that prayer consists in asking good things of God, we ask our Lord for the grace we want in each prayer period of the Exercises. Here Fr. O'Malley summarizes the graces we will pray for during the four Ignatian "weeks" of the Exercises, which do not unfold as literal seven-day "weeks," but rather consist of four periods (the length of each depends on how long it takes a given person to receive the graces of that "week") of distinct spiritual movements.

As you pause here between the introduction of St. Ignatius and the text of the Spiritual Exercises proper, reflect in your journal: What compulsive fixations leave me feeling disconnected from God, myself, and others? What helps me to stop obsessing over sin and focus instead on Jesus at the center of my awareness? What do I want from God that might help me with that?

[021] [The Spiritual Exercises]

["Which have as their purpose the conquest of self and the regulation of one's life in such a way that no decision is made under the influence of any inordinate attachment" —Puhl translation; omitted by De Place]

PRELECTION: THE ‘IGNATIAN PLUS’

“I know that friends and parents are always upset by the departure of those they love. But I look at it in a different way. Supposing that my father and mother were here on the one side, together with my sister and other relatives, and on the other Our God and Lord with his, and I hope, my Blessed Mother; and suppose my parents said, ‘Dear son, we beg you, do not leave us; we ask this in return for the labors and cares we have endured for your sake. . . .’ And suppose Jesus said, ‘Follow me. I was born for your sake, scourged for you, crowned with thorns and crucified for you. See the five sacred wounds I suffered for you. Have you forgotten that I have fed your soul with my holy Body and given it my sacred Blood to drink? Are you not ashamed of your lack of gratitude to me?’ Dear Father and Mother, whenever I think on this my heart is on fire, and I would wish if I could to enter the religious life on the spot. My mind and heart have no peace until they find their beloved.”

—St. John Berchmans, S.J., *Jesuit Supplement to the Divine Office*, Second Reading of Matins for his feast

Editor: Like his fellow Jesuit boy saints Aloysius Gonzaga and Stanislaus Kostka, St. John Berchmans (1599–1621) died young as a seminarian, well before ordination. The son of a working-class Belgian shoemaker and an invalid mother, Berchmans died in Rome without any great exploits to his

name, yet somehow earned a reputation for doing ordinary things with joyful passion. When seventeen-year-old John, a boarding student at the Jesuit high school in Mechlin, had first felt called to become a Jesuit, his parents angrily told him to get a job to support the family instead—to at least become a diocesan priest, rather than take the Jesuit vow of poverty, so he might draw an income and live closer to home. In a letter, his parents reminded John of all they had done by feeding and providing for him. But in his reply letter that Jesuits now read on his feast day, the teenage John gently but firmly held his ground, presenting his choice as a response to the invitation of Jesus and not an attack on his family.

Comparing how his parents had provided for him to how Jesus had died for him on the cross, Berchmans expressed gratitude for his family and refrained from angry accusations as he wrote the difficult but heartfelt words quoted above. Resisting the temptation to interpret their concerns negatively and react defensively against his parents, young John exercised the “Ignatian plus” by putting a good interpretation on their words, an attitude St. Ignatius recommends below in his Presupposition as a basis for relations with authority figures—a text he wrote in Paris, from which John Calvin had just fled and in which the first Jesuits continually faced theological controversy. Because St. John Berchmans chose to receive his parents’ concerns with *positive* presuppositions and respond accordingly, gently pointing out that he acted out of gratitude to Jesus rather than rebelliousness, his parents finally softened their resistance to his vocation and supported his entry into the Society of Jesus.

As you read the Presupposition of St. Ignatius, reflect in your journal: When have I reacted defensively to someone else's words, assuming the worst and taking premature personal offense? When has my negative interpretation of others' motives provoked them to similar anger and fear, making a bad situation worse? What helps me suspend my judgment of another person's words or actions, striving to put a favorable interpretation on his intentions in a way that helps us remain friends in the Lord?

[022] PRESUPPOSITION

That the relations between him who gives the retreat and those who make it may be as agreeable and as profitable as possible, neither must lose sight of this advice: every good and pious Christian must be disposed to receive in a favorable sense and to take in good part every word susceptible of being so received and understood, rather than to take it in a rigorous and objectionable sense. If it happen that the expression is not defensible, ask the person his intention in saying it; and if he is really in error, point it out to him in a charitable manner, that he may set himself right on the point.

**PRELECTION: THE FIRST PRINCIPLE
AND FOUNDATION**

“Why did God create? Not for sport, not for nothing. Every sensible man has a purpose in all he does, every workman has a use for every object he makes. Much more has God a purpose, an end, a meaning in his work. He meant the world to give him praise, reverence, and service; *to give him glory.*”

—Fr. Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J., “The Principle or Foundation: An Address Based on the Opening of *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*”

Editor: Father Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J. (1844–1889), became a brilliant Victorian English poet who struggled as a prep school teacher and with everything else he did in the priesthood. During his short forty-five years of life, he started out as a High Church Anglican, participating in the Oxford Movement as a university student. Like many members of that group, including St. John Henry Cardinal Newman and Monsignor Ronald Knox, Hopkins converted to Catholicism. But Fr. Hopkins, who burned his early poems in the mistaken belief he had to give up his worldly talent to become a Jesuit, suffered as a priest and made little impact on others while alive.

It was only after Hopkins died that his literary friend Robert Bridges published his poetry, leading to posthumous fame for his innovative use of “sprung rhythm” and a long legacy in the poetry section of commercial bookstores to this day. In his rich use of imagery, Hopkins became admired for lines like “Glory be to God for dappled things,” evoking

the goodness of God's creative activity. In the above excerpt from his talk on the First Principle and Foundation, Hopkins notes that God has a purpose for all of creation, giving meaning to our lives and to all living creatures whose existence praises him in the midst of our earthly struggles. For God gives us all created things to use as means to the end of loving him and our neighbor as ourselves; not as ends-in-themselves to be loved for their own sakes. Possessions, relationships, and ideals in themselves do not have evil or bad qualities; only our addictive and compulsive obsessions (disordered affections) regarding them lead us away from God. Indifference alone—a deep interior sense of freedom—enables us to use or not use things in ways that fulfill the Great Commandment to love God, our neighbors, and ourselves.

As you pray with the First Principle and Foundation of St. Ignatius, reflect in your journal: Where have I sensed freedom in using my gifts and talents to praise, reverence, and serve God? Where have I sensed “unfreedom” in my attachment to certain ways of thinking and acting? If I rank the things I value most strongly and then rank by how much time I actually give to them, what do I notice?

[023] PRINCIPLE OR FOUNDATION

Man was created for a certain end. This end is to praise, to reverence and to serve the Lord his God and by this means to arrive at eternal salvation.

All the other beings and objects that surround us on the earth were created for the benefit of man and to be useful to him, as means to his final end; hence his obligation to use, or to abstain from the use of, these creatures, according as they bring him nearer to that end, or tend to separate him from it.

Hence we must above all endeavor to establish in ourselves a complete indifference toward all created things, though the use of them may not be otherwise forbidden; not giving, as far as depends on us, any preference to health over sickness, riches over poverty, honor over humiliation, a long life over a short. But we must desire and choose definitively in everything what will lead us to the end of our creation.

First Week

PRELECTION: PARTICULAR EXAMEN

“On the one hand is the acceptance of myself, in the profoundest depths of my intellectual nature, as a living frustration, an existential absurdity, ordered ineluctably toward a simply non-existent goal, magnetized, so to speak, by the abyss of nothingness, of what is not and can never be—a dynamism doomed eternally to temporary gratification but permanent unfulfillment. On the other hand lies the acceptance of my nature as drawn, magnetized toward an actually existing, totally fulfilling goal, which confers upon it total and magnificent meaningfulness and opens out before it a destiny filled with inexhaustible light and hope. On the one hand, the darkness of ultimate nothingness of what can never be; on the other, the fullness of ultimate Light, which already awaits our coming.”

—Fr. W. Norris Clarke, S.J., *The Philosophical Approach to God*, p. 19

Editor: Father W. Norris Clarke, S.J. (1915–2008), the late philosopher who taught at Fordham University, forged a unique brand of Thomism influenced by Transcendentalism and personalism. In this excerpt from his book on the

philosophy of God, Fr. Clarke describes the dynamic tension we experience in our reflections on the divine between nothingness and fullness, nihilism and faith. We may experience this tension especially in our own struggles with longstanding root sins—Pauline “thorns in the flesh”—which tempt us to despair as we find ourselves unable to overcome them in our lives through the force of our own will. To accept both the darkness and light, relying on God’s power alone as we put Christ at the center of our lives, constitutes a truer wisdom than trying to force solutions on our own.

To help us overcome ourselves, St. Ignatius offers us two forms of Examination of Conscience in the Exercises. When we speak about the “Ignatian Examen,” we typically mean the General Examination of Conscience (no. 043), a reflection on our daily experiences of grace and sin that St. Ignatius will invite us to pray each day. But even before we pray the General Examen, St. Ignatius foresees that we may enter a retreat already aware of certain root sins blocking our intimacy with God. Thus St. Ignatius begins here with the Particular Examination of Conscience as another tool to help us become more aware of the compulsive habits, pervasive attitudes, and behavior patterns we wish to overcome by turning them over to God with a clear resolution to be free of them.

In a retreat house setting, St. Ignatius doesn’t envision the retreatant committing any especially great sins, but rather offers the particular *examen* as a lens for examining one’s own fidelity to the structure and habit of prayer, identifying any obstacles which keep us from entering more deeply into the silence. Even outside of a retreat house, we may use the

particular *examen* to track our bad habits and ask God to help us be wary of them—always bearing in mind, of course, that God may invite us to the grace of perseverance that he gave St. Paul of Tarsus, who learned humility in suffering (2 Cor 2:7–9) from his unspecified thorn in the flesh.

As you pray the Particular Examination of Conscience, reflect in your journal: What “root sins” increase my sense of disconnection from God, myself, and others? How do these bad habits affect my efforts to pray and invite God into the messiness of my life? What might help me let go of these bad habits, redirecting my awareness from them to God’s presence?

[024] METHOD OF PARTICULAR EXAMINATION

There are two kinds of examination (or *examen*): general and particular. The object of the first is to discover all the faults we have committed. The second or particular examination has for its object one single fault or bad habit that we have resolved to correct. It is made every day in the following manner:

1. In the morning, on rising, resolve to avoid this sin or defect.

[025] 2. Toward noon, ask of God the grace to remember how often you have fallen into it and to avoid it for the future. Then examine, thinking over the time passed since your rising to this time, the number of faults committed,

marking them by so many points in the first line of a figure like the following: [no. 31]

This done, renew your resolutions for the rest of the day.

[026] 3. In the evening, after supper, a new examination like the first, marking the faults on the second line.

[027] Observations [Four Additional Directions]

1. At each fault against the resolutions you have taken, put your hand on your heart and repent of your fall. This may be done without being perceived.

2. [028] At night, count the points of the two examinations, and see if from the first to the second you have made any amendment.

3. [029] Compare in the same way the day or the week that is ending with the preceding day or week. The lines diminish in length because it is reasonable to expect that the number of the faults should likewise diminish.

4. [030] The subject of the particular examination should be ordinarily the predominant passion—that is, the one that is the source of the greater number of faults that you commit and that consequently is the great obstacle to your sanctification.

This examination on the predominant passion should be continued until it is entirely overcome, or at least notably weakened.

[031] [Note]

There are two kinds of examination (or examen): general and particular. The second or particular examination has for its object one single fault or bad habit that we have resolved to correct. It is made every day in the following manner:

1. In the morning, on rising, resolve to avoid this sin or defect.

2. Toward noon, ask of God the grace to remember how often you have fallen into it and to avoid it for the future. Then examine, thinking over the time passed since your rising to this time, the number of faults committed, marking them by so many points in the first line of a figure like the following:

Days of the week

1st day _____

2nd day _____

3rd day _____

4th day _____

5th day _____

6th day _____

7th day _____

PRELECTION: SIN

“The ancient wisdom, whether among pagans or believers in the one true God of Israel, recognizes that sin is a real experience for everyone, a sad truth from which no individual or society can escape.”

—Fr. Mitch Pacwa, S.J., *Winning the Battle Against Sin: Hope-Filled Lessons from the Bible*, p. 10

Editor: Father Mitch Pacwa, S.J. (1949–present), biblical scholar and longtime Catholic media host, explores the mystery of sin in his book *Winning the Battle Against Sin*. In this excerpt, he notes that Old Testament Wisdom literature asserts the recognition in both God’s people and ancient pagan literature that sin exists as a source of sadness in our lives. Not only does sin affect us individually, but socially, as the sinful pattern of God’s people neglecting poor widows and orphans to worship false idols in violation of God’s covenants recurs throughout the Torah.

In the following paragraphs (nos. 032–042), St. Ignatius offers a catechesis on morals for people whose consciences need clarifying and whom he urges to confess weekly. Introducing the General Examination of Conscience as a daily prayer tool to identify and resist our sinful patterns, balancing our awareness of them with a hopeful consciousness of God’s presence that seeks to free us, he breaks actual sin into the three categories of thoughts, words, and actions or deeds. For St. Ignatius, although we may employ the Particular Examen as a way of identifying and resisting certain root sins especially on a retreat, the General Examen provides a more

regular tool to tune into the presence of our own sinfulness and God's power to liberate us lovingly from this sad reality.

As you read through this catechesis on morals that introduces the General Examen, reflect on these questions in your prayer journal: Where do I notice the reality of sin most present in my life? Where do I experience the most brokenness in my relationships with God, myself, and others? Where do I most need God's healing mercy?

[032] ADVICE CONCERNING THE GENERAL EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

The object of the first [or General Examination of Conscience] is to discover all the faults we have committed.

[033] Sins of Thought

It may be admitted as a principle that there arise in man three sorts of thoughts, of which one comes of itself, and the other two from the good and the evil spirit.

A bad thought, which if consented to would become a mortal sin, may be an occasion of merit—

(1) when the thought, as soon as it presents itself, is resisted or banished;

(2) [034] when the thought repelled, once or several times, returns soon afterward but is constantly resisted until vanquished: and this second victory is much more meritorious than the first.

[035] That person sins venially who dwells a little on the thought, as if he listened to it, or who takes a slight pleasure in what flatters the senses or is negligent in repelling it.

[036] Mortal sin is committed by thought, first, when the thought is consented to;

[037] and second, when the thought is acted upon, which is a more grievous sin:

(1) because it is entertained longer;

(2) because we give ourselves up to it more ardently;

(3) because we generally injure others by scandalizing them.

[038] Sins of Word

There are many ways of offending God by words; for example, by swearing and blaspheming. We must not swear by the Creator, nor by any creature, except with these three conditions—truth, necessity, respect. By necessity is understood the obligation of confirming with an oath, not all sorts of truths, but only those that tend to procure a considerable good, spiritual or temporal. That person swears with respect, who, in pronouncing the name of God, renders Him the honor that is due to Him.

[039] To swear by the Creator rashly and in vain is a greater sin than to swear by the creature. Yet it is easier to observe the required conditions in swearing by the Creator than swearing by created things:

(1) because in swearing by the latter we take less care as to the truth and the necessity;

(2) because we think less of the respect due to God in calling His works to witness than in uttering His holy name.

(3) *[Editor: In the frequent swearing of oaths, St. Ignatius urges us to fear error more from imperfect people than from perfect people, implying that we might refrain from calling on God to witness to the truth of our words if we do not believe ourselves to be perfect.]*

[040] All idle words must be avoided, that is, such as are useful neither to the speaker nor to others and that are not said with any intention of being useful. But we must not consider those words idle that of themselves tend to the spiritual good of our souls or those of our neighbors or to a temporal good or interest or that refer to it in the intention of the speaker, although he may be speaking of things foreign to his state—as if, for instance, a monk should speak of trade or war, and so on. To speak with a good intention is a merit; to speak uselessly or to a bad end is a sin.

[041] The most common sins of the tongue are lying, false testimony and detraction. As to this last, it is a mortal sin to make known a serious fault that is not public, if done with a bad intention or with notable prejudice to our neighbor's reputation. If the fault revealed be less serious, the sin is only venial.

If the intention be good, we may speak of our neighbor's faults,

(1) when they are public;

(2) when we speak to persons who may probably withdraw them from sin.

Insult, derision and words with suchlike tendency belong also to sins of the tongue.

[042] Sins of Action

All actions by which we transgress the commandments of God or the Church are mortal or venial sins, according to the gravity of the matter and the degree of thought and consent with which they were done.

PRELECTION: GENERAL EXAMEN

“If, when night comes, I think back to certain privileged moments when the truth of my affirmation was revealed to me in an experience, I am not living on a deceptive memory, on the recollection of a pleasing experience, but recollecting a value perceived; it is not the recollection of the fulfillment of a value which I bore in principle within me, but the recollection of a newly discovered existence which integrates, orders, and judges all human values.”

—Cardinal Henri de Lubac, S.J., *The Discovery of God*, translated Alexander Dru, pp. 157–58

Editor: Cardinal Henri de Lubac, S.J. (1896–1991), a French godfather of the mid-twentieth-century New Theology movement, spent his life as a theologian returning to the

sources of Christian tradition for the creative retrieval that inspired the Second Vatican Council. In this excerpt from a 1956 book, written for people struggling to find God in the postwar period, he draws on the perennial philosophy and Christian experience to remind us that our encounter with God begins with awareness. From the perspective of his renewed Thomism, de Lubac believed that consciousness of existence led to consciousness of God himself, a “discovery” that one could make by simply praying back over the events of an ordinary day. In this discovery, we learn to become more conscious of God’s actions in our daily lives, moving beyond an abstract knowledge that God exists to a more personal “felt knowledge” of his presence in our experiences and memories. For de Lubac as for all Jesuits, prayer begins with awareness of ourselves and the world around us, of the vast universe beyond our own heads where we discover God truly acting in the interrelationships of all creation.

Reading this excerpt, we gain some insight into how de Lubac practiced the Ignatian Examen, an essential prayer tool from the Exercises. Having introduced the particular *examen* as a method to focus on root sins, St. Ignatius now gives us the general *examen* as a way to practice what de Lubac sees as the recollection of existence. Saint Ignatius presents this prayer as a grateful recollection of God’s presence in our daily experiences, not as a preparation for confession, but as a way of moving beyond our own values and experiences to recognize the Presence of a power greater than ourselves. Beginning with self-awareness of my gratitude and sinfulness, this “Consciousness Examen” thus follows a transcendental path out of our own heads toward

explicit awareness of God who is Existence itself, the path de Lubac also traces. Jesuits and many others pray the General Examen once or twice daily, both inside and outside of retreat, as a permanent daily prayer routine. We spend no more than fifteen minutes on it.

Before you pray the five-point Ignatian Examen below, prepare by reflecting on the following in your journal: Sit for ten minutes of silence in a peaceful place, with your only effort being to enter more deeply into the silence, and pay attention to yourself as well as the world around you. What feelings, thoughts, and actions surface in my consciousness that I wish to invite God to enter? What do I notice around and beyond myself?

[043] METHOD OF THE GENERAL EXAMINATION TO BE MADE EVERY DAY

[I.] The first point is an act of thanksgiving to the Lord for the benefits we have received.

[II.] The second is a prayer to know our faults and to correct them.

[III.] The third is an exact discussion and examination of the sins we have committed during the day. We must demand a rigorous account from our souls of what we have thought, said and done hour by hour. The same order and method must be followed as has been already given for the particular examen.

[IV.] The fourth consists in asking pardon of God for the sins into which we have fallen.

[V.] — [Editor: *The fifth and last point of the General Examen consists in resolving to change with God's grace. It suggests closing the Examen with an Our Father.*]

PRELECTION: GENERAL CONFESSION AND HOLY COMMUNION

“Take note of this: when you hear confessions in these regions, do not treat your penitents with any rigor or cause them to fear so much that they never end telling their sins; but rather speak to them of the great mercy of God, treating lightly what is in itself very serious, and this until they have finished confessing and revealing their sins.”

—St. Francis Xavier, S.J., “Instruction for Gaspar Barzaeus going to Hormuz (Goa, April 1549),” no. 12 in *The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier*, p. 252.

Editor: Saint Francis Xavier (1506–1552), who roomed with St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Peter Faber at the University of Paris, intensely disliked the pious Ignatius when they first met. A proud Spanish nobleman whose family had fought on the opposite side of the war that crippled Ignatius, Xavier also enjoyed the nightlife in Paris. For this reason, St. Ignatius regularly pestered him each night he came home late with this sing-song biblical refrain: “What good would it profit a man to gain the whole world, but lose his soul?”

Eventually, Xavier came around to the spiritual guidance of Ignatius after encountering a friend dying of syphilis in the streets of Paris one night, an encounter that “scared him straight.”

Upon making the Exercises and becoming a member of the fledgling Society, Xavier found himself asked by Ignatius to establish a mission in India. He responded: “Here I am. Send me.” St. Francis Xavier then spent the rest of his life establishing mission posts in India and Japan before dying on an island off the coast of China at age forty-six, having never seen Ignatius or home again after leaving Europe. In this excerpt from an instruction to a priest he was sending to work at a Portuguese settlement in modern-day Iran, Xavier exhorts his Jesuit brother to mercy in hearing the confessions of new Christians in the region. As with retreatants who make a general confession of their whole lives at this point in the Exercises, Xavier recognized the need for pastoral sensitivity in allowing penitents a safe space to open up about all the sins of their past lives, facilitating a full and truly healing confession that avoids neurotic scruples.

At this point in the Exercises, St. Ignatius does indeed invite us to list out all of the sins we remember from earliest childhood to present, making a general sacramental confession of them to a priest ideally after the First Week exercises. He believed from personal experience that this devotional practice, while not strictly required for retreatants, could strongly deepen the First Week grace of knowing ourselves more intimately as sinners loved by God. By overcoming our fear of naming and looking at our sins in this way, St. Ignatius believed this confession would lead to more fervent

and grateful reception of Holy Communion during the time of retreat, removing a major obstacle to God's friendship. If you wish to make a general confession yourself as a devotional practice while praying through this book, either self-guided or with a spiritual director, please tell the priest you are doing so as part of the Spiritual Exercises to avoid any confusion. As Xavier suggests above, you will do well to simply confess all of your sins as completely as possible, without fixating excessively on rationalizing the most serious ones.

As you read the following description of the Ignatian general confession, take as much as three days to list out all the sins of your past life in your journal, omitting nothing. Since this general confession remains a devotional practice, you may list even major sins you remember already confessing. Once you feel ready, contact a priest to set up an appointment to offer your general confession, making sure he understands you are following the Spiritual Exercises and will need up to a full hour for this confession.

[044] OF GENERAL CONFESSION AND COMMUNION

The following are some of the principal advantages of general confession, which is recommended during the Exercises, even though not of absolute obligation.

1. The remembrance and detailed view of the sins of our past life excite in the soul a more lively contrition.

2. As the exercises give a clearer and more distinct knowledge of the malice of sin, the confession will be made with more care and more fruit.

Experience shows that a great number of Christians often approach the sacrament of penance without sufficient examination, without the necessary sorrow, without any, or at least a very feeble, resolution of amendment of life. Thence arise troubles and disquiet, if not during life, at least at the moment of death. The purpose of the general confession made during the exercises is to purify the soul from all past faults and to give it peace and tranquility for the future. So, although we must avoid in this confession anxiety, scruples, and continual returns to the past, yet we must endeavor to give it all the attention and all the care we are capable of, so that we may always be able to assure ourselves that not anything has been neglected; without which we can never enjoy peace of heart or repose of conscience. It will be desirable, in preparing for this confession, to make use of some method or directory for examination. There are several very good ones that can easily be procured.

[3.] The last advantage of general confession is that it is generally followed by a more fervent communion. And nothing is more efficacious than a good communion, whether in avoiding sin, or in preserving and augmenting the grace that we have had the happiness to receive.

PRELECTION: THE PREPARATORY PRAYER

“The preparatory prayer with which Ignatius prefaces each meditation, ‘Ask our Lord God for the grace to direct my thoughts, activities and deeds to the service and praise of His Divine Majesty’ (*Exercises*, no. 46), clearly indicates this liturgical and personal meaning of contemplation: its aim is to be exclusively worship.”

—Fr. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Prayer*, p. 114

Editor: Father Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–1988), the Swiss mystical theologian who died two days before he could receive the cardinal’s red hat, made the full Spiritual Exercises as a young Jesuit. After meeting fellow mystic Adrienne von Speyr and receiving her into the Catholic Church in 1940, however, God led him on a new path. In 1945, Balthasar and Speyr founded the Community of Saint John as a religious society for men and women. To serve full-time as head of this secular religious institute, Balthasar left the Jesuits in 1950 after twenty-one years in the order, but remained a friend of the Society and promoter of the Spiritual Exercises for the rest of his life. Together with Speyr and the Jesuit theologian Henri de Lubac, Balthasar founded the Casa Balthasar, formally established in Rome in 1990 under the patronage of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) as a place for young people to make the Exercises and discern religious life. Today this Jesuit-run organization continues its work, steeped in the mystical writings of Balthasar and Speyr, with an eye in particular towards helping young men explore a Jesuit vocation.

In his 1955 book *Prayer*, published five years after leaving the Society, Balthasar describes the Exercises as an act of worship that brings one into personal contact with Jesus. In the above excerpt, he encourages retreatants to use the preparatory prayer that opens each exercise of the retreat to invite ourselves mystically into a communal act of worship, asking fervently to focus entirely on God as we settle into silence. Notice how the threefold ring in Balthasar's quotation of no. 046, translated more literally than Fr. De Place, exhorts us to consciously direct the three faculties Ignatius had earlier mentioned as vehicles of sin—thoughts, words, and deeds—back toward the Creator who loves us.

Having dispensed with the introductory observations and some basic prayer tools to use throughout the Exercises, St. Ignatius now begins his First Exercise of the First Week with this deceptively simple preparatory prayer that he expects retreatants to internalize and repeat at the start of every exercise of the retreat. Far from being a rote activity, the preparatory prayer powerfully invites us to reorient the three powers of our soul away from the threefold corruption of sin back to the praise and service of God's divine majesty. Indeed, St. Ignatius suggests we will find it fruitful to use this preparatory prayer as an opening ritual in every personal prayer period of our lives, not merely during times of retreat.

As you read St. Ignatius's description of the preparatory prayer and pray through this First Exercise on Sin, reflect in your journal: What thoughts am I directing to God as I pray the First Exercise? What words do I give to him?

What actions do I offer for his praise and service during this prayer period?

[EXERCISES ON THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN]

[045] First Exercise on Sin

Meditation or Exercise of the Three Powers of the soul on Three Different Sins: That of the fallen angels, That of Our First Parents and That of a Child of Adam Condemned for a Personal Sin

[046] Preparatory prayer.

Ask of God the grace to refer to His glory and service all the powers and operations of your soul.

[047] First prelude.

Represent to yourself, during the first point, Lucifer falling from the heights of heaven to the depths of the abyss; in the second, Adam cast out of the terrestrial Paradise into this vale of tears; in the third, a lost soul in the midst of the flames of hell.

[048] Second prelude.

Ask of God feelings of shame and repentance at the sight of so many souls expiating by eternal suffering the sin you have committed so frequently.

[049] [Note] [Editor: Here St. Ignatius instructs us to make the Preparatory Prayer (always the same as above) and two preludes (which change in each exercise) before each meditation and contemplation in the Spiritual Exercises.]

[050] First Point

The sin of the rebel angels

Consider—

1. *The angels before their sin.* The excellence of their being; the light of their intelligence; the rectitude and innocence of their will; their dwelling, which is heaven, where, without yet seeing the Lord face to face, they have no other life than thinking of Him and loving Him; the happiness of their destiny—that is, a few moments of trial, and then the sight and possession of God for all eternity.

2. *The sin of the angels.* These noble spirits were masters of their liberty, and it proved their ruin; God gave it to them that they might merit, and they abused it to destroy themselves. Lucifer, the highest of all, dared to refuse to God the obedience due to Him; and he drew a third of the angels into his rebellion. Meditate attentively on the circumstances of this sin, and see if you do not find them in great part in your own sins; a sin committed in heaven; a sin committed with great lights; a sin committed after great benefits from Divine grace; a sin of scandal.

3. *The punishment of the rebel angels.* The justice of God falls on them like lightning. They are cast into the depths of hell,

and in the midst of flames they suffer in an eternity of torment the sin of a moment. Meditate well on this terrible vengeance of God, which regards neither the multitude of the culprits nor the dignity of the victims; neither the rank of the angels nor the high place that they occupied in His friendship; neither the service these angels if repentant and restored to grace might render Him nor the nature of their sin; it is their first sin and the sin of a moment. “Who shall not fear Thee, O King of nations?” (*Jer.* 10:7). “How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how inscrutable His ways!” (*Rom.* 11:33).

[051] Second Point

The sin of Adam

Consider—

1. *Adam before his sin.* The excellence of his being; made in the image of God; the reign of truth in his intellect, of justice in his heart; his empire over his passions and his senses; the profound peace of his soul; the delights of the terrestrial Paradise where God had placed him.

2. *Adam's sin.* God had forbidden him to touch the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Adam did not obey. Tempted by the serpent, Eve tempts her husband, who by a fatal complaisance becomes a sinner. Meditate on the characteristics of this sin—imprudence, sensuality, cowardice, blindness, contempt of God. In the fall of our first father do you not recognize all your past falls?

3. *The punishment of Adam after his sin.* The loss of original justice and grace; disorder in all his being, in his intellect, in his heart, in his senses; change in nature—inclemency of the seasons, barrenness of the earth, the revolt of the animals; tribulations of Adam during his whole life—labor, sickness, desolation at the death of Abel, all the troubles of his mind and heart; and, after 900 years of penitence, death. Finally, consider the anger of God avenging this first sin on all the descendants of the first sinner: pestilence, war, famine, desolation of the earth; so many disasters, so many violent deaths, so many tears shed, so many crimes committed, so many children forever deprived of the sight of God, so many souls cast into hell. What consequences and what chastisements for one single sin!

End by recalling your own state, and comparing Adam's sin with your own personal sins.

On Adam's side. One single sin, committed before the Incarnation, before he had experienced the justice of God; above all, as in which he expiated by 900 years of penitence.

On your side. Sins so numerous, committed by a nature sanctified by Jesus Christ, in face of the cross and of hell, and perhaps sins not expiated and for which you only feel but feeble repentance.

[052] Third Point

On a particular sin

Consider that at the moment that you on earth are meditating on the malice of mortal sin, there is, perhaps, in the depths of hell a soul that God has eternally condemned for

such a mortal sin committed one single time, or at least for sins less numerous and less serious than yours.

Represent to yourself this soul forever deprived of the sight and the possession of God, plunged into hell among demons, delivered up to remorse, to despair, to flames, for a wretched eternity.

Ask yourself what this God is who punishes a single mortal sin in this manner. He is a God infinitely wise, infinitely just, infinitely merciful—a God who has loved this soul so much as to die for it. What an evil, then, is one single mortal sin!

Finally, reflect upon yourself. How long is it since you first committed mortal sin? Why did not God strike you dead after this first sin? Why has God spared you till now, when everything demanded your condemnation? The interest of His perfections, which you outraged; of His graces, which you trampled underfoot, of the souls whose loss you caused by your scandals. If God had called you before His tribunal on such a day, at such an hour, after such a fault, where would you be at this moment, and in what state? “It is of the mercies of the Lord that we are not consumed” (*Jer. 3:22*).

[053] Colloquy at the Foot of the Crucifix

Address yourself to Jesus Christ crucified present before you. Ask of your God why He has deigned to become incarnate, to suffer, to die for you. Ask yourself what you have done for Him up to this time that deserves mentioning; what you will do, and what you ought to do, for Him for the future.

Fix your eyes upon the cross, and say to Him all that your heart suggests.

Pater. Ave.

PRELECTION: THE COLLOQUY

“In dealing with Jesus and Mary I go along with holy fear as I speak with them, and they answer me with gentle sweetness and teach me, by letting me know their holy will so that I can carry it out. In this sweet familiarity with God and with the Virgin this person’s attitude is that of a baby at the breast with its mother; he does not know how to be presumptuous nor is he able to be, because he is a baby. In this conversation the soul reaches the state, by the grace of God, where it does not know how to be—nor even can be—presumptuous, any more than a baby at the breast.”

—St. Alphonsus Rodriguez, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: After losing his wife, children, and business in quick succession, the thirty-eight-year-old St. Alphonsus Rodriguez, S.J. (1533–1617), knocked on the door of the Society of Jesus asking to study for the priesthood. Deemed too old and frail in health to endure the required studies and missionary labors, the Spanish Jesuits invited him to become a brother instead. After taking vows, St. Alphonsus spent the rest of his life serving as doorkeeper of a Jesuit secondary school in Majorca, where he acquired a reputation among

students and visitors as a wise man gifted in the art of spiritual conversation. As a young Jesuit, St. Peter Claver even sought Rodríguez's advice, volunteering because of it for the missions to serve African slaves being forcibly processed into South America. When St. Alphonsus Rodríguez died, the Jesuits discovered in his diaries the roots of his gift for discourse, learning that he imagined Jesus coming to the door and participating in conversations whenever he answered it.

In the *Spiritual Exercises*, the ability to have a spiritual conversation or “colloquy” (no. 053) with others in our lives, striving to interact as Jesus and his apostles did with each other, helps us do the same with God and the saints in prayer. For St. Ignatius, a person who just sits and thinks about his problems does not really pray, and he urges us to end every prayer period by holding a colloquy (conversation) with God or a saint. To move beyond intellectual analysis into a real encounter with the living God, as St. Alphonsus Rodríguez did, we must make a real effort to have an actual conversation with the Lord, vocalizing directly to him whatever occurred in our hearts and minds during the exercise—even if boredom and distraction prevailed. By this means, our prayer slowly evolves from a head trip into an intimate relationship with the God who loves us, creating the “sweet familiarity” with the divine presence that St. Alphonsus found in his own spiritual conversations both in and out of formal prayer.

As you read the summary of St. Ignatius's note on colloquies in no. 054, reflect in your journal: When I pray, do I simply think about my problems, or do I actually speak

to God? What keeps me from conversing with the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Mary, or other holy persons in prayer? What helps me talk to God like one friend to another, or like a servant to a master?

[054] [Note on Colloquies] [Editor: Here St. Ignatius instructs the retreatant to make the prior colloquy (conversation) closing the First Exercise in no. 053 as one friend speaks to another, or as a servant to a master; that is, asking for good things while accepting blame for our selfish acts and seeking advice in our personal lives. St. Ignatius finally recommends closing the colloquy with an Our Father, to which Fr. De Place in no. 053 suggests adding a Hail Mary.]

[055] Second Exercise on Sin

On Our Own Sins

Preparatory prayer.

[This is always the same, as in no. 046 above.]

First prelude.

Present yourself before God in the state of a criminal who appears before His tribunal and is going to hear his sentence.

Second prelude.

“I groan in Thy sight as one guilty; shame hath covered my face, because of my sin; spare me, a suppliant, O my God.”

[056] First Point

Recall all the sins of your life

Sins of infancy, sins of early youth, sins of more mature age. Examine all your years; what day was there that had not its sin? Question the different places you have inhabited, the societies, the employments, all the scenes of your pleasures; where do you not meet with memories of sin? Ask all the laws of God; is there a single one that you have not transgressed? Ask all your past temptations; are there many before which you have not fallen? Ask all your faculties; which is there that has not been guilty? Ask all your senses; which is there that has not served as an instrument of iniquity?

[057] Second Point

Consider the malice of all these sins in themselves

1. *What deformity!* They must be ugliness itself, since they are infinitely opposed to supreme beauty, which is God.
2. *What ingratitude!* You hold all from God and yet you dare to say to Him, "Go from me: withdraw Thyself from my senses, which only live by Thy power; retire from my heart, which has received feeling only to love Thee; withdraw from all my being, which I only received to serve Thee."
3. *What audacity!* You have dared to say to God, "I will not serve, I will not obey"; and you have said it to God in face of Himself, on the borders of the grave, on the brink of hell, where He holds you suspended by a slender thread called life.

4. *What folly!* You have left God, God your Father, God your supreme beatitude; and for what? For a perfidious master, for a cruel tyrant, for Satan.

5. *What malice!* You have sinned, and it was with so much eagerness and passion, with so much reflection and liberty, with so much show and scandal. And you have remained at rest in your sin, notwithstanding so many lights, so many solicitations of grace; notwithstanding the voice of conscience and remorse.

[058] Third Point

Consider what you are that have thus offended God

What are all the angels before God? What are all men compared to the angels? What am I in comparison with the whole human race? What a leaf is in an immense forest, a drop of water in a stream, a grain of sand on the shores of the ocean, an atom in the immensity of the universe! And it is I, vile and worthless dust, that have not feared to declare myself a rebel against God!

[059] Fourth Point

Consider what this God is that you have offended

Against whom, my God, have I rebelled when I committed sin? I, weakness itself, rebelled against strength! I, baseness itself, rebelled against sovereign greatness! I, malice itself, rebelled against sovereign goodness! I, who am only

corruption and darkness, rebelled against essential wisdom and holiness! I, a nothing, rebelled against the Being of beings!

[060] Fifth Point

Conclude by addressing God and creatures

Be astonished that, after so many iniquities, creatures have not armed themselves against you, that they continue to serve you when you never ceased to insult their God and yours.

Be astonished that God has not withdrawn His gifts, that He has left you this fortune, this credit, these talents, this mind, this heart, this life, which you abuse to offend Him. Then ask pardon of all the perfections of God that you have offended: "Pardon, O justice of my God, for having so long braved your thunders! Pardon, O holiness of God, for having so long sullied by my crimes your purity! Pardon, O mercy of my God, for having so long forgotten your voice!"

[061] Colloquy

Give thanks to the mercy of God, and protest at the feet of Jesus Christ that you will never more offend Him.

Pater. Ave.

[062] Third Exercise on Sin

[Editor: While St. Ignatius describes this third exercise on sin only briefly as a repetition of the first and second exercises on sin, focusing on whatever moved the retreatant and now ending

with three colloquies, Fr. De Place elaborates this repetition with the following synthesis of the first two meditations. De Place also omits the Triple Colloquy of Ignatius, which we nevertheless summarize below, in favor of a simplified colloquy.]

Of the Infinite Malice of Mortal Sin

Preparatory prayer and preludes. As before. [See nos. 046 and 055 above.]

First Consideration

God offended by man

Consider attentively—

1. *The greatness of God who has been offended.* What is God? Who is like to Him in greatness, in power, in holiness, in justice, in wisdom, in goodness? Who is like to God? His age is eternity, His empire everything that exists, His palace the light, His garments beauty and glory, His subjects and ministers the angels. And this is He whom the sinner dares to offend!

2. *The nothingness of the sinner.* What is man? Flesh full of pollution, dried grass ready to fall under the scythe, a leaf the sport of the winds, a vapor scarce formed and already dispersed in the air, a little dust and ashes. And it is this man who dares to say to God, “I will not obey.” “Thou hast lifted thyself up against the Lord of heaven, and said, I will not serve” (*Dan. 5:23; Jer. 2:20*).

3. *The matter of the sin.* A law of God transgressed; a law infinitely delightful, infinitely wise, the accomplishment of which was so easy, to which were attached such consoling promises and such terrible threats.

4. *The motive of the sin.* To whom have you compared Me? Says the Lord: "To whom have you likened Me?" (*Is.* 46:5). To a passion at which you blush; to some low interest, to a pleasure that passes so quickly: "Be astonished at this. They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living water, and have digged to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns" (*Jer.* 2:12, 13).

Second Consideration

God offended by man and offended in all His attributes

What is it you do when you are so unhappy as to commit mortal sin? By a single sin you outrage God in all His titles and in all His perfections. You outrage God the Father. You profane the supernatural being He gave you in holy baptism. You outrage the Word incarnate; you break the bonds that unite you to Him; you renew His passion in your heart; you render His blood and death useless. You outrage the Holy Ghost—you grieve, you resist Him, you extinguish Him within you.

You outrage God in all His titles. As Creator, in rebelling against His supreme dominion; as Legislator, as Redeemer, as your Friend, as your King, as your Father.

You outrage God in all His perfections. In His unity: you adore as many gods as you have passions. In His infinite perfection: you prefer a vile creature before Him. In His wisdom: you overthrow the order He has established, in turning creatures away from their end. In His immensity: you do not blush to sin in His presence, under His eyes. In His justice, which you brave. In His mercy, which only encourages you in your impenitence. In a word, you become guilty of deicide!

Third Consideration

God offended by man in spite of so many motives to urge him not to offend

How many motives there are that ought to engage you to remain obedient to God!

1. *Your respect for your fellow creatures.* You are so numbly submissive before a sovereign, a protector, a powerful enemy. How is it that you are bold only against God, the first of sovereigns?
2. *What you exact from others.* You are so tenacious of your authority, your honor, your rights, your sentiments, your will. How is it, then, that you have so little respect for the authority, the honor, the rights of God?
3. *The sacrifices you make for the world.* When the world speaks, do you not obey at any price—at the price of your repose, of your pleasures, of your liberty, sometimes even of your life? Why is it that, when the Lord commands, He is

not obeyed in this manner? Why is it that then alone sacrifices are painful and appear impossible?

4. *Your vows to God.* You glory in respecting your pledged word; you would rather die than fail in your sworn faith. But has not God received your vows a thousand times—in baptism, at the sacred tribunal, at the holy table? Or is it that the oath that has such strength to bind man to man has none to bind man to God?

5. *The benefits received from God.* You hold all from God—talents, fortune, life. You can only sin by means of His benefits. What ingratitude, then, not only to forget such a benefactor, but also to render Him evil for good! To make use of His gifts to insult Him! To force Him to act against Himself and to turn against His glory His own goodness and His own power, which preserve you!

[063] Colloquy

Place yourself at the foot of the crucifix, as a rebel subject, as a perjured friend, as a parricide son; and humbly ask of Our Lord the pardon of your sins.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

[Triple Colloquy] — [Editor: Here I summarize the colloquy in no. 063 as St. Ignatius intended it:]

[First Colloquy] [St. Ignatius instructs the retreatant to ask Mary to obtain three graces from her Son: (1) to know and hate my sins; (2) to understand my disordered actions in a way that motivates me in horror to put my life's priorities back in order;

(3) to know “the world” in a way that inspires me to reject all that is selfish about it. Then St. Ignatius says to pray the Hail Mary.]

[Second Colloquy] [St. Ignatius instructs the retreatant to now ask Jesus Christ for these same three graces from his Father and to pray the Anima Christi (Soul of Christ) prayer.]

[Third Colloquy] [St. Ignatius instructs the retreatant to finally ask the Father to grant these three graces and to conclude with the Our Father.]

[064] Fourth Exercise on Sin

[Editor: For the Fourth Exercise on sin, St. Ignatius invites us to think over and recall the Third Exercise, repeating the Triple Colloquy. Father De Place again provides an expanded synthesis, writing out the repetition to aid self-guided devotion, and again simplifies the Triple Colloquy that Ignatius suggests. However, one may simply return to the exercises and Triple Colloquy above, reflecting on the most significant points instead of using the text below.]

On the Effects of Mortal Sin in the Soul of the Sinner

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Present yourself before God as a criminal loaded with chains, taken from a dungeon and led to the tribunal of his judge.

Second prelude.

Beg of Our Lord that He will deign to show you the sad state of a soul that has mortally sinned.

First Consideration

Mortal sin makes us lose the friendship of God

When you were in a state of grace God dwelt in your soul; the most august bonds united you to Him; He called you His people, His friend, His child, another self. But what a change since mortal sin has entered into your soul! God has withdrawn Himself from you; the ties that united you to Him have been broken; and with His friendship what have you not lost!

Second Consideration

Mortal sin robs us of all the gifts of Grace

1. *It destroys the beauty of the soul.* Before sin, this soul was so beautiful a sight that it delighted the heart of God; since its sin, it is as if disfigured by a hideous leprosy, which makes it an object of horror to the Lord and His angels.

2. *It deprives the soul of all its merit.* alms, prayer, sacrifices, good works; one single mortal sin suffices to destroy all.

3. *It deprives the soul even of the power of meriting.* As long as you are in a state of mortal sin, all your good works are useless for heaven. Bestow your goods in alms; embrace the most rigorous austerities; convert the universe, if possible; give your body to the flames—St. Paul assures you that all this

is useless for salvation if there is a single mortal sin in your heart: “If I have not charity, I am nothing” (*1 Cor.* 13:2).

Third Consideration

Mortal sin enslaves our liberty

Are you in the grace of God? You are free: “Where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty” (*2 Cor.* 3:17); the sweetest liberty, the most honorable, the only one that human power cannot take away. But have you had the misfortune to sin mortally? You are a slave: “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin” (*John* 8:34). All in you is enslaved—the faculties of your soul, your senses, your talents, your fortune. The devil deals with you as the centurion in the Gospel with his servants: “I say to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it” (*Luke* 7:8). He cries to you incessantly, “Bring, bring” (*Prov.* 30:15). Again this passion, again this sin; and always he is obeyed. What degrading slavery!

Fourth Consideration

Mortal sin deprives us of peace of heart

The sinner carries with him everywhere a trembling heart and a soul prey to trouble and grief. Remorse is as a barbed arrow in his heart, as a gnawing worm; his conscience always pursues him; sometimes in the midst of the most serious cares, like David; sometimes in the midst of pleasure, like Baltassar; sometimes in the pains of sickness, like Antiochus; almost always in the silence of solitude, like Cain.

Sometimes it reproaches him with a pleasure bought at the price of a long repentance; sometimes it recalls his ingratitude, the malice of his sin; sometimes it represents to him the sword of God's justice suspended over his head. O sinner, how much you are to be pitied, if conscience pursues you in this manner! But how much more if it leaves you at rest! For the peace of a guilty conscience is the sure sign of the great wrath of God.

Fifth Consideration

Mortal sin kills the soul

The soul is the life of the body, and God is the life of the soul. Sin, then, kills the soul in separating it from God. And what difference is there between a corpse and a soul in mortal sin? The dead no longer see. Everything ought to strike the eyes of the sinner—the state of his soul, death that approaches, judgment, hell; and he sees nothing. The dead are insensible. God moves heaven and earth to touch the sinner, and the sinner remains insensible. The dead exhale an infectious odor; in like manner, the sinner spreads death around him by the contagion of his scandals. O fatal death! Who will give us tears to weep over thee?

Affections at the foot of the crucifix. [*Editor: This translation mentions "affections at the foot of the crucifix" in several places as shorthand; Ignatius here asks the retreatant to repeat the Triple Colloquy summarized in no. 063.*]

Pater. Ave.

PRELECTION: MEDITATION ON HELL

“In so doing, [the disciple] does not believe he is transgressing the Gospel precept to hate and condemn the world. He does, indeed, despise the world and trample it under foot—but the world that is cultivated for its own sake, the world closed in on itself, the world of pleasure, the damned portion of the world that falls back and worships itself.”

—Fr. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., “Mastery of the World and the Kingdom of God” in *Writings in Time of War*, pp. 83–91

Editor: Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J. (1881–1955), the French geologist and mystic, writes in this excerpt with particular clarity on the Ignatian invitation to embrace God’s creation as good while hating “the world.” Although Teilhard got into some questionable waters over his attempts to theologize about how the earth and the whole cosmos are being gathered into Christ, de Lubac wrote a book defending him, and Pope Benedict XVI praised him in a homily. Among the “new theologians” of pre-Vatican II France along with de Lubac and Daniélou, Teilhard grasped with special force the goodness of earth, noting here that “hatred of the world” refers more to our sinful distortions of creation than to God’s original plan of holiness. The “damned portion of the world” he talks about here, suggesting that we best understand hell by reflecting on how we already encounter it in the reality of sin, invites us to consider our experiences of “hell on earth” as we engage this next exercise. For the Fifth Exercise of the retreat, St. Ignatius offers us the following

meditation on hell that consists of the preparatory prayer, two preludes, five points, and a colloquy with Jesus.

As you prepare to pray this exercise on hell, reflect in your journal: Where have I seen signs of hell on earth in my own life experiences? Where have I seen God's creation distorted by human selfishness? What images come to mind when I think about hell, that state of eternal punishment where damned souls experience the torment of self-imposed separation from God's love that they freely chose during their earthly lives?

[065] EXERCISE ON HELL

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Represent to yourself in imagination the length, the width, the depth of hell.

Second prelude.

Ask of God a lively fear of the pains of hell, so that if ever you have the misfortune to lose the feeling of Divine love, at least the fear of torments may deter you from sin.

Considerations

[066] 1. *The habitation of the damned.* It is hell. But what is hell? The Holy Ghost calls it the place of torment; a region of misery and darkness, where disorder dwells; the lake of

the anger of God; a burning furnace; the depths of the abyss; the winepress of the fury of the Almighty, under which God will trample and crush His enemies.

[067] 2. *The society of the damned.* In hell, a triple society will form the torment of the damned soul. (1) The society of his body, which will unite to the infectious corruption of a corpse all the sensibility of a living body, and of which all the members have their torment and their pain. (2) The company of devils, whose sole occupation is to torture the damned; who, not being able to revenge themselves on God for their reprobation, revenge themselves on man, His image, and pursue Him in the condemned with all the fury that can enter the heart of a demon. (3) The society of an infinite number of reprobates like himself. Represent to yourself this assembly, so hideous that nothing like it can be found in the dungeons and galleys of human justice; represent to yourself these miserable creatures bound together like a bundle of thorns, or like a heap of tow thrown into the flames, accusing, cursing themselves, tearing one another.

[068] 3. *The torment of the damned in the powers of his soul.* *His imagination*, which represents to him with irresistible clearness the delights of his past life on earth; the horror of his present sufferings in hell; the eternity of his future sufferings; the happiness of the elect of which he might have partaken and that he has lost forever. *His memory*, which recalls all his sins, all the graces he received in time, all the warnings that were given him during his life. *His understanding*, which incessantly shows him the deformity of sin, the greatness

and beauty of God, the justice of the punishments of hell. *His will*, torn at the same time by regret, remorse, jealousy, desire, hatred of God and of himself.

[069] 4. *The torment of the damned in all his senses.* Torment of *sight*: the flames, the devils, the damned, his companions in torture, the cross of Jesus Christ imprinted on the roof of hell. Torment of *hearing*: blasphemies, imprecations, reproaches, cries of rage calling on death and annihilation. Torment of the *smell*: the infection exhaled from so many bodies, which preserve in hell all the corruption of the tomb. Torment of *taste*: a maddening hunger, the violence of which will force the damned to devour his own flesh; a devouring thirst, and for refreshment wormwood and gall. Torment of the *touch*: this fire, which surrounds the damned like a vestment, and penetrates all his members—fire lighted by the breath of God Himself; fire that preserves its victim, and at the same time every moment exhausts and renews his sensibility, so as to render his pain eternal; fire armed with all the attributes of God to avenge them on the damned; fire that identifies itself with the damned, which boils in his veins, escapes and enters at every pore, which makes his body but one burning coal in the midst of the furnaces of hell.

[070] 5. *The torment of eternity.* “Always,” “Never.” *Always* regrets and despair, always the company of devils, always flames; *never* any end, never any interruption, never any remission of the pains and tortures. “Which of you can dwell with devouring fire? which of you shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” (*Is.* 33:14).

[071] Colloquy

Address yourself to Jesus Christ; recall at His feet, that the causes for which these men are damned are either for having refused to believe in His coming or for not having obeyed His precepts. It is the crime of men damned before His coming on earth, of those who lived in His time and of those who came into the world after Him. Then attach yourself to Him forever in mind and heart, that He may save you from eternal death. Finish by returning Him the most lively thanks that He has not permitted you to fall into this terrible abyss but that He pursues you even to this day, not by His vengeance, but by His immense goodness and infinite mercy.

Pater. Ave.

PRELECTION: GOD'S LOVE FOR SINNERS

“There is nothing fuller I can tell you beyond what I wrote you and here reconfirm: that you should above all keep in mind that your Lord loves you, as I have no doubt that he does, and that you should respond to him with the same love, paying no heed at all to any evil, foul, or sensual thoughts, to any timidity or tepidity, when they are against your will. For not to have all or some of these thoughts come is something that neither St. Peter nor St. Paul ever achieved. However, even if it cannot be done completely, we achieve a great deal by paying no heed to any of them. For just as I am not going to be saved through the good angels’ works, so I am not

going to be damned through the evil thoughts and frailties that are brought before me by the bad angels, the world, and the flesh. God our Lord requires only that my soul be conformed to his divine majesty; so conformed, it makes the body act in conformity to his divine will, like it or not—wherein is our greatest struggle, and the good pleasure of the eternal and sovereign goodness. By his infinite kindness and grace may he hold us always with his hand.”

—St. Ignatius of Loyola, Letter to Sr. Teresa Rejadell,
O.S.B., September 11, 1536, translated Fr. Martin E.
Palmer, S.J.

Editor: Praying over my sinfulness during this First Week of the Exercises, I notice in the words of St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556) a counterbalancing emphasis on God’s love for me, an invitation to center my focus on the reality of God’s goodness without losing my awareness of my own sinfulness. By comparing my sins to God’s love, St. Ignatius does not want me to despair by stewing in my own unworthiness, but to find hope by shifting my gaze from myself to Jesus. In this excerpt from a letter that St. Ignatius wrote to a struggling Benedictine nun, we glimpse his deep appreciation of God’s unconditional love, a love that directs us outward so that we channel our own passionate energies into love rather than self-hatred. As St. Ignatius sees it, God loves us just the way we are, in our imperfection and striving that sometimes painfully reminds us of our need for a Savior. To recognize that I needn’t perform for God’s love, to embrace self-acceptance over self-improvement, means to patiently turn over my whole life and will to the Triune God—to trust him to

work with me in his own time and way, not according to my own limited plans and schedules.

As you read the following suggestions for other exercises to pray during the First Week theme of our sinfulness and God's love, reflect in your journal: How have I failed to trust in God's love by trying to force perfection in my life according to my own timeline or designs? What deceptive thoughts keep me from accepting myself in all of my messiness as a loved sinner? What helps me accept God's unconditional love for me?

[071] [OTHER EXERCISES]

[Editor: St. Ignatius notes here that a retreat director may now add other exercises and prayer methods on death and other punishments for sin, judgment, and so on. Taking St. Ignatius at his word, Fr. De Place provides the following freely composed exercises for the retreatant to use as helpful, addressing the saint's themes in a way that removes the need for self-directed readers to find supplementary materials without the aid of a retreat director who would normally provide them. Please note that these "other exercises" below do not come from St. Ignatius, but De Place proposes them out of an Ignatian spirit of adaptation. Readers may choose to omit them. The text of the Exercises proper resumes at no. 072 following these exercises.]

*First Exercise on Death***Preparatory prayer.****First prelude.**

Transport yourself in thought to the bedside of a dying person, or beside a grave ready to receive a coffin or into the middle of a cemetery.

Second prelude.

Ask of Our Lord a salutary fear of death and the grace to be prepared for it every day.

1. *What is it to die?* It is to bid adieu to everything in this world—to fortune, pleasures, friends, family; a sad adieu, heart-rendering, irrevocable. It is to leave my house, to be thrown into a deep narrow pit, without any garment but a shroud, without any society but reptiles and worms. It is to pass to the most humiliating state, the nearest to nothingness, where I shall become the prey of corruption, where I shall fall to pieces, where I shall decompose into an infectious putrefaction. It is for my soul to enter in the twinkling of an eye into an unknown region called eternity, where I shall go to hear from the mouth of God in what place I am to make that great retreat that will last forever, whether it be in heaven or in the depths of hell.

2. *Must I die?* Most certainly. And what assures me of it? Reason, faith, experience. Yes; notwithstanding all precautions, all cares, all the efforts of physicians, I shall die. Where are those who preceded me in life? In the grave, in eternity.

And from this grave, from this eternity, they cry to me, “Yesterday for me, and to-day for thee” (*Sirach* 38:23).

3. *Shall I die soon?* Yes. Why? Because ever since my birth I have been only dying. An action continued without interruption is soon accomplished. All other actions have some cessation; business, study, pleasure, sleep—all these have intervals; death is the only action never interrupted. How can I be long dying when I have been dying ever since I was born and every moment of the day and night? Where is now that portion of my life that death has already taken from me? As death has taken the past from me, so it will take the future; with the same rapidity, with the rapidity of lightning.

4. *When shall I die?* At what age? In old age? In mature age? Will it be after a long illness? Will it be from a fall, from a fire, beneath the knife of an assassin? In what place? In my own house or in a strange house? At table, at play, at the theatre, at church, in my bed, on a scaffold? What day shall I die? Will it be this year? this week? Tomorrow? Today? In what state shall I die? Will it be in a state of grace, or in that of sin? To all these questions, Jesus Christ answers me, “Watch; for ye know not the day nor the hour” (*Matt.* 25:13).

5. *How often shall I die?* Once only; therefore, any error in this great action is irreparable. The misfortune of a bad death is an eternal misfortune. And on what does this bad death depend? On a single instant. It only requires a moment to offend the Lord mortally. It, then, only requires a moment to decide my eternity. If I had died this year, on such a day,

such an hour of my life, when I was the enemy of God, where should I be now?

Affections

Fear; desire; resolution.

Colloquy

Represent to yourself Our Lord dying on the cross, and recommend the hour of your death to Him.

Pater. Ave.

Second Exercise on Death

First Contemplation

Your agony

Preparatory prayer.

First and second preludes.

The same as in the preceding.

Application of the Senses

1. *Application of the sight.* Contemplate: (1) Your apartment dimly lighted by the feeble gleam of a lamp; all the objects that surround you seem to say, "You are leaving us, and forever." (2) The persons who surround you—your servants, your family, the minister of Jesus Christ. (3) Yourself laid on a bed of pain, and violently struggling against death. (4) At your side, devils and holy angels, who dispute for your soul.

2. *Application of the hearing.* Listen to the noise of your painfully interrupted breathing, to the stifled sobs of the assistants, to the prayers of the Church recited in the midst of tears: "From an evil death, from the pains of hell, from the snares of the devil, deliver him, O Lord." "Depart, Christian soul, in the name of God the Father Almighty, who created thee; of Jesus Christ, who suffered for thee; of the Holy Ghost, who sanctified thee." The holy words that the priest suggests to you: "Lord Jesus, receive my soul; Mary, mother of grace, mother of mercy," and so on.

3. *Application of the taste.* Represent to yourself all the bitterness of the agony of a dying man. For the present—what bitterness in this separation from your possessions, your family, your body; in the weariness, the fears that precede the last sigh! For the past; what bitterness in the memory of your infidelities, of your resistance to grace! For the future—what bitterness in the thought of the judgment you are about to undergo!

4. *Application of the touch.* Imagine yourself holding between your hands the crucifix that the priest presents to you. Touch your own body on the point of dissolution; those icy feet, those rigid arms, that chest laboring painfully with interrupted respiration, that heart beating with an almost imperceptible movement. It is in this state that your relations and friends will see you before very long. Make now on yourself the reflections that your agony will soon inspire in those who witness it.

End by a colloquy with our dying Lord: "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit."

Second Contemplation

Your state after death

Preparatory prayer.

Preludes.

The same.

1. *Application of the sight.* Consider, (1) Some moments after your death: your corpse wrapped in a shroud; at your side the crucifix, the holy water, relations and friends; a priest praying for you; the public officer writing in a registry of deaths the day, the hour of your decease; the servants occupied with the preparations for your funeral. (2) The day after your death: your inanimate body in the coffin, taken from your apartment, laid at the foot of the altar; then taken to its last home, the grave. (3) Sometime after your death: contemplate that stone already blackened by time and under this stone the sad state of your body; the putrefied flesh, the separated limbs, the bones consumed by the corruption of the grave.

2. *Application of the hearing.* Again, go over the different scenes where you yourself are the spectacle: the dismal sound of the bells asking prayers for you, the prayers recited at the foot of your deathbed, "De profundis clamavi"; the discourse of the servants, who speak freely of you; the friends and relations, who communicate to each other their reflections on

your loss; the attendants called in to arrange your funeral; the chants of the Church during the funeral ceremony: “Deliver me, O Lord, from eternal death in that dreadful day, when the heavens and the earth shall tremble; when Thou shalt come to judgment—a day of wrath, calamity and misery—that great and bitter day”; the conversation of the persons attending your funeral; what is said of you in society after your death.

3. *Application of the smell and the touch.* Imagine that you respire the odor that your body exhales after your soul has abandoned it—the infection it would spread if taken from the coffin a few months after your death. Imagine that you touch the damp earth where you have been laid, the shroud in rags, the bare skull, the separated limbs, the mass of corruption enclosed in a grave, after a few months the sight alone of which is horrible.

In the presence of this sad scene, ask yourself what the world is, and what is life? “Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity” (*Eccles.* 1:2). End by a colloquy with Our Lord dying: “Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.”

Pater. Ave.

*Exercise on the Particular Judgment***Preparatory prayer.****First prelude.**

Represent to yourself the tribunal of Jesus Christ and your soul led to the presence of its Judge to give an account of all its works.

Second prelude.

Remember, O most loving Jesu, that for me Thou didst humble Thyself to this mortal life. Let me not be lost, I beseech Thee, on that day.

Considerations

1. *The time and the place of the judgment.* The time will be the moment you render your last sigh. Represent to yourself your relatives and your friends around your deathbed, examining your lips, your heart, to discover a breath, a throb, which may still betoken life. While they are yet asking whether you belong to time or to eternity, you are already before the tribunal of your Judge. And where is this tribunal? In the very place where you have just expired, beside your deathbed, in presence of those who surround your inanimate remains and who assist at this terrible scene without desiring it and probably without thinking of it.

2. *The accused.* It is your soul; but your soul alone with its works; your soul suddenly enlightened on all its obligations; on all the graces it has received, on all the iniquities it has committed; your soul in presence of its God, without power

to escape this formidable sight. What a situation! A worldly soul in presence of that God it has never loved—a voluptuous soul in presence of that God thrice holy, who has witnessed its disorders and who is about to punish them!

3. *The accusers.* Satan, who recalls your baptismal vows so often renewed, so often broken; the holy angels; your guardian angel, who reproaches you with his inspirations that you rejected; the angels entrusted with the souls of your brethren, who reproach you with your scandals; the angels who watch over the holy altars, and who reproach you with that indifference that kept you away from the holy table; your conscience, which places before your eyes all your past life, produces all your works, which cry out, “Dost thou recognize us? We are thy works.”

4. *The Judge.* It is Jesus Christ who is your judge, Jesus Christ once your father, your spouse, your friend, your brother; but who now is your judge only—a judge infinitely holy, a judge infinitely clear-sighted, a judge infinitely just, a judge without appeal, a judge all powerful. What have you not to fear from His justice! “What shall I do when God shall rise to judge?” (*Job* 31:14).

5. *Your defense at the tribunal of God.* If you present yourself before the tribunal of Jesus Christ in mortal sin, what will you reply to the accusations brought against you? Will you excuse yourself by your ignorance? But you had the lights of conscience and of faith; on your weakness? But you had grace; on your temptations? But you had prayer and the Sacraments; on the scandals that have led you astray? But you

had so many holy examples to instruct you. Leaving excuses, will you have recourse to the intercession of holy Mary and of the saints? They can no longer do anything for you; to the mercy of Jesus Christ? He is henceforward the God of justice, and no longer the God of clemency: “My eyes shall not spare them, neither will I show mercy” (*Ezech.* 8:18).

6. *The sentence.* To the just will be said: “Come, O ye blessed of My Father, and possess the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world” (*Matt.* 25:34). But to the sinner will be said: “Begone, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (*Ibid.*, 41). Be gone! That is, every tie between us is broken; go far from Me, unnatural child; I am no longer thy father—go far from Me, wandering sheep, I am no longer thy pastor; thou art cursed in thy senses, which shall each have its torment—in thy understanding, in thy heart, in all thy being. Be gone into everlasting fire, to that fire where thy only dwelling shall be a furnace, thy food flames—to that fire that shall last as long as I am God; be gone to the fire prepared for Satan and his angels. I take heaven and earth to witness that it was not prepared for thee. I protest that I have done everything to save thee from this eternal fire; but since thou wouldst not profit by My grace and friendship, be gone from Me, and be gone for all eternity.

Affections

Fear; desire; resolution.

Colloquies

1. At the feet of Jesus Christ crucified: “O most just Judge, grant me, I beseech Thee, the gift of pardon before that great day of reckoning. Behold, I groan in Thy sight as a guilty sinner; shame covereth my face because of my iniquities. Spare me, O God, crying to Thee for mercy.”

2. At the feet of an image of Mary: “O Mary, at once the Mother of God and the Mother of the sinner, Mother of the Judge and of the criminal; let not God your Son condemn your son the sinner.”

Pater. Ave.

Exercise on the Prodigal Son

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Represent to yourself the prodigal son returning to his father after long wanderings.

Second prelude.

Ask of Our Lord the grace to imitate the repentance of the prodigal and like him to obtain pardon for the past.

Parable of the Prodigal

“A certain man,” and so on (*Luke* 15:11–24).

First Point

The wandering of the prodigal

Consider all the circumstances.

1. *He is young.* The passions of youth, that is, love of pleasure, independence; these are the causes of his wandering. Have not yours arisen from the same cause?

2. *He asks of his father his portion of the inheritance.* What ingratitude, what injustice, what temerity, in this conduct of the prodigal! Is not all this to be found in the steps that have led you from your God?

3. *He goes into a distant country.* An image this of your wandering when you gave yourself to the world. Is it not true that you have fled as far from yourself and from God as possible, for fear that grace should find you and restore you to your heavenly Father in spite of yourself?

4. *Away from his father, the prodigal squanders all his fortune.* And you, away from God, what treasures of grace have you not wasted! Recall all these losses, and weep over them with tears of blood—loss of the friendship of God, loss of your past merits, loss of your Christian education, of your inclinations so favorable to piety, of that taste for virtue, of that delicacy of conscience, of that uprightness of heart—loss of those talents prostituted to your passions—loss of reason—perhaps of faith. Oh, what a fatal use of the gifts of God!

5. *The prodigal is soon reduced to want in a country desolated by famine.* Obligated to place himself in the service of a hard master; condemned to take care of filthy animals; to envy, without obtaining, their degrading food.

Behold the fruits of sin:

(1) *Indulgence*. The world in this country is a prey to a cruel famine. This hunger is the devouring hunger of the passions, which cry incessantly, “Bring, bring” (*Prov.* 30:15). And this want is the deep craving of a soul tormented by the desire of happiness, and finding in creatures only endless regrets, disgust and sorrow.

(2) *Slavery*. Like the prodigal, the sinner is a slave, not of one master alone, but of numberless tyrants—of the devil, of the world, of his own inclinations and habits.

(3) *Degradation*. There is no pleasure, however base, from which a soul separated from God will not seek happiness. It will even envy the most disgraceful sinners their most shameful excesses; sometimes even envy the condition of the brutes, so as to desire to have like them no law but instinct, no other destiny than the satisfaction of his senses: “Man when he was in honour did not understand; he hath been compared to senseless beasts, and made like to them” (*Ps.* 48:21). [*Ps.* 49:20 or 21 in newer Bible numbering.]

Second Point

The return of the prodigal

1. *The prodigal, deserted by the world, returns to himself*. He begins to reflect on his sins and his misfortunes. What subjects of reflection does he not find within himself! O God, what have I gained by forsaking Thee? What repose, what happiness, have I found in the world? Was it necessary to

sacrifice Thy friendship, peace of conscience, my eternity, for pleasures so transient, so empty, so degrading?

2. *The prodigal compares his state with that of his father's servants and envies them their happiness.* Faithless soul, what a difference between your state and that of the servants of God! What peace, what joy in their hearts! In yours what troubles, what bitterness!

3. *The prodigal takes a courageous resolution.* "I will arise," said he, "and I will go to my father." He does not stop at words and desires; he does not defer his return; he does not draw back, either before the raillery of the world or the sacrifice of his attachments. What an example of solid conversion!

4. *The prodigal hopes, by the acknowledgment of his faults, to regain his father's favor.* Let this be also the first step in your conversion. Cast yourself at the feet of Jesus Christ, present in the person of the priest and say to Him, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee. I am no longer worthy to be called Thy child; too happy if Thou wilt deign to receive me among Thy servants."

Consider the welcome the prodigal receives from his father.

1. *His father sees him afar off and is immediately moved with compassion.* Thus, at the first feelings of repentance that arise in the sinner's heart, God is moved with pity; He forgets his past ingratitude; He only sees his misfortunes and his sorrow.

2. *The father of the prodigal fell upon his neck and embraced him.* Recognize in these facts the goodness of God when, abandoned by creatures, we return to Him. Did not God owe it to His glory, His holiness, His justice, to reject us? And yet he meets us; He offers us pardon; He embraces us and presses us to His sacred heart.

3. *The father of the prodigal orders him to be immediately reestablished in all the prerogatives of his rank.* So the Lord treats the sinner that returns to Him. With His friendship He restores to him all he had forfeited by sin—innocence, peace, merits, right to heaven, all his dignity as a man and as a Christian.

4. Finally, *the father of the prodigal orders a splendid feast to celebrate the return of his son and invites all his household to take part in the joy of this feast.* So our Heavenly Father celebrates the return of the sinner by a solemn festival, in which He gives him His own body. He invites the angels to rejoice in his spiritual resurrection. He wills that the day of his conversion should be a day of gladness and feasting for all His family, that is, the Church. After this, why do we delay returning to the arms and the heart of this good Father?

Colloquy

Throw yourself at the feet of Jesus Christ, like the prodigal at his father's feet, and promise never more to forsake Him.

Anima Christi.

[072] [Note] [Editor: St. Ignatius recommends here that retreatants making the full retreat pray the five exercises on sin on the first day as follows: the first at midnight, the second immediately upon getting out of bed in the morning, the third before or after mass but before dinner, the fourth at the time of vespers (evening prayer, around 4–6 pm), and the fifth an hour before eating dinner. While he recommends this schedule of five daily prayer periods for retreatants throughout a thirty-day retreat, St. Ignatius adds that retreatants may do less than five exercises out of consideration for mitigating factors like age, health, and physical constitution. As Fr. De Place has done by leaving it untranslated, readers using this book for self-directed prayer may simply ignore this note and others like it, praying at their own pace.]

PRELECTION: RETREAT ROUTINES

“My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready!”

—St. Stanislaus Kostka, S.J., deathbed words, *Jesuit Saints and Martyrs*, p. 384

Editor: Although he died at eighteen less than a year after entering the Jesuits to study for the priesthood, quoting these words from Psalm 57 as he expired, the Polish nobleman St. Stanislaus Kostka, S.J. (1550–1568), left behind him an extraordinary reputation for self-discipline. Denied permission to enter the Jesuits as he graduated from a Jesuit secondary school, he simply ran away from home to do so. Setting out on foot, he eventually walked nearly five hundred miles to Rome. After the Jesuits placated his parents,

he then entered the novitiate joyfully, dying of a fever and becoming the Society's first canonized saint only thirty-six years later.

Kostka's life suggests two points of reflection for our own spiritual readiness to meet God in prayer: determination and discipline. Outside of formal prayer periods, St. Ignatius believed that disciplined retreat habits could help focus us on the task at hand, and at this point in the Exercises he offers some advice in this area to help align our wills with God's will. Whether we make a directed or preached form of the Exercises at a retreat house, or a self-directed retreat in the privacy of our own homes, we will find such rituals helpful for staying focused. For example, we might go on a daily prayer walk (albeit not as long as that of Kostka!) to reflect on how things seem to be going, and practice little habits of mental discipline to mark the time and space of retreat as "holy"; that is, set apart from ordinary life and devoted to God.

As you read the following Additional Recommendations that St. Ignatius offers to help the exercitant create disciplined routines on retreat, reflect in your journal: What mental rituals give me a sense of being on vacation with the Lord? What do I find helpful and/or unhelpful in the recommendations of St. Ignatius here? If I cannot set aside an entire day or week for the Exercises, but am praying with them in my free time, what habits might help me let go of distractions and enter more deeply into a focused spirit of prayer?

[073] ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In the Form of Resolutions, Which Will Assist Us in Making the Exercises Well and Obtaining from God What We Ask of Him

1. On lying down, before going to sleep, during the short time that will suffice for repeating the “Hail Mary,” I will fix the hour of my rising and review in my mind the points of my meditation.

2. [074] On awakening, immediately excluding all other thoughts, I will apply my mind to the truth on which I am going to meditate; at the same time, I will excite in my heart suitable sentiments. For example, before the Exercise on the “triple sin,” I will say to myself while I dress, “And I, loaded with so many graces, the object of predilection to my Lord and King, I stand convicted of ingratitude, of treason, of rebellion, before His eyes and those of His whole court.” Before the Exercise on personal sins, “Behold me, a criminal deserving death, led before my Judge loaded with chains.” These sentiments must accompany the act of rising and will vary according to the subject of meditation.

3. [075] Standing a few paces from the spot where I am going to make my meditation, I must recollect myself, raise my mind above earthly things and consider Our Lord Jesus Christ as present and attentive to what I am about to do. Having given to this preparation the time required to say the “Our Father,” I will offer the homage of my soul and body

to Our Savior, assuming an attitude full of veneration and humble respect.

4. [076] I will then begin my meditation, if I am alone in my chamber or elsewhere without witnesses, in the posture most suitable to the end I propose to myself, sometimes with my face bowed to the earth, sometimes standing, sometimes sitting; only observing that if I obtain what I seek kneeling, or in any other attitude, I ought to remain so without seeking anything better. In the same way, if any particular point causes me to experience the grace that I am seeking, I must remain there calmly until my devotion is satisfied, without caring for anything more.

5. [077] After having finished the Exercise, I will either walk about or sit still and examine how it has succeeded. If it has not, I will ascertain the cause, sincerely repent and make firm resolutions for the future. If the success has been satisfactory, I will make acts of thanksgiving and resolve to follow the same method for the future.

6. [078] I will lay aside during the first week all joyful thoughts, such, for instance, as the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. This thought would dry up the tears that I ought at this period to shed over my sins. I must rather call up thoughts of death and judgment, in order to assist my sorrow.

7. [079] For the same purpose, I will shut out the daylight, only allowing sufficient light to enter my room to enable me to read and take my meals.

8. [080] I will carefully avoid all laughter or anything that can lead to it.

9. [081] I will not look at any one, unless obliged to salute them or say adieu.

10. [Penance] [082]

The tenth “recommendation” will be found . . . under the title of “Rule of Penance.”

PRELECTION: RULE OF PENANCE

“Our love reveals to us values we had not appreciated, values of prayer and worship, or repentance and belief. But if we would know what is going on within us, if we would learn to integrate it with the rest of our living, we have to inquire, investigate, seek counsel. So it is that in religious matters love precedes knowledge and, as that love is God’s gift, the very beginning of faith is due to God’s grace.”

—Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J., *Method in Theology*, Ch. 4,
Part IV

Editor: Father Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J. (1904–84), the Transcendental Thomist philosopher and theologian from Canada, writes in this excerpt from his landmark 1972 book that our experience of God’s love comes before our knowledge of it in our faith lives. Our personal values of prayer, worship, repentance, and belief arising from our acceptance of God’s grace nevertheless require some normative testing

if we wish to integrate them into our faith lives in a balanced way. Especially when it comes to repentance, where our practice of penance may easily skew to extremes if we rely on our own minds alone, it becomes necessary to test our experiences by discussing our self-knowledge with others and seeking advice from spiritually mature companions.

For St. Ignatius, whose zeal to atone for his sins in the early days of his conversion led him to scrupulosity and extreme self-punishments that made him think of suicide, moderation likewise becomes supremely important when we practice penance. Rejecting the idea of imposed penances for the Jesuit order in his Constitutions, St. Ignatius displayed wariness toward people who seemed too eager to flagellate themselves and punish their body in secret ways, having learned from his own mistakes how such practices destroyed his health. For retreatants, he thus provides the following rule of penance as his “Tenth Addition” on retreat habits, striving to set some reasonable guidelines to do penance for one’s sins out of genuine rather than disordered love.

As you read through the “Rules of Penance” that St. Ignatius enumerates under this Tenth Additional Recommendation, reflect in your journal: Which of these practices attracts me as genuinely loving and why? Which of these practices strike me as being less helpful or likely to excite me to disordered extremes? If I wish to practice any of these penances, what priest or spiritual mentor might I ask for an outside perspective before starting?

[082] RULES OF PENANCE OR TENTH ADDITION

I will add to the practices already recommended some satisfaction or penance. Penance is interior and exterior. Interior penance is sorrow for our personal sins, accompanied by the firm resolution to sin no more. Exterior is as the fruit of the interior sentiments. It is a punishment that a sincere repentance causes us to inflict and is practiced chiefly in three ways.

[I.] [083] First, in nourishment; if we retrench something, not of superfluous food (that is the office of temperance, not penance), but of something proper for us; and the more we retrench, the better we do, as long as nature does not become too weak or ill.

[II.] [084] In the second place, in sleep and rest; if we give up, not only luxury—that which would give delight—but also what might be only convenient; always avoiding, however, what would seriously endanger the health or life. For this reason, we must not retrench necessary sleep, or at least very little, and only in case of being obliged to cure ourselves of a bad habit of sleeping too long.

[III.] [085] Finally, in the treatment of the body; if we inflict painful sensations on our body, by the use of hair shirts, cords, or iron girdles, or by wounding or bruising ourselves.

[086] In all this, however, it appears more expedient that the pain should affect the flesh only, without penetrating to the interior organs, where dangerous lesions might take place; therefore we ought rather to choose disciplines made with

small cords, because they only give pain to the exterior parts without injuring the health.

[Notes]

[I.] [087] Exterior penance serves for three purposes or produces three principal effects:

[i.] it serves as an excellent satisfaction for past sins;

[ii.] it exercises man in conquering himself and in submitting the inferior part of himself, his senses, to the superior part, or the reason;

[iii.] finally, it solicits and obtains those gifts of Divine grace that we desire—for example, lively contrition for our sins, abundant tears for them, or over the cross of Jesus Christ, the solution of a doubt that has troubled us, and so forth.

[II.] [088] *[Editor: For retreatants making the full retreat in thirty days, St. Ignatius notes here that the first and second additional recommendations (directives) above apply only to midnight and daybreak meditations, not to exercises made later each day. To stifle any desire to pray for show, he specifies that retreatants only follow the fourth additional recommendation above behind the privacy of closed doors (i.e., in one's personal home) and never publicly for others to see.]*

[III.] [089] When the desired feelings of consolation or sorrow are not derived from the Exercises, it is useful to modify the regimen a little by mortifying ourselves differently from what we have done before, in our eating, sleeping, or the

treatment of our body. So that when a penance has been practiced three days, for example, it may be interrupted two days or longer, according as the state of the soul requires more or less penance.

Care in varying and interrupting these exterior mortifications during the exercises procures the following great advantages. It frequently happens that certain persons neglect all practice of penance, either from excess of sensuality or because they persuade themselves that their constitution cannot bear it without danger: others, on the contrary, relying too much on their strength, pass the bounds of all discretion. But by changing the kind of penance, and trying first one and then another, it happens that we obtain, through this experience, and by the grace of God, who sees the depths of our nature, the knowledge of what will be most useful to us.

[IV.] [090] [Editor: At this point in the retreat, St. Ignatius invites us to pray the Particular Examination of Conscience daily to remove any culpable faults and infidelity we commit in following the Exercises and especially the Additional Recommendations above.]

PRELECTION: THE CALL OF THE KING

“Before any specific apostolic tasks, the first co-redemptive collaborative work of anyone will have to be achieved in one’s own heart, by offering one’s nature with its affections into a direct relationship with the work of universal salvation. . . .

The offering of the Kingdom is not reserved to a privileged few. It is open to every Christian who will have made himself or herself aware of the full meaning of his vocation in its fullness, according to God's designs for him."

—Fr. Gilles Cusson, S.J., *Biblical Theology and the Spiritual Exercises*, p. 203–4

Editor: Father Gilles Cusson, S.J. (1927–2003), was a French-Canadian spiritual director who guided many thirty-day retreats. He studied theology, biblical studies, and spirituality at the Gregorian University, producing a famous dissertation on the biblical experience of salvation in the *Spiritual Exercises*. He turned this manuscript into a book, now revised and reprinted three times since 1968. Many Jesuit scholars consider it the most extensive and most thoroughly documented commentary on the Exercises perhaps in any language. In this excerpt, Fr. Cusson explains that entering into the Kingdom meditation opens the doors both of a person's heart and also of the wide world where Christ works and suffers to bring redemption to all.

As we transition from the First Week of the Exercises into the Second Week, St. Ignatius now invites us to pray with this meditation on the Kingdom of Christ, also known as the "Call of the King" or "Kingdom Meditation," to reflect more deeply on this theme of Christ's reign that spoke so deeply to his knightly heart. Here he invites us to use our imaginations, recognizing that Christ's divine kingship remains a human analogy, to reflect on how we might respond to an earthly leader who rouses us to greatness. While we no longer have absolute monarchs with vast powers to move

world events today, as St. Ignatius did in sixteenth-century Europe, we may best understand “king” as an ideal leader of our own time who inspires us deeply within the context of our contemporary political systems.

As you pray over the Call of the King contemplation of the reign of Christ, reflect in your journal: What qualities of leadership do I see in Jesus Christ? To what sort of “kingdom” does Christ the King call me? If I were to imagine a Christlike political leader today who called me to assist in establishing a more just world, what might that person look and sound like?

[091] ON THE REIGN OF CHRIST

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Represent to yourself the synagogues, villages, cities of Judea, and the different places, the scenes of the preaching of Jesus Christ.

Second prelude.

Ask of God the grace not to be deaf to the calls of His divine Son but prompt to obey Him and follow Him.

[First Part]

[Editor: Please note that Fr. De Place glosses the text of Ignatius below by mentioning Napoleon, who lived centuries after the saint wrote the Exercises.]

[092] First Point

Let us suppose that the bounty of Heaven has sent on earth a monarch who unites in himself all the moral and Christian virtues, all the heroic qualities, every title of legitimacy, all the gifts of valor and fortune that can render a general or a king formidable to his enemies and dear to his subjects—a prince wiser than Solomon, greater than Charlemagne, more pious than St. Louis, more fortunate in war than Bonaparte in the days of his greatest prosperity—a sovereign to whom the Lord has given in an authentic manner, and acknowledged by all Christian people, the title of universal monarch, which Henry IV, Charles V and Napoleon aspired in vain to be; in fine, a king to whom all the princes of Europe would willingly become tributary, and who had incontestable rights over the states of the infidels. Suppose, moreover, that this great man, this invincible general, this supreme monarch, should one day call around him all these princes—formerly independent but now considering themselves more fortunate in being his generals and his officers—and should speak to them thus: “Kings, my friends and my subjects, who enjoy with so much happiness the peace that reigns throughout Christian Europe, you are not ignorant of the evils that weigh on a part of humanity still barbarous and savage. In one place absurd divinities exact and receive human sacrifices, in another place, cannibals feed on the hearts of their enemies, or even on the yet living flesh of their parents. Elsewhere, unhappy widows are obliged to burn themselves on their husband’s funeral pile; officers and courtiers are buried alive with their dead prince. There

are chiefs of tribes who punish with death any unfortunate being who should by chance cross their shadow, or cast a single look on them. Almost every where, the child who is too great a burden on its parents is condemned to perish at its birth, and the Chinese seas daily swallow up thousands of children. There and elsewhere the laws of natural morality, of the rights of man, of modesty, of humanity, are unknown or violated. Nowhere is there liberty, security, instruction, order, or true prosperity. By the announcement only of our approach, by the mere view of our armies, by the reputation of knowledge, wisdom and strength that Europe has acquired in the world, these unhappy people will feel that their subjugation will be their happiness and will submit to us without striking a blow. As they are our subjects by the order of divine power, we must spare their blood as we should spare that of our own soldiers. Thence we must take more precautions and run more perils; but I will be there at your head to set you the example of clemency and bravery; in so splendid an enterprise, I wish to undergo myself the greatest part of the privations and sufferings. No one in the army shall have anything to do, or to suffer, that I have not done and suffered before him. This, then, is the condition I impose on those who wish to take part in this great expedition; to accompany me in the midst of hazards and dangers, or rather to follow me into them, suffer with me but always less than myself. And behold the prize that I promise to the conquerors, and that shall be proportioned to the services rendered: I shall soon have a great number of crowns to distribute; the smallest reward I shall give to my brave and faithful companions will be a throne—a throne to

occupy for the liberation, the civilization, the happiness of a whole people.”

With what enthusiasm would this discourse be received! With what unanimous applause! The enterprise is so glorious; the end proposed so noble, so useful; the example of the monarch so encouraging; the rewards promised so magnificent! What generous ambition would fire every heart, and how on every lip would be heard the cry of our fathers marching to the conquest of the Holy Sepulcher, “*God wills it, God wills it!*” And if it happened that one of these princes, preferring an ignoble repose to this glorious labor, should dare to reply, without dying of shame, “For me, I prefer remaining in the midst of my idleness, enjoying the delights of the court,” what a general hoot, what exclamations of disapprobation and contempt, would follow this cowardly and indolent refusal!

[093] Second Point

And now compare with this great monarch and his noble expedition another monarch, the King of kings, Jesus Christ, and the enterprise that brought Him from heaven upon earth.

Son of God, Creator and Savior of all mankind, King of the whole earth, He receives all nations as His inheritance; He is the way, the truth and the life, and no one arrives at the Father but through Him; there is no salvation possible to mortals but in Him and through Him alone. Full of grace and truth, He unites in Himself all virtues, all perfections, divine and human. And this is the discourse He addresses

to all those who have become His subjects by baptism and His soldiers by confirmation: “My will, the most just of all wills, is from the height of My cross to draw all to Me; to enter into the possession of My domain, the world; to subjugate all My enemies for their salvation; and as a peaceful conqueror and master, universally obeyed by all the earth, to introduce with Me into the glory of My Father all these men redeemed by My blood. Let those who would share My crown accompany Me, follow Me; their eternal reward will be proportioned to their labors and their efforts.”

[094] [Third Point]

Let us reason and understand that it would be folly to refuse to Jesus Christ the generous and fervent offer of our entire selves. Let us, moreover, conceive not only that we must offer to follow Him in bodily works and fatigues but also that we owe Him a more worthy and precious service—the struggle and the victory against our flesh, our senses, our self-love, the love of the world.

[095] [Second Part]

Let us say, weighing all the circumstances of this sublime vocation:

(1) *Who is it that calls us?* It is a God who has every right to our submission. *The right of His infinite perfections.* We cannot belong to ourselves; we must belong to God or to our passions. We have only the choice of the one yoke or the other. Which appears the most honorable? *The right of*

creation. What are we? What have we? All that we are, all that we have, comes from God and consequently belongs to God. Shall we disown, violate, toward Him alone that right of property that reason and justice consecrate in human society? *The right of redemption*. A thing belongs to us if we buy it with our money, still more if we purchase it by long and hard labor; yet more would it appear so if bought with our blood. But what are we with regard to Jesus Christ? We are the price of all His wealth, the price of all His sufferings, the price of His blood and His death: "Know you not that you are not your own? For you are bought with a great price" (1 Cor. 6:19, 20). *The right of our vows and promises*. What more sacred than an oath dictated by gratitude and justice, sworn in the fullness of liberty and reflection, renewed so often and so solemnly in the face of heaven and earth? This is the oath that binds us to Jesus Christ.

[096] (2) *To what enterprise does Jesus Christ call us?* To the most noble and most heroic that can be proposed. In this enterprise all is great. Consider: *The enemies to be combated*; the devil, the world, our own hearts. *The weapons*; faith, prayer, humility, patience, self-denial, charity, zeal. *Our companions in the battle*; the most illustrious that the world ever saw; the apostles, the martyrs, the penitents, in one word, all the saints. *Our leader*; Jesus Christ Himself; but Jesus Christ who combats in us by His grace and who, already a conqueror in so many saints, wishes to conquer in each one of us and in the hearts of all mankind. Lastly, *the motive and end of the combat*; to bestow on all the captives of Jesus

Christ liberty, glory, happiness; to restore them to the way, the truth and the life.

[097] (3) *What are the conditions of the enterprise?* To partake in the labors of Jesus Christ, that we may afterward partake of His glory. But let us remark well, that *the sacrifices that Jesus asks of us He has first accomplished Himself.*

If He asks humility of us, He first humiliated Himself; if He asks renouncement of us, He first renounced Himself. He has done more. He has gone beyond what He asks of us; He humbled Himself even to annihilation; He renounced Himself even to the cross. *The sacrifices that Jesus Christ demands are sweetened by the unction of His grace.* The cross has been without alleviation for Him alone; for His servants He lightens the weight by consolations. He alone could say in the full force of the words, "My soul is sorrowful even unto death" (*Matt. 26:38*); He enables His servants to say, "I exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulations" (*2 Cor. 7:4*). *The sacrifices that Jesus Christ asks of us are only passing.* A short period of combat, an eternity of reward. *If He asks humility of us, He first humiliated Himself; if He asks renouncement of us, He first renounced Himself. He has done more; He has gone beyond what He asks of us; He humbled Himself even to annihilation; He renounced Himself even to the cross.*

Let us consecrate ourselves generously to the service of so great and magnificent a master and say to Him,

**[098] [Supreme Monarch of the Universe
— Eternal Lord of All Things]**

“Behold me at Thy feet, supreme Monarch of the universe. Without doubt I am unworthy to march after Thee; but full of confidence in Thy grace and protection, I consecrate myself to Thee without reserve. All that I am and all that I possess I submit to Thy holy will. I declare before Thy infinite goodness in the presence of the Virgin Mother of my Savior and of all the heavenly court that my desire, my unalterable resolution, my determined will, is to follow Thee as nearly as possible, detached in spirit from the things of the earth and, if Thou shouldst will it, really poor; humble of heart and, if that also is Thy will, partaking in all Thy humiliations and all Thy ignominies; living and dying at the post where the interests of Thy glory and my salvation and Thy divine call may have placed me.” “As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth: in what place soever thou shalt be, my lord king, either in death or in life, there will thy servant be” (2 Kings 15:21). *[2 Kings 2:2 in more recent Bible translations.]*

Notes

[099] [Note I.] [Editor: Here St. Ignatius suggests praying this Call of the King or Reign of Christ exercise twice during the day: once in the morning upon rising and again an hour before lunch or before the evening meal. Since readers praying through the Exercises on their own will likely follow a different schedule that doesn't consist of five hours of daily prayer, it makes sense that Fr. De Place omits these kinds of notes from his translation,

but I continue to summarize them here for those using this book in a more traditional thirty-day retreat setting.]

[100] [Note II.] [Editor: This meditation on the Kingdom of Christ concludes the First Week of the Spiritual Exercises. Here St. Ignatius recommends that the retreatant now read some passages from the Imitation of Christ, or from the Gospels, and from the Lives of the Saints during the Second Week of the Exercises. Fr. De Place provides suggestions at end of this book.]

Second Week

PRELECTION: ST. IGNATIUS ON THE TRINITY

“One way of finding God is to try to enter into the meaning of that which he wishes to accomplish among us. We find God when we discover that we are with him as workers in a marvelous world, a world in which the body of Christ is forming, a world in which the word of God, through whom all things are uttered into existence, fulfills all things by his incarnation in order to lead them to their end.”

—Cardinal Jean Daniélou, S.J., *Prayer: The Mission of the Church*, pp. 9–10 (Eerdmans)

Editor: Theologians today remember Cardinal Jean Daniélou, S.J. (1905–1974), a French scripture scholar, as a key figure in the *Ressourcement* or “return to the sources” of the New Theology before Vatican II. A consultant in the drafting of *Gaudium et Spes* at Vatican II, Cardinal Daniélou specialized in biblical typology, mining the Church Fathers to read the Old Testament for foreshadowing of Jesus and other New Testament themes. Such was his way, as a theologian, of engaging in the Ignatian practice of “finding God in all things” by seeking hints of Christ’s incarnation even in the Jewish Scriptures.

In this excerpt from his book *Prayer*, Cardinal Daniélou encourages us to find God by seeking out signs of Christ's incarnation in our world, signs which show us glimpses of the divine plan. For just as St. Ignatius invites us in this next contemplation to reflect on the three divine persons of the Trinity deciding to send the Son to save us, with the Eternal Logos becoming incarnate as the God-Man Jesus Christ, Cardinal Daniélou reminds us that the "Word become flesh" makes all of creation into a living icon of God's presence and of creation's end in Christ.

As you prepare to pray with the next exercise on the Incarnation or Trinity, reflect in your journal: Where in the concrete events of our world today do I see hints of God's plan for salvation? Where do I see Christ incarnate in people around me? How do I sense Jesus Christ, the biblical Word made flesh, leading me to my ultimate end?

[FIRST DAY]

[101] First Exercise on the Incarnation [The Trinity]

[Editor: Fr. De Place presents this exercise as a "meditation" or mental reflection. But St. Ignatius actually introduces it as a "contemplation" or imaginative prayer that consists of three points and a colloquy after the usual preparatory prayer and three preludes.]

Preparatory prayer.**[102] First prelude.**

Recall the mystery—The angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin called Mary. The angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; thou shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word (*Luke* 1:26–38).

[103] Second prelude.

Represent to yourself Nazareth and the humble house of Mary, where the mystery of the Incarnation was accomplished.

[104] Third prelude.

Ask the grace of knowing well the infinite charity of the Word incarnate, that you may love Him with more ardor and serve Him with greater zeal.

[105] [Note] [Here St. Ignatius reminds retreatants to continue using the same preparatory prayer (see no. 046) throughout the Exercises but notes that the three preludes will continue to change for each exercise of the second, third, and fourth “weeks” of the retreat.]

[106] First Point

Consider the state of the human race before the Incarnation of the Word. With the exception of a few faithful souls, men lived in a profound forgetfulness of their last end. The devils

had altars among all the people; pride, voluptuousness, love of riches, reigned in all hearts; the knowledge of God disappeared gradually from their hearts: "Truths are decayed from among the children of men" (*Ps.* 11:2). The Jews themselves were, for the most part, scarcely nearer to God and salvation than idolatrous nations.

Witness the reproaches addressed to them by the Baptist—"Ye brood of vipers, who hath showed you to flee from the wrath to come?" (*Matt.* 3:7) And after him Our Lord—"You are of your father the devil" (*John* 8:44). In a word, God was scarcely any longer known, or loved, or served on earth. And souls fell into the abyss every day in such numbers that hell was obliged to enlarge its precincts—"Hell hath enlarged her soul, and opened her mouth without any bounds" (*Is.* 5:14).

Could man in this state of degradation and misery reasonably hope that God would deign to pity him and save him? For should not God thrice holy, God infinitely just, turn away His eyes with horror from the human race, of whom it is written, "To God the wicked and his wickedness are hateful"? (*Wis.* 14:9). "Thy eyes are too pure to behold evil, and Thou canst not look on iniquity" (*Hab.* 1:13). Should He not treat man as He had treated the rebel angels and deliver him up forever to all the rigors of His vengeance?

Did not God, infinitely great, owe it to His glory not to pardon criminals, whose ingratitude He foresaw and who would only receive His mercy with indifference, contempt, resistance and hardness? Where would mankind be, where should we be, if God had only consulted the interests of His greatness or His justice? Let us, then, recognize the infinite

need we have of His mercy, and return thanks to Him for not having abandoned us in our misery.

[107] **Second Point**

Consider the intention of the eternal Word in the Incarnation. His design is to repair the glory of the Father by bringing man back to his end—that is, to the knowledge, love and service of God.

1. *The Word became man to bring men back to the knowledge of God.* Consider that the Incarnation is the plainest proof of the Divine perfections. It reveals to us the grandeur of God, which cannot be worthily adored except by a Man-God; His wisdom, which knew how to invent this wonderful union of Divine and human nature for His glory and our salvation; His holiness, the offense to which can only be repaired by the satisfactions of a God; His mercy, which, instead of abandoning guilty man to eternal reprobation, takes pity on him and saves him; His love, which, not content with the gifts bestowed on man in the order of creation, wishes also to present him with a God as a Savior.

2. *The Word becomes incarnate to recall men to the love of God.* Consider that creatures, instead of leading man to God, usurped all the affections of his heart. What does the Divine Word do to restore this heart to the empire of charity? Because man is under the dominion of his senses, He appears in a sensible form; because he is smitten with the love of creatures, He makes Himself one of them—He becomes man; and that He may more irresistibly captivate

the human heart, He gives the first example of the love He asks. Recall the great precept of charity, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength” (*Mark* 12:30). Recall also the whole life on earth of the Word incarnate. See Him bestowing on our redemption all His thoughts, all His affections, all His works, His humanity, His entire divinity—and say, has He not fulfilled the precept of charity in its full extent toward man?

3. *The Word became incarnate to recall man to the service of God.* Consider that precepts no longer sufficed to teach man how God should be served. It was because of this that the Divine Word came to instruct us, not only by words, but also by example. His whole life is only a practical lesson of devotion to His Father’s service. What do we see in it in fact? (1) A Man-God, who, from the first moment of His conception, offers Himself to His Father. This is to teach us that there is not a single moment of our lives that does not belong to God. “When He cometh into the world He saith: Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldest not; but a body Thou hast fitted to Me; then said I, Behold I come to do Thy will, O God” (*Heb.* 10:5–9). (2) A God who fulfilled all the details and observances of the law, which could not bind Him. This was to teach us that He wishes to be served with a religious obedience to all His commandments. (3) A God who devotes Himself to every sacrifice, even to death upon the cross. This is to teach us that God merits to be served, however much it may cost to nature.

Meditate attentively on the great end that the Word proposed to Himself in the Incarnation, and ask of Him the grace to correspond to it faithfully.

[108] Third Point

Consider how the Incarnation of the Word was accomplished. An angel is sent to Mary, a virgin, the spouse of a poor artisan. He comes to announce to her that the Word has chosen her for His mother, and to ask her consent to the great mystery that was to be accomplished in her. Meditate on each of these circumstances.

1. *A God who incarnates Himself*; that is to say, a God who makes Himself man, who makes Himself flesh, who unites Himself so closely to this vile flesh, subject to so many infirmities, which is common to us with the beasts and which He assumes in a state of feebleness and humiliation in the state of infancy. From this annihilation of the Son of God, learn the necessity and excellence of humility.

2. *A God who becomes incarnate in the womb of a virgin mother*. Admire the privilege of virginity: it is to it that the greatest honor is granted that God could do to a creature, the honor of the Divine maternity. From this conduct of God, who chose a virgin for His mother, and the purest of virgins, learn the necessity and the value of purity.

3. *A God who becomes incarnate in the womb of a poor mother*. The Son of God could have chosen a rich mother, and one of elevated rank according to the world. He fixes His choice on the spouse of a poor artisan. Engaged by His promises to be

born of the race of David, He waits to be born of her until this royal race had fallen into obscurity and almost indigence. Learn from this the necessity and value of detachment.

4. *A God who makes His incarnation depend on the consent of His creature.* Learn from this the dignity and power of Mary. God willed that men should, as it were, owe Jesus Christ, and with Jesus Christ their redemption, to the free will of this blessed Virgin. Conceive, then, a great respect and confidence for the Mother of God, and never forget that the Word incarnate having only come into the world through Mary, it is only by Mary that we can go to Him.

[109] Colloquy With the Three Persons of the Adorable Trinity

Adore the infinite charity of God, who deigns to save men, notwithstanding their unworthiness and their ingratitude. *[Consider what you ought to say to the Three Divine Persons.]* Render thanks to the Word incarnate. Address yourself to Mary, and beg of her to obtain for you the grace of a tender love and faithful imitation of her divine Son.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

PRELECTION: THE BIRTH OF JESUS

“Then love humility, my soul, if you want to be truly exalted. Imitate the spotless Lamb, imitate the Virgin Mother, imitate the cherubim and seraphim. All of them are the more humble the higher they are.”

—St. Robert Bellarmine, S.J., *The Mind's Ascent to God*,
Step 10, translated by John Patrick Connelly, S.J., and
Roland J. Teske, S.J.

Editor: Saint Robert Bellarmine, S.J. (1542–1621), the great Italian theologian and Doctor of the Church, identified strongly in his writings and life with the virtue of humility. Resisting attempts by admirers to elect him pope and at the end of his life to give him a lavish funeral, Cardinal Bellarmine insisted on living simply, without the servants and comforts that other Roman prelates enjoyed. But the more humbly he tried to live, the more the Society and Church promoted him, and Bellarmine rose from serving in Jesuit leadership to serving in the Vatican due to his brilliant, controversial theological writings that made Catholicism credible in the Reformation period. In this excerpt from *The Mind's Ascent to God*, he identifies strongly with the humility of the Holy Family and angels, who became humbler the higher they rose. Imitating Jesus, Mary, and the angels, this great cardinal sought to become humbler as he rose in the Church and in academic circles, not to mention rising closer to God in prayer.

For St. Ignatius, few things inspire us with humility as passionately as the Nativity, the great image of the all-powerful

God choosing to enter our world as a powerless baby. Born into a poor family in poor surroundings, the Son of God humbles himself by entering this world as one of us, taking flesh as the newborn Jesus. In his exercise on the nativity, St. Ignatius invites us to enter into this humble scene and imitate its spiritual poverty in our own lives.

As you pray this exercise on the birth of Jesus Christ, reflect in your journal: What do I notice about the humility of Jesus and Mary as I imagine them in this scene? If I imagine myself in this scene, who am I and where am I standing in relation to them? How do I interact with the others in this scene?

*[110] [Second Contemplation] On
the Birth of Jesus Christ*

[Editor: As with the Trinity exercise on the Incarnation, Fr. De Place presents the following exercise on the Nativity as a “meditation,” even though St. Ignatius introduces it as the second contemplation of the second week.]

Preparatory prayer.

[the usual preparatory prayer]

[111] First prelude.

“It came to pass that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own

city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, to be enrolled with Mary his spouse. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn” (*Luke 2:1–7*) [see no. 264].

[112] **Second prelude.**

Represent to yourself the road from Nazareth to Bethlehem—its length, its windings, its roughnesses. Then this cave where the Savior was born, representing it according to your imagination, as wide or narrow, on a level with the road or in a hollow, as commodious or incommodious, and so on.

[113] **Third prelude.**

The same as in the preceding meditation.

Since the fall of our nature by sin, a triple disorder keeps the heart of man away from his final end—*pride, love of riches, attachment to the pleasures of sense*. The birth of Jesus Christ opposes to these disorders His *humility*, His *poverty*, His *sufferings*.

[114] **First Point**

The humility of Jesus Christ in His birth

1. He humbles Himself, even to acknowledging Himself the subject of an idolatrous prince. To obey the edict of Augustus—an edict dictated by pride—He wills that His Holy

Mother should take Him to a strange country, where at His birth He should be in poverty and want.

2. He is the Messiah promised to the world; foretold by the prophets many ages before; expected by the people; whose coming the earth has sighed after and to Whom it has cried, “Oh, that Thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down!” (*Is.* 64:1) And at His coming He would remain unknown; He allows His people to treat Him as a stranger, and that His own should deny Him like a mendicant who begs for public charity: “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not” (*John* 1:11).

3. He intentionally hides the greatness of His birth; He who is of the royal race and of the blood of David wills to be born as the son of a poor artisan; nay, He wills to be born as even the children of the poor are not born—in a stable, in a manger, in the society of vile animals.

4. Not only does He hide His divinity under the guise of humanity, but He also debases His humanity itself to the infirmities and weaknesses of infancy. What a humiliation! This God-Man becomes like little children; like them, deprived of the use of speech, of the liberty of movement; dependent in everything on the will of those around Him!

Let us look in upon ourselves. How opposed are the maxims of the world, and the maxims of our corrupt nature, to the example of Jesus Christ! Let us beg of the Divine Infant to change our hearts by His grace; let us ask of Him that we may understand and love the way of humility.

[115] Second Point

The poverty of the birth of Jesus Christ

1. He is born in a strange country, out of His mother's house, where He would have found what is never wanting even to the most neglected of poor children, a roof to shelter Him and a cradle to rest in.

2. He is born in the most miserable place in the little city of Bethlehem. While the poorest around Him have an asylum, He is banished to a wretched building, open to the wind and rain.

3. His cradle is a little straw in a manger, so that His birth resembles that of the lowest animals. He is reduced to such misery that He can say with truth even now, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head" (*Luke 9:58*).

4. Everything around Him participates in His poverty; His parents, who scarcely possess a few coarse garments to clothe Him with; the poor shepherds, who at the voice of the angels leave their flocks to come and adore Him.

Consider that this wretchedness of the Son of God was not necessary and compulsory, like the poor in the world; it is free and of His own choice. Conceive a high idea of this poverty, which appeared so precious to Our Lord, that to espouse it He quitted heaven and His glory. Above all, understand the necessity of detachment and be persuaded that disengagement from creatures is the only true way that leads to God.

[116] Third Point

The sufferings of Jesus Christ from His birth

Consider that the sufferings of Jesus commenced with His life; that they begin in His cradle, never more to leave Him but with His last sigh on the cross.

1. He suffers in His sacred body; for He is born in the depth of winter; at the hour when the cold is the most piercing; in a place where He is exposed, thinly clothed, to all the inclemency of the weather.

2. He suffers above all in His soul, which has the full exercise of its faculties. He suffers from the rebuffs He experiences in His tribe, and even in His own family, where none know Him. He suffers yet more for the troubles of Mary and Joseph, whom He sees repulsed with contempt from all the houses in Bethlehem and inconsolable not to find any other asylum for Him but a stable.

3. He suffers, with the intention of suffering during His whole life, toil, hunger, thirst, perpetual poverty, the most profound humiliations, the scourges, and the cross; *and all this for me*. Let me, then, seek to penetrate the motives that induce Him to suffer so much for love of me and seek it for my instruction and, above all, for my edification.

[117] Colloquies With Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Adore Jesus Christ in His cradle; beg Him to be born in our hearts; ask Him to come to us with the virtues He teaches us in the manger—with humility, detachment, spirit of

sacrifice. Beg the powerful intercession of Mary and Joseph to support our prayer.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

*[118] [Third Contemplation:
Repetition] On the Incarnation*

[Editor: For the third exercise of the second week, St. Ignatius in no. 118 recommends doing a repetition of the first contemplation on the Incarnation/Trinity or a repetition of the second contemplation on the Nativity, asking God to delve deeper into the graces we received in those initial prayer periods. To aid this repetition, Fr. De Place provides the following detailed points for repeating the Incarnation exercise, again aiming to assist readers self-praying the Exercises.]

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Recall the mystery, “The angel Gabriel,” and so on, as in the first Meditation.

Second and third preludes.

Also as before.

I. Contemplate the Persons

1. Men spread over all the universe, almost all opposed in manners, characters, passions, interests, and yet almost all agreeing on one point; that is, in forgetting their last end, in

offending God, in serving the devil, in dying as sinners and reprobates and precipitating themselves forever into hell.

2. The holy Trinity, which suffices to itself; which finds its happiness in its own perfections, without having need of creatures; and which, instead of overwhelming criminal men with its justice, casts upon them looks of pity and mercy.

3. The blessed Virgin Mary, retired in the humble house at Nazareth and absorbed in prayer.

4. The angel Gabriel descending from heaven and saluting Mary, as Mother of God, full of grace, blessed among women.

Practical reflections and affections.

II. Listen to the Words

1. On earth and among men, words of hatred, of scandal, imprecations, blasphemies.

2. In heaven, words of clemency and charity; the august Trinity, which decrees the incarnation of the Word; the Word, who offers Himself to the Father for His glory and the salvation of man.

3. At Nazareth, the words of the angel Gabriel to Mary: "Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (*Luke* 1:28, 35). The answer of Mary,

who humbly submits to the will of the Lord: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word” (*Luke* 1:38).

Practical reflections and affections.

III. Consider the Actions

1. On earth. The diverse crimes of men; the sacrilegious worship paid to idols and demons; the disorders of their plays, feasts, pleasures; their endeavors to supplant and even to destroy each other.

2. In heaven. The charity of the three Divine Persons toward man; with what love the Father gives us His own Son; the Word consents to become incarnate; the Holy Ghost forms the union of the Divine and the human nature.

3. At Nazareth. The respect of the angel in the presence of the Blessed Virgin; the trouble of Mary on hearing the words of Gabriel; her love for virginity, which she prefers to the honor of the Divine maternity; her humility and obedience to the will of Heaven.

Practical reflections and affections.

Colloquy With the Three Persons of the Adorable Trinity

Adore the infinite charity of God, who deigns to save men, notwithstanding their unworthiness and ingratitude. Render thanks to the Word incarnate. Address yourself to Mary, and beg of her to obtain for you the grace of a tender love and faithful imitation of her Son.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

[119] [Editor: On the first day of this Second Week, St. Ignatius recommends that the third and fourth contemplations repeat the first two exercises on the Incarnation and the Nativity, as noted above. Having provided his own repetition exercise on the Incarnation, Fr. De Place now provides the following expanded points for a repetition of the Nativity exercise.]

*[120] [Fourth Contemplation: Repetition]
On the Birth of Jesus Christ*

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

The same as in the preceding meditation.

Second prelude.

Represent to yourself a ruinous stable, and at the end of it a manger, where Mary and Joseph are adoring the Son of God, who is lying in it between two animals.

Third prelude.

Ask a grace conformable to the present mystery and to your spiritual want; for example, humility or detachment.

First Point

Contemplate the persons

The Holy Virgin, St. Joseph, Jesus Christ Our Lord, who is just born, the angels who surround the manger, the shepherds

who have hastened to the crib of the new-born Child. Represent to yourself the Divine beauty of the Savior: the modesty, meekness and humility imprinted on the features of Mary; the simplicity and recollection of Joseph; the rapture of the angels; the joy of the shepherds. Imagine that you are beside the manger with Mary and Joseph, to contemplate Him, to serve Him. Consider what spiritual fruit you ought to draw from this sight; and to this end ask yourself, "Who is this that is just born? Why did He choose for Himself, and for all that were dearest to Him in the world—that is, Mary and Joseph—humiliation, poverty, pain? What is that treasure of graces that God has hidden in detachment from all things?"

Second Point

Listen to the words

1. The conversations of Joseph and Mary during the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem; how they beg an asylum at the inns and in what terms they are refused; what they say to each other at the sight of the stable where they are obliged to take shelter; their effusion of heart beside the crib where Jesus reposes.
2. The words of the angels. One of them says to the shepherds, "I bring you tidings of great joy that shall be to all people; for this day is born to you a Savior in the city of David." And the others sing in concert, "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will" (*Luke* 2:10–14).

3. The conversation of the shepherds among themselves: “Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass” (*Ibid.* 2:15); their expressions of faith and admiration at the sight of Jesus Christ; their conversation with Mary and Joseph.

Third Point

Consider the actions

1. In Joseph and Mary: The fatigue of the journey; the contempt and the rebuffs they suffer at Bethlehem, their solicitude and trouble to find an asylum; their cares to provide a more convenient and worthy cradle for the Divine Child; and in all this the admirable virtues that they practice; their patience, their interior peace, their union with God, their lively faith and their ardent love toward the Savior.

2. In the shepherds: The contrast of their docility with the hardness of the inhabitants of Bethlehem; their adoration and their homage to the newborn Child.

3. Above all, in Jesus Christ: The extreme deprivation in which He chooses to be born; in which henceforth we shall see Him live and die. If we again ask ourselves, why these deprivations of the Son of God? Ah! It is for us; for our instruction and for our salvation.

Colloquies with Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, as in last meditation.

PRELECTION: APPLICATION OF SENSES

“For two days now I have experienced a great desire to be a martyr and to endure all the torments the martyrs suffered. Jesus, my Lord and Savior, what can I give you in return for all the favors you have first conferred on me? I will take from your hand the cup of your sufferings and call on your name. I vow before your eternal Father and the Holy Spirit, before your most holy Mother and her most chaste spouse, before the angels, apostles and martyrs, before my blessed fathers Saint Ignatius and Saint Francis Xavier — in truth I vow to you, Jesus my Savior, that as far as I have the strength I will never fail to accept the grace of martyrdom, if some day you in your infinite mercy would offer it to me, your most unworthy servant.”

—St. Jean de Brebeuf, S.J., spiritual diaries, from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Liturgy of the Hours*

Editor: Like all the French Jesuit North American Martyrs who shed their blood ministering to American Indians in modern-day Canada and New York, St. Jean de Brebeuf, S.J. (1593–1649), prayed to feel the torments of Jesus on the cross as a martyr. Knowing he would probably die, yet willing to offer his life out of love for the Huron and other Indian tribes, Brebeuf carried only his faith and trust in God into the wilderness. He applied all of his sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch to his prayer as he imagined himself suffering with Jesus. A war party of Iroquois Indians captured him and another Jesuit, stripped them naked, forced them to run through the snow, ran them through the gauntlet, and

systematically butchered them on two poles as they praised God for his goodness.

St. Jean de Brebeuf learned this practice of applying our bodily senses in prayer from the Exercises. But what about applying our senses to a happier subject? In this next section, St. Ignatius instructs us on the manner of making an application of our senses to the Incarnation and then one to the Nativity. We may presume that becoming human was agony for the Son, whose swaddling clothes in sacred art sometimes resemble the burial cloths he will wear after coming down from the cross. While not so intense as Brebeuf's identification with Jesus on the cross, this application of senses invites us to share the pain and hope of the Son entering the world as a crying baby, helpless and dependent on the poor family he enters. We may find ourselves holding the baby Jesus to comfort him, sharing his pain as one born into a world of suffering to suffer for it, and shedding joyful tears with him at this point in the Exercises.

As you pray this application of senses, reflect in your journal: What do I see, smell, hear, taste, and touch most strongly in this exercise? What senses help me feel closest to Jesus in this prayer? What do I notice as I apply my senses to the Nativity in this way?

[121] [*Fifth Contemplation*] *On the Same
Mystery—Application of the Senses*

Preliminary Remarks

1. By the imagination, the soul can render an object present and, as it were, see it, hear it, taste it and so on. So that to apply this faculty of the soul and the five senses to a truth of religion (according as it is susceptible of it), or to a mystery of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is what is called *application of the senses*.

2. The application of the senses differs from meditation in this: that in the one, the intelligence proceeds by reasoning, discoursing on the attributes of God and the causes and effects of mysteries, while in the other, it is confined solely to sensible objects—to what can be seen, heard, touched and so forth. It is not that the application of the senses, in order to be useful, does not require some reasoning and reflections, but they should be short, simple and rapid.

3. This exercise generally contains five points; or four only, when the senses of smell and taste are joined together. The following is the method:

[122] First point.

Represent to yourself the different persons, together with all their circumstances, and endeavor to draw some spiritual fruit from each.

[123] Second point.

Listen to their words or to what it may be supposed they say.

[124] Third point.

Taste interiorly the sweetness, or bitterness, or any other sentiment, of the person you are considering.

Respire, as it were, the perfume of the virtues, or the infection of the vices, the sulfur of hell, the corruption of dead bodies and so forth.

[125] [Fourth point.]

Touch interiorly the objects; for example, the eternal flames, the vestments of Our Savior; kiss His footsteps, the manger and so on.

[126] Colloquies as in the preceding contemplation.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

After two meditations or contemplations, it is usual to repeat the two together twice, and then to follow with the application of the senses to the same truths or mysteries.

Application of the Senses to the Birth of Jesus Christ

[Editor: Fr. De Place provides the following additional points for praying the Application of Senses more specifically with the exercise on the Nativity.]

The *preparatory prayer* and the three *preludes* as in the preceding meditation.

1. *Sight*. Contemplate the stable that is falling in ruins; the manger where Jesus Christ reposes on a little straw; the coarse swaddling clothes in which He is wrapped; the animals that warm Him with their breath; the Divine Infant Himself, who fixes His eyes on us and extends His arms to us; Mary and Joseph praying before the manger; the shepherds coming to adore the newborn Child whom the angel has announced to them; all heaven attentive to the great event that is being accomplished at Bethlehem; and, at the same time, the profound indifference of the rest of men to the coming of the Son of God. Practical reflections and affections.¹

2. *Hearing*. Listen to the discourse of the strangers going to Bethlehem; to the conversations of Mary and Joseph during the journey; to the words of the inhabitants of Bethlehem, who repulse them; to Jesus Christ, who speaks to His heavenly Father, who speaks to us by His cries and His tears; to the angels singing in the heavens, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace” to the shepherds making inquiries from the holy family about the birth of Jesus. Practical reflections and affections.

3. *Taste*. Taste interiorly the bitterness of the hearts of Mary and Joseph; the peace of their souls; their joy at the sight of the newborn God. Unite yourself in spirit to the abasement, the tears, the poverty, the prayer, all the virtues of Our Savior in His birth. Practical reflections and affections.

¹ De Place repeatedly uses this shorthand “practical reflections and affections” to encourage readers to consider what this meditation point means for their own lives practically and what feelings it arouses in them.

4. *Touch*. Kiss respectfully the walls of the stable, the straw in the manger, the swaddling clothes, the sacred hands and feet of Jesus Christ. Practical reflections and affections.

PRELECTION: SECOND WEEK RECOMMENDATIONS

“You ask me how I manage to put some balance into my life. This is a question I ask myself, as each day I am swallowed up more by my work. . . . So often I feel I am on a rock, battered from all sides by rising waves. The only escape route is heavenwards. For an hour or a day, I let the waves beat upon the rock; I stop looking out to the horizon and only look upwards towards God.”

—St. Alberto Hurtado, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: Saint Alberto Hurtado Cruchaga, S.J. (1901–1952), developed an active social apostolate to the poor in his native Chile. But all of his work teaching, caring for children, founding a trade union, establishing a periodical, and starting the *Hogar de Cristo* for destitute families regularly left him overwhelmed and exhausted. In this excerpt from his unpublished writings titled *Always in Contact with God*, reprinted in the Jesuit supplement for Matins on his August 18 feast day, St. Alberto noted that his only escape from work consisted of daily prayer. For an hour or more each day, this hyper-active lawyer and social worker, who ultimately died of pancreatic cancer at age fifty-one, found peace in

redirecting his gaze from the world's problems to the God who walks alongside his struggling people.

In this same way, the Second Week of the Exercises now invites us to redirect our gaze from our sinfulness and God's love to the incarnate Savior who calls us to follow him in ministry as missionary disciples. By centering ourselves on the Lord who calls us, placing him in the midst of our messy lives, we find the peace that helps us persevere. As we pray the Second Week, St. Ignatius offers the following recommendations on the dispositions helpful to this theme.

As you read the following recommendations of St. Ignatius for the Second Week exercises, reflect in your journal: Which of these notes resonate most strongly with me? Which notes provoke resistance or confusion in me? What makes it hard for me to redirect my attention in prayer from the problems of myself and others to the loving God-Man who invites me to follow him on mission?

[127–131] [NOTES]

[Editor: Father De Place provides the following loose synthesis of St. Ignatius's notes on the second week from nos. 127–31. Except for nos. 127 and 130, he diverges freely from the text of St. Ignatius, replacing the saint's more specific directives that presume a formal retreat house setting with summaries and recommendations more suited to personal devotion. While retaining his freely glossed paraphrase, I have inserted brief summaries of omitted texts in nos. 128–29 and no. 131.]

The Intention of the Second Week and Some Recommendations Proper to It

The aim of the first week is to know how far we have wandered from the path that leads to our last end, to deplore so great an error and to conceive an ardent desire to return to this path, never more to quit it.

The purpose of the second week is to propose to ourselves Jesus Christ as the true way, as He Himself says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by Me" (*John* 14:6). Jesus Christ is, in fact, the Divine model whose example must reform and regulate our lives. And as the life of Our Savior is the very perfection of holiness, it follows that the more faithfully we imitate Him, the more perfect our lives will be; and as perfection is our end, to approach nearer to our end, is to be nearer repose and happiness. Thus, the more our life resembles that of Jesus Christ, the happier it will be.

The recommendations proper to this week are—

To undertake the Exercises with great courage and a sincere desire to follow the way of God, as it shall be manifested to us. This disposition is so necessary for the fruit of the Exercises that it would be better to interrupt them than to continue them with an undecided will.

[I.] [127] After the meditations, any spare time may be employed in reading some useful work, but one more calculated to nourish piety than give rise to curiosity—such as some of the works of St. Bernard, of Louis of Granada,

the *Imitation of Christ*, the Lives of the Saints, and the Holy Gospels. It must be observed, however, in order to avoid distraction, that if the work treats of the mysteries of Our Savior, we must not stop to dwell upon any other mystery than the one on which we are to meditate then or during the day.

[II.] [128] *[Editor: Here St. Ignatius suggests doing the first exercise of the Second Week (on the Incarnation) at midnight, the second (on the Nativity) at daybreak, the third (repetition of the Incarnation) around mass time, the fourth (repetition of the Nativity) at the time (4–6 pm) of Vespers, and the fifth (an Application of Senses on the Incarnation or Nativity) for around the time of the evening meal. For thirty-day retreats, he suggests continuing to observe five separate prayer periods in this same way for each day of the Second Week exercises.]*

[III.] [129] *[Editor: If a retreatant is old, weak, or exhausted by the First Week, St. Ignatius suggests omitting the midnight meditation as necessary during the Second Week. In this case he suggests one exercise in the morning, one at mass time, a third before lunch, one repetition at the time of vespers, and one Application of Senses before the evening meal.]*

[IV.] [130] In the observance of the [ten] additions [given for the First Week in nos. 073–081] there must be the following modifications [for the Second Week]:

[Second addition:] On waking, you must recall the subject of meditation and excite in yourself a great desire to know more particularly the mystery of the Word incarnate, that

you may love Him with more ardor and serve Him with more fidelity.

[Sixth addition:] During the day, you must frequently recall some event in the life of Our Savior, from the time of His incarnation to that of the mystery that is the subject of the present meditation.

[Seventh addition:] In the time of meditation, make use of light, or of obscurity, according as the one or the other appears most suitable to the sentiments and affections we desire to excite in ourselves. With regard to corporeal mortifications, they must be regulated according to the mystery we are meditating on; for some of the mysteries should excite us to penitence, some to other virtues.

When meditation has for its immediate object the mysteries of Jesus Christ, it naturally takes the form of contemplation. It is therefore necessary here to trace out the method of contemplation and the application of the senses.

[V.] [131] [Editor: St. Ignatius recommends applying the second addition (no. 074) to each exercise except those prayed at midnight and in the morning, instructing the retreatant to mentally set the scene and summarize the exercise for oneself before actually sitting down to pray it. He says retreatants might also observe the third additional direction (no. 075) of pausing for a step or two away from their prayer space to recall God's gaze upon them and make a humble act of reverence just before praying each exercise of the Second Week.]

PRELECTION: THE HIDDEN LIFE OF JESUS

“Jesus had something that drew people. We want that something. By praying with the scriptures, we can appreciate better what was going on in the Heart of Jesus, what was moving him to say and do what he said and did. We want his thoughts and feelings to fill our imaginations and our hearts. We want our hearts to be like his.”

—Fr. James Kubicki, S.J., *A Heart on Fire: Rediscovering Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus*, p. 76

Editor: Father James Kubicki, S.J. (1952–present), served for several years as US director of The Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network: The Apostleship of Prayer. There he promoted the Jesuit-founded devotion of making a Daily Offering for the pope’s monthly intentions in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Father Kubicki also promoted the renewal of various forms of devotion to the Sacred Heart as the source of what draws us to him: the hidden recesses of love flowing out from his pierced side.

In this excerpt from his book *A Heart on Fire*, Fr. Kubicki notes that praying with the Bible—as we do in the Exercises—helps us get out of our heads and redirect our attention towards Jesus. By gazing at Jesus in prayer, asking for the grace to fill our imaginations and hearts with his sacred thoughts and sentiments beginning in the Second Week of the Exercises, we strive to make our hearts like his heart. Through focusing on his actions and attitudes in prayer, we learn to love others as he loves us. As we reflect on the formative years of Jesus, we may find it helpful to imagine the

loving and humble way he treated others throughout his private life.

As you pray with the following Scripture passages on the hidden life of Jesus, using the points of St. Ignatius referenced below, reflect in your journal: What is it about Jesus that draws me to him? What do I see in his heart that I want for myself? What does it mean for me to follow Jesus in my life right now?

[132] [SECOND DAY]

[Editor: On the second day of the Second Week of the Exercises, St. Ignatius offers the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (see no. 268) and the Flight into Egypt (no. 269) as subjects for the first and second contemplations, two repetitions, and an Application of Senses to one of them, following the same five-hour pattern of the first day. In addition to the brief points of St. Ignatius in nos. 268–69 for praying with these Gospel passages, Fr. De Place provides the following expanded points for meditation on the Presentation, for a contemplative repetition of it, and for an Application of Senses on it. Readers wishing to stick with the text of St. Ignatius may follow the usual order of the preparatory prayer followed by their own contemplation of the three points and Scripture passages for the Presentation and Flight that St. Ignatius provides in nos. 268–69 later in this book. At this point in the Exercises, St. Ignatius cuts back on written instructions in the expectation that retreatants will apply his method on their own to the scriptural mysteries with guidance

from their retreat directors, but these freely composed syntheses from Fr. De Place may continue to assist those praying through the Exercises without the assistance of a director. The text of the Exercises proper resumes in no. 133.]

*[Meditation on the Presentation:] The
Hidden Life of Jesus at Nazareth*

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Jesus having been found in the Temple by Mary and Joseph, left Jerusalem and returned with them to Nazareth, and was subject to them; and He advanced in wisdom and grace with God and man (*Luke 2:51, 52*).

Second prelude.

Represent to yourself the humble house at Nazareth, the workshop of St. Joseph, and so on.

Third prelude.

Ask of God a grace conformable to the present mystery and to your wants; for example, the love of a retired life, of retreat, of labor, of prayer, of obedience, and so on.

The Gospel only teaches us three things regarding the life of Jesus at Nazareth:—(1) That He obeyed: “He was subject to them” (*Luke 2:51*). (2) That He worked with His hands and at the work of an artisan: “Is not this the son of the carpenter?” (*Mark 6:3*). (3) That “He grew in wisdom, in age, and in grace before God and before men” (*Luke 2:52*).

First Point

At Nazareth Jesus obeyed

Consider the obedience of Jesus Christ in all its circumstances.

1. *Who is He that obeys?* It is He who is reason by essence; He whose will is sovereignly wise and independent; it is the Word of God.

2. *Whom does He obey?* His creatures. He obeys Joseph and Mary, whom He infinitely surpasses in light and in sanctity; who derive, and can only derive, light and holiness from Him. He obeys even strangers, who command Him like a mercenary; that is to say, He submits His will, the most noble and most upright that ever was, to wills full of weakness, of ignorance, of caprice—wills only made to obey Him.

3. *In what does He obey?* In everything that was commanded Him; consequently in the most trifling things, even in the meanest things—for example, in all the details of care required by a poor household and the station of a [worker] who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow.

4. *How long does He obey?* For thirty years, that is, not only during His childhood, when obedience is both a necessity and a duty for man, but also in the strength of age, when, according to the ordinary laws of nature and society, every man is arrived at the time when he has a right to govern himself.

5. *How did He obey?* In the most perfect way that can be conceived. By obedience of action, which executes promptly

and to the letter; obedience of mind, which does not reason on the motives of the order or its nature; obedience of heart, which submits with love to the orders of man as to the orders of the Divine will.

Let us examine ourselves, our thoughts, our feelings, our conduct, with regard to obedience. Let us beg Our Lord to teach us by His example the value, the necessity, the practice of this virtue.

Second Point

At Nazareth Jesus worked

Represent to yourself what passes in a poor family. A mechanic engaged in manual labor; his wife occupied in the lowest domestic offices; a child sharing the toils of both, first assisting his mother, and then, as his strength increases with his age, helping his father in the labors of his trade; this is a faithful image of what took place at Nazareth.

Consider attentively—

1. *The dignity of Him who thus labors.* How is the condition of a workman regarded by the world? What pity is inspired by the misfortune of a man who is obliged, by reverse of fortune, to descend to this condition? From this conclude how little suitable such a condition is to Jesus Christ; to the descendant of David; the Messiah who might labor in public with such success in the promulgation of the Gospel; to a God.

2. *The painful and humiliating circumstances of this work.* It is the work of a carpenter, working in wood; using rough tools; his time and toil hired out to any master who will pay him; recommencing each day the same fatigues, scarcely interrupted by hasty meals and a short sleep; living unknown and despised, like those poor artisans, whose fate is never pitied, who often think themselves fortunate in meeting with persons to hire their services. Such is the position of Jesus Christ; thus is accomplished what the prophet said of Him: “I am poor and in labours from my youth” (*Ps.* 87:16). [*Ps* 88:16 in newer Bible numbering.]

3. *In what manner Jesus Christ works.* Enter into the heart of Jesus Christ. Prayer is constantly united in it to the work of the hands. In the midst of bodily fatigues, Jesus blesses the justice of His Father, that has condemned man to water the earth that gives him bread with the sweat of his brow (*Gen.* 3:19). When He receives orders, He adores in creatures the supreme dominion of His Father; when He receives payment, He returns thanks to His providence, which gives subsistence to all men; when He suffers disdain and rebuffs, He accepts them as a reparation to His glory outraged by sin.

4. *The motive of the labor of Jesus Christ.* Among so many different professions, why did Jesus Christ choose one so laborious and so low? It is to teach men that since original sin, they have two great disorders to combat—pride and luxury—and that the only way to arrive at their final end is by the path of humiliation and suffering.

5. *The merit of the labor of Jesus Christ*; a merit so excellent that it fixes the looks and complaisance of His celestial Father. At the same time that Jesus Christ hides Himself at Nazareth, there are in the world famous politicians, celebrated orators and poets, captains of high renown; but the eyes of the Lord are turned from all these men and rest on Nazareth, a city so despised and of which it was said, “Can any thing good come from Nazareth?” (*John* 1:46). They are fixed on the Son of the carpenter; Him alone the celestial Father points out to His angels, saying, “Behold My beloved Son”—how He obeys, how He humbles Himself, how He annihilates Himself, for My glory and My love.

Third Point

At Nazareth Jesus Christ grew in grace and wisdom before God and before men

Jesus Christ could not grow interiorly in virtue, since from the first moment of His conception the plenitude of grace dwelt in Him, and therefore the words of the Gospel signify that each day He produced new acts and allowed new marks of holiness to appear.

Represent Our Savior to yourself in spirit as if you contemplated Him with your eyes; follow Him in all the details of this life, so simple and so common; study all the virtues that were developed in Him with age—

1. *Humility*, which makes Him prefer to the labors of an apostolic life obscurity, retreat, a hidden life in the workshop of a mechanic.

2. *Detachment*, which makes Him support with joy the most painful privations in His dwelling, His dress, His food; in a word, all the wants of the poor.

3. *Charity*, which fills his heart with an immense compassion for the miseries of men; above all, with a burning zeal for their salvation.

4. *Modesty*, which regulates admirably His looks, His words, all His movements, all His steps.

5. *Recollection*, which, in the midst of conversation, work, or recreation, always keeps His holy soul elevated and united to the Divinity.

6. *Perfection in the commonest actions*; so that it is written of Him “that He did all things well” (*Mark* 7:37). Recall to yourself that holiness of life depends on the sanctity of ordinary actions; consequently, that it is by the perfection or imperfection of the actions of common life that we approach our end or go farther from it. Take, then, Jesus Christ for your model, and learn from the example of His private life to do all things well.

Colloquy

Let us adore Jesus Christ as our master and model; humble ourselves for having followed His example so little; beg of Him, through the intercession of Joseph and Mary, to give us the intelligence to understand and the strength to practice what He teaches us.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

*[Repetition on the Presentation:] The
Hidden Life of Jesus At Nazareth*

Preparatory prayer.

Preludes

Same as in the [immediately preceding] meditation.

First Point

Contemplate the persons

(1) In this world, men, thinking only of advancing themselves—the learned, the rich, the great—all occupied with thoughts of fortune, elevation, celebrity; the poor, who envy them, who cannot resign themselves to indigence and degradation. (2) At Nazareth, Mary in silence and prayer, attending to the cares of a poor household; Joseph working with his hands in an obscure workshop; Jesus associating Himself with the troubles and labors of His parents; the grace spread over all His sacred person—“Grace is poured abroad in Thy lips” (*Ps.* 44:3); the modesty of His countenance and demeanor; the recollection that keeps His mind and heart constantly united to His Father. (3) Finally, in heaven, the angels, who look on this scene with admiration; and the celestial Father, whose looks dwell with complacency on His beloved Son.

Second Point

Listen to the words

They are few. Charity or necessity alone interrupt occasionally the silence of this family, whose conversation is in heaven. They are always regulated by humility, by meekness, by zeal, in a word, by the Spirit of God. They are always holy and perfect. St. Joseph speaks little; Mary still less; the Infant God scarcely ever. In the holy house at Nazareth they converse little with men, but they converse constantly with the heavenly Father. Recollect yourself profoundly, and listen to these holy conversations, which ravish the angels.

Third Point

Consider the actions

The painful toil to which the Son of God voluntarily submits—how he assists Mary in her domestic cares; how He shares with Joseph the rude and humble trade of a carpenter; with what simplicity and zeal He obeys the least wish of His parents; with what patience He bears the fatigues of His condition; with what humility He resigns Himself to the caprices, the repulses, the disdain of strangers, who command Him as a hireling; His charity in His relations with His neighbour; His fervour in prayer; His divine perfections in the smallest actions, and so on.

Colloquy With the Three Persons of the Holy Family

Adore Jesus Christ in the humble exercise of His hidden virtues, and beg of Him to fill us with His spirit. Ask, through the intercession of Joseph and Mary, the grace to imitate after them the examples of the Divine Savior.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

[Application of the Senses to the Presentation:]
The Hidden Life of Jesus at Nazareth

Application of the Senses

Preparatory prayer.

Preludes, as in the preceding contemplation.

1. *Sight*. Consider St. Joseph, the holy Virgin, Our Lord Jesus Christ, at their work, their repasts, their prayers, their intercourse with their neighbors; the angels, who look with love on this holy house; the heavenly Father, who takes delight in His Son; and so on.

2. *Hearing*. Listen to the words of Jesus, of Mary, of Joseph; their silence, their recollection; their conversations, regulated by meekness, humility, modesty, and so on.

3. *Taste*. Taste the peace that fills their souls, their interior joy, their bitterness, and so on.

4. *Smell*. Respire the sweetness and, as it were, the perfume of their virtues—obedience, charity, fervor, care in little things, love of a hidden life, and so on.

5. *Touch*. Kiss inwardly the walls, witnesses of the virtues of Jesus Christ; the rude tools of His trade; the earth sanctified by His steps and His labors.

Colloquy as in the preceding contemplation.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

Note. It is more especially from this time that the person in retreat must occupy himself seriously with the choice of a state of life, or a reformation to be made in his state of life, if already fixed.

[133] [Note] [Editor: St. Ignatius observes that even with strong and well-disposed retreatants, it may be helpful to propose only four daily prayer periods for the second through fourth days of the Second Week exercises, eliminating the midnight meditation. He proposes making the first exercise upon waking, the second around mass time, a repetition at the time of evening prayer (vespers), and the application of senses before the evening meal. Although I summarize these notes and others in italicized brackets for the sake of completion, readers may wish to ignore them and simply pray with Fr. De Place's text at their own pace, as they pertain more to people making the full thirty-day Exercises in a retreat house than to self-directed prayer.]

[134] [THIRD DAY]

[Editor: For the third day of the Second Week of the Exercises, St. Ignatius recommends the contemplation on the quiet obedience of Jesus to his parents from age twelve to thirty (no. 271), the contemplation on the finding in the Temple (no. 272), two repetitions, and an Application of Senses. Again, readers praying the Exercises alone in self-guided devotion may ignore these italicized summaries of notes that Fr. De Place did not translate and simply go through the text at their own pace. But people making a full thirty-day retreat may find these summaries of the saint's notes helpful in structuring their days.]

PRELECTION: INTRO TO DISCERNING A VOCATION

“But what is my life? Would I not gain it if I lost it for my brothers and sisters? True, we do not have to give it away stupidly. But what are the sons of Loyola for if they flee at the first flare? I am not speaking in general; some should certainly be spared because they will be very useful some day. But types like myself?”

—Blessed Miguel Agustin Pro, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: Blessed Miguel Pro, S.J. (1891–1927), the fearless Mexican martyr whose comedic talents enabled him to minister secretly to persecuted Catholics in disguise during the Marxist persecutions of Plutarco Calles, suggests in this quote an essential fact about any vocation: It begins with the unconditional, free, and passionate realization that my entire life, indeed the gift of my very self, belongs entirely to Jesus Christ to dispose as he pleases. Arrested on trumped-up charges and brought before a firing squad without trial on November 23, now his feast day, Bl. Miguel illustrated this fact with his “last request” for a moment to pray. Kneeling on his execution spot, he stared lovingly at his Jesuit vow crucifix, silently renewing his self-offering to Jesus in a wordless thanksgiving. Then standing to face the photographers who recorded every detail of his bloody death, he stretched out his arms in the form of a cross and shouted as the soldiers fired: “Viva Cristo Rey!” Long live Christ the King!

In the following introduction, St. Ignatius presumes the same reality as he now invites us to spend the rest of the

retreat reflecting on this question: How is God calling me to live my life? If I have not yet discerned priesthood, marriage, or vowed single life, St. Ignatius invites me to now begin thinking seriously about that question. On the other hand, if I have already committed myself to some vocation like marriage or priesthood, St. Ignatius invites me to reflect on how I'm living out that big choice through the smaller choices I'm making each day. Perhaps, as I reflect on how best to offer the gift of my life back to God in gratitude, I may discover a new perspective or even a "vocation within my vocation."

As you read this Introduction to the Consideration of Different States of Life, reflect in your journal: How have I heard and responded to God's call in my life? What obstacles have made it hard to hear and respond to God's call? What smaller vocations or works, if any, do I see as possible invitations within the larger commitments I have made in my life?

[135] INTRODUCTION TO THE MEDITATION ON THE TWO STANDARDS

Or a Prelude to the Considerations to be Made on the Particular State of Life to Which We may be Called

Our Lord, subject to His parents at Nazareth, presents to us the model of that first state of life that consists in observing the commandments and that is called *common life*.

But from the time that Jesus Christ, at the age of twelve years, leaves His foster father and her who, according to nature, was His mother, and goes to the Temple to attend to His Heavenly Father's service, as He was to do during the three years of His public life, He appears to give us the idea and the example of a second state, which is that of *evangelical perfection*.

It is therefore proper here, while we are contemplating the life of Christ, to examine and earnestly beg the grace to know the kind and state of life in which it would most please His Divine Majesty that we should serve Him and promote His glory. We shall be guided in this search by the following exercise, which places in parallel and contrast the thoughts and views of Jesus Christ and those of His mortal enemy. We shall thus learn what ought to be our dispositions, in order that we may arrive at perfection in that state, whatever it may be, which the Divine goodness may counsel us to choose.

PRELECTION: THE TWO STANDARDS

“We all know how much St. Ignatius loved poverty. He looked on it as one of the basic virtues of the Jesuit apostle. Deriving this insight from interior illuminations of the Holy Spirit regarding the standard of the cross, he lost no time in translating it into practice: we are to love poverty as a mother and defend it as the rampart of religion.”

—Servant of God Pedro Arrupe, S.J., “Poverty is a Gospel Mystery,” address given to Italian Jesuits in December 1973 preparing for 32nd General Congregation

Editor: Father General Pedro Arrupe, S.J. (1907–1991), a Basque Spaniard like Ignatius who served as the twenty-eighth superior general of the Jesuits during the difficult post-conciliar years of 1965–1983, witnessed a miracle at Lourdes as a young medical student that led him into the priesthood. During World War II, he later watched an atomic bomb fall on Hiroshima while serving as novice master in Japan, organizing his seminarians in a futile effort to care for people dying in the fallout. Forged by these experiences of compassion and solidarity with the suffering, Fr. General Arrupe helped the Jesuits re-embrace the poverty of the Ignatian charism in promoting a “faith that does justice,” leading the Society through many changes.

After suffering a stroke that robbed him of speech in 1981, Fr. General Arrupe waited two years for a Jesuit general congregation to accept his resignation, declaring in his written farewell remarks: “It is indeed a profound spiritual experience to know and feel myself so totally in God’s hands.” In the above excerpt from a talk given to Italian Jesuits before the influential thirty-second General Congregation, Fr. General Arrupe notes how St. Ignatius in the Two Standards meditation exhorts retreatants to embrace poverty as a loving mother and the protective wall of religion. The “standards” in this exercise refer to battle flags, more specifically the battle flag of Jesus and the battle flag of Lucifer, whom St. Ignatius here calls “the enemy of our human nature.” St. Ignatius presents this exercise as a *meditation* for reflection, rather than as an imaginative *contemplation*, as we pray to choose the right side of this spiritual war.

Before you pray through the Two Standards meditation of St. Ignatius below, reflect on these questions in your journal: Do I know firsthand what real poverty feels like, tastes like, sounds like, and smells like? Am I willing to follow Jesus Christ in actual poverty, and not merely the spiritual poverty of total dependence on him, if he leads me there in my life? How does my own attitude toward poverty affect my apostolic witness to others?

[136] [FOURTH DAY]

Meditation on the Two Standards

Note. This exercise is a sort of *parable*, in which St. Ignatius represents Our Lord and Lucifer as two captains armed one against the other and calling all men to their standards. The object of it is to place before our eyes the right of Jesus Christ to our service and to engage us to serve under His banner forever.

Preparatory prayer.

[137] First prelude.

Consider, on one side, Our Savior, on the other Lucifer, who both invite men to follow their standard.

[138] Second prelude.

Construction of place. Represent to yourself two vast plains; in one, near to Babylon, Lucifer assembles round him all sinners; in the other, near to Jerusalem, Our Lord is surrounded by all the just.

[139] Third prelude.

Ask the grace to discover and avoid the snares of Lucifer and to know and imitate the virtues of Jesus Christ.

First [Part]

The standard of Lucifer

[140] [First Point] Represent to yourself the prince of the reprobate in the vast plains of Babylon, on a throne of fire surrounded by thick smoke, spreading terror around him by the hideous deformity of his features and by his terrible looks. Meditate on the hidden meaning of these figures. These vast plains designate the broad path where sinners walk. Babylon, the city of confusion, signifies the disorder of a guilty conscience. The throne of fire is the symbol of the pride and the passions that devour the soul like a fire. The thick smoke is the image of the blindness of the sinner and of the vanity of his pleasures. The hideous features and terrible look of Lucifer express the deformity of sin and the operations of the evil spirit in the soul; that is to say, its trouble, its agitation, its depression, its sorrows.

[141] [Second Point] Consider the innumerable crowd of followers and ministers around Lucifer. Here are found united the sinners of all ages—the spirits who first, even in heaven, raised the standard of revolt against God, degraded beings, with whom evil is become as a nature; all the men who have made themselves the slaves of their passions and sins—the proud, the impure, robbers, homicides, all the wicked men who at different times have startled the world

by their crimes, and of whom there is not a single one who is not, in some way, an object of aversion and disgust. But why does Lucifer convoke these under his standard? For the most perfidious and cruel design that can be imagined; he wishes to seduce the whole human race, and after having seduced it, to drag it down to eternal misery.

[142] [Third Point] Listen, in spirit, to Lucifer addressing his ministers, and ordering them to lay snares on all sides for men, in order to their perdition: “Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood, let us hide snares for the innocent without cause. Let us swallow him up alive like hell. We shall find all precious substances; we shall fill our houses with spoils” (*Prov.* 1:11–13). Remark his artifices, and the three ordinary degrees of temptation—how, first, he catches souls by the love of riches; next, how he throws them into the paths of ambition; then, from ambition to pride—a bottomless abyss, from whence all vices rise as from their fountain. See with what patience and active zeal the ministers of Lucifer execute the task imposed on them by their master, how they make everything conduce to the one end—the ruin of souls; defects of the understanding, inclinations of the heart, the character, the habits, the passions, the faults, the virtues even, and graces of God. Finally, contemplate the success of hell in its enterprise—how many fools are taken in these snares every day; how many blindly throw themselves in; how many who, not content to allow themselves to be seduced, seek also to seduce their brethren. Look on yourself. Be astonished at having given way so often and so easily to the temptations of the enemy; weep over your folly and your past weakness, and resolve to be wiser and more courageous for the future.

Second [Part]

The standard of Jesus Christ

[143] *[Editor: As we did in the first part with Satan, Ignatius now invites us to imagine the sovereign and true Commander, Christ our Lord.]*

[144] [First Point] Represent to yourself a beautiful plain near Jerusalem, and there, not on a throne, but mingling with His subjects, Our Lord, attracting all hearts by the beauty and irresistible charm of His looks. Meditate on the hidden meaning of these figures. This plain signifies the way of the just, rough in appearance but in reality pleasant and happy. Jerusalem, the city of saints, the vision of peace, is the symbol of a pure conscience. Our Lord is represented without a throne and mixing among His subjects, to express the lowliness and self-humiliation of His mortal life. He shows Himself as the most beautiful of the children of men—“Thou art beautiful above the sons of men” (*Ps.* 44:3) [*Ps* 45:3 in newer Bible numbering]; and with all the marks described by the prophets: “He shall not be sad, nor troublesome” (*Is.* 42:4); “His conversation hath no bitterness, nor His company any tediousness, but joy and gladness” (*Wis.* 8:16); “The bruised reed He shall not break, and the smoking flax He shall not quench” (*Is.* 42:3). It is the image of beauty, of virtue, and the operations of the good Spirit in souls, that is, of joy, of calm, of consolation and so forth.

[145] [Second Point] Consider, around Our Savior, His disciples and apostles. Where shall we find a more august assembly? There are united the just and the saints of all

ages—patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, penitents, virgins, doctors, holy pontiffs; none of the vices or weaknesses that dishonor humanity; on the contrary, all virtues, and these carried even to heroism. But for what purpose does Jesus Christ convoke His disciples under His standard? For the most just, the most noble, the most generous purpose that can be—to recall men to virtue and through virtue to happiness in time and eternity.

[146] [Third Point] Listen, in spirit, to Our Savior addressing His disciples, and commanding them to go into the world to save men: “For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (*Luke* 19:10); “I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly” (*John* 10:10); “I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?” (*Luke* 12:49); “Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature” (*Mark* 16:15); “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (*Matt.* 28:20).

Observe by what degrees, exactly opposed to the temptations of Lucifer, Jesus Christ leads souls to perfection. He wishes His apostles first to inspire them with indifference to riches, and then the desire of abjection, from whence arises humility as from its source and with it every other virtue.

[Editor: The following text up to no. 147 does not come from Ignatius, but represents a gloss and elaboration on the Two Standards that Fr. De Place inserts just before the closing colloquies.]

See with what ardor, what constancy, the apostles accomplish the mission entrusted to them by the Son of God.

Represent to yourself all the labors and sacrifices that their ministry entails: “In all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses. In stripes, in prison, in seditions, in labors, in watchings, in fastings. In chastity, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in sweetness, in the Holy Ghost, in charity unfeigned. In the word of truth, in the power of God, by the armor of justice on the right hand and on the left” (2 *Cor.* 6:4–7).

Finally, contemplate the success of the enterprise—how many sinners snatched from hell; how many disciples won to evangelical poverty and humility; how many apostles trained and prepared for the saving of souls and the glory of God. Examine yourself, and make practical reflections.

Election between the two standards

Consider that we are all placed between Jesus Christ and Lucifer, and that it is equally impossible either to serve both at once—“No one can serve two masters” (*Matt.* 6:24)—or to remain neutral without serving one or other, for Jesus Christ says, “He who is not with Me is against Me” (*Luke* 11:23). It is, then, necessary to *make a choice*. And to do so wisely, let us examine attentively—

1. *The qualities of the two leaders.* In Jesus Christ, all that can captivate the heart; in Lucifer, all that can merit aversion and hatred.
2. *What they have done for you.* Jesus Christ has been the most generous of benefactors; Lucifer the most cruel of enemies.

3. *Their design.* That of Jesus Christ is to make you a sharer in His labors and then in His glory; that of Lucifer is to make you first the accomplice of his crimes, and then the companion of his punishment.

4. *Their promises.* Jesus Christ promises you possessions honorable, unfailing, infinite, eternal. Ask the elect; all render homage to the truth of His promises; all confess that they have only been surprised in being rendered happier even beyond their hopes. Lucifer promises you things unworthy of you, uncertain, which will leave a void in your heart, which will only add to your disgusts and agitations, which will soon pass away and will end in everlasting punishments.

5. *Their rights.* Jesus Christ has the most sacred and incontestable rights over your heart. Recall what, as a man and as a Christian, you owe Him, what you have promised Him so often, so freely, and so solemnly. Lucifer has no right but to your contempt. You renounced him before heaven and earth at the baptismal font, at the holy table; you cannot give yourself to him without perjury.

[147] Colloquies

1. With the Blessed Virgin. Ask her to obtain for you from her Son the grace to be received and to march under His standard; first, in the love, or even, if He should deign to call you to it, in the practice of poverty; then, in the love of abjection and humility. *Ave Maria.*

2. With Our Savior. Ask Him the same grace. *Anima Christi.*

3. With the Eternal Father. The same. *Pater*.

[148] [Editor: St. Ignatius invites retreatants to make the Two Standards meditation at midnight and again in the morning. Then he recommends two repetitions of it, around the times of mass and vespers, and the following meditation on the Three Classes an hour before the evening meal. So he encourages readers making the full retreat to spend an entire day (specifically the fourth day of the Second Week) praying the Two Standards four times and the following Three Classes exercise once, ending each of these five prayer periods in the three colloquies with Mary, the Son, and the Father from no. 147.]

PRELECTION: THREE KINDS OF PEOPLE

“Proclaiming a new and astonishing gospel during his earthly ministry, Jesus gathers great crowds who flock to hear his word. But he is not content to preach to anonymous and fickle crowds. He forms a small band of close disciples and trains them righteously in his doctrine and way of life.”

—Cardinal Avery Dulles, S.J., *Magisterium: Teacher and Guardian of the Faith*, p. 12

Editor: Son of US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, the American theologian Cardinal Avery Dulles, S.J. (1918–2008), converted to Catholicism as a student at Harvard University, later joining the Jesuits and becoming a priest. As an academic theologian, he taught for many years at Fordham University, becoming famous in ecclesiology for his landmark book *Models of the Church* in 1976. Always a great lover of the

hierarchical Catholic Church, yet immersed in more mystical models of understanding her, Dulles received a red hat in 2001, but humbly asked to become a priest-cardinal without being ordained a bishop. In this excerpt from *Magisterium*, Cardinal Dulles reminds us that the hierarchical Church began with the inner circles of friendship Jesus initiated with his disciples and apostles, with St. Peter as head.

In the Second Week of the Exercises, St. Ignatius invites us to follow Jesus as his friends, placing ourselves in the Gospels among his followers. But what kind of friend to Jesus do we want to be? How close do we wish to come? Here Ignatius presents us with a reflection on three different classes or kinds of people who respond to the Lord's invitation in varied ways, asking us to consider what kind of discipleship we now practice and whether we want to grow in it. Father De Place plays freely with this particular meditation, replacing the saint's example of three people who have acquired a small financial fortune not entirely for godly motives with a new example of three people attacked by serious illness who respond in different ways to God. Since illicitly acquired money represents a kind of spiritual illness, we may forgive the translation this transposition. Readers will simply want to be aware that Fr. De Place elaborates significantly on this particular exercise, going beyond paraphrase to gloss freely the text of Ignatius. Those wishing to pray with a closer rendering of the meditation than this version may consult Puhl or another English translation of the Exercises for comparison.

As you pray over this exercise on the Three Classes, reflect in your journal: Where do I see myself in relation to Jesus at this point of life? Do I see myself as one of the curious onlookers, a hostile observer, a miracle seeker, a disciple, or an apostle like St. Paul and the Twelve? Do I see myself as one of the innermost circle of St. Peter, St. James, and St. John? In terms of the three kinds of people presented here, which one best describes my current relationship to Jesus and which one best describes where I want to be?

[149] Exercise on the Three Classes

Preparatory prayer.

[150] First prelude.

Represent to yourself three men attacked by serious illness, who all desire health. One will not take any remedy; the second only certain remedies of his own choice; the third will take whatever remedy may be necessary for his cure.

[151] Second prelude.

Figure to yourself that you are in the presence of God and His saints, and offer to the Lord a sincere and ardent desire to please Him.

[152] *Third prelude.* Ask the grace of a good election; that is, the grace to choose what is the most agreeable to the Divine Majesty, and the most useful for your salvation.

Preliminary Observations

In the meditation of the two standards, we have resolved to attach ourselves to that of Jesus Christ. It is requisite, then, to examine whether this resolution is a serious and solid one. There are three ways of giving ourselves to Jesus Christ; and thus those who call themselves His disciples may be divided into three classes, who correspond to the three sick men presented to us in the first prelude. All in appearance wish to follow Jesus Christ; but the first only give Him desires; the next certain works; the third give themselves entirely to Him, and without reserve. To which of these three classes do we aspire to belong?

[153] [The First Man] First Point

The first class consists of those who only *give desires to Jesus Christ*. To this class belong all those Christians who are convinced of the truth of religion, of the rights and dominion of God over men, of the malice of sin, of the misery of a soul surprised by death in a state of mortal sin, of the necessity of salvation. They wish, they say, to save themselves, to be converted, to be sanctified.

But they stop there, and put aside all the means necessary for holiness, for conversion, for salvation. These Christians may be compared to the sick man who wishes to be cured but will not submit to any remedy. Evidently this sick man does not wish to be cured with a serious will and all his desires of health are only illusions.

Examine before God whether this disposition is not yours. You wish to be converted, to be saved, to be sanctified; but

conversion, salvation, sanctity, require *efforts*—for example, prayer, regular frequenting of the sacraments, avoidance of occasions of sin, the reform of the passions and bad habits: do you seriously will all this?

If this disposition is yours, consider how criminal it is; for it supposes the abuse of the graces and inspirations of the Holy Ghost. In this state, men know the obligation of belonging to God; they feel at the bottom of their heart the desire to belong to Him; they have around them all the means of conversion and sanctification; and yet they stop at a barren and inefficacious will, that is, they resemble the rebellious Jews at the voice of Our Savior, of whom He said, “If I had not come, and spoken to them, they would not have had sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin” (*John* 15:22). Or that cursed land of which St. Paul speaks: “For the earth that drinketh in the rain which cometh often upon it, and bringeth forth thorns and briers, is reprobate, and very near unto a curse, whose end is to be burnt” (*Heb.* 6:7, 8).

[154] [The Second Man] Second Point

The second class is of those who will only give Jesus Christ certain works. To this class belong those Christians who wish to be saved, to be converted, to be sanctified; but who will not adopt the most certain means, nor all the means of salvation, conversion or sanctification. They are like the sick man who wished to be cured but would only take certain remedies, and rejected the others that were the only efficacious ones.

Look into yourself. Are there not certain sacrifices that God asks of you because they are, you know well, the necessary condition of your sanctification or your salvation and that you dispute with Him? Is there not in your heart some predominant passion, the source of all the others, the occasion of all your falls and that you yet wish to spare. Are there not certain exercises of piety, certain rules of Christian mortification, which are necessary for your return to, or your advancement in, the ways of virtue, and that you have not dared to embrace? Consider well that to remain in this disposition is—

1. *To lose the principal fruit of this retreat*; for it is to renounce the degree of virtue to which God calls you, and consequently all the graces that were to follow it and the degree of glory that would have crowned it in heaven.

2. *It is to expose your eternal salvation to serious peril*; for God punishes those who resist His voice by withdrawing from them those superabundant graces by which He rewards the sacrifices of those generous souls who give themselves to Him unreservedly.

3. *It is to increase the difficulty in trying to avoid it*; for God generally pours such bitterness into the passions we try to spare, that it costs us more to spare them than it would have done to sacrifice them.

[155] [The Third Man] Third Point

The third class consists of those who give themselves to God entirely and without reserve. To this class belong exclusively

those who desire conversion, salvation, holiness, whatever they may cost, and by the most effectual means. These souls are like the sick man who desires health at any price and gives himself up without restriction into the hands and to the treatment of the physician. Meditate on the motives that urge you to place yourself in this last class.

1. *The example of worldlings.* They sacrifice themselves without reserve for the world, and for what a world! Will you not do for God what they do for men? "And they, indeed, that they may receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible one" (1 Cor. 9:25).

2. *The example of the devil.* Is there any one means that he neglects, any one difficulty before which he recoils, when there is the question of destroying a single soul? Shall we have less courage for our salvation than he has for our ruin?

3. *The example of Our Lord.* Did He give Himself to us by half or with reserve? Ask the manger, the cross, the tabernacle. Shall we be miserly of ourselves with so generous a God?

4. *The blessings attached to this disposition of heart.* These are: a superabundance of graces, peace of heart, and the unction of the Holy Ghost, which will soften all sacrifices; the moral assurance of salvation; great merits in time, and an immense weight of glory for eternity. Let us, then, resolve to follow Jesus Christ in this third class; and let us say with the apostle, "I most gladly will spend and be spent myself" (2 Cor. 12:15). "I fear none of these things, neither do I count my

life more precious than myself, so that I may consummate my course" (*Acts 20:24*).

[156] [Threefold Colloquy]

[Editor: Here St. Ignatius instructs the retreatant to repeat the Triple Colloquy from the Two Standards in no. 147.]

1. With the Blessed Virgin.
2. With Our Lord.
3. With the Eternal Father, as in the exercise of the Two Standards.

[157] [Note] Observe here that when we feel a reluctance for perfect poverty, which consists not only in being detached in spirit but also in being really deprived of riches; when, on the contrary, we feel ourselves inclined toward the possession of the goods of this world, it is very useful, in order to destroy the effect of this inclination, to ask of God, notwithstanding the repugnance of nature, that He will deign to call us to this complete and effective detachment; and this we must not only ask but also strive to desire and earnestly beg, solely for the interest of the service and glory of God.

[158] [FIFTH DAY]

[Editor: For the fifth day of the Second Week, St. Ignatius suggests praying the contemplation on the journey of Jesus from Nazareth to the Jordan River and his baptism there, using his points from no. 273. Readers may also consult a Bible for the passage referenced there.]

[Notes]

[I.] [159] [Editor: For the five prayer periods he recommends on this contemplation, St. Ignatius asks retreatants to pray over no. 273 once at midnight and again in the morning. Then he specifies two repetitions around mass time and vespers and an Application of the Senses to this same mystery before the evening meal. In each of these five prayer periods, Ignatius instructs readers to begin with the preparatory prayer and three preludes as explained (nos. 101–4 and nos. 110–13) in the earlier contemplations on the Incarnation (Trinity) and Nativity. For the closing colloquy in each of these five periods, St. Ignatius asks retreatants to use the threefold colloquy from no. 156 or make it according to the note in no. 157.]

[II.] [160] [Editor: On this fifth day of the Second Week, St. Ignatius invites retreatants to pray the Particular Examination of Conscience (no. 024) after the midday and evening meals on how faithfully we follow the exercises and Additional Recommendations on this day and all remaining days in the retreat, noting any faults or negligence.]

[161] [SIXTH TO TWELFTH DAY]

[Sixth Day] [Editor: For this sixth day of the Second Week, St. Ignatius invites retreatants to pray the contemplation on Christ from the Jordan River to the desert temptation in no. 274. He asks retreatants to follow the same directions given for five periods on the Fifth Day from no. 159.]

[Seventh Day] [Editor: For the seventh day of the Second Week, St. Ignatius invites retreatants to contemplate Christ our Lord calling St. Andrew and other disciples in no. 275.]

[Eighth Day] [Editor: For the eighth day of the Second Week, St. Ignatius invites retreatants to contemplate the Sermon on the Mount, especially the eight beatitudes, in no. 278.]

[Ninth Day] [Editor: For the ninth day of the Second Week, St. Ignatius invites retreatants to contemplate Christ our Lord appearing to his disciples walking on the sea in no. 280.]

[Tenth Day] [Editor: For the tenth day of the Second Week, St. Ignatius invites retreatants to contemplate Jesus preaching at the Temple in no. 288.]

[Eleventh Day] [Editor: For the eleventh day of the Second Week, St. Ignatius invites retreatants to contemplate the raising of Lazarus in no. 285.]

[Twelfth Day] [Editor: For the twelfth day of the Second Week, St. Ignatius invites retreatants to contemplate Palm Sunday for the usual five daily prayer periods using no. 287.]

[Notes]

I. [162] [Editor: Ignatius suggests that retreatants may lengthen or shorten the Second Week of the Exercises depending on their progress in receiving its graces and how much time we wish to spend on it. To extend this Week, he recommends praying over these additional passages: the Visitation of Our Lady to Elizabeth (no. 263), the Shepherds (no. 265), the Presentation of

the Child Jesus in the Temple (no. 268), the Three Kings (no. 267), and other such passages we may add at our discretion. To shorten the Second Week, St. Ignatius suggests omitting even some of the scriptural mysteries he proposed in no. 161 above, noting that they merely serve as an introduction and method for better and more complete reflection later in the retreat.]

II. [163] [Editor: Saint Ignatius notes here that readers may choose to begin reflecting on the topic of “election” (the discernment of a Choice of a Way or State of Life) that he will explain more in no. 169 below, in particular with the Fifth Day exercise (no. 273, suggested in no. 158) on the journey of Jesus from Nazareth to his baptism in the Jordan.]

III. [164] [Editor: Before entering upon the Choice of a Way of Life, for retreatants trying to decide a vocation or re-commit in a new way to a vocation already chosen, St. Ignatius recommends carefully reflecting on the following Degrees of Humility. Whenever we find ourselves discerning this choice on a given day, St. Ignatius invites us to reflect on these three degrees periodically throughout that day and to add the three colloquies as instructed in the exercise. As Fr. De Place implies by adding preparatory instructions and preludes, annotating the text of St. Ignatius with additional, we may likewise repeat this exercise on humility as one of the five prayer periods on any given day that we find ourselves reflecting on decisions.]

PRELECTION: THREE KINDS OF HUMILITY

“So then, the question of the third degree of humility: how does it stand? There can be no more questions in regard to you, Lord, any longer. You have solved every problem, every item in my life, by your infinite love towards me, by absorbing me in your divine life without any restrictions—and I, O my God, surrender totally to this wonderful act of your love. Nothing exists for me now but you and your love. Where is your love going to lead me? My answer I find in you and only in you. Act, Lord. I am ready to begin the new life to which you invite me. To you all praise and glory for ever and ever.”

—Servant of God Walter Ciszek, S.J., “The Three Modes of Humility,” *With God in America*, p. 46

Editor: Father Walter Ciszek, S.J. (1904–1984), learned humility in Lubianka prison and Siberian labor camps, where he spent twenty-three years incarcerated as a “Vatican spy” after slipping into Russia through occupied Poland in 1939 to do missionary work at the outbreak of World War II. Presumed dead by his family and brother Jesuits back home in the United States, who offered the required three masses for the repose of his soul, Ciszek survived starvation and nearly being machine-gunned into a mass grave. While faith didn’t change the reality of his sufferings, he said faith gave meaning to his sufferings, sustaining him through many years of imprisonment before a diplomatic exchange of prisoners returned him to America in 1963.

Returned to the United States, Fr. Ciszek made his eight-day final vow retreat at the Shrine of the North American Martyrs in Auriesville, New York, in August 1964. He spent days six and seven of this retreat praying the Three Kinds of Humility. In the words quoted above from his prayer journal, Ciszek illustrates the meaning of humility as seeing the reality of oneself and the world more fully through God's eyes rather than his own limited vision. As he pronounced his final perpetual vows on the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, August 15, 1964, this Polish-American Jesuit from Pennsylvania experienced new freedom to serve as a priest after so many years of clandestine missionary work in Communist Russia. But his personal freedom, far from giving him a sense of pride or superiority over others, gave him a liberating sense of indifference (the grace of the First Principle and Foundation) to embrace the less outwardly-heroic life to which God was calling him back in America. After laboring alongside the Russian people for so many years, Ciszek saw himself as a humble laborer in the vineyard, grateful to recommit to his vocation in a new way back home. Looking at himself and the world through God's eyes in this way, he received the grace of the third degree of humility.

As you pray this exercise on the Three Degrees of Humility, reflect in your journal: Looking at my life through God's eyes, what do I see as the biggest obstacles and helps to my growth in humility, the virtue that St. Ignatius once quipped has never been sufficiently praised? Which of the three kinds of humility seems most frequently operative in my life? Which kind of humility do I want for myself right now?

EXERCISE ON THE THREE DEGREES OF HUMILITY

[Editor: As often occurs in this book, the following unnumbered introductory material comes from Fr. De Place, who goes on to put "Text" next to the actual italicized words of Ignatius in the sections I've numbered, with his commentary in regular print below each. This is one of the few exercises where the old TAN edition of this book separates cleanly the saint's text from De Place's commentary.]

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Represent to yourself Our Lord Jesus Christ pointing to His sacred Heart, and saying to us, "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart" (*Matt. 11:29*).

Second prelude.

Ask the grace of a perfect renouncement of yourself, after the example of Jesus Christ.

Preliminary Observations

1. The exercise of the "Two Standards" points out the motives for following Jesus Christ. The exercise of the "Three Classes" points out the motives for following Him by giving ourselves to Him entirely and without reserve. In the exercise of the "Three Degrees of Humility," we are about to consider in what this perfect gift of ourselves to Jesus Christ consists.

2. This exercise is called, in the first place, the “Three Degrees,” because it contains the three degrees of Christian perfection, which consist (1) in the firm resolution to avoid mortal sin, even at the risk of life; (2) in the firm resolution to avoid deliberate venial sin at any price; and (3) in the voluntary choice of whatever is most perfect for the service of God: in the second place, it is so called because these three degrees suppose the abasement and, as it were, the annihilation of the old man within us.

First Point

[165] Text. *The first degree of humility consists in perfect submission to the law of God, so that we should be ready to refuse the empire of the whole world, or even to sacrifice our lives, rather than willingly transgress any precept that obliges us under pain of mortal sin.*

This first degree is absolutely necessary for eternal salvation and is, as it were, the fruit of the exercises of the first week. To establish ourselves firmly in it, we may recall what faith teaches us: (1) of the infinite malice of mortal sin, and the terrible vengeance with which the justice of God pursues it in time and in eternity; (2) of the supreme dominion of God, and His right to the obedience of every creature; (3) of the certainty and nearness of death, which will leave the sinner without resource in the hands of the living God; (4) the rewards that await in eternity the faithful observers of God’s law; (5) the sacrifices of the saints and martyrs, who renounced everything—fortune, pleasures, liberty, life itself—in order to escape mortal sin: “They were stoned,

they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword" (*Heb.* 11:37).

End by turning back upon yourself. Examine if you are ready to sacrifice all rather than consent to mortal sin; if there is not some obstacle to this necessary disposition of heart, and what that obstacle is; and what means you are willing to take for the future, in order to arrive at this first degree and to strengthen yourself in it.

Second Point

[166] Text. *The second degree is more perfect; it consists in the indifference of the soul toward riches or poverty, honor or shame, health or sickness, provided the glory of God and salvation are equally secured on both sides; further, that no consideration of interest or temporal disgrace, not even the consideration of immediate death, should be capable of drawing us into deliberate venial sin.*

This second degree is the consequence of the [First Principle and Foundation (no. 023)]." In that exercise we saw that, according to the order of creation, creatures are only the means given to man to lead him to his true end. Reason tells us that, in the choice of means, man should only consider what brings him nearer or takes him farther from this end. Hence it follows that man should be indifferent to poverty or riches, honor or shame; and that to commit venial sin in order to escape shame or poverty is to sin against this indifference, is to reverse the order and convert the means into the end itself.

To arrive at this second degree, we may meditate—(1) on the malice of venial sin, the greatest of evils after mortal sin; (2) the hatred with which God pursues it and the torments with which He punishes it in the other life; (3) its effects with regard to the soul, in which it weakens charity and disposes to mortal sin; (4) the examples of the saints, of whom several have preferred to die rather than consent to one slight fault; (5) above all, the example of Jesus Christ. Examine what is your disposition toward venial sin as in the first point.

Third Point

[167] Text. *The third degree is the highest degree of Christian perfection. It consists in preferring, for the sole love of Jesus Christ, and from the wish to resemble Him more, poverty to riches, shame to honor and so on, even if on both sides your salvation and the glory of God were equally to be found.*

To arrive at this third degree of humility, we may consider—

1. *Its excellence.* It contains all that is most heroic in virtue, and the perfect imitation of Jesus Christ, who for love of us willingly embraced the ignominy of the cross: “Having joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame” (*Heb.* 12:2).

2. *Its happiness.* To this degree is attached (1) peace of heart, since nothing can trouble him who professes to love all that nature fears and abhors; (2) intimate union with Jesus Christ, who communicates Himself fully to those souls who give

themselves to Him without reserve; (3) the choice graces and blessings of God on all that we undertake for His glory: “The foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise” (1 Cor. 1:27).

3. *Its utility.* This degree is the *most certain* way of salvation, because it snatches us away from all the dangers inseparable from fortune and honor; the *shortest*, because it delivers us at once from sin, and raises us to every virtue; finally, the *most meritorious*, because it is one uninterrupted course of sacrifices, and consequently of merits, for eternity.

[168] [Note] [Editor: Saint Ignatius says that to receive the grace of the third degree of humility, it will be helpful to end with the Triple Colloquy in no. 156 that closes the meditation on the Three Classes of Men, itself a repetition of the Triple Colloquy in no. 147 that closes the Two Standards meditation. Using this colloquy, he urges retreatants to beg our Lord to choose us for the third degree of humility, the higher and better degree that helps us best imitate and serve him, provided the Divine Majesty receives equal praise and service.]

Colloquies

1. With Mary
2. With Jesus Christ
3. With the Eternal Father—to obtain the grace of arriving at the third degree of humility.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

PRELECTION: MAKING A CHOICE OF A WAY OF LIFE

“God continues to speak today as he spoke in former times to our fathers when there were no directors as at present, nor any regular method of direction. Then all spirituality was comprised in fidelity to the designs of God, for there was no regular system of guidance in the spiritual life to explain it in detail, nor so many instructions, precepts and examples as there are now. . . . Then, for those who led a spiritual life, each moment brought some duty to be faithfully accomplished. Their whole attention was thus concentrated consecutively like a hand that marks the hours which, at each moment, traverses the space allotted to it.”

—Fr. Jean-Pierre de Caussade, S.J., *Abandonment to Divine Providence*, translated E. J. Strickland, Ignatius Press edition, p. 27

Editor: How do we hear God? Where do we begin in prayer? Father Jean-Pierre de Caussade, S.J. (1675–1751), the great French spiritual writer, opens his book *Abandonment to Divine Providence* with the wise words quoted above, pointing out that our forefathers had no prayer books or spiritual directors to help them know God’s will and do it. They did not have printed Bibles, clocks, or calendars. Our ancestors like Abraham, St. Joseph, and the Virgin Mary simply practiced the constant awareness of each moment—a deep consciousness of God’s presence permeating the now that Fr. de Caussade called “the sacrament of the present moment.”

In our frantic age, we may easily forget this lesson of God’s intimate presence to us in the immediacy of the moment,

focusing more on the past or future. We may think we have to work through a book or consult a spiritual guru simply to pray. De Caussade reminds us that prayer, in fact, begins with the sort of awareness St. Ignatius teaches in exercises like the Examen. Once I become self-aware of my own thoughts, feelings, and actions, I can relate them to my awareness of others and the world around me. Then I can invite God into my awareness, looking for signs of his presence. Instead of saying “I want to do great things for God in the future,” I can start by following the Jesuit maxim to “do what you are doing,” completing the small duty in front of me with full attentiveness. To begin with what lies in front of me—with what I sense in myself, in other people, and in the patterns unfolding around me right now—helps me to respond to the divine invitation of the moment. The following notes of St. Ignatius on making a choice of a way of life—that is, discerning a vocation—encourages us to engage in this awareness by calling to mind some dispositions and considerations that help us pay attention.

As you read the following notes of St. Ignatius on the right dispositions and considerations to discern a vocation, reflect in your journal: What do I notice about myself and the world around me right now? Where do I sense God in the present moment? What do I find helpful about the words of St. Ignatius here on making a choice?

[169] OF ELECTION OR CHOICE

First Article: Of the dispositions necessary

To make a good choice on any matter whatever, we must first meditate with a pure and upright intention on the end of our creation, which is the glory of God and our salvation. Therefore, our choice ought never to fall on anything that does not lead us to this end; for it is evident that the means ought always to be subordinate to the end, and not the end to the means. Those persons deceive themselves who begin by determining on such or such a state—for example, on marriage—and afterward form the resolution to serve God as well as they can in that state. That is to reverse the order, to take the means for the end, and the end for the means; it is to tend to God obliquely, so to say, and expect to draw the will of God to ours, instead of making ours bow to that of God.

We must do just the contrary: first we must propose for our end what is the true end of man—the service of God; then, with a view to this end, choose such or such a state, as marriage, or holy orders, and so forth, and determine our choice by the sole motive of arriving more certainly at our end. In a word, we ought not to decide upon one state in preference to another but according as one or the other can conduce to the glory of God and our salvation.

[170] Second Article: Of the matter of choice

1. All that forms the matter of election ought of necessity to be good, at least neither bad in itself nor contrary to the principles and maxims of the Church.

[171] 2. Two kinds of things may be the matter and object of election; one kind is such that the choice once made is unchangeable; for example, the priesthood and marriage. There are other things of which the choice is revocable; for example, such or such employment, ecclesiastical or secular, that may be accepted at first and afterward abandoned for just reasons.

[172] 3. When the choice has already taken place on an unchangeable matter, there is no longer any election to make. But if imprudence or some unruly affection has dictated a choice that it is not permitted to retract, there is only one decision to take; it is to repair the fault committed by the regularity of our life and our fidelity to all our duties.

There is no question here of change, for that is no longer allowed. Election must have its effect in its full extent, although made imprudently or from suspicious motives it can never pass for a divine vocation; for there is no divine vocation unless dictated by pure motives and solid reason unmixed with carnal affection or irregular inclinations.

[173] 4. With regard to the states that may be changed, if the choice was made with discretion and wisdom, it must not be changed; but we must endeavor to perfect ourselves more and more in this state. If, on the contrary, the election does not appear to have been sufficiently wise and Christian, we must change it, whatever it may cost, in order to render ourselves more agreeable to God and the better to assure our salvation.

[174] [Note] [Editor: *With changeable commitments, if we have not chosen sincerely and with due order in a way that proves fruitful to our lives and pleasing to God, St. Ignatius says it will be profitable to make the choice again in a proper way.*]

[175] *Third Article: Of the three times most favorable for making a good choice*

1. When the Divine power gives to the will such an impulse that the soul does not and cannot doubt that it ought to follow it. It happened thus to St. Paul, to St. Matthew, who were called by Jesus Christ, and to many others.

[176] 2. When the Spirit of God makes us discern His good pleasure in a manner sufficiently clear and evident by the application of His grace to our hearts. It is by submitting the consolations and different movements we feel to the rules for the discernment of spirits that we distinguish this Divine action, which always bears with it the characteristics of God Himself.

[177] 3. When, our spirit enjoying a great calm; our soul free from agitation and exercising freely its natural powers; our understanding enlightened, as it always is in its operations when conducted with rectitude, by the light of the Divine Word—we make choice of the most proper means to lead us surely and easily to our end. This end is the glory of God and our salvation. We set this truth before us as an established principle; and, as a consequence or a way to arrive at this term, we choose, among all the states that the Church authorizes, the one that will best of all lead us to it.

*[178] [Two Methods of Making a Choice
of a Way of Life in the Third Time]*

If neither the testimony of our senses struck by the Divine power nor that of our heart moved by the Spirit of God succeed in fixing our choice, we must appeal to the testimony of our spirit enlightened by eternal truth; and we must have recourse to the two following methods:

First Method

1. Propose to yourself the object of your determination—for example, such a state, or such an employment. Should it be embraced? Ought it to be renounced? And thus of all that can become matter of election.

[179] 2. Keep in view this truth: my end is, in glorifying God, to save myself. Prevent your will from pronouncing prematurely either for or against the object in question; establish yourself rather in a perfect equilibrium, so as to turn entirely and immediately to that side in which you recognize the greatest interest of the glory of God and your own salvation.

[180] 3. Beg of the Divine goodness to enlighten your spirit and incline your will toward the calling you should choose; without, however, neglecting to assist yourself by reasonings based on faith, in order to seek and discover the will of God, which is to decide your choice.

[181] 4. Weigh exactly the for and against: what advantages, what assistance, such or such an employment or state presents to enable you to arrive at your end; on the contrary, what dangers, what obstacles, await you in it. Examine in

the same way the opposite state—what means it offers you, or what perils; what resources, or what difficulties.

[182] 5. After this examination, compare both sides, and without listening to the suggestions of the flesh, decide for that which appears the most according to sound reason.

[183] 6. The choice being made, have recourse to prayer; offer your resolution to God, and beg of Him, if it is agreeable to Him, to receive it and confirm you in it.

[184] **Second Method**

1. As the election to be perfect ought to be determined by a celestial movement of Divine love, assure yourself well that whatever inclination you have (whether much or little is of no consequence) for the object you have chosen really comes from the love to God and regard to His interests alone.

[185] 2. If some other person, whose salvation or perfection was of great interest to you, found himself in the same situation you are in, and consulted you in his uncertainty, what would you counsel him for the greater glory of God and the greater perfection of his own soul? The counsel that you would give him is precisely that which you ought to follow yourself.

[186] 3. At the moment of death, how would you wish you had conducted yourself in this deliberation? In the same way conduct yourself now.

[187] 4. When called before the tribunal of God, what choice would you wish you had made? The same is the choice you

must make now; for it is the one that will give you the most confidence at that terrible hour.

[188] [Note] Your resolution once fixed, offer it to God in prayer, and beg of Him to accept and bless it, as in the preceding method.

PRELECTION: PERFECTING A VOCATION ALREADY CHOSEN

“As people who have placed our trust in God and in God’s ongoing revelation to us, we choose not to take the world’s point of view about what is pleasurable, profitable, or powerful. We grow aware of the Holy Spirit at work in our world. The more mature among us can see God at work in everything.”

—Fr. Joseph A. Tetlow, S.J., *Always Discerning*, p. 5

Editor: Father Joseph A. Tetlow, S.J. (1930–present), grew up in New Orleans and later served as assistant for Ignatian spirituality to the Jesuit superior general. Visiting hundreds of Jesuit retreat houses globally, Fr. Tetlow formed a deep perspective on how people practice Ignatian spirituality in our contemporary world, noting the evolution of the word “discernment” from its 1913 definition in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* as “discernment of spirits” (for choosing a vocation) to the “practical discernment” (for making daily decisions) of the 1992 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that expands it to include the operations of conscience.

In his award-winning 2017 book *Always Discerning*, Tetlow notes that we already exercise discernment every day in the big and small choices we make. Understanding discernment as a self-awareness of the dynamic interplay between head, hands, and heart, Fr. Tetlow quotes Pope Francis in defining good discernment as such: “It’s fundamental that one thinks what one feels and does; feels what one thinks and does; and does what one thinks and feels.” He adds that we must use the language of head, hands, and heart.

Saint Ignatius himself affirms that discernment goes beyond simply making a lifelong vocational commitment in marriage, priesthood, religious life, a particular job, and so on. After introducing the choice of a state of life and elaborating on how to discern it in the Exercises, St. Ignatius now provides the following instructions to retreatants who have already chosen a vocation but now struggle to decide how best to live it. In the following section on amendment or reform in a state of life already embraced, he elaborates on how the Exercises may guide us to recommit to a vocation already chosen, perfecting it by making the daily decisions that best fulfill our bigger commitments. Some examples that Fr. De Place inserts here of smaller choices we might discern to fulfill big choices, like how many servants to employ, will not apply to many readers. But the Exercises still invite us to be “always discerning,” as Tetlow says, continuing to become aware of how we might use what God has given us to better fulfill our vocations.

As you read the following notes of St. Ignatius on amending or reforming a vocation already chosen, reflect in your

journal: What lifelong commitments have I already made to God in terms of my work and personal life? What seems imperfect or unresolved in the way I am currently living out my vocation? Which of the “smaller” discernment questions below, or prayer exercises recommended by St. Ignatius for making choices, resonate with me as something I might apply to my current vocation?

[189] OF AMENDMENT

Or Reform in a State of Life Already Embraced

To persons engaged in the bonds of marriage, or raised to an ecclesiastical dignity impossible or difficult to abandon, we do not propose the rules regarding the choice of a state. Instead of these, we subjoin a method of reform or rules of conduct that will serve for amendment of life in the state already fixed.

The following are the elements of this method:

Do you wish to adopt and follow a plan of life conformable to the end for which God created you? Perform the Exercises of the second week to be pointed out presently.

Employ the methods of election named above, applying them with much reflection and exactness to the following objects, or others that may serve as matters for your deliberation:

What style of house, what number of servants, is it proper for you to keep? How does it become you to administer and regulate your affairs?

What instructions and examples ought you to give for the edification of your children and servants? What part of your revenues ought you to employ for your personal use and that of your house? What other part ought you to destine to the poor or consecrate to pious works?

In all this you ought to have nothing in view but the glory of God and your own salvation. And you ought to be persuaded that the more you withdraw from yourself, from self-love, and seeking your own ease, the more you will advance in the way of salvation and perfection.

The exercises to be performed before beginning this work of reform are (besides the meditation on the ordinary mysteries of Jesus Christ), the Contemplation of the Two Standards, the Exercises of the Three Classes, the Prelude of the Elections. These will greatly assist in making the person in retreat conceive the idea and the desire of the perfection of which he is capable and of which his state is susceptible.

The second article on Election is scarcely applicable here, but rather the third, with its double method. We must proceed in this way: Each of the points to be examined before God—for example, the personnel of the house, expenses, pious works—will be considered separately. Whenever deliberation has been made and a resolution taken on a point, pass on to another. The more grave and difficult the question, the more time it requires: sometimes an hour or more must be given to one; sometimes several points successively will have been decided in this space of time.

[Third Week]

PRELECTION: SUFFERING WITH JESUS

“In the Third Week, its subject being the Passion, these three graces appear to suit that subject reasonably well: the first, compassion with Christ in his bodily sufferings; the second, compassion with Christ in poverty and despoiled of all he has; the third, compassion with Christ mocked and put to shame. Far too many people do not know what it is to experience such a diversity of sufferings in a spiritual manner and are less disposed to experience them with compassion in their bodies.”

—St. Peter Faber, S.J., *Memoriale* no. 304, in *The Spiritual Writings of Pierre Favre*, p. 242

Editor: Also known as Pierre Favre, St. Peter Faber, S.J. (1506–1546), was a Frenchman from rural Savoy studying for the priesthood at the University of Paris when he ended up rooming with St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Francis Xavier. Ignatius, much older at thirty-seven than his twenty-two-year-old roommates when he arrived at Paris in 1528, mentored Faber and gave him the Exercises. After struggling to overcome his scruples, Faber achieved the First Week grace of accepting God’s deep love for him as a sinner,

and went on to become the best director of the Exercises in the opinion of Ignatius. After the three friends drew other companions and decided at Montmartre in 1534 to form a religious community, St. Peter Faber spent most of his brief Jesuit life reforming religious life and universities in Protestant Germany, where he personally experienced compassion—whose Latin root “com-passio” means “to suffer with”—in his embrace of the hurting Catholic community.

A zealous preacher and retreat master, Faber recruited the brilliant young Dutchman St. Peter Canisius to the Society, and that future Doctor of the Church recognized Faber as a saint. When St. Peter Faber took ill and died suddenly at age forty on his way to participate in the Council of Trent, St. Ignatius wept and mourned for him as a brother. His death provided another Third Week experience of compassionate “suffering together” for the young order, at that point only six years past its 1540 founding under Pope Paul III. In the above excerpt from his *Memoriale*, Faber exhorts people praying through the Passion in the Third Week to rouse themselves to likewise suffer together with Jesus in their bodies. That theme leads us into the Third Week of the Exercises, where our focus now shifts from praying for the grace to follow the incarnate Son in the words and deeds of his earthly ministry to praying for the grace to suffer with him on his journey to the cross.

As you enter the Third Week of the Exercises, reflect on your life history to answer these questions in your journal: Where have I experienced the greatest bodily suffering in

my life? How have I experienced poverty and need? When have I felt mocked and humiliated?

[OBJECT OF THE THIRD WEEK AND SOME
CONSIDERATIONS PECULIAR TO IT]

[Editor: Fr. De Place offers these introductory comments to the Third Week.]

The purpose of the third week is to confirm the soul in the resolution of a new life, and in the determination to serve God better. It is for this purpose that it is devoted to meditations on the touching and admirable examples that are offered to us by the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The remarks peculiar to this week are—

1. The order and method of the preceding meditations must be followed. The preparatory prayer and the three preludes as usual. In the second prelude, or construction of place, however, the person must imagine himself present at a mystery accomplished for *him*, according to the words of the Apostle, “He Wred me, and delivered Himself for me” (*Gal.* 2:20); and must dwell upon the consideration that *his* sins are the cause of the sufferings of Christ.

2. In the meditation we shall continue to consider (1) the persons, (2) the words, (3) the actions. But three other points must be added: (4) what Our Savior suffers and desires to suffer in His humanity; (5) how His divinity hides itself, as it were, allowing His enemies to work their will; (6) what we

must do and suffer for a God whom our sins have reduced to such a state.

On each of these points we must excite ourselves to sorrow, sadness and tears.

Although these three first points are in a degree comprised in the three last, St. Ignatius has chosen to present them separately, that the soul may attach itself in a particular manner to the sentiments they express and that are to lead it to the third degree of humility.

In the fourth point, it will be useful to compare the sufferings of Jesus Christ to the kinds of pain that have been spoken of in the meditation on the end of man—to weakness, to the sufferings He endured in body and soul, to poverty, to constant separation from all dear to Him, to contempt, to insults, to a short life, to the death He suffered on the cross.

The fifth point relates to these words of Isaias (53:3): “He was offered because it was His own will.” Jesus Christ could have destroyed His enemies, as His miracles prove, and yet He spared them and freely gave Himself up to their hate. This thought ought to inspire us with the desire to prefer with Jesus Christ poverty to riches, contempt to reputation and the esteem of men, provided always that both shall be equally conducive to the glory of God.

The sixth point is a sort of abridgment of the colloquy of the first meditation on sin, except that in one we consider what we ought to do for Jesus Christ, and in the other what we ought to suffer for love of Him.

Finally, St. Ignatius wishes that, in these three last points, we should excite ourselves to sorrow, sadness, and tears; but these affections must not stop at an interior sentiment, they must above all tend to the imitation of Jesus Christ suffering.

3. The colloquies must be made according to the disposition of the soul; for example, according as it feels trouble or consolation, as it desires such or such a virtue, or wishes to make such or such a resolution. We may make one single colloquy, addressed to Jesus Christ; or we may make three—one to the Blessed Virgin, another to her Divine Son, the third to the Eternal Father.

4. The observance of the ten additions [no. 082] must undergo the following modifications:

(1) As soon as you awake, you must recall the summary of the prayer; then, in dressing, excite yourself to sadness and sorrow, in union with Jesus Christ suffering.

(2) Dismiss, as so many distractions, agreeable and consoling thoughts, however holy they may be in themselves, and encourage feelings of sadness by the remembrance of all that Jesus Christ suffered from His birth to His death.

(3) It is useful to read some passages from Scripture relating to the Passion of Our Savior—for example, the Psalms or Isaias, St. Paul or the Gospels—in order to recall the greatness of Our Lord's sufferings, or His mercy, or the admirable effects of His death for the redemption of mankind.

(4) You may also occupy yourself usefully in reciting the “*Stabat Mater*,” according to the second method of prayer.

Note. Although the sentiment of compassion is good, though it ought to be asked for earnestly, desired with humility, and received with gratitude, yet there are other sentiments that we must endeavor to excite in ourselves, because they are more useful for our spiritual progress. Such are—(1) *Hatred of sin*: this hatred must be excited in the soul by the consideration of the insult that sin offers to God—an insult that can only be fully repaired by the sufferings and death of a God-man. (2) *Admiration of the infinite goodness* and wisdom of God, who has found so efficacious a means of touching and drawing to Him the hearts of men: “But God commendeth His charity towards us, because when as yet we were sinners Christ died for us” (*Rom.* 5:8). (3) *Confidence*: “For,” says St. Augustine, “can He who gave us the most precious thing in the world, the blood of His only son, refuse us eternal glory, which is certainly of less price?” (4) *Love*; by way of gratitude for this wonderful love of God, who gives Himself to us and gives Himself in this manner. (5) *Imitation of Christ*: it is for you that He suffered, says St. Peter, leaving you an example that you may follow in His footsteps. (6) *The salvation of souls*, which God has so much esteemed, has so much loved, that He has redeemed with so much pain, and at so high a price.

PRELECTION: JESUS INSTITUTES THE EUCHARIST

“And touching our Society, be it known to you that we have made a league — all the Jesuits in the world, whose succession and multitude must overreach all the practice of England — cheerfully to carry the cross you shall lay upon us, and never to despair your recovery, while we have a man left to enjoy your Tyburn, or to be racked with your torments, or consumed with your prisons. The expense is reckoned, the enterprise is begun; it is of God; it cannot be withstood. So the faith was planted: So it must be restored.”

—St. Edmund Campion, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: As “companions of Jesus,” Jesuits imitate the self-giving example of Jesus in the Eucharist, and the life of St. Edmund Campion, S.J. (1540–1581), illustrates this uniting of our sufferings to his sacrifice on the cross. At the institution of the Eucharist, Jesus gives his body and blood to his friends at the Last Supper under the appearances of bread and wine, recalling his promise that the greatest love consists in laying down one’s life for his friends as he intends to do. Campion, the brightest light at Oxford in his youth, placed himself in this scene when he returned to his native England as a Jesuit priest to preserve the Catholic faith from the Protestant persecutions of Queen Elizabeth. Because of St. Edmund’s bold but rash words quoted above, circulated widely in a document derisively called “Campion’s Brag,” he found himself pursued with extreme prejudice

by the Queen's priest hunters. Arrested, tried, and executed in terrible fashion, he remained bold in his self-offering for England's persecuted Catholics right up to the end, uniting his suffering to the self-offering of Jesus.

At the start of this Third Week of the Exercises, St. Ignatius invites us to do the same as we pray with the institution of the Eucharist, refocusing from the grace of following Jesus in ministry to the grace of suffering with him in the communion of saints. Although the Last Supper looks like a simple meal among friends, it carries deeper sacrificial overtones, as Jesus presents himself as the Passover lamb to be slain on behalf of his friends. Like Campion on the gallows, we likewise enter into this mystery of the Last Supper with sadness and grief, partaking in this sacrificial meal with a deep trust and hope that the Eucharist will sustain us in all life's trials.

As you pray through the Last Supper, reflect in your journal: What comes to mind when I think of the holy grief and loving sadness of Jesus with his apostles at the Last Supper? When have I experienced the grief of suffering out of love with a friend? What glimpses of joy and hope do I see amidst the sadness of the Last Supper?

[FIRST DAY]

[190] First Contemplation on the Mystery of the Eucharist

[Editor: Saint Ignatius invites us to begin the Third Week with a midnight contemplation of Christ our Lord's journey from

Bethany to Jerusalem and the Last Supper in no. 289. He notes that this first contemplation includes the preparatory prayer, three preludes, six points, and a colloquy. Father De Place incorrectly refers to this exercise as a meditation, glossing it heavily, but I have provided summaries of the saint's original text in italicized brackets below.]

Preparatory prayer.

[191] First prelude.

Represent to yourself the Last Supper, and Our Savior seated at the same table as His Apostles and by His all-powerful word changing the bread into His own body and the wine into His own blood.

[192] Second prelude.

[Editor: Ignatius asks us to imagine where this exercise takes place, considering the road from Bethany to Jerusalem (whether narrow or broad, flat, etc.) and the Upper Room (whether big or small, of this or that appearance) where the Last Supper occurs.]

[193] [Third prelude.]

Ask for a lively faith in the mystery of the Eucharist, and a tender love for Jesus present in the tabernacle. *[Editor: Ignatius recommends asking for sorrow and compassion because Jesus is going to suffer for my sins.]*

[194] First Point

The presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist

Contemplate in spirit Our Savior present on our altars, and, after having adored Him with profound respect, ask Him why for so many centuries He has remained shut up and, as it were, a captive in our tabernacles. Is it to redeem the world? But the redemption was accomplished on Calvary. Is it solely to confer grace upon us? But from the height of heaven Jesus Christ could sanctify us without there being any need of His presence on earth. Why, then, remain in the midst of us? Because He loves us, and all His delight is to be with the children of men: “My delights were to be with the children of men” (*Prov.* 8:31). And how does He dwell among us? He dwells under the veils of the Sacrament, for fear that the splendor of His glory should keep us away from His person, either through fear or respect. He wishes to dwell, not merely in a single city or a single sanctuary, but in all the temples of the Catholic Church, so that there shall not be any Christian who may not enjoy converse with Him. Finally, He wishes to inhabit our temples, not on certain days or certain solemnities only, but all days, all hours, all moments, so that there shall not be any person in His family who cannot come at all times before Him, to ask and to receive light, strength and consolation.

What happiness for you to live thus in the society of Jesus Christ! You have, then, nothing to envy the Apostles, the disciples, the inhabitants of Judea—all those who possessed Our Savior during the days of His mortal life. Between them and you there is only one difference, and that appears to be to your advantage. They possessed Jesus Christ, but in the state of His infirmity; you possess Him in the state of His glory. They only possessed Him at intervals, for Jesus

Christ frequently retired from the company of men into solitude; you possess Him constantly, you can enjoy His presence at any hour, as often, as long as you wish. Your happiness is so great that it may be compared to that of the elect in heaven; for this Jesus, whose possession forms the beatitude of the saints, is the same you possess on earth; and He does not reside more really in heaven than He resides in our sanctuaries.

Second Point

The life of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist

Consider that Our Lord reproduces in His Eucharistic life all the states and all the virtues of His mortal life.

1. His mysterious birth on the altar at the voice of the priest represents His birth at Bethlehem. In the solitude of our churches you find the deserted stable where Mary gave to the world its Savior; in the sacramental species, the swaddling clothes that enveloped the Divine Child; in the indifference of men for the Sacrament of Divine Love, the conduct of the inhabitants of Bethlehem toward the Messiah.

2. The tabernacle represents the humble house at Nazareth. What was the life of Jesus at Nazareth? A life of retreat, of prayer, of obedience. What is His life in the tabernacle? Contemplate it. He dwells in the midst of the world and is at an infinite distance from its societies and its feasts. He prays, but with a continual prayer that has not been interrupted a single instant for two millennia. He is in a state of absolute dependence, always submissive to His ministers,

equally ready, according to their will, either to remain hidden in the tabernacle, or to present Himself to the adoration of the faithful, or to transport Himself to the houses or to the hospitals, to visit His suffering members.

3. Recall to yourself what the Gospel relates of the public life of the Son of God. You will still meet with all this in the Eucharist. In His public life Jesus taught, and He supported His teaching by miracles. In His Eucharistic life what does He do? He teaches still, no longer by His words, but by His example—by His poverty, by His humility, by His flight from the world. He says always, “Blessed are the poor in spirit. Woe to the world” (*Matt.* 5:3, 18:7). He still works miracles; He still restores sight to the blind, life to the dead—that is, the light of faith to those who walk in the darkness of the world, the life of grace to those who are buried in the grave of sin.

4. The suffering life of Our Savior on Calvary is perpetuated in the Sacrament of the Altar. On the altar, as on the cross, the same trials: the same sadness of the heart of Jesus Christ at the sight of men’s crimes; the same abandonment of Jesus Christ by those souls who ought to be most faithfully attached to Him; the same insults on Calvary by the Jews and on the altar by heretics and impious men; the same torment of His sacred body, equally crucified by His executioners on Calvary and on the altar by the profane; in fine, on Calvary and at the altar the same examples of patience, of detachment, of charity, in a word, of the most heroic sacrifices.

Meditate with lively faith on the mystery of the Eucharistic life of Jesus Christ and excite yourself to the imitation of His virtues.

Third Point

The union of Jesus Christ with us in the Eucharist

Consider that the Eucharist, according to the idea of the Fathers, is an extension of the mystery of the Incarnation. In the Incarnation, the Word, it is true, unites Himself to us in an ineffable manner; but much more wonderful is the union He contracts with us in the Eucharist. In the Incarnation He takes a nature like ours; He enters into our family, He makes Himself one of us in a word, our brother. In the Eucharist He goes farther; it is no longer to a nature like ours He unites Himself, He unites Himself to each one in particular; it is no longer to our family He allies Himself, it is to our person.

[195] [Fourth Point]

Enter into this mystery of the charity of Jesus Christ, and meditate on all the circumstances.

1. How does He unite Himself to us in the Eucharist? By the nearest and most intimate union. The Fathers compare it to the union of two waxes melted into and mixed together (St. Cyril of Alexandria). Our Lord compares it to that which exists between His Father and Himself: "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me" (*John* 6:57). As in the Holy

Trinity, the Father, without losing anything of His infinite being, communicates it entirely to His Son, who is His Word; so, in the Eucharist, the Word incarnate retains His humanity and His divinity, yet always communicates both to the person receiving Him.

2. With what sentiments does He unite Himself to us? With sentiments of the most ardent love; and this love He reveals by His desires, His promises, His threats: “If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world. Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, you shall not have life in you” (*John* 6:51, 53).

3. What does He do to unite Himself to us? He multiplies miracles and reverses all the laws of nature. He does more, He exposes Himself to all insults; for example, to the insults of indifferent Christians, who leave Him alone and do not come to adore Him in His tabernacle; to the insults of profaners, who in their souls unite themselves with sin and the devil; to the insults of heretics and the impious, who have so often trampled Him underfoot and cast Him in the mire.

4. What does He give us in uniting Himself to us? He gives us all He has and all He is—His body, His soul, His divinity, and with this every grace. He is generous even to exhaustion; and what is most admirable is, that He gives Himself thus entirely, not once only, but every day, if we wish it. Every fresh communion is a new gift that Jesus Christ makes of Himself to us.

[196] *[Fifth Point]* [Editor: Ignatius invites us to consider how the divinity hides itself, choosing not to destroy its enemies but leaving the most sacred humanity to suffer cruelly.]

[197] *[Sixth Point]* [Editor: Saint Ignatius invites us to consider how Christ suffers for our sins, reflecting on what we ought to do and suffer for him in return.]

[198] Practical reflections and affections. Colloquy with Our Lord.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

[Editor: For two more prayer periods on this first exercise of the Third Week, Fr. De Place provides the following Application of Senses and repetition.]

Second Exercise on the Mystery of the Eucharist

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Represent to yourself heaven opening at the voice of the priest and Our Lord descending upon the altar amid choirs of angels.

Second prelude.

Beg a lively faith in the mystery of the Eucharist and a tender love for Jesus Christ present in the tabernacle.

Application of sight.

By faith, pierce through the veils of the Sacrament. Contemplate Our Savior present in the tabernacle and impatient to give Himself to you. Represent to yourself the glory of His adorable humanity; the majesty, and at the same time the sweetness, of His countenance; the dazzling light that flashes from His wounds; the flames that escape from His heart. Then penetrate in spirit to His divinity, to the Word consubstantial with the Father and the Holy Ghost, and with them One only God. Consider with what goodness this Divine Savior casts on you those eyes, one look from which converted sinners in the days of His mortal life; and after having adored Him with a lively faith, profound respect and fervent love, say to Him with the prophet: “Lord, cast Thine eyes upon me, and have pity on my miseries. Look Thou upon me, and have mercy on me” (*Ps. 118:132*). [*Ps 119:132 in newer Bible numbering.*] Make the light of Thy countenance to shine on Thy servant and save me because of Thy mercy: “Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant: save me in Thy mercy” (*Ps. 30:17*). [*Ps 31:17 in newer Bible numbering.*]

Practical reflections and affections.

Application of hearing.

Listen to Our Savior, the incarnate Wisdom, who speaks to you. And what does He say to you? Words of *consolation*:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are they that mourn. Blessed are they that suffer persecution” (*Matt. 5:3, 5, 10*). Perhaps words of *reproach*, but of sweet and tender reproach:

“I know thy works, and thy labour, but I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first charity” (*Apoc.* 2:2, 4). Words of *counsel* and *invitation*: “Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls; for My yoke is sweet and My burden light” (*Matt.* 11:29, 30). Words of *encouragement*: “I know thy tribulation and thy poverty, but thou art rich . . . Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life” (*Apoc.* 2:9, 10). Words of *desire* and *love*: “Behold I stand at the gate and knock” (*Apoc.* 3:20). “My son, give me thy heart” (*Prov.* 23:26).

Gather together with holy attention the words of Our Savior, and say to Him: “Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth” (*1 Samuel* 3:9). “Thou hast the words of eternal life” (*John* 6:69). “Say to my soul, I am thy salvation” (*Pss.* 34:3). [*Pss.* 35:3 in newer Bible numbering.]

Practical reflections and affections.

Application of smell and taste.

Respire the celestial perfume of the divinity and the humanity of Jesus Christ. Taste in spirit, sometimes the bitterness that His sacred Heart suffers from the indifference, the contempt, the insults, the profanations of men; at other times the sweetness of the virtues He practices in His Eucharistic life—His patience, His charity, His obedience, His poverty, His humility, His solitude, His prayer and so on. Unite yourself to Him as a model, to imitate His example; as a victim,

to sympathize with His sorrows and to make reparation for the outrages He suffers.

Practical reflections and affections.

Application of the touch.

Recall to yourself the woman in the Gospel who touched the hem of the garments of Jesus Christ and obtained health as the price of her faith; Magdalen, who embraced His sacred feet and watered them with her tears; St. Thomas, who placed his finger in His wounds; St. John, who reposed on His breast, and so forth. Enter into their sentiments, and put yourself in their places, according to the different states of your soul. Thus, present yourself before Jesus Christ, sometimes as a sick man and in spirit touch His garments to obtain your cure; sometimes as a penitent, embracing His sacred feet and asking pardon for your faults; sometimes as a disciple, whose confidence requires animating and strengthening, then place your finger in His wounds to convince yourself of His love; sometimes as a friend admitted to intimate familiarity, and then figure to yourself that Our Lord presses you to His heart.

Practical reflections. Colloquy with Our Lord.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

*Exercise on the Discourse of Our Lord After
the Last Supper (St. John 13–17)*

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Represent to yourself the disciple whom Jesus loved reposing on His bosom and drawing from His heart the understanding of His sublime teachings.

Second prelude.

Ask the grace to partake with Him this place of honor during your meditation.

First Point

Jesus answers the questions of His apostles

1. Peter asks Him, “Lord, whither goest Thou?” Jesus answers, “Whither I go thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow hereafter.” Peter replies, “Why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thee.” Jesus answers, “Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me? Amen, amen, I say to thee, the cock shall not crow till thou deny Me thrice.”

2. Thomas says to Him, “We know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way?” Jesus answers him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me. If you had known Me, you would without doubt have known My Father also, and from henceforth you shall know Him, and you have seen Him.”

3. Philip says to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus says to him, "So long a time have I been with you, and have you not known Me? Philip, he that seeth Me, seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am the Father, and the Father is Me? The words that I speak to you, I speak not of Myself. But My Father who abideth in Me, He doth the works. Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? Otherwise believe for the very works' sake. Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do: because I go to the Father. And whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do: that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask Me anything in My name, that I will do. If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you forever. The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him: but you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more. But you see Me, because I live, and you shall live. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me. And he that loveth Me shall be loved by My Father: and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him."

4. Judas says to Him, not Iscariot, "Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us and not to the world?" Jesus

answered him, "If any man love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love Him, and We will come to him, and will make Our abode with him. He that loveth Me not keepeth not my words, and the word that you have heard is not Mine but is the Father's who sent Me. These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you; but the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you."

5. The Apostles asked each other what the words signified that Jesus had just said: "A little while, and you shall not see Me; and again a little while, and you shall see Me." Jesus, knowing they wished to ask Him, said to them, "Of this do you inquire among yourselves, because I said: A little while, and you shall not see Me; and again a little while, and you shall see Me? Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice, and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, hath sorrow because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish for joy that a man is born into the world. So also you now indeed have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you. And in that day you shall not ask Me anything. Amen, amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it you. Hitherto you have not asked anything in My name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full."

Second Point

Jesus announces His passion; recommends charity, peace, intimate union with Him and with our brethren, constancy in persecutions: He promises the Holy Ghost.

1. *He announces His passion.* “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God also will glorify Him in Himself, and immediately will He glorify Him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you” (*John* 13:31–33).

2. *He recommends charity.* “A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another” (13:34, 35).

3. *Peace.* “Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions. If not, I would have told you that I go to prepare a place for you. And go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to Myself, that where I am you also may be” (14:1–3).

4. *Union with Him and with our brethren.* “I am the true Vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He will take away; and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are clean by reason of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the Vine; you

the branches. He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing. If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up and cast him into the fire, and he burneth. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you. In this is My Father glorified, that you bring forth very much fruit, and become My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love, as I also have kept My Father's commandments, and do abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled. This is My commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends, if you do the things that I command you. I will not now call you servants: for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth. But I have called you friends: because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father I have made known to you. You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you; and have appointed you that you should go and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain; that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you. These things I command you, that you love one another" (15: 1–17).

5. *Constancy in persecutions.* "If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated Me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world,

therefore the world hateth you. Remember My word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they had persecuted Me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. He that hateth Me hateth My Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their law: They have hated Me without cause. But when the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me: and you shall give testimony, because you are with Me from the beginning. These things have I spoken to you, that you may not be scandalized. They will put you out of the synagogues; yea, the hour cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth a service to God. And these things will they do to you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me. But these things I have told you, that when the hour of them shall come, you may remember that I told you" (15:18 to end, 16:1-4).

6. *He promises the Holy Ghost.* "But I tell you the truth: it is expedient to you that I go; for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you: but if I go, I will send Him to you. And when He is come, He will convince the world of sin and of justice and of judgment. Of sin: because they believed not

in Me. And of justice: because I go to the Father, and you shall see Me no longer. And of judgment: because the prince of this world is already judged. I have yet many things to say to you; but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will teach you all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, He shall speak, and the things that are to come He shall show you. He shall glorify Me; because He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it to you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine. Therefore I said, that He shall receive of Mine and show it to you” (16:7–15).

Third Point

The prayer of Jesus

1. *Jesus prays for Himself.* Lifting up His eyes to heaven, Jesus said: “Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee. As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. Now this is eternal life: That they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee on earth. I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now glorify Thou Me, O Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with Thee” (*John* 17:1–5).

2. *Jesus prays for His disciples.* “I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world. Thine they were, and to Me Thou gavest them: and they have kept Thy word. Now they have known that all things

which Thou hast given me are from Thee: because the words which Thou gavest Me I have given to them, and they have received them, and have known in very deed that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world but for them whom Thou hast given Me; because they are Thine. And all My things are Thine, and Thine are Mine: and I am glorified in them. And now I am not in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name whom Thou hast given Me; that they may be one, as We are also. While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name. Those whom Thou gavest Me have I kept: and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture may be fulfilled. And now I come to Thee: and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy filled in themselves. I have given them Thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil. They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth. Thy word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for them do I sanctify Myself: that they also may be sanctified in truth. And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me. That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee: that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them: that they may be one, as We also are one. I in them, and Thou in Me; that they may be made

perfect in one; and the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast also loved Me. Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me: that they may see My glory which Thou hast given Me, because Thou hast loved Me before the foundation of the world. Just Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee; and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have made known Thy name to them, and will make it known: that the love, wherewith Thou hast loved Me, may be in them, and I in them" (17:6 to end).

Affections at the foot of the crucifix.

Anima Christi.

[199] [Note]

[Editor: As we begin the Third Week, St. Ignatius reminds us to use our colloquy at the end of each prayer period to discuss our motives and present our petitions to God according to our circumstances. He urges us to tell God if we experienced temptation or consolation during the prayer period, if we desire one virtue or another, if we feel moved in one direction or the other, and if we seek to grieve or rejoice according to the exercise we just experienced. Finally, he wants us to ask ourselves what we more deeply desire according to our particular interests. At this point in the retreat, he invites us to engage either in one colloquy with Jesus or in three colloquies (with Mary, with her Son, and with the Father) at the end of each prayer period. If we do the threefold colloquy, Ignatius suggests using the format from the

Two Standards in no. 147 and observing the note in no. 157 that follows the Three Classes of Men.]

PRELECTION: THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN

“I am a Catholic priest. I was born in the Catholic faith and I wish to die in it. My faith is the true faith, which leads to salvation.”

—St. Andrew Bobola, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: Determined to uproot Catholicism, Cossack rebels tortured St. Andrew Bobola, S.J. (1591–1657), to death during a seventeenth-century uprising in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Before he died, this Polish priest now known as the Apostle of Lithuania responded with the unbending profession of his faith quoted above from the Jesuit divine office for his feast, cited by Pope Pius XI in his 1938 canonization decree.

Like Jesus, who prayed in the Garden of Olives that the Passover cup of suffering might pass from his hands if the Father allowed it, Bobola did not want to die. Popular among laypeople as a director of the sodality (now Christian Life Community) and a missionary preacher, his apostolic life had made him beloved. But as the angry mob of Cossack rebels tortured him, this brave Jesuit embraced his suffering as a necessary consequence of righteousness. Following Jesus, he accepted death as a natural result of knowing God’s will and doing it in a broken world, refusing to let fear or pain

make him renounce his faith. In the same way, St. Ignatius encourages retreatants to identify with the very human suffering of Jesus Christ in this next meditation on the Agony in the Garden, uniting our thoughts and sentiments to his example in a way that informs the loving action of our evangelizing witness.

As you pray through the Agony of the Garden with the points of St. Ignatius, recalling the example of the martyrs who imitated Jesus by their deaths, reflect in your journal: How do I respond when I suffer physical pain? How do I want to spend the last moments of my life before God? What do I fear about the end of my life?

*[200] Second Contemplation on
the Passion of Our Lord*

[Editor: St. Ignatius invites us to continue the Third Week with a morning contemplation of Christ our Lord's journey from the Last Supper to the Agony in the Garden inclusive in no. 290. He notes that this first contemplation includes the preparatory prayer, three preludes, six points, and a colloquy. To assist self-guided prayer, Fr. De Place fills in the details of this repetition to complete the first day of this Week.]

Preparatory prayer.

[201] First prelude.

Jesus entering into the garden of Gethsemani, took with Him Peter and James and John; and He began to fear and

be sorrowful; and He said to them: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death, wait here and watch with Me." And going a little way off, "He prayed, saying, Father, if it be possible, remove this chalice from Me; but yet not My will, but Thine be done." And being in an agony, He prayed the longer. And His sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground (*Mark* 14:32; *Luke* 22:40).

[202] Second prelude.

Represent to yourself the garden of Gethsemani, and Our Savior prostrate on the ground praying for the salvation of mankind.

[203] Third prelude.

Ask God to grant you tears of sorrow in union with Jesus Christ suffering for love of us. In each of the scenes of the passion of Our Lord we may consider what He suffers, and how He suffers; that is, a God as a victim, and a God as a model. As the one, we owe Him love; as the other, we owe Him imitation.

First Point

Jesus Christ as victim

Recall to yourself that Our Lord is the most holy of the children of men; that He is the beloved Son of the living God; that He is Himself the God of all consolation, the sight of whom forms the beatitude of the angels and the elect. He ought not, then, to have known pain or suffering; and

yet what does He not suffer! He endures the most violent interior trials of the soul—fear, “He began to fear” (*Mark* 14:33); weariness, “and to be heavy” (*Ibid.*); sorrow, “My soul is sorrowful even unto death” (*Ibid.* 34); finally, a sort of agony, “Being in an agony” (*Luke* 22:43). [*Lk 22:44 in newer Bible translations.*]

In order fully to understand the excess of the suffering of Jesus Christ, meditate on all the circumstances told by the evangelists. Jesus Christ complains; He who had never uttered a single complaint until then. And to whom does He complain? To common and almost unconcerned men, who do not know how to console Him, nor even to pray with Him. In what terms does He complain? In the most energetic—He tells them His soul is sorrowful even unto death. And this Jesus who complains in this way, is He who said a short time before, speaking of His approaching passion, “I have a baptism, wherewith I am to be baptized, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!” (*Luke* 11:50). In fine, His desolation is such that His heart appears to break; He suffers convulsions like a dying person struggling violently against death; it reduces Him to sweat blood from all His members: “His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground” (*Luke* 22:44).

And what are the causes of this desolation of the Savior? The eternal misery that sin is preparing for us; this is cause of His fear. The infinite injury that sin does to the majesty of His Father; this is the cause of His sorrow. The uselessness of His sufferings for so many miserable creatures who persist in the way of perdition; this is the cause of His weariness.

The sight of God basely insulted, and of so many souls miserably damned, is the cause of His agony. Return to yourself. You see what Jesus Christ suffered on your account and for you: what will you do for Him?

Second Point

Jesus Christ as our model

Recall these words of St. Peter—Jesus Christ suffered for us, that we might walk in His footsteps: “Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example, that you should follow His steps” (*1 Peter* 2:21). Consider, then, all the examples of this Divine Savior, and endeavor to imitate Him in your life.

1. Jesus Christ knew beforehand the trials that awaited Him in the Garden of Olives; but it does not make Him less faithful to the holy custom of retiring into solitude to pray. With what intrepidity and what peace He goes to the first theatre of His bloody passion! From this example of the Savior, learn fidelity to good resolutions in spite of obstacles and trials.

2. Jesus Christ leaves His disciples at the entrance of the garden; He only takes with Him three of His apostles, Peter, James and John; and yet, if He admits them to the confidence of His prayers and sorrows, it is rather for their instruction than His own consolation. From this example of the Savior, learn detachment from human consolation in afflictions.

3. Jesus Christ, given up to all the agitation and bitterness of His heart, has recourse to prayer. And in this prayer what lessons for a Christian! A lesson of recollection and solitude:

“Withdrawn away from them a stone’s cast” (*Luke* 22:41); a lesson of humility: “Kneeling down He prayed” (*Ibid.*); a lesson of confidence in God: “Abba, Father, all things are possible to Thee; remove this chalice from Me” (*Mark* 14:36); a lesson of resignation: “Not what I will, but what Thou wilt” (*Ibid.*); a lesson of fervor: “And leaving them He went again, and He prayed for the third time” (*Matt.* 26:44); finally, a lesson of heroic constancy: “Being in an agony, He prayed the longer” (*Luke* 22:43). [*Lk* 22:44 in newer Bible translations.]

Practical reflections and affections. Colloquies with Our Lord suffering in the Garden of Olives; then with God the Father.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

[Notes]

[I.] [204] [Editor: In this second contemplation of the Third Week, St. Ignatius reminds us to use the points and colloquies in the same way we used them in the first contemplation, following the preparatory prayer and three preludes.]

[II.] [205] [Editor: During the Third Week, St. Ignatius recommends that the retreatant continue to pray five exercises a day or fewer depending on age, health, and physical condition.]

[III.] [206] [Editor: For the Third Week, St. Ignatius modifies the second and sixth Additional Directions (given for the First Week in nos. 073–081) as follows. The second will be to recall where I am going and the purpose as soon as I wake up each

morning, mentally summarizing the contemplation I am about to do, and making an effort while getting out of bed and dressing to feel sadness and grief for the great sorrow and suffering of Jesus Christ. The sixth will be to avoid comforting thoughts of the resurrection and glory of heaven, even though they be good and holy, to better rouse myself to sadness, suffering, and anguish as I reflect on the labors, exhaustion, and suffering Jesus endured from his birth to the passion I am now contemplating during this Third Week.]

[IV.] [207] [Editor: As during the Second Week, St. Ignatius encourages us to pray the Particular Examen of Conscience on our fidelity to the structure of the exercises and apply the Additional Directions (nos. 073–081) to this Third Week.]

PRELECTION: FOLLOWING CHRIST IN PAIN

“Again, though we are called to help others we are often sick ourselves, worn out by illness and scarcely able to complete the journey: the doctors seem to need as much help as the sick. But nothing is too difficult for those who seek only God’s love and the salvation of souls: for this they are ready to lay down their lives. Often we rise from sleep to help the sick and dying.”

—St. Joseph de Anchieta, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: In this 1560 letter to the Jesuit superior general in Rome, St. Joseph de Anchieta, S.J. (1534–1597), reports

that he and his fellow Portuguese missionaries spend much of their time on the Brazilian missions assisting the sick and dying, despite often being ill and exhausted themselves. Known today as the Apostle of Brazil, Anchieta gives us an example in this letter of how to follow Jesus like the twelve apostles. He and his fellow Jesuits spent themselves to evangelize the Guarani and other Indian tribes in difficult circumstances.

At this point in the Third Week exercises, St. Ignatius provides suggestions (not translated by Fr. De Place but summarized below) to spend several days praying through Gospel accounts of Christ's passion with the prayer points he provides in nos. 291–98. Like Anchieta and his fellow Jesuit missionaries, who lived out the graces of this retreat by following Jesus on the indigenous missions even in suffering, these meditations invite us to continue deepening our sense of carrying the cross with our Savior to Calvary.

As you pray through the following passages suggested by St. Ignatius, flipping to nos. 291–98 for his prayer points and Scripture citations, reflect in your journal: When have I experienced compassion in my Christian outreach to others who suffer? When have I fought through my own discomfort and pain to be present to a sick family member or friend? What grace do I ask of Jesus as I reflect on these passages and relate his sufferings to mine?

[SECOND THROUGH SEVENTH DAYS]*[208] [Second Day]*

[Editor: For the second day of the Third Week, St. Ignatius suggests praying over no. 291 on the Garden to Annas at midnight, no. 292 from the house of Annas to Caiaphas in the morning, and then two repetitions and the application of senses as above.]

[Third Day]

[Editor: For the third day of the Third Week, St. Ignatius suggests praying over no. 293 from the House of Caiaphas to Pilate at midnight, no. 294 from Pilate to Herod in the morning, and then two repetitions and the application of senses as above.]

[Fourth Day]

[Editor: For the fourth day of the Third Week, St. Ignatius suggests praying over no. 295 from Herod back to Pilate, contemplating the first half of the events in Pilate's house at midnight and the second half in the morning, and then two repetitions and the application of senses as above.]

[Fifth Day]

[Editor: For the fifth day of the Third Week, St. Ignatius suggests praying over no. 296 from the house of Pilate to the crucifixion at midnight, no. 297 from the raising of the cross to the death of Jesus in the morning, and then two repetitions and the application of senses as above.]

[Sixth Day]

[Editor: For the sixth day of the Third Week, St. Ignatius suggests praying over no. 298 from Jesus being taken down off the cross to the point of his burial at midnight, resuming from his burial to the house where Mary retired after his burial in the morning, and then two repetitions and the application of senses as above.]

[Seventh Day]

[Editor: For the seventh day of the Third Week, St. Ignatius suggests praying over the whole passion in one hour at midnight and again in the morning, giving retreatants the space to contemplate any of the four Gospel passion accounts or pray from memory. Instead of two repetitions and an application of senses, St. Ignatius recommends spending the whole remainder of the day reflecting on the separation of Christ's sacred body from his soul, and imagining the place and style of his burial. He encourages the retreatant to consider the desolation, sadness, and fatigue of Our Lady and also of the disciples.]

PRELECTION: THE CRUCIFIXION

“God wants you to learn to suffer tribulation without comfort and, submitting yourself entirely to Him, to grow in humility through tribulation. No one so deeply feels what Christ endured as one who has had to suffer as He did. The

cross is always ready and waits everywhere for you; you cannot escape it no matter where you turn.”

—Fr. Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, Book 2,
Ch. 12, translated Clare L. Fitzpatrick

Editor: Father Thomas à Kempis (1380–1471), a Dutchman and Canon Regular of St. Augustine, survives in our memory today as the best-known figure of the Modern Devotion (*Devotio Moderna*) dedicated to Christ-centered humility and simplicity. But many people long believed Jean Gerson to be the actual author of his greatest work, *The Imitation of Christ*, which today remains the most-printed religious book after the Bible. Even St. Ignatius believed Gerson to be the author, referring to the *Imitation* fondly as the *Gersoncito*, and he reportedly read a chapter of it every day.

In this excerpt from the “*Imitatio*,” Fr. Thomas encouraged readers to truly unite their own sufferings to the feelings of Jesus on the cross. His urging of the reader to suffer with Christ on the cross without comfort, without happy thoughts of angels or resurrection, describes well the grace that St. Ignatius wants retreatants to ask God for during the Third Week of the Exercises. Although Thomas à Kempis cannot be considered a “Jesuit spiritual master,” we include this excerpt here because St. Ignatius recommends the *Imitation* for spiritual reading during the Exercises, acknowledging his debt to it as a major source of Ignatian spirituality.

As you pray for the grace to suffer with Jesus Christ on the cross, reflect in your journal: What do I notice about the attitude of Jesus in his sufferings? What makes me

uncomfortable about the cross? What great suffering(s) in my life do I want to invite Jesus to share with me?

[Editor: To assist self-guided prayer, Fr. De Place synthesizes all of the Third Week prayer topics from the second through seventh days in the following exercises which readers may use with or in lieu of the prayer points in no. 291–98 referenced above.]

SECOND EXERCISE ON THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

On the Sufferings of Jesus Christ, from His Agony in the Garden of Olives to His Death on the Cross

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Recall the account of the evangelist. Jesus Christ is betrayed by the traitor Judas, abandoned by His disciples, bound with cords by the soldiers, dragged to the tribunal of Caiphas, then to that of Pilate, and of Herod; again sent back before the Roman governor, and cruelly scourged by his orders, crowned with thorns in the judgment hall; finally, loaded with His cross and led to Calvary, there to undergo the last suffering. (*Matt. 26, 27; Mark 14, 15; Luke 22, 23; John 18, 19*)

Second prelude.

Represent to yourself the different scenes of Our Savior's passion: the Garden of Olives, the tribunal of Caiphas, that

of Pilate, the palace of Herod, the judgment hall, the way of Calvary.

Third prelude.

Beg a lively contrition for your sins, and a tender love for Jesus Christ suffering for us. In the Garden of Olives you have contemplated Jesus Christ making the sacrifice of His *interior* consolations. Contemplate Him in Jerusalem, making also the sacrifice of all *exterior* things, which consist in these five things—His liberty, His friends, His reputation, His happiness, His own body. In each of these sacrifices consider the Savior as a victim and as a model; meditate on what He suffers and how He suffers.

First Point

Jesus Christ as victim

Consider—

1. *What Our Lord suffers in His liberty.* He is deprived of it in the most unjust, the most violent, the most ignominious manner possible. He is seized in the midst of His disciples by the Pharisees and their followers. He is bound like a vile malefactor. He is dragged from tribunal to tribunal in the same city and amid the same people that have so often witnessed His preachings and His miracles. He is delivered up to the brutality of the soldiers and of the vilest populace. Finally, His bonds are loosed, only that He may be nailed to the cross where He is to expire.

2. *What He suffers from His friends.* He suffers all that is most cruel from friendships disowned and betrayed. All His apostles forsake Him; one of them denies Him three times and at the voice of a servant; another sells Him to His enemies for thirty pieces of money. And when is it that His friends put His heart to these sore trials? At a time the most painful and when He had the greatest need of consolation; at the moment when His most implacable enemies are the masters of His person; at the moment of His sufferings and death. And who are these friends who treat Him in this way? Men whom He has admitted to intimate familiarity; the depositors of His secrets; men to whom He had just given the institution of the Eucharist, the most splendid testimony of His love: "My friends and my neighbors, and they that were near me, stood afar off" (*Ps.* 37:12, 13). [*Ps* 38:11 or 38:12 in newer Bible numbering.] "My heart hath expected reproach and misery, and I looked for one that would grieve with me, but there was none; and for one that would comfort me, and I found none" (*Ps.* 68:21). [*Ps* 69:20 or 69:21 in newer Bible numbering.]

3. *What He suffers in His reputation.* What reputation more universal or more glorious than that of Jesus Christ! In all Judea men only spoke of His wisdom, His power, His holiness. Now they only see in Him an ignorant, stupid person, who does not know how to answer accusations the coarsest and the most easy to refute: "Answerest Thou nothing? Jesus held His peace" (*Matt.* 26:62, 63). An impostor, who has deceived the people by illusions, and who with all His power cannot withdraw Himself from the hands of His enemies:

“He saved others, let Him save Himself” (*Luke* 23:35). A seditious impious man, deserving the greatest punishment: “All condemned Him to be guilty of death” (*Mark* 14:64).

4. *What He suffers in His honor.* Not any kind of insult is spared Him. At the tribunal of Caiphas, He is struck in the face, as guilty of irreverence toward the high priest. In the house of this pontiff the soldiers, covering His eyes, struck Him by turns, and cried, “Prophecy, O Christ! and say who it is that struck Thee” (*Luke* 22:64). At the court of Herod, He was shamefully clothed in a white robe as a madman. At the tribunal of Pilate, He is placed on a level with Barabbas, whom the people unanimously prefer before Him. In the hall of judgment they cover Him with purple rags, crown Him with thorns, put a reed in His hand, and bending before Him in derision, say: “Hail, King of the Jews!”

5. *What He suffers in His body.* Represent to yourself the cruel scenes of the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the crucifixion. Contemplate the sacred body of Our Lord torn by the scourgers, and presenting to the eye one bleeding wound: “There is no beauty in Him, nor comeliness; and we have seen Him, and there was no sightliness, that we should be desirous of Him—a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity; and we have thought Him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted” (*Is.* 53:2–4). His head pierced by sharp thorns, which the soldiers make more painful every moment by striking Him; His shoulders bruised by the overpowering weight of the cross, which He carries to Calvary; and lastly, His feet and hands nailed to the cross,

with horrible torture to the nerves, and all His body suspended and, as it were, sustained by His wounds. Then ask yourself why were all these sufferings of your God and say with lively contrition: “He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed” (*Is.* 53:5).

Second Point

Jesus Christ as model

Meditate on the examples of virtue Our Savior gives us in the different circumstances of His passion.

1. *In the loss of His liberty*, He gives you an example of perfect resignation to the will of His Father, which He adores in the criminal will of His enemies. He knew their designs beforehand, since He had foretold them to His Apostles, and yet He will withdraw Himself neither by a miracle nor by flight. He anticipates the Pharisees and the soldiers by going to meet them; He voluntarily delivers Himself into their hands; He allows Himself to be bound, then led from tribunal to tribunal, and finally nailed to the cross, and that without offering the least resistance, without making one complaint. Learn from so great a model the characters of perfect obedience to the will of God—that is, docility, promptitude and constancy.

2. *In the desertion of His friends*, He gives you an example of the most generous charity. To the indifference of His disciples He opposes a lively and tender friendship; He watches

over their perils, forgetting His own; and while He delivers Himself without defense into the hands of His most cruel enemies, He obliges them to respect the liberty of His Apostles. "I have told you that I am He. If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way. That the word might be fulfilled which He said: Of them whom Thou hast given Me, I have not lost any one" (*John* 18:8, 9). To Peter, who had denied Him, He does not even utter a reproach and only replies to his perjury by a look full of sweetness and that converted the unfaithful Apostle: "The Lord turning looked at Peter, and he going out wept bitterly" (*Luke* 22:61, 62). With regard to Judas, He does not repulse his perfidious embrace; He contents Himself with saying, less to confound him than to convert him, "Friend, whereto are thou come?" (*Matt.* 26:50). "Judas, dost thou betray the Son of man with a kiss?" (*Luke* 22:48).

3. *In the loss of His reputation*, He gives you an example of perfect detachment. It was easy for Him to confound His enemies, and to reestablish with more splendor than ever His renown for wisdom, sanctity and power. For this a miracle or even a few words would have sufficed. What does Jesus Christ do? He refuses for Himself the miracles He lavishes on others, and if He speaks, it is only in the interest of truth. Are you the Son of God? You have said it. Yes, I am. Learn, then, from your Divine Master to despise the opinion and the esteem of men. What matters the contempt of the world, if you have the approbation of the Lord? "Those who praise me while Thou blamest me, can they save me when Thou shalt condemn me?" (St. Augustine).

4. *In the ignominies and insults that Jesus Christ endured*, He gives you an example of profound humility. To calumny He only opposes silence: "He held His peace and said nothing" (*Mark* 14:61). Yet it appears that the interest of His doctrine, of His mission, of His Church, that the glory even of His Father, required from Him at least a few words for His justification. But Jesus is silent: "I as a deaf man heard not; and as a dumb man not opening his mouth, and that hath no reproofs in his mouth" (*Ps.* 37:14, 15). [*Ps* 38:13-14 or 38:14-15 in newer Bible numbering.] To derision and insult He only opposes meekness; and He fulfills to the letter what was written of Him: "I have given My body to the strikers, and My cheeks to them that plucked them; I have not turned away My face from them that rebuked Me and spit upon Me" (*Is.* 50:6); "He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before His shearer, and He shall not open His mouth" (*Is.* 53:7).

5. *In the different torments of His sacred body*, He gives you the example of a heroic penance. Meditate well on the following circumstances: (1) Who is He that suffers? A God holy by essence. (2) What does He suffer? Everything that it is possible for man to suffer. (3) From whom does He suffer it? From those whom He has loaded with benefits. (4) Why does He suffer? For your sins. (5) How does He suffer? With infinite love. These, in a few words, are the motives and practice of penance.

Colloquies

1. With the blessed Virgin. Recite some verses of the *Stabat Mater*, for example.

2. With Our Lord.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

PRELECTION: THE CROSS

“For the soul which spends too little time in the meditation and imitation of Christ crucified will conceive only a tepid desire to suffer and will easily fall victim to impatience. . . . How great a cure for all our ills is meditation on the cross of Christ!”

—St. Francis Borgia, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: Saint Francis Borgia, S.J. (1510–1572), went from lay benefactor to third Superior General of the Society of Jesus in his lifetime. As the powerful Duke of Gandia, born into the notorious Borgia family, he and his wife Eleanor de Castro raised eight children. But upon her death he renounced his title, studied theology, got ordained priest in 1551, and joined the Society. As a Jesuit during the generalate of St. Ignatius, he embraced humility, giving up his servants and wealth to wash dishes in the kitchen. In this excerpt from a letter that he sent as superior general to the whole Society in April 1569, Borgia speaks from experience

as he recommends praying for the desire to suffer with Jesus on the cross as a solution to lukewarm spirituality, having discovered in the cross a divine medicine for his own grief.

As you continue reflecting on the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, reflect in your journal: What experiences of grief or loss help me share what Jesus suffers in giving up his life? What attracts me to the cross? What repulses me from the cross?

THIRD EXERCISE ON THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

Contemplation of the Death of Jesus Christ Crucified

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

They fasten Jesus to the cross, and crucify Him between two thieves, one on His right and the other on His left. Thus were accomplished the words of Scripture, “With the wicked He was reputed” (*Mark* 15:28).

Second prelude.

Represent to yourself Calvary and there Our Lord Jesus Christ fastened to the cross.

Third prelude.

Let us beg a lively contrition for our sins and a tender love of Jesus Christ dying for us.

First Point

Contemplate the persons

1. The crowd of strangers and inhabitants of Jerusalem assembled round Our Savior. What motive brings them to Calvary? With some, it is compassion; but with a great number, it is curiosity; with a still greater number it is hatred.
2. The Roman soldiers, the Pharisees, the princes of the priests, who insult the Son of God, and who feel a malignant joy at His sufferings and death.
3. The two malefactors crucified beside Jesus Christ.
4. The Blessed Virgin, Mary the wife of Cleophas, Magdalen and the beloved disciple, gathered together at the foot of the cross.
5. Our Lord on the cross; His head crowned with thorns, His eyes blinded by the blood trickling from His forehead, His arms violently stretched out, His hands and feet pierced by sharp nails, His body torn so that the bones may be counted through the still bleeding wounds of His scourging.

Practical reflections and affections.

Second Point

Listen to the Words

1. *The words of the people.* Those who pass by loading Him with maledictions, shaking their heads, and saying, "Thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days dost

rebuild it, save Thy own self; if Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross" (*Matt.* 27:40).

2. *The words of the chief priests and scribes.* They said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him. He trusted in God; let Him now deliver Him if He will save Him, for He said: I am the Son of God" (*Matt.* 27:42, 43).

3. *The words of the soldiers,* who come to Him and offer Him vinegar, saying, "If Thou be the King of the Jews, save Thyself" (*Luke* 23:37).

4. *The words of the two malefactors.* One of them blasphemed against Him, saying, "If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us" (*Ibid.* 39). The other rebuked him, saying, "Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this Man hath done no evil. And he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom" (*Ibid.* 40–42).

5. *The interior words of Mary,* of the holy women, of St. John, and their communion with the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

6. *The seven words of Jesus Christ on the cross.* (1) To His Heavenly Father: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (*Luke* 23:34). (2) To the good thief: "To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise" (*Ibid.* 43). (3) To Mary and John: "Woman, behold thy son; son, behold thy mother" (*John* 19:26). (4) "My God, My God, why hast Thou

forsaken Me?” (*Matt.* 27:46). (5) “I thirst” (*John* 19:28). (6) “It is consummated” (*Ibid.* 30). (7) “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit” (*Luke* 23:46).

Practical reflections and affections.

Third Point

Consider the Actions

- (1) In the Jews, indifference, or rather hate.
- (2) In the priests and Pharisees, a barbarous joy at the sight of their enemy dying.
- (3) In the soldiers, a fierce cruelty: they divide the garments of Jesus at the foot of the cross and give Him vinegar to quench the thirst of which He complains.
- (4) In one of the thieves, an impenitence and hardness that resists every grace. In the other, faith, humility, contrition, confidence in God.
- (5) In the holy women and St. John, the heroism of fidelity and devotion.
- (6) In Mary, the union of her heart with the sufferings, the patience, the humility, the charity of Jesus Christ.
- (7) In Jesus Christ, the perfection of all virtues: the perfection of humility—He dies under the ignominy of the most disgraceful of sufferings: the perfection of poverty—He dies in a state of the most complete privation: the perfection of abnegation—He sacrifices all His liberty, His honor, His

affections; His body, in which every sense suffers torture; His soul, of which every faculty has its pain.

Practical reflections and affections.

End by the three following considerations:

1. What Our Savior suffers in His humanity.
2. How His divinity bides itself and allows His enemies to act, instead of striking them and annihilating them.
3. What we ought to do and suffer for a God whom our sins have reduced to this state.

Colloquy with Our Savior Crucified

Excite in yourself the sentiments pointed out in the advice on the third week: (1) hatred of sin; (2) admiration of the goodness and wisdom of God; (3) trust; (4) love; (5) imitation of the Savior; (6) zeal for the salvation of souls.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

PRELECTION: SUFFERING FOR FAITH

“My sufferings are terrible, the tortures severe. Your Paternity’s charity will ensure that you pray for me, that I may die with great generosity for the ever-victorious Jesus. May

Christ long protect you, the most expert leader of his chosen and tested soldiers, as the bulwark of his Church.”

—St. John Ogilvie, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: Saint John Ogilvie, S.J. (1579–1615), abandoned his noble Calvinist family to become a Catholic and Jesuit while studying on the European continent as a boy. Returning to his native Scotland, he experienced betrayal and capture in Glasgow while serving the persecuted Catholic community there. Refusing under torture to renounce the spiritual primacy of the pope, he suffered extreme tortures before the government hanged him, but managed to write these words to the Jesuit general shortly before his death.

Like Ogilvie, we too will find the grace and courage to suffer with Jesus Christ if we identify in our imagination with the lively sentiments of his passion. In the following application of senses that Fr. De Place supplies” after “senses, we apply all of our bodily senses to the crucifixion: our sight, smell, hearing, touch, and taste. For the great Jesuit martyrs, who deeply shared Christ’s passion in their senses as they prayed these Exercises, no external threat to life or limb could destroy their faith.

As you continue contemplating the passion of Christ, reflect in your journal: What do I see, smell, taste, touch, and hear when applying my senses to the crucifixion? What thoughts or memories do these senses stir in me? What do I ask of God as I pray in this way?

FOURTH EXERCISE ON THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

Preparatory prayer.

Preludes

The same as last.

Application of the sight.

Contemplate the bloody scene of Calvary; the crowd of strangers and of the inhabitants of Jerusalem assembled through compassion, curiosity or hatred; the soldiers and Pharisees who insult the agony of the Son of God; the two malefactors crucified beside Him; the Blessed Virgin, the holy women, and the beloved disciple at the foot of the cross; and on the cross Jesus Christ, just giving the last sign, His feet and hands violently stretched, His head crowned with thorns, His eyes dim, His whole body torn, and allowing the bones to be seen through the wounds that furrow it.

Practical reflections and affections.

Application of the hearing.

Listen to the discourse of the people; the blasphemies of the soldiers; the words of the bad thief who insults Jesus Christ, and those of the good thief who acknowledges Him as God; the interior words of Mary, of the holy women, of St. John; the seven words of Jesus Christ.

Practical reflections and affections.

Application of the taste.

Taste the bitterness of the heart of Mary at the sight of her Son nailed to the cross and dying in the most cruel and ignominious tortures. Taste, above all, the bitterness of the heart of Jesus, suffering at once from His own sorrows and those of His Mother and from the rigor of His Father, who seems to have forsaken Him.

Practical reflections and affections.

Application of the smell.

Respire the perfume of the virtues of Jesus Christ dying; of His poverty, His humility, His patience, His charity.

Practical reflections and affections.

Application of the touch.

Kiss inwardly the cross and the bleeding wounds of Jesus Christ.

Practical reflections and affections.

Colloquy with Our Lord

Recite slowly the *Anima Christi*, stopping at each clause.

Pater. Ave.

[209] [Note]

[Editor: If readers wish to spend more time on the Passion during this Third Week, St. Ignatius encourages them to use fewer points

for prayer in each contemplation: only the Last Supper in the first, the washing of feet in the second, the institution of the Blessed Sacrament in the third, Christ's farewell discourse in the fourth, and so on for the rest. Intentionally providing very little material for prayer on Christ's suffering, St. Ignatius adds that retreatants may spend an additional three days in prayer after finishing the passion on the seventh day: one whole day of consideration on the first half of the passion, a second day on the other half, and a third day on the whole passion from beginning to end. On the other hand, if readers wish to spend less time on the Passion, St. Ignatius recommends abbreviating the prayers in this way: the Last Supper at midnight, the Agony in the Garden at morning, Jesus before Annas around mass time, Jesus before Caiaphas around the time of Evening Prayer, and Jesus before Pilate an hour prior to supper. In this way, without repetitions or Applications of Senses, retreatants may still do five exercises a day using for each one a distinct point or mystery of Christ's life. After finishing the whole passion in this way, retreatants may use another day to go through the entire Passion either in one exercise or several as seems best.]

PRELECTION: RULES FOR EATING

“We hurried out with two baskets full of oranges, lemons, sweet biscuits, and all sorts of other things. . . . In this way we spoke to them, not with words but with deeds; and for people in their situation who were convinced that they had been brought there to be eaten, any other form of address would have been pointless.”

—St. Peter Claver, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: Saint Peter Claver, S.J. (1580–1654), the Spanish missionary who described himself as “the slave of the slaves forever,” spent most of his life ministering to African slaves as they arrived on the docks of Cartagena in Colombia. In this letter to his superior from May 31, 1627, reprinted in the Jesuit supplement for Matins of his feast, Claver describes how he and his helpers immediately rushed onto the docks whenever a shipload of slaves arrived to share food and material comforts. Only after feeding, washing, and helping the Africans did he speak to them of baptism. Having volunteered for this mission, Claver freely abandoned all comfort to work until his death in the dark underbelly of the Transatlantic slave trade.

Saint Ignatius, who likewise valued a spirit of temperance and generosity with food, offers the following rules for eating to those making the Exercises. For St. Ignatius, imagining Jesus and the disciples sharing a meal joyfully in their poverty as we eat in silence during a retreat balances our

attitudes about food and inspires zeal for God's glory. Just as St. Peter Claver experienced hunger and poverty to identify more strongly with the African slaves on the docks, we too may grow in our desire to know and do God's will by practicing asceticism with our eating habits, eating in solidarity with Jesus and his friends who had little food.

As you read the following rules for eating, reflect in your journal: How satisfied am I with my current food habits, in light of the fact that Jesus and his disciples rarely had much to eat? Which of these rules seem most helpful for me right now in my spiritual life? Which of these rules seem most challenging for me?

[210] SOME RULES ON TEMPERANCE

[Editor: To assist one's compassion for the suffering Jesus during this Third Week and prevent us from numbing unpleasant feelings, St. Ignatius here provides some "rules with regard to eating" that invite us to a balanced attitude of "due order" toward the food we consume on retreat.]

1. Less care is required about bread than about other food, because it is less pleasing to the palate and exposes us less to temptation.

[211] 2. The use of wine requires more attention. On this point we must examine what is necessary, in order to keep to it exactly, as well as what is hurtful in order to retrench it.

[121] 3. Abstinence should be observed more particularly with regard to exquisite and rare meats, because they stimulate to concupiscence and provoke temptation. We may succeed in this in two ways—by accustoming ourselves to be contented with the most simple aliments and by restraining ourselves in the use of what is more delicate.

[123] 4. The more we retrench in nourishment (always avoiding privations injurious to health), the more easily we find the quantity suitable for us, and for this reason—on the one side, abstinence, by meriting for us the lights and consolations of grace, gives us more facility in knowing what sustenance our corporal powers require; and on the other, the weakening of the body, betrayed by the difficulty of fulfilling our spiritual exercises, teaches us by experience what is necessary to nature.

[124] 5. It is well, during our repasts, to represent to ourselves Our Lord living with His disciples and eating at the same table with them, and take Him for our model in the use of all our senses. The mind being occupied with these pious objects, it will be easier to be moderate.

[125] 6. We may also occupy ourselves with other thoughts: for example, the lives of saints, some object of piety, or some spiritual affair, so that this diversion of mind may weaken the too lively feelings of nature.

[126] 7. We must, above all, in our repasts, be on our guard against avidity, precipitation, or that effusion of the soul that is bestowed in a manner on the food. It is requisite that we

should always rule our appetite and practice temperance both in the quantity of nourishment and the manner of taking it.

[217] 8. To extirpate any bad habit of excess in eating or drinking, it would be well to determine before the repast and before the want of it is yet felt, the quantity that on reflection we judge it well to take. The portion thus determined we ought to content ourselves with, even when nature asks for more, and Satan backs the demand. To conquer both, we might even retrench something more.

[Fourth Week]

PRELECTION: REJOICING WITH JESUS

“We can indeed expect no happiness in this life, but our troubles will not follow us beyond the grave. If my life is to end in a few days’ time and I can then go to heaven, I promise you that I shall beg God to call you to himself when your own lives are ended.”

—St. Joseph Pignatelli, S.J., from the Office of Readings
for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: The second founder of the Society of Jesus, St. Joseph Pignatelli, S.J. (1737–1811), joined the Spanish Jesuits shortly before the suppression of the order and vowed to a die “a thousand times” before he would ever leave it. As the atheistic tide of the Enlightenment prevailed upon Europe’s monarchs, they arrested the Jesuits as foreign agents of the pope, confiscated their properties, and exiled them in boatloads. His hand finally forced, Pope Clement XIV suppressed the Society universally in 1773. But since the papal brief required heads of state to let bishops promulgate the suppression, several hundred Jesuits found refuge in Prussia

and especially in Russia, where the Protestant Queen Catherine the Great refused to suppress the order because she liked Jesuit schools and felt no loyalty to any pope.

Over the next four decades, this remnant of the Society cautiously rebuilt itself in what is now Lithuania, laying the groundwork for another pope to restore the Jesuits universally in 1812. Pignatelli, who kept in contact with as many Jesuits as possible and finally re-established the order in today's northern Italian city of Parma, emerged as a hero and later a canonized saint. He died in 1811, shortly before universal restoration. In the Fourth Week of the Exercises, our focus likewise shifts from suffering and death to the hope of heaven, the hope of spending eternity with the risen Lord that Pignatelli championed in the above excerpt from a 1767 letter. Once we have suffered and died with Jesus, like St. Joseph Pignatelli, S.J., we too will rejoice wholeheartedly when we find him alive again on the third day.

As you enter into the Fourth Week of the Exercises, reflect in your journal: What losses in my life am I still grieving? What gives me hope and joy in the midst of these losses? What does the resurrection of Jesus mean for me?

[OBJECT OF THE FOURTH WEEK AND WHAT IS PECULIAR TO IT]

[Editor: Fr. De Place offers these introductory comments to the Fourth Week.]

In the fourth week, the soul occupies itself entirely with the love of God and the desire of a blessed eternity, of which a pledge is given in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The following are the directions proper to this week:

1. In the first, second and third points of the meditation, you must contemplate the persons, the words and the actions, as in the preceding week.

In the fourth point, you must consider how the divinity of Jesus Christ, which was, as it were, hidden during the time of His passion, is manifested in His resurrection, and afterward declares itself by all kinds of miracles.

In the fifth point, you must remark with what promptitude, what tenderness, and what effusion of heart Jesus Christ deigns to console His faithful followers.

To meditate with fruit on each of these points, you must recall to yourself that we shall participate in the victory and happiness of the Son of God in proportion as we have partaken of His sufferings, as has already been said in the contemplation on the reign of Jesus Christ. It is for this purpose that St. Ignatius proposes to us—

(1) Jesus Christ as glorious and triumphant after His resurrection, in proportion as He had been cast down and humiliated in His death; (2) the Apostles and disciples as consoled by Our Savior, in proportion to their past trials and sufferings.

2. During this week, some change must be made in the “additions” observed during the preceding weeks. Thus: (1) As soon as you awake you must, in recalling the subject of

the meditation, endeavor to unite yourself to the joy of Our Savior after His resurrection with His disciples. (2) You must occupy yourself with all the thoughts that can excite you to spiritual joy, such as celestial glory. (3) No longer deprive yourself of light or of the sight of heaven but profit by whatever the season offers of agreeable, that we may rejoice with our Creator and Savior: in spring, with the appearance of verdure, the flowers, and the fresh rich fields; in winter, with the warmth of the sun or the fire; in a word, with the innocent pleasures of nature. Abstain also from corporal mortifications and be satisfied with temperance in your repasts, unless there should be some fast or abstinence prescribed by the Church, of which the precepts must always be observed, unless some legitimate reason should dispense with them.

PRELECTION: JESUS APPEARS TO HIS MOTHER

“Jesus my love, my sonne, my God, Behold thy mother washt in tears: Thy bloody woundes be made a rod, to chasten these my latter yeares.”

—St. Robert Southwell, S.J., “The virgin Mary to Christ on the Cross,” 1595

Editor: The Elizabethan poet, sacred composer, and clandestine missionary St. Robert Southwell, S.J. (1561–1595), smuggled Catholic sentiments to persecuted Catholics in Reformation England by hiding them in sheaves of poetry and song verses. Hanged to death at Tyburn after years of quiet sacramental ministry, Southwell exemplified one

notable mark of Catholics and Jesuits during the Counter-Reformation: a deep and fierce Marian piety. In this excerpt from one of his poems, this brave priest imagines Mary speaking to her son on the cross, pouring out her tears for the crucified one in an image that resonated strongly with English Catholics deprived of life and liberty for staying faithful to Rome.

In the Marian piety of the Exercises, so nourishing to Southwell and innumerable other Jesuit martyrs, the first contemplation on the resurrection of Jesus stands out in particular. Saint Ignatius politely but forcefully points out in no. 299 that Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, must have appeared first to comfort his tearful mother before appearing to anyone else, and he invites us to imagine their reunion. In the last line of the Gospel of John, Scripture itself points out that Jesus said and did far more than the sacred authors wrote down, and it refers to other resurrection appearances (including that to St. Peter) without narrating them. In his only points not drawn from the Gospels, St. Ignatius felt certain that Jesus appeared first to Mary entirely for her own sake, in a gratuitous moment so intimate and personal that Scripture itself dares not record it as part of public revelation. Saint Ignatius, raised by a nurse after his own mother died after childbirth, implies that if we do not understand why God's only-begotten Son would appear first to his mother, then we do not understand anything at all of divine love.

As you begin the Fourth Week by praying over the first contemplation on the Resurrection, reflect in your journal: How do I imagine Mary's face, expression, and actions

when the risen Jesus appears to her in her grief? How do I imagine the risen Jesus acting toward her? What do I see, hear, taste, smell, and touch in this scene?

[218] FIRST CONTEMPLATION ON THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

[The Apparition of Christ Our Lord to Our Lady, using points in no. 299.]

[Editor: Father De Place breaks up the first contemplation of the Fourth Week into the following two exercises. Readers may utilize these glossed exercises, or, if they feel confident following the Ignatian method without expanded directions, may simply follow the numbered texts below (219–225) in one prayer hour, skipping the unnumbered material from De Place and using the comments that St. Ignatius provides in no. 299.]

Preparatory prayer.

[219] First prelude.

When Our Lord had breathed His last sigh, His body, taken down from the cross, was placed in the sepulcher: His soul descended into Limbus to deliver the souls of the just; then returned to the sepulcher the third day and withdrew from it His body, which was then united to it never more to be separated. The risen Savior appeared, first, to His blessed Mother, then to the holy women, and at different times to the disciples and Apostles.

[220] Second prelude.

Represent to yourself the sepulcher from which Jesus Christ arose, and some of the places that witnessed His apparitions—for example, the road to Emmaus.

[221] Third prelude.

Beg the grace to participate in the joy of Jesus Christ and of His blessed Mother.

[222] [The First, Second, and Third Points will be the usual ones as presented in the Last Supper contemplation]

First Point

The glory of Jesus Christ in His Resurrection

Consider the glory of the Savior in His resurrection and how faithfully His Father rewards all the sacrifices of His suffering life.

1. In His passion, Jesus Christ had made the sacrifice of His body. We have seen this sacred body scourged and on the cross, only offering to the eye one bleeding wound, and scarce allowing the features of the Son of man to be recognized: “From the sole of the foot unto the top of the head there is no soundness therein” (*Is.* 1:6); “There is no beauty in Him, nor comeliness; and we have seen Him, and there was no sightliness” (*Is.* 53:2). In the resurrection, the body of Jesus Christ takes a new life—an immortal life. He is raised in a manner to the nature of spirits; like them, He is endowed with agility and impassibility. In the place of that

beauty destroyed by His executioners, He is clothed with a splendor surpassing that of the sun. This glory of the body of Jesus Christ is promised to our body also, but on the condition that, after the example of Jesus Christ, we offer up ourselves by penance: "Yet so if we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him" (*Rom.* 8:17). Let us courageously embrace Christian mortification, of which the following are the three principal degrees: (1) to suffer patiently all the trials that are independent of our will—for example, sickness, infirmities, the inclemencies of the seasons and so on; (2) not to allow our senses any criminal enjoyment; (3) to resist our senses, whether by imposing voluntary afflictions on them or by refusing them allowable enjoyments.

2. In His passion, Jesus Christ had made the sacrifice of His honor and glory. Before the tribunals and on Calvary we have seen Him, according to the oracle of the prophets, treated as the lowest of men, with the reproach of mankind: "The most abject of men" (*Is.* 53:3); "The reproach of men" (*Ps.* 21:7). [*Ps* 22:7 in newer Bible numbering.] Classed with the wicked: "And was reputed with the wicked" (*Is.* 53:12). Loaded with ignominy; trodden underfoot like a worm of the earth, "A worm and no man" (*Ps.* 21:7). [*Ps* 22:7 in newer Bible numbering.] Now, in the resurrection, all is repaired: Jerusalem is filled with the news of His triumph; the judges who condemned Him are confounded; the soldiers, who insulted Him as a seducer and a madman, are the first witnesses of His glory; His disciples and Apostles, who had abandoned Him everywhere, proclaim His resurrection; the angels and the holy souls He has delivered from Limbus bless Him as

the Conqueror of death and hell: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God in Thy blood, and hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests. The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power and divinity" (*Apoc.* 5:9–12). Conceive a holy contempt for the opinion and esteem of men; place your honor in the hands of God and know how to make the sacrifice of it to Him when He requires it, being assured that He will faithfully return it to you a hundredfold: "I also suffer; but I am not ashamed. For I know whom I have believed, and I am certain that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 *Tim.* 1:12).

3. In His passion, Jesus Christ had made the sacrifice of His interior consolations. His soul was steeped in bitterness: in the Garden of Olives we have heard Him cry out, "My soul is sorrowful even unto death" (*Matt.* 26:38); and on the cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (*Mark* 15:34). Now the time of desolation is passed never to return; His soul enters into possession of a happiness without end; it is inundated with the delights of Paradise, with all the joys of the divinity that is united to Him. Animate your hope by your faith. Recall to yourself that you are called to share this felicity of the Son of God one day in heaven. And when sacrifices alarm you or trials depress you, say to yourself with the Apostle, "For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation worketh for us above measure an eternal weight of glory" (2 *Cor.* 4:17).

Second Point

The apparitions of Jesus Christ after His resurrection

Consider to whom Jesus Christ appeared, how He appeared and why He appeared.

1. *To whom Jesus Christ appeared.* He appeared (1) according to the general opinion, to His blessed Mother—not only on account of the incomparable dignity of Mary but above all because no one had participated so much in His sorrows and in the opprobrium of His passion. So Jesus Christ teaches you that you will only participate in His consolations in proportion to your constancy in suffering after His example and for His love.

(2) He appeared next, not to the Apostles, but to Magdalen and the holy women. And why to these holy women? To reward their simplicity and fervor and to teach you that it is to simple and fervent souls that He is pleased to communicate Himself: “His communication is with the simple” (*Prov.* 3:32).

(3) Lastly, He appears to the Apostles; but it is after Peter and John have been to the sepulcher and have merited the grace of seeing Our Saviour by the zeal of their search. Learn from this that to find Jesus Christ we must seek Him long by prayer and desire. Happy are they who know how to draw Jesus Christ to them! Happy are they who know how to retain Jesus Christ with them! “It is a great art to know how to converse with Jesus, and to know how to retain Jesus is a great prudence” (*Imit. of Christ*, bk. 2 ch. 8).

2. *How Jesus appeared.* All the apparitions of the Saviour brought joy and consolation to their souls. He appeared to Mary; who can express with what a torrent of spiritual

delight He inundated her heart? He appeared to Magdalen, saying to her, “Mary”; and this word alone, making Him known, transports and ravishes the soul of Magdalen. He appeared to the Apostles, saying to them, “Peace be with you; and He said to them again, Peace be with you” (*John* 20:19, 21). And the sight of Him and these words filled all their hearts with joy: “The disciples therefore were glad when they saw the Lord” (*John* 20:20).

Let us learn to recognize by these signs the presence of Jesus Christ and the characteristics that distinguished the action of His spirit in our souls from the action of the evil spirit. The one announces himself by obscurity, trouble, depression and agitation; the other, on the contrary, announces Himself by light, peace, interior consolation. Above all, let us know how to profit by the visits of Jesus Christ; and let us not forget that to lose His sensible grace and the consolation of His presence, it suffices only to bestow too much of our thoughts on exterior things: “You may easily banish Jesus and lose His grace if you give yourself too much to exterior things” (*Imit. of Christ*, 2.8).

3. *Why Jesus Christ appeared.* For three reasons, which the Gospel indicates to us—to strengthen the still hesitating faith of the Apostles; to prepare them for an approaching and long separation; to animate them to the sacrifices He is going to ask of them. The interior visits with which Jesus Christ favors souls are for the following purposes. If He honors us with lights and consolations, it is always to impress a greater liveliness on our faith—to prepare us for interior

desolation and trials—to animate us for the sacrifices He will soon ask of us in the practice of virtue.

Colloquies

1. With the holy Virgin. Congratulate her on her happiness and join in her joy.

Regina coeli.

2. With Our Lord Jesus Christ. Adore Him in the glory of His resurrection and consecrate yourself anew to Him as to your Savior and your King.

Prayer—Suscipe, [no. 234].

SECOND EXERCISE ON THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

Preparatory prayer.

Preludes.

The same as last.

First Point

Contemplate the persons

Represent to yourself Jesus Christ rising gloriously from the tomb; the angel seated on the stone of the sepulcher, of whom it is said in the Gospel, “His countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow” (*Matt.* 28:3); the guard terrified and taking to flight; the holy women, then the Apostles Peter and John, coming to the sepulcher; Jesus

Christ appearing to the holy women; the disciples refusing to believe; Jesus Christ appearing to them several times.

Second Point

Listen to the words

Listen to the angel saying to the holy women: "You seek Jesus of Nazareth; He is not here; He is risen, as He foretold," and so on. To Jesus Christ, appearing to His disciples and addressing words of consolation to them: "Peace be to you. It is I; fear not," and so on; then explaining to them the mysteries of His passion and of the redemption of men: "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise again . . . Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed . . . Receive ye the Holy Ghost . . . All power has been given Me in heaven and on earth . . . Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven . . . Go, teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost" (*Matt.* 28; *Luke* 24).

Third Point

Consider the actions

Jesus Christ, after having delivered the souls of the just from Limbus, rises from the tomb through the massive stone that closes up the entrance. The earth trembles. An angel dazzling with light descends from heaven and seats himself on the stone of the sepulcher after having overturned it; the terrified guards run to tell the priests, who bribe them to say that the disciples have carried off the body of their Master.

The holy women arrive at the sepulcher and are seized with terror at the sight of the angel; the celestial spirit reassures them. The Saviour appears to them as well as to Peter; soon He shows Himself to His Apostles to console them, instruct them, strengthen them: He bestows upon them His peace.

[223] Fourth Point

Consider how the divinity of Jesus Christ, which was, so to say, hidden during the time of His passion, manifests itself in His resurrection and is declared by all kinds of miracles.

[224] Fifth Point

Consider with what loving tenderness, what effusion of heart, Jesus Christ deigns to console His Apostles—like a friend who, knowing the affliction of a friend tenderly loved, hastens to console him. Finish by practical reflections, and say to yourself, “If I am now raised to grace, I must, like Jesus Christ, make my resurrection shine for the glory of God and the edification of my brethren. Jesus Christ risen dies no more; I must, then, die no more to grace by sin. Jesus Christ risen made only short apparitions of Himself; I must, then, only appear in the world through necessity, through charity, through courtesy,” and so on.

[225] Colloquies

[Ignatius asks retreatants to close with a colloquy or colloquies, as seems appropriate, and say the Our Father at the end. Father De Place suggests the following colloquies.]

1. With the holy Virgin. Congratulate her on her happiness and participate in her joy.

Regina coeli.

2. With Our Lord Jesus Christ. Adore Him in the glory of His resurrection and renew your consecration to Him as your Saviour and your King.

Prayer—Suscipe, [no. 234]. Pater. Ave.

[Editor: To assist self-guided prayer in this Fourth Week, Fr. De Place provides the following meditations in place of the points in nos. 300–12 from the Second Apparition to the Ascension. Readers wishing to follow the saint's text more literally may again omit these materials and use the mysteries Ignatius gives in nos. 300–12 for prayer hours.]

EXERCISE ON THE BLESSED LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST IN HEAVEN

Preparatory prayer.

First prelude.

Represent to yourself Our Lord seated on His throne at the right hand of His Father; beside Him the Blessed Virgin; around the throne the angels and the elect.

Second prelude.

Beg for an ardent desire of heaven, and the courage to suffer on earth with Jesus Christ, that you may one day reign with Him in eternity.

First Point

Jesus Christ in Heaven suffers no more

Consider that Our Lord in heaven is free from all the trials and pains that He experienced in His mortal life. His body, since His resurrection, is withdrawn from the empire of weakness and death. His soul, inundated with the delights of the divinity united to Him, is henceforward a stranger to sadness and desolation.

In heaven, the Christian, like his Divine Head, will be forever freed from all bodily pains and from all afflictions of the soul.

1. *In heaven there are no more infirmities.* The body, clothed with the glory of Jesus Christ, will be raised, like that of the Savior, to a state of impassibility: "Who will reform the body of our lowness, made like to the body of His glory" (*Phil.* 3:21). In this abode of perfect beatitude the blessed no longer know what it is to suffer and die: "And death shall be no more" (*Apoc.* 21:4).

2. *In heaven there is no more grief or sorrow.* "Nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more" (*Apoc.* 21:4). Here below, what is life but one long unceasing affliction? In heaven, all tears are dried: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (*Apoc.* 7:17). They remember past sorrows, but this memory is for the elect a part of their beatitude. Each one of them, like the prophet, applauds his past trials. Each one of them says, Happy tribulations, which are now repaid by an immense weight of glory: "We have rejoiced

for the days in which Thou hast humbled us; for the years in which we have seen evils" (*Ps.* 89:15). [*Ps* 90:15 in newer Bible numbering.]

3. *In heaven there are no more separations.* Here below, to poison the sweets of friendship, this thought alone suffices: "How long will the society of these friends, of these relatives so tenderly loved, continue?" But once in the bosom of God, the elect meet to part no more. What joy for a Christian family to meet again, after the long and sad separation of the grave! What joy to be able to say with confidence, "We are again united, and it is for eternity!"

4. *In heaven there are no more temptations.* Here on earth is for the Christian a struggle of every day and every moment; and in this struggle a continual danger of losing the grace of God, his soul, and eternity. Hence the groans of the saints, who never cease crying out with the prophet, "Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged" (*Ps.* 119:5) [*Ps* 120:5 in newer Bible numbering]; or with the Apostle, "Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (*Rom.* 7:24). The lament of the exile is never heard in this country. There is no longer anything to fear from the world, which has no more illusions; nor from hell, which is conquered; nor from our own hearts, which only live for Divine love. There everything says, as did formerly holy King David, "He hath delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from falling. I will please the Lord in the land of the living" (*Ps.* 114:8-9). [*Ps* 114:8-9 in newer Bible numbering.]

5. *In heaven, above all, there is no more sin.* Recall what you have meditated on the malice of sin. It is the supreme evil, the one only evil of time and eternity; the sole evil of the creature, the great evil done against God. Banished into hell, sin cannot penetrate into the kingdom of charity. Oh, the happiness of that day, when, entering into heaven, the elect shall say, My God is now mine, and I am His! “My beloved to me and I to Him” (*Cant.* 2:16). I am united to Him forever, and sin can never separate me from Him: “I held Him, and will not let Him go” (*Cant.* 3:4).

Second Point

Jesus Christ in Heaven has no longer anything to desire

What Our Lord asked of His Father is accomplished: “And now glorify Thou Me, O Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with Thee” (*John* 17:5). The holy humanity of Our Saviour is glorified and His glory is this blessed possession of God, in which His soul loses itself in the plenitude of all good.

To possess God and in God to possess all good—such is also the bliss that awaits us in heaven; a sovereign and universal beatitude, which will be the full satisfaction of the entire man.

1. *Beatitude of the senses.* The body raised up at the last day and united to the soul, whose servant it was, will partake of its felicity. The ear will not weary of hearing the sacred songs of the elect; the eye will never tire in contemplating the light of Paradise, the splendor of the glorified saints, the

sweet majesty of Mary on her throne, the luster of the adorable humanity of Jesus Christ—all the senses will be inebriated with these pure and spiritual pleasures, which appear to belong only to the celestial intelligences: “They shall be inebriated with the plenty of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure” (*Ps.* 35:9). [*Ps* 36:9 in newer Bible numbering.]

2. *Beatitude of memory.* With what joy will the saints recall the graces they have received from God, the virtues they practiced on earth! How will a martyr congratulate himself on his sufferings, an apostle on his labors, a confessor on his sacrifices! How each one of the elect will return thanks to God for His mercies! With what an effusion of gratitude and happiness will they say to themselves, “On such a day God inspired me to serve Him alone; and it is this inspiration that has led me to heaven: on such a day God preserved me from this temptation, withdrew me from this occasion or habit of sin! What care His providence took for my salvation! And what had I done to merit that He should save me in preference to so many who are lost forever?”

3. *Beatitude of the intellect.* Closely united to God, the intelligence of the elect sees all truth in Him as in a mirror. Suppose the rudest man in the world, the most ignorant of science, enters heaven; that moment his soul is inundated with lights so vivid that before them the lights of the greatest geniuses are but darkness: it sees God without veil and face to face; and in God sees all things—the wonderful laws that govern the world; the mysteries of providence; the secrets

of the redemption of men and of the predestination of the elect; the attributes of the Divine nature—wisdom, power, goodness, immensity, eternity; the Three Persons of the Trinity, with their relations and ineffable operation. The soul sees God, and this sight, in a manner, transforms it into God Himself, according to the words of St. John: “We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like to Him; because we shall see Him as He is” (*1 John* 3:2).

4. *Beatitude of the will.* This beatitude will be to love and possess God. To love God is the true object of our heart. But here below how weak is this love, how it is mingled with lowness and imperfections, how subject it is to change and inconstancy! In heaven, scarcely does God show Himself to the soul before He subjugates it and ravishes it forever—sovereign love that rules all the affections; love so pure that the blessed forget themselves to be lost in God; love so ardent and so strong that it absorbs and exhausts all the power of loving; love so ecstatic that the soul goes out of itself and passes entirely into God to be consummated in unity with Him. It is the expression of Our Lord: “The glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given to them, that they may be one, as We also are one” (*John* 17:22).

“O God! When shall it be given to me to see the glory of Thy kingdom? When will the day arrive that Thou shalt be all in all to me? When shall I be with Thee in the mansions which Thou hast eternally prepared for Thy beloved?” (*Imit. of Christ*, 3.48).

Third Point

Jesus Christ in Heaven has no change to dread

The reign of Jesus Christ in heaven is safe from all vicissitudes: it will have no end. He will reign eternally at the right hand of His Father, always triumphant, always sovereign, always the object of love to the saints and angels, as of the sweetest approbation of His Father: *Cujus regni non erit finis*, "Of whose kingdom there shall be no end."

The beatitude of the saints is immutable, like that of the Son of God. It is the inseparable condition of worldly goods to be accompanied by fear or distaste, sometimes by both at once: fear, because each moment they may escape; distaste, because we cannot long enjoy them without recognizing and feeling their vanity. It is not so with the goods of eternity. These are unchangeable and therefore have no end or diminution. Add ages to ages; multiply them equal to the sand of the ocean or the stars of heaven; exhaust all the numbers, if you can, beyond what the human intelligence can conceive, and for the elect there will be still the same eternity of happiness. They are immutable, and this immutability excludes weariness and disgust. The life of an elect soul is one succession, without end, of desires ever arising and ever satisfied, but desires without trouble, satiety or lassitude. The elect will always see God, love God, possess God and always will wish to see Him, love Him and possess Him still more. This beatitude is the end destined for all; God has given us time only in order to merit it, being and life only to possess it. Reflect seriously on this great truth, and ask yourself these three questions at the foot of the crucifix.

What have I done hitherto for heaven? What ought I to do for heaven? What shall I do henceforward for heaven?

Colloquies with the Blessed Virgin and Our Lord glorified in heaven.

Anima Christi. Pater. Ave.

[Notes]

[I.] [226] [Editor: Ignatius suggests that in following the mysteries from the resurrection to the ascension in nos. 299-312, retreatants follow the same form and method as the Third Week, adapting preludes and following the Additional Directions in no. 229.]

[II.] [227] [Editor: Ignatius here recommends that thirty-day retreatants do four rather than five prayer hours a day during the Fourth Week: the first on rising, the second about mass or lunch time, the third a repetition about the time of vespers, and the fourth an application of senses before supper, paying special attention in this last to where the soul was more deeply moved to spiritual relish.]

[III.] [228] [Editor: Ignatius here encourages the retreatant to use more or fewer prayer points, as helpful, than what he provides in nos. 299-312, deciding in advance on the number.]

[IV.] [229] [For the Fourth Week, Ignatius modifies the second, sixth, seventh, and tenth additional recommendations (nos. 073-081) as follows. The second will be, upon waking each day, to strive to share Christ's great joy and happiness as I turn my thoughts to the first contemplation. The sixth will be to reflect on

heavenly glory and other causes of spiritual pleasure, happiness, and joy. The seventh will be, insofar as it helps me rejoice in my Creator and Redeemer, to enjoy the morning sunlight and pleasures of the season, whether a cool summer breeze or warm winter sun and fire. The tenth, instead of penance, will be to practice temperance and moderation in all things except days of fasting and abstinence.]

PRELECTION: THE ‘CONTEMPLATIO’

“The Contemplation on Love seems to be tightly woven into the fabric of the complete Exercises, especially when it leads to the discovery of God in all things through the detachment so much insisted on by St. Ignatius, and through that distance from things that is won only on the cross of Christ.”

—Fr. Karl Rahner, S.J., *Spiritual Exercises*, translated Fr. Kenneth Baker, S.J., St. Augustine Press, p. 273

Editor: Father Karl Rahner, S.J. (1904–1984), the great Transcendental Thomist theologian who influenced the Second Vatican Council so deeply, wrote a great deal on spirituality in his early academic career. In this book of conferences preached to Jesuit seminarians on their annual eight-day retreat in his native Germany, Rahner offers a commentary on various elements of the Exercises. As he notes in this quote about the Contemplation on Love, the Exercises begin and end in love, proceeding from the First Principle and Foundation (no. 23) to the *Contemplatio* (no. 230) in a way that brings retreatants full circle to reflect on their spiritual progress as they seek the unitive way.

Here Fr. Rahner points out that this concluding exercise invites retreatants to accept and internalize the final grace of the Exercises by surrendering fully to God, offering everything back to him out of grateful love for the divine love we have received in our lives. This theme of God's love and the grateful response that it calls out of us permeates the entirety of the Exercises, not just the beginning or end. In the great *Suscipe* prayer employed here, St. Ignatius invites us to walk away from the retreat not with deeper intellectual insights, but with our hands ready to act in conformity with our head and heart directed freely toward God's will.

As you prepare to pray the Contemplation on Love, reflect in your journal: Where have I given and received love in my life? What gifts has the Creator given me? How have I used God's gifts in response to his love?

[230] EXERCISE ON THE LOVE OF GOD

[Note] [Editor: Before offering this exercise, St. Ignatius offers two remarks for our reflection.]

First remark. True love consists in fruits and effects, not in words: "My little children," says the beloved disciple, "let us not love in word, nor in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18).

[231] *Second remark.* The effect of true love is the reciprocal communication of all good things between the persons who love each other; whence it follows that charity cannot exist

without sacrifice. Do not, then, content yourself with tender and affectionate sentiments; “For,” says St. Gregory, “the proof of love is in the works: where love exists, it works great things, but when it ceases to act, it ceases to exist.”

Preparatory prayer.

[The usual prayer.]

[232] First prelude.

Place yourself in spirit in the presence of God, and figure to yourself that you are before His throne in the midst of saints and angels, who intercede for you with the Lord.

[233] Second prelude.

Ask of God the grace to comprehend the greatness of His benefits and to consecrate yourself without reserve to His love and service.

[234] First Point

Recall to yourself the benefits of God. These benefits are of three principal orders: *benefits of creation, benefits of redemption, particular benefits*. The first order comprises all the natural gifts—the soul with its powers, the body with its senses, life with the good things that accompany it. The second comprises all the supernatural graces, the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, the Sacraments, and so on. In the third are all the graces that we receive every day and every hour from Divine Providence.

Consider attentively these three orders of the Divine benefits, and in each one meditate on these three circumstances in which St. Ignatius shows us the characters of true charity. In each you will find:

1. A love that acts and manifests itself by works. What is more active than the charity of God in the creation, preservation and redemption of man?
2. A love that gives, that lavishes its goods. Has God anything of which He has not given part to man? Has He not given Himself on the cross for an example and in the Eucharist, His body, His blood, His divinity, His life and all His being?
3. A love never satisfied with what it has given and that would always give more. Is not this the love of God toward us? Is it not true that His greatest gifts have not been able to exhaust the prodigality of His heart? Is it not true that there is in Him a desire to do us good that will never be satisfied until He has given Himself to us entirely and forever in heaven?

After having meditated on these characters of Divine charity, return to yourself and ask yourself what gratitude and justice require in return for such marvelous generosity. You have nothing of yourself: you hold all from God; what else, then, can you do but offer Him all that you have and all that you are? Say to Him, then, with all the affection of your heart:

Suscipe, Domine. [Take, Lord, and Receive]: “Take, O Lord, and receive my entire liberty, my memory, my understanding and my whole will. All that I am, all that I have, Thou hast given me, and I give it back again to Thee, to be disposed of according to Thy good pleasure. Give me only Thy love and Thy grace: with these I am rich enough.”

[235] *Second Point*

Consider that God, your Benefactor, is present in all creatures and in yourself. If you look at every step of the visible creation, in all you will meet God. He is in the elements, He gives them existence; in plants, He gives them life; in animals, He gives them sensation. He is in you; and collecting all these degrees of being scattered through the rest of His creation, He unites them in you, and adds to them intelligence. And how is this great God in you? In the most noble, the most excellent manner. He is in you as in His temple, as in a sanctuary where He sees His own image, where He finds an intelligence capable of knowing and loving Him. Thus your Benefactor is always with you; He is more intimately united to you than your soul is to your body. You ought, then—and this is the second degree of love—you ought as much as possible not to lose sight of Him. You ought to think and act in His presence, to keep yourself before Him like a child before a tenderly loved father, studying the slightest sign of His will and wish. Finish this second point by a renewed offering of yourself, and one, if possible, still more affectionate and unreserved.

[236] Third Point

Consider not only that God your benefactor is present but also that He acts continually in all His creatures. And for whom is this continual action, this work of God in nature? For you. Thus, He lights you by the light of day; He nourishes you with the productions of the earth; in a word, He serves you by each one of the creatures that you use; so that it is true to say that at every moment the bounty, the wisdom and the power of God are at your service and are exercised in the world for your wants or pleasures. This conduct of God toward man should be the model of your conduct toward God. You see that the presence of God in His creatures is never idle; it acts incessantly, it preserves, it governs. Beware, then, of stopping at a sterile contemplation of God present in yourself. Add action to contemplation; to the sight of the Divine presence add the faithful accomplishment of the Divine will. Meditate well on the two characters of the action of God in the world so as to reproduce them as much as possible in your own deeds. What is more active than God and at the same time what more calm and tranquil? He is incessantly occupied with the care of His creatures; and yet He is never distracted from the interior contemplation of His essence and of His attributes. Learn in the exercise of the presence of God, to unite movement and repose, work and recollection. Think always of God, but in such a manner that you do not cease to act; act, but in such a manner that you do not cease to think of God. And to arrive at this high degree of perfection, endeavor to seek only one end even in the diversity of your occupations; that is, the good pleasure

and holy will of God. End by offering yourself as in the preceding points.

[237] *Fourth Point*

Recall what you meditated on the first point, that is, that there is in God an ardent desire and, as it were, a need to communicate all His perfections to you, as much as the infinite can be communicated to the finite. Consider that you find the weak and rude image of these perfections in created things. All that there is good and beautiful in creatures, what is it but an emanation of the Divinity? The power, wisdom, goodness of men, from whence do they come if not from God, as the rays come from the sun and the stream from the fountain?

From this consideration arises a double consequence, which is the fourth and last degree of the love of God: detachment from creatures and detachment from ourselves.

1. *Detachment from creatures*; because they have only very limited perfections, and those lent to them; while God possesses all perfection and in an infinite degree.

2. *Detachment from ourselves*; because all our being and all our happiness depend, not on us, but on God, as the light of the ray depends on the sun, the water of the stream on the fountain. According to the words of Our Lord, to find ourselves is to lose ourselves, because in us and of ourselves there is only nothingness: "He that loveth his life shall lose it" (*John* 12:25); and, on the contrary, to hate ourselves, leave ourselves, lose ourselves is to find ourselves, because then we

find ourselves in God, who alone is our life, our happiness, and our being: “He that hateth his life shall keep it unto life eternal” (*Ibid.*).

From this double detachment springs true liberty of spirit, which consists in no longer being bound either to creatures or to ourselves, and in reposing perfectly and solely on the love of God. In this state, the soul is absolutely indifferent to all that is not God. For if there is only one thought—to please God in all its actions; only one desire—soon to quit this earth, in order fully to possess God in heaven.

Finish as in the preceding points.

Sum up, in order to profit better by them, the four degrees of the love of God, as they are proposed to us by St. Ignatius.

1. A God from whom I hold all; I ought, then, to render Him all. Hence entire oblation of myself.
2. A God who is present in every creature and in myself; I ought, then, to live in God by a constant and happy remembrance of His presence.
3. A God who acts in every creature and for my service, but without losing anything of His infinite repose; I ought, then, to act in God and for His service without ever losing sight of His presence.
4. A God who wishes to communicate all His perfections to me and who beforehand shows me the image of them in a faint degree in His creatures; I ought, then, to leave both creatures and myself, in order to attach myself only to God,

in whom I find, as in their source, and in an infinite degree, all perfections.

Colloquy according to the accustomed method.

Suscipe or Pater. Ave.

[Editor: The Spiritual Exercises formally conclude here, but St. Ignatius now goes on to provide supplemental prayer matter for directors to give exercitants during or after retreat as helpful. Self-guided readers may choose to continue ahead, using the following methods and materials, sometimes referenced earlier in the book, for ongoing prayer and reflection to deepen their graces (mystagogy) if they have not already done so.]

PRELECTION: THREE WAYS OF PRAYING

“But after we have adored, the heart must be open to the other sentiments; for you well know that we are taught a diversity of forms of adoration in the Gospels; and we express them sometimes by profound acts of bodily reverence, sometimes by silence of the mind. From time to time, we also link with this type of adoration, tears, groans, and sighs; or words, expressions of interior feelings, prayers accompany the same.”

—St. Joseph Mary Rubio, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: Known as the Apostle of Madrid, St. Joseph Mary Rubio, S.J. (1864–1929), acquired fame as a spiritual director and father of the poor who organized apostolic teams of laypeople in his ministry of itinerant preaching. In this excerpt from the second reading of Matins in the Jesuit supplement for his feast day, taken from his collected writings, St. Joseph Mary speaks with joyful freedom of the various ways we adore God in the Blessed Sacrament. Exhibiting the spirit of Ignatian flexibility in prayer, this saint reminds us here that prayer remains an embodied act that we express in all sorts of ways.

To be helpful between prayer periods and at other times, St. Ignatius now provides three additional ways of praying. He suggests the first way for newcomers; the second and third ways seem more helpful between formal contemplations and as a regular prayer tool in ordinary life. For the sake of a self-guided retreat, or self-praying with the Exercises for devotion, readers may find it fruitful to adopt these three ways as daily practices to form contemplative habits. As with all of his exercises, St. Ignatius offers these Three Manners of Praying to help retreatants go deeper into silence, opening the whole person to God.

As you experiment with the following three ways of praying, reflect in your journal: What do I find helpful about these ways? What do I find challenging or difficult about them? What do I notice about my internal response as I pray with each of these methods?

[238] OF DIVERSE MANNERS OF PRAYING

First Manner

This is less a prayer than a spiritual exercise, which assists the soul and renders its prayer more agreeable to God. It consists in reflecting on the commandments of God, the capital sins, the three powers of the soul, the five senses of the body, as follows:

[On the Ten Commandments]

[239] [Additional Direction] 1. Before beginning, think a few minutes of what you are about to do.

[240] [Prayer] Ask of God for the grace to know the sins you have committed against His commandments and to accomplish the obligations of His law with more fidelity henceforth.

[241] [Manner] Thinking over, one after another, the commandments of God, see how you have fulfilled or violated them. Ask pardon for the sins you can recall, and say the *Pater*. It is sufficient to dwell the length of three *Paters* on each precept; but this space of time must be abridged or prolonged according as the faults are few or numerous on each precept.

[Notes]

[242] [I.] After having thus run through all the commandments, humble yourself, accuse yourself; ask for grace to observe them better for the future;

[243] [II.] and end by a colloquy addressed to God, suitable to the state and the dispositions in which you find yourself.

[244] [On the Capital Sins]

[Manner] If you wish to take for your subject the capital sins, the three powers of the soul, the five senses, and so on, you have only to change the matter of the examination; the rest will be the same as for the commandments.

[245] [Note] *[Editor: To better understand our vices or bad habits that fall into the category of the Seven Capital Sins, St. Ignatius urges us to reflect on their contrary seven virtues. So to better avoid our sins of gluttony, for example, we will here spend some prayer periods on our retreat asking God for the virtue of temperance. The Seven Capital (Deadly) Sins are pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath and sloth. The Seven Lively Virtues are the four Cardinal Virtues of prudence, justice, temperance, and courage combined with the three Theological Virtues of faith, hope, and love.]*

PRELECTION: POWERS OF THE SOUL

“Powers of the soul: the capacities of a living being to act according to the patterns typical of its nature.”

—Fr. Joseph W. Koterski, S.J., *An Introduction to Medieval Philosophy: Basic Concepts*, p. 213

Editor: In the Exercises, St. Ignatius uses terms from scholastic philosophy that he presumes readers will know. The

memory, understanding, and will mentioned in his *Suscipe* prayer and other places comprise the three “powers of the soul” familiar to medieval philosophers like St. Thomas Aquinas. Father Joseph Koterski, S.J. (1953–present), a professor of philosophy at Fordham University who edits the journal *Philosophical Quarterly*, defines “powers of the soul” in this excerpt from his medieval philosophy textbook, describing them as our abilities to remember/retain (memory) what we have experienced and can come to know, to choose with delight (will) what we perceive as good while avoiding with disgust what we perceive as evil, and to truly know God (understanding) with what St. Ignatius would call a “felt knowledge.”

As you pray this exercise on the powers of the soul, reflect in your journal: Where do I find God in my power of memory? Where do I encounter him in my understanding? Where do I find my will and God’s will united most strongly in my life?

[246] [On the Three Powers of the Soul]

[Manner] [Editor: To pray over the three powers of the soul of memory, understanding, and will, St. Ignatius says to simply use the same manner, measure of time, and additional direction from no. 239 that we used with the commandments. That includes beginning with a preparatory prayer and ending with a colloquy.]

[247] [On the Five Senses of the Body]

[Manner] [Editor: To do this first manner of prayer over the five bodily senses of touch, sight, taste, smell, and sound, St. Ignatius says to simply apply the same manner of praying that he explains above for the commandments and three powers of the soul.]

[248] [Note] Let us observe that the Christian who wishes to imitate Our Lord Jesus Christ in the use of his senses must ask the grace of God the Father to enable him to do so, and, glancing at each of his senses, examine how far they approach or depart from his Divine Model. Before passing from one sense to another, recite a Pater.

If it is proposed to imitate the Blessed Virgin, we must ask her to obtain this grace from her divine Son and after the examination of each sense recite an Ave.

PRELECTION: THE OUR FATHER

“From where do we learn the correct manner of hope and entreaty? From the Lord’s Prayer, which Christ Himself our Lord and Teacher, handed down and prescribed by His own sacred mouth.”

—St. Peter Canisius, S.J., “A Small Catechism for Catholics,” translated Ryan Grant

Editor: Saint Peter Canisius, S.J. (1521–1597), a Dutch priest and Doctor of the Church, proved one of the brightest early recruits to the Society of Jesus when he left the world to follow his mentor St. Peter Faber. The author of multiple

catechisms that focus particularly on teachings disputed by Protestants while skirting over uncontroversial issues, Canisius became so successful as a theologian at keeping Catholics from leaving the Church that Germans referred to the catechism as “the Canisius” for centuries—well into the childhood of Pope Benedict XVI.

In this brief excerpt from his *Small Catechism*, St. Peter Canisius refers to the Our Father (*Pater Noster*) as a school of prayer that rewards concentrated meditation. Here he breathes the spirit of the Exercises, where St. Ignatius of Loyola’s three ways of prayer include the second way that focuses on using a *lectio divina* style of meditation with traditional written prayers. As the Lord’s Prayer, the Our Father represents the oldest and most important written prayer in Christianity, and St. Ignatius accordingly recommends spending one or more days of retreat simply praying in this way over it.

As you try this second way or manner of prayer, reflect in your journal: What word or phrase stirs me to linger on as I pray slowly over the Our Father in this way? What do I notice about my internal reaction to that word or phrase? What might God be telling me through it?

[249] *Second Manner*

This consists in reciting some vocal prayer and resting successively on the words composing it as long as we feel taste and devotion.

[250] [Additional Direction] *[Editor: Ignatius asks us to follow the same additional direction from no. 239 that we used in the first manner of prayer.]* Before beginning, recollect yourself.

[251] [Preparatory Prayer] Address yourself to the person to whom you are going to pray.

[252] [Manner] Begin the prayer—the *Pater*, for example; dwell on these words, “Our Father”; meditate on them as long as they furnish you with thoughts, affections, and so on, and then pass to the following words, which you will consider in the same manner.

[253] [Rule 1] All vocal prayers, the Credo, the *Salve Regina*, the *Anima Christi*, and so on, may be recited in this manner.

[254] [Rule 2] If one single word of the prayer we are reciting in this way suffices to occupy the mind and the heart all the time destined to prayer, we must put off to another day the meditation of the rest.

[255] [Rule 3] The following day we must commence by reciting, without stopping, what was meditated on the day before, and then continue the consideration of the rest of the words of the prayer.

[Notes]

[I.] [256] *[Editor: After one or more days praying with the Our Father, St. Ignatius recommends that we use the Hail Mary for prayer in the same way, then other vocal prayers so that we remain always focused on one of them for some substantial time during our retreat.]*

[II.] [257] When the time comes to conclude, recite the rest of the prayer without stopping, and address yourself in a short prayer to the person to whom you have been praying, to ask the grace or the virtue that you require.

[258] *Third Manner*

[A Measured Rhythmical Recitation]

This consists in pronouncing a vocal prayer, and, if we choose, several prayers successively, only stopping the interval of a breathing between each, thinking either of the sense of the word, or of the dignity of the person to whom we pray, or of our own unworthiness, or of the distance between the two. Let us take the *Ave Maria* for an example.

[Additional Direction] [*Editor: Ignatius asks us to follow the same additional direction from no. 239 that we used in the first manner of prayer.*] Think of the action you are going to perform.

[Prayer] [*Editor: Ignatius asks us to say the Preparatory Prayer in the same way as the second manner of praying from no. 251.*]

2. Beginning with “Hail, Mary,” think for a moment what these words signify, or of the dignity of the Blessed Virgin whom you salute, or of your miseries, which place so great a distance between you and the Mother of God.

3. Then you pronounce the other words, dwelling on each one, as we have said, only the time of a breathing.

[259] [Rule 1] [Editor: On another day or some other desired time, Ignatius invites the retreatant to pray the Hail Mary in this measured way and other vocal prayers in the ordinary way.]

[260] [Rule 2] [Editor: Ignatius says whoever wishes to spend more time with this measured prayer method may say all of the following vocal prayers in this way: Hail Mary, Soul of Christ, the Creed, and the Hail Holy Queen.]

PRELECTION: IGNATIAN PRAYER POINTS

“For this cause I would most willingly suffer not just one but a thousand deaths.”

—Bl. Dominic Collins, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: Blessed Dominic Collins, S.J. (1566–1602), became a Jesuit brother after serving in the military. Returning from the continent to his native Ireland, the good brother soon found himself arrested by the English, who tried in vain to make him give up his Catholic faith. With characteristic Irish grit, Collins said he’d rather die a thousand deaths than give up the faith, and the authorities hanged him to death in his native County Cork. Looking at martyrs like him, we marvel at how fixed the Jesuit martyrs seemed to be on God in their last moments. Their clarity of single-minded focus, this dedicated versatility and zeal in extreme circumstances, arose partly from the habits of mental discipline they acquired in the Exercises.

In the following section of the Exercises, St. Ignatius offers his own “prayer points” on various Gospel passages to pray over on retreat, typically giving three points per mystery to focus our reflection. Praying through the Exercises, we will have already encountered some of these mysteries earlier in the book. While St. Ignatius offered these points for retreatants to use at their directors’ discretion in an age when printed Bibles remained rare, today we may use them as supplements to the actual biblical texts referenced. Once we have mastered the basic structure (preparatory prayer, preludes, grace, silence, colloquy, closing prayer) of a prayer period set during the First Week, we will find these mysteries helpful. Opening with a sign of the cross and preparatory prayer, retreatants may use these Ignatian “points” as preludes, ask for the grace they want, read the cited Gospel passage if helpful, imagine themselves in the scene, and reflect silently before concluding with a colloquy and prayer, always remembering to note significant movements in their journals afterwards. If a sentence in the text seems to jump out, it will be helpful to stop and reflect on the meaning of a word or line. Because we use the Douay-Rheims version of the Bible throughout this book, please note that the verses for each mystery may vary, depending on what English translation a reader uses for prayer.

As you read through these prayer points on fifty-one subjects or mysteries taken from the four Gospels for prayer, reflect in your journal: Which of these Gospel passages do I sense the Holy Spirit inviting me to pray over? Which of these passages provoke internal resistance in me? If I write

down the words and phrases in the prayer points of Ignatius that stand out to me, what do I notice about them?

[261] [THE MYSTERIES OF THE LIFE OF OUR LORD]

Distributed by St. Ignatius into Fifty-One Subjects of Prayer Corresponding to the Three Last Weeks of the Exercises

[Note] *[Editor: Ignatius typically gives three points for each of the following mysteries to help focus our meditations and contemplations on the Gospel passages he cites.]*

[262] [*The Annunciation*]

The Incarnation of the Word Announced to the Blessed Virgin (Luke 1:26–38)

1. The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin and announces to her the conception of the Word of God: “The angel entering, said to her, Hail, Mary, full of grace. Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son,” and so on.
2. The angel confirms what he has just announced by the example of the miraculous conception of St. John the Baptist: “Thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age,” and so on.
3. The Holy Virgin replies to the angel: “Behold the servant of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word.”

[263] [*The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth*]

The Visit that Mary Pays to her Cousin Elizabeth (Luke 1:39–56)

1. Mary goes to visit Elizabeth. What impression the approach of Mary, and her voice, made on St. John! “When Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and said, ‘Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.’”
2. The Holy Virgin, in the transport of her joy, breathes forth the sentiments of her soul in the canticle, “My soul doth magnify the Lord,” and so on.
3. Mary remains with Elizabeth three months and returns to her own home.

[264] [*The Nativity*]

The Birth of Jesus Christ (Luke 2:1–14)

1. The Blessed Virgin sets out from Nazareth with St. Joseph, her spouse, to go to Bethlehem: “Joseph went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, to Bethlehem . . . to be enrolled with Mary, his spouse, who was with child.”
2. “Mary brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger.”

3. “Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest,’” and so on.

[265] [*The Adoration of the Shepherds*]

The Adoration of the Shepherds (Luke 2:8–20)

1. An angel reveals the birth of Jesus Christ to the shepherds: “I bring you good tidings of great joy . . . This day is born to you a Savior,” and so on.

2. The shepherds hasten to Bethlehem: “They came with haste, and they found Mary and Joseph, and the Infant lying in a manger.”

3. The shepherds return, “glorifying and praising God,” and so on.

[266] [*The Naming of Jesus*]

The Circumcision (Luke 2:21)

1. The Child is circumcised.

2. “His name is called Jesus, which was so called by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.”

3. The Child, after His circumcision, was placed in His Mother’s arms, who feels the most tender compassion at seeing the blood of her Son flow.

[267] [*The Adoration of the Three Wise Men*]

The Adoration of the Magi (Matt. 2:1–12)

1. Three kings, wise men, guided by a star, come to adore Jesus Christ: “We have seen His star in the east, and are come to adore Him.”
2. “And falling down at the feet of the Child, they adored Him; and opening their treasures, they offered Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”
3. Having received an answer in sleep that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their country.

[268] [The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple]

Purification of the Holy Virgin and the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:22–39)

1. Mary and Joseph carry the Child to the Temple of Jerusalem to present Him to God as their first born and make the offerings prescribed by the law: “a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons.”
2. Simeon came into the Temple, “and took the Child into his arms, and blessed God, and said, Now dost Thou dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace,” and so on.
3. “Anna, coming in at the same hour, confessed to the Lord; and spoke of Him to all that looked for the redemption of Israel.”

[269] [*The Flight to Egypt*]

The Flight Into Egypt (Matt. 2:13–15)

1. Herod, wishing to kill the newborn Jesus, orders all the children about Bethlehem to be massacred. But before that, an angel had warned Joseph to go into Egypt: “Arise, and take the Child and His Mother, and fly into Egypt.”
2. Joseph sets out for Egypt: “He arose, and took the Child and His Mother by night, and retired into Egypt.”
3. “He was there until the death of Herod.”

[270] [*The Return from Egypt*]

The Return from Egypt (Matt. 2:19–23)

1. An angel warned Joseph to return to the land of Israel: “Arise; take the Child and His Mother, and go into the land of Israel.”
2. Joseph immediately “arose, and came into the land of Israel.”
3. Archelaus, son of Herod, reigned in Judea at that time, which induced Joseph to retire to Nazareth.

[271] [*The Childhood (‘Hidden Life’) of Jesus*]

The Life of Our Lord from His Twelfth to His Thirtieth Year
(Luke 2:51, 52; Mark 6:3)

1. Jesus was subject and obedient to Mary and Joseph.

2. “He advanced in wisdom and age and grace with God and men,” and so on.

3. It appears that He Himself worked at a trade, since it is said in St. Mark (chapter 6), that the Jews said of Him, “Is not this the carpenter?”

[272] [Jesus Goes Up to the Temple at Age Twelve]

Jesus Among the Doctors at Twelve Years of Age (Luke 2:41–51)

1. Jesus having attained the age of twelve years went from Nazareth to Jerusalem.

2. He remained in Jerusalem, without Mary and Joseph knowing it.

3. Having sought Him for three days, they found Him in the Temple among the doctors. They asked Him why He had remained in Jerusalem; He replied, “Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?”

[273] [The Baptism of Jesus]

The Baptism of Jesus Christ (Matt. 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–23)

1. Jesus having bid adieu to His Mother set out from Nazareth, and went to the banks of the river Jordan, where John, His precursor, was baptizing.

2. He is baptized by St. John, who at first excuses himself as unworthy to exercise this function toward Him; but Jesus Christ obliges him, saying, “Do it, for it becometh us to fulfil all justice.”

3. The Holy Ghost descends upon Jesus Christ, and the voice of the Eternal Father is heard in heaven: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

[274] [*The Temptation of Jesus in the Desert*]

The Temptation of Jesus Christ (Matt. 4:1–11; Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1–13)

1. Jesus Christ, after His baptism, retired into the desert and fasted there forty days and forty nights.

2. There He was tempted three times by the enemy of our salvation: “The tempter coming, said to Him, ‘If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread . . . Cast Thyself down from this pinnacle . . . All these will I give Thee, if, falling down, Thou wilt adore me.’”

3. “Angels came and ministered to Him.”

[275] [*The Calling of the Twelve Apostles*]

The Call of the Apostles

1. St. Peter and St. Andrew appear to have been called three times; first, to a simple knowledge of Jesus Christ (*John* 1); then, to follow Jesus Christ only for a time, intending to return to and continue their trade of fishermen (*Luke* 5);

finally, to follow Him constantly, and not to leave Him any more (*Matt.* 4; *Mark* 1).

2. He called the sons of Zebedee, as is related in St. Matthew, Chapter 4; Philip, as St. John relates, Chapter 1; and Matthew, as he himself relates, Chapter 9.

The other Apostles were called also, although there is no express mention in the Gospels of the order and circumstance of their vocation.

3. On this, three reflections may be made: (1) that the Apostles were taken from a low and poor station; (2) that they were raised to a supereminent dignity with admirable sweetness; (3) that they were honored with supernatural gifts, as numerous as they were extraordinary, and by that placed above all the patriarchs of the Old Testament and all the saints of the New.

[276] [*The Wedding at Cana*]

First Miracle of Jesus Christ at the Marriage of Cana (John 2:1–11)

1. Jesus Christ is invited, with His disciples, to the marriage taking place at Cana.

2. His Mother tells Him that the guests are in want of wine: “They have no wine.” She said to the waiters, “Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye.”

3. The Lord changes the water into wine: “so manifesting His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.”

*[277] [Jesus Drives the Moneylenders
Out of the Temple]*

The Buyers and Sellers Turned Out of the Temple the First Time (John 2:13–22)

1. He drives out of the Temple all the buyers and sellers, having armed Himself with a scourge made of little cords.
2. He pours out the money of the changers and overthrows the tables.
3. With more meekness, He says to those who sold doves, “Take these things hence, and make not the house of My Father a house of traffic.”

[278] [The Sermon on the Mount]

The Sermon of Jesus Christ on the Mount (Matt. 5–7; Luke 6:17–49)

1. Jesus Christ proposes to His beloved disciples eight kinds of beatitudes.
2. He exhorts them to make a good use of the gifts and talents they have received from God: “So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”
3. He shows that He does not come to destroy the Law but, on the contrary, to perfect it by developing the precepts against homicide, theft, fornication and perjury; by ordaining that we love even our enemies: “I say to you, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you.”

[279] [Jesus Calms the Storm]

The Tempest Calmed on the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 8:23–27; Mark 4:35–40; Luke 8:22–25)

1. A violent tempest arose on the sea while Jesus slept.
2. His disciples, being afraid, awake Him. He reproaches them with their want of confidence: “Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith?”
3. He commands the winds and the sea to be still, and immediately there is a profound calm. All those who witnessed it, struck with astonishment, cried out, “What manner of man is this, for the winds and the sea obey Him?”

[280] [Jesus Walks on Water]

Jesus Christ Walks on the Waters (Matt. 14:22–33; Mark 6:45–54; John 6:15–21)

1. Jesus Christ, being still on the mountain, orders His disciples to return to their boat, “and having dismissed the multitude, He went up into the mountain to pray alone.”
2. During the night, a tempest arises. The boat of the Apostles is violently tossed by the waves. Jesus goes toward them, and to reach the boat He walks upon the waters. “The Apostles, seeing Him, were afraid, and thought it was a spirit.”
3. Jesus says to His Apostles, “It is I; fear not.” After He had reassured them by these words, St. Peter asks permission to join Him. Jesus having permitted him, Peter, walking on the

waters, goes to meet Him; but feeling afraid, he begins to sink. The Lord reproves him for the weakness of his faith, and entering the boat, the wind ceases.

[281] [Jesus Sends Out the Apostles]

Jesus Christ Sends His Apostles to Preach (Matt. 10:1–42, 11:1; Mark 6:7–13; Luke 9:1–6)

1. Jesus, having assembled His disciples, gives them power to cast out devils and to cure all sorts of diseases.
2. He teaches them prudence and patience: “I send you as sheep amidst the wolves. Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents and simple as doves.”
3. He explains in what manner they must conduct their apostolic mission: “Freely have you received, freely give.” “Do not possess silver nor gold.” Moreover, He tells them expressly what they are to teach: “Go and preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

[282] [The Pardon of the Sinful Woman]

The Conversion of Magdalen (Luke 7:36–50)

1. Jesus being at table in the house of a Pharisee, a woman, a sinner of the city, enters the room, carrying an alabaster vase full of perfumes.
2. Standing behind at the feet of Jesus, she waters them with her tears, wipes them with her hair, kisses them and anoints them with perfumes.

3. Jesus defends Himself against the Pharisee, to whom He says: Many sins are forgiven this woman because she hath loved much." Then He said to her, "Thy faith hath made thee safe; go in peace."

[283] [*The Multiplication of Loaves*]

The Multitude Fed (Matt. 14:13–21; Mark 6:30–44; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–14)

1. The disciples ask Jesus to send away the multitude who had followed Him into the desert.
2. Jesus tells His disciples to give Him the loaves they had brought. Having blessed them, He breaks them and gives them to His disciples to distribute to the people, whom He had first ordered to be seated.
3. All the multitude eat and after they are satisfied, there remain twelve baskets of the pieces.

[284] [*The Transfiguration*]

Transfiguration of Jesus Christ (Matt. 17:1–9; Mark 9:1–8; Luke 9:28–36)

1. Jesus takes with Him His three dearest disciples, Peter, James and John. "He was transfigured before them. And His face did shine as the sun; and His garments became white as snow."
2. Jesus speaks of His passion to Moses and Elias.

3. Peter asks permission to erect three tents on the mountain. A voice is heard from heaven: "This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him." The disciples, being afraid, fell on their faces. Jesus reassured them, touched them, and raised them, saying to them, "Arise, and fear not . . . Tell the vision to no man till the Son of Man be risen from the dead."

[285] [*The Raising of Lazarus*]

The Resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:1–45)

1. Jesus, having heard that Lazarus was ill, remains two days in the place where He was, so that the miracle He wished to work in his favor might be more striking.
2. Before raising him, He rouses and animates the faith of his two sisters: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live."
3. Jesus begins by shedding tears; He addresses a fervent prayer to His heavenly Father; then He raises the dead. On which it may be observed, that it was done by the most positive command: "Lazarus, come forth."

[286] [*The Anointing at Bethany*]

The Supper at Bethania (Matt. 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; John 12:1–11)

1. Jesus eats at the house of Simon the leper, and Lazarus is one of the guests.
2. Mary anoints the head of Jesus with precious perfumes.

3. Judas murmurs at the action of Mary: "What is the use of this profusion?" Jesus excuses Magdalen: "She hath wrought a good work upon Me."

[287] [*Palm Sunday*]

Palm Sunday (Matt. 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–10; Luke 19:29–44; John 12:12–19)

1. The Lord orders His Apostles to go and seek and bring Him an ass with its foal: "Loose them, and bring them to Me. And if any man shall say anything to you, say ye, that the Lord hath need of them, and forthwith he will let them go."

2. The Apostles having laid their garments on the ass, the Lord mounted on it.

3. The people assemble in crowds to receive Him. All hasten to cover the way with their garments and the branches of trees, singing: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!"

[288] [*Jesus Preaches in the Temple*]

The Preaching of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 19:47, 48)

1. Jesus teaches every day publicly in the Temple.

2. The preaching over, He returns to Bethania, not any one in Jerusalem receiving Him.

[289] [*The Last Supper*]

The Last Supper (Matt. 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–20; Luke 22:7–23; John 13:1–30)

1. Jesus Christ eats the paschal lamb with His disciples and warns them of His approaching death: “Amen, I say to you, that one of you is about to betray Me.”
2. Jesus washes their feet, even those of Judas, and begins with Peter. He, considering the majesty of Jesus Christ and his own lowness, opposes it at first: “Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?” He did not yet know that it was a lesson of humility that their Divine Master was giving them, who told them of it in these words: “I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so do you also.”
3. Then He institutes the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist to be the pledge of His love. These are His words: “Take ye and eat, this is My body,” and so on. The supper ended, Judas goes out to sell Him to the chief priests.

[290] [*From the Last Supper to
the Agony in the Garden*]

Mysteries, from the Supper to the Garden of Olives Inclusive (Matt. 26:31–46; Mark 14:27–42; Luke 22:24–46; John 13:31–38, 14–17, 18:1, 2)

1. The supper being ended, and having returned thanks to His Father, Jesus sets out to go to the mountain of Olives with His eleven disciples, who are filled with fear. He leaves

eight of them at Gethsemani: "Sit you here, till I go yonder and pray."

2. Taking with Him Peter, James and John, He repeats three times the same prayer: "My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me. Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." The greater His sorrow became in this mortal agony, the more earnest He became in prayer.

3. He allows Himself to be reduced to such an excess of fear and terror that He said, "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." He sweated blood abundantly, according to the testimony of St. Luke: "His sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground."

[291] [From Gethsemani to the House of Annas]

From the Garden to the House of Annas (Matt. 26:47–57; Mark 14:43–53; Luke 22:47–54; John 18:3–24)

1. Our Lord allows Judas to betray Him by a kiss, and the soldiers to seize Him like a malefactor: "Ye are come out as it were to a robber with swords and clubs to apprehend Me. I sat daily with you teaching in the Temple, and you laid not hands on Me." Then, having interrogated them in these terms, "Whom seek ye?" all His enemies fall backward to the ground.

2. Peter strikes one of the servants of the high priest and wounds him. Jesus says to Peter, "Put up thy sword into the scabbard"; and He cures the servant.

3. Jesus is arrested, abandoned by His disciples, dragged to the house of Annas. Peter follows Him a short time after and there denies Him the first time. Jesus receives a blow from another servant of the high priest, who reproaches Him with being wanting in respect: “Answerest Thou the high-priest so?”

[292] [From Annas to Caiaphas]

From the House of Annas to that of Caiaphas (Matt. 26:57–75; Mark 14:53–72; Luke 22:54–71; John 18:24–27)

1. Jesus bound is led from Annas to Caiaphas. There Peter denies Him twice. But the Lord casts a look at His apostle; “and he going out wept bitterly.”

2. Jesus remains bound all the night.

3. The guards who surround Him insult and torment Him. They blindfold Him, strike Him, and say in derision, “Christ, prophesy unto us, and say who it is that struck Thee.” They insult Him by a thousand blasphemies.

[293] [From Caiaphas to Pilate]

From the House of Caiaphas to that of Pilate (Matt. 27:1–27; Mark 15:1–14; Luke 23:1–5; John 18:28–40)

1. Jesus is led before Pilate and calumniously accused at his tribunal: “We have found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar.”

2. Pilate, having examined Him several times, answers the Jews, "I find no cause in this man worthy of death."
3. The Jews ask for the release of Barabbas in preference to that of Jesus Christ: "Not this man, but Barabbas."

[294] [From Pilate to Herod]

From the House of Pilate to that of Herod (Luke 23:6–12)

1. Pilate sends Jesus to Herod, king of Galilee, supposing that He was a Galilean.
2. Herod questions Him to satisfy his curiosity. Jesus answers nothing, though the Jews load Him with accusations.
3. Herod and his court insult Him, and in derision He is clothed in white.

[295] [From Herod Back to Pilate]

Jesus Sent Back from Herod to Pilate (Matt. 27:24–30; Mark 15:15–19; Luke 23:12–23; John 19:1–11)

1. Herod sends Jesus Christ back to Pilate. From this day, Herod and Pilate, who had been enemies before, became reconciled.
2. Pilate orders Jesus Christ to be scourged; the soldiers crown Him with thorns and place an old purple mantle on His shoulders; afterward they insult Him, saying in derision: "Hail, king of the Jews!" at the same time they strike Him.

3. Jesus comes out of the hall of justice crowned with thorns and clothed in purple. Pilate, showing Him to the Jews, says, "Behold the man!" The priests seeing Him, say, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

[296] [*From Pilate to the Crucifixion*]

Condemnation and Crucifixion of Jesus Christ (Matt. 27:31–38; Mark 15:20–28; Luke 23:24–38; John 19:12–24)

1. Pilate being seated on his tribunal, judged Jesus and delivered Him up to the Jews, who renounced Him for their King, saying, "We have no king but Caesar."

2. Jesus bears His cross until, His strength failing Him, they compel a man named Simon, a Cyrenian, to carry it behind Him.

3. He is crucified between two thieves. At the top of the cross this inscription is placed: "Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews."

[297] [*Jesus Dies on the Cross*]

Jesus on the Cross (Matt. 27:39–56; Mark 15:29–41; Luke 23:39–49; John 19:25–39)

1. They blaspheme against Jesus Christ in different ways: "Thou that destroyest the Temple of God . . . come down from the cross," and so on. The soldiers divide His garments.

2. Jesus pronounces seven words on the cross. He prays for His murderers. He pardons one of the thieves crucified

with Him. He recommends His Mother to St. John and St. John to His Mother. He cries, “I thirst”; then the soldiers give Him vinegar and water to drink. He complains to His Father of the abandonment in which He left Him. He says, “All is consummated.” Finally, before dying, He pronounces these words: “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.”

3. At His death, the sun is darkened, the rocks rent, the graves opened, the veil of the Temple is torn from top to bottom. His side being pierced by a spear, blood and water flow from it.

[298] [From the Cross to the Burial of Jesus]

The Burial of Jesus Christ (Matt. 27:57–66; Mark 15:42–47; Luke 23:50–56; John 19:30–42)

1. Our Lord, being now dead, is taken down from the cross by Joseph and Nicodemus, in presence of His holy Mother, who is overpowered by the most lively grief.
2. His body, being embalmed, is carried to the sepulcher, and enclosed in it.
3. Guards are placed at the tomb.

*[299] [Resurrection and First
Apparition of the Risen Christ]*

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ and His First Apparition

Jesus Christ appears first to His Blessed Mother after His resurrection. The Gospel leads us to think so, by saying that

Jesus Christ appeared to several persons; if we do not find in this general expression a sufficiently sure proof, we deserve that reproach of Our Savior to His disciples: "Are ye still without understanding?"

[300] [Second Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Second Apparition (Matt. 28:1–7; Mark 16:1–11; Luke 24:1–11; John 20:1, 11–18)

1. Early in the morning, Mary Magdalen and the mother of James and Salome leave Jerusalem to go to the sepulcher. They say to one another, "Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulcher?"
2. They see the stone removed and in the tomb an angel, who says to them, "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen; He is not here."
3. Jesus appears to Magdalen, who had remained alone at the tomb, the other women having gone away.

[301] [Third Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Third Apparition (Matt. 28:8–10)

1. The pious women of whom we have spoken are returning to Jerusalem, filled with fear and joy, to tell the Apostles what they had heard of the resurrection of their Master.
2. As they walk together, Jesus appears to them, and says, "All hail!" They kneel at His feet and adore Him.

3. The Lord speaks to them tenderly: “Fear not. Go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee; there they shall see Me.”

[302] [Fourth Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Fourth Apparition (Luke 24:12–34; John 20:1–10)

1. St. Peter, having learned from the holy women that Jesus was risen, goes in all haste to the sepulcher.

2. He enters and sees only the linen clothes in which the body of Our Saviour had been wrapped.

3. While St. Peter wondered at this event, the Lord appeared, as it was afterward said, “The Lord hath risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.”

[303] [Fifth Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Fifth Apparition (Mark 16:12, 13; Luke 24:13–34)

1. He appears to two disciples who are talking of Him on their way to Emmaus.

2. He reproaches them with their incredulity and explains to them the mysteries of His passion and resurrection. “O foolish, and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?”

3. His disciples beg Him to remain with them. He remains. Then taking bread and breaking it, He gives it to them and disappears. They return to Jerusalem, and relate to the

Apostles how they had seen the Lord, and had recognized Him by the breaking of the bread.

[304] [Sixth Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Sixth Apparition (Luke 24:36–45; John 20:19–23)

1. All the disciples, except Thomas, are shut up in a house because they feared the Jews.
2. Jesus Christ enters the room where they all are, the doors being closed. “He stood in the midst, and said to them, Peace be to you.”
3. He gives them the Holy Spirit, and says to them, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them.”

[305] [Seventh Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Seventh Apparition (John 20:24–29)

1. St. Thomas, not having been with the other Apostles when Jesus appeared to them the first time, had protested that he would not believe unless he saw: “If I see not, I will not believe.”
2. Eight days after, the Apostles being still together, and Thomas with them, the doors being closed, Jesus appears a second time, and says to St. Thomas, “Put in thy finger hither . . . and be not faithless, but believing.”

3. Thomas answers, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus replies, “Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed.”

[306] [Eighth Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Eighth Apparition (John 21:1–25)

1. Jesus appears to seven of His disciples who were fishing. They had taken nothing all night; but having cast their net by the order of Jesus Christ, “now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.”
2. John knew Jesus Christ by this miracle and said to Peter, “It is the Lord.” Immediately Peter, casting himself into the sea, hastens to Jesus.
3. Jesus gives them bread and fish to eat. Then, having asked Peter three different times if he loved Him, He gives him the care of His flock, saying to him, “Feed My lambs, feed My sheep.”

[307] [Ninth Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Ninth Apparition (Matt. 28:16–20; Mark 16:14–20; Luke 24:46–53)

1. The disciples, by order of their Master, go to Mount Thabor.
2. There He appears to them again, saying, “All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth.”

3. Sending them to preach throughout the whole world, He gives them this command: "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

[308] [Tenth Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Tenth Apparition (1 Cor. 15:6)

Jesus afterward shows Himself to more than five hundred disciples assembled together.

[309] [Eleventh Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Eleventh Apparition (1 Cor. 15:7)

He shows Himself to James alone.

[310] [Twelfth Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Twelfth Apparition

We read in several pious books that He appeared to Joseph of Arimathea alone. This is probable, and we may piously meditate on it.

[311] [Thirteenth Apparition of the Risen Christ]

Thirteenth Apparition (1 Cor. 15:8)

1. His soul also makes its presence felt by the patriarchs and the just in limbus; and after having delivered them, He showed Himself to them many times.

2. He shows Himself very frequently to His disciples after His resurrection and converses with them.
3. He appears again, after His ascension, to St. Paul, who declares it himself: "And last of all, He was seen also by me, as by one born out of due time."

[312] [The Ascension of Jesus]

Ascension of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:1, 11)

1. Jesus Christ, having shown Himself many times to His Apostles during forty days, and having convinced them by many signs that He was really living, "speaking to them of the kingdom of God," He orders them to return to Jerusalem until they shall have received the Holy Ghost.
2. He led them to the Mount of Olives; and "while they looked on, He was raised up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight."
3. While they were looking at Him ascending into heaven, two men dressed in white (whom we believe to have been angels) appeared to them, and said, "Men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to heaven? This Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come as you have seen Him going into heaven."

[VARIOUS RULES]

PRELECTION: FIRST WEEK RULES FOR DISCERNMENT

“The time of desolation and dryness is the best for gaining merit. A soul that seeks God easily bears this state and rises above all that passes before the imagination and in the inferior part of the soul where consolation is mostly to be found. It does not cease to love God, to humble itself, and to accept this state even for ever.”

—St. Claude de la Colombiere, S.J., *Retreat notes*, Lyons, 1674, translated Mother M. Philip

Editor: Confessor of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, promoter of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and prisoner in Protestant England, St. Claude de la Colombiere, S.J. (1641–1682), emphasized in his spiritual writings the sacrifice of Christ’s heart poured out for us on the cross and our loving response. Here he encourages retreatants to look at desolation and dryness in prayer as greater opportunities for spiritual growth than consolation, considering how disconnection from God and lack of tangible sweetness might spur us to greater acts of love. His thoughts on consolation (what brings us closer to God), desolation (what leads us away from God), and dryness (lack of feeling God present)

recall the Rules for Discernment that St. Ignatius now offers for those making the Exercises, rules we apply further to everyday life.

The first fourteen rules for discernment of spirits, suited to the First Week of the Exercises when praying on our sinfulness may plunge us into dark places, focus in a particular way on receiving consolation by resisting desolation and responding in a healthy way to dryness in prayer—two issues many of us face in the naïve scrupulosity of our early spiritual growth, where we may struggle for years to accept God’s unconditional love for us as sinners. The Sacred Heart, an image beloved by St. Claude and his spiritual protégé St. Margaret Mary, who saw it in a vision, reminds us of the immense love of God for us in our sinfulness that we must internalize deeply before we make bold to progress in our discernment to topics covered in the Second Week of the Exercises. We may find the Sacred Heart a helpful image to contemplate as we consider the following rules on how good and bad spirits move us.

As you reflect on these first fourteen Rules for the Discernment of Spirits, reflect in your journal: Which of these rules seem most relevant to my own struggles? Where do I typically experience desolation and dryness in my prayer life? What helps me let go of fixating on desolation and dryness to receive consolation when it comes?

[313] RULES FOR THE DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS*[The First Week]*

The soul is moved by diverse spirits, which it is important to discern, in order to follow the good and repel the bad. The following are some rules, of which the first are suited to souls less perfect and the others to those who are more so.

First Rules

(More particularly suitable to the first week.)

1. [314] Let us suppose a soul that easily falls into mortal sin and goes from fall to fall: to plunge it deeper into crime and fill up the measure of iniquity, the infernal enemy ordinarily employs the charms of voluptuousness and all the baits of the senses, which he incessantly places before the eyes. On the contrary, to turn him from sin, the good spirit never ceases to prick his conscience with the sting of remorse and the counsels of reason.

2. [315] But if this soul should set itself to use every effort in order to purify itself from its sins and to advance every day more and more in the service of God, the evil spirit, to stop and embarrass it, throws in its way every kind of scruple, disquiet, specious pretext, and subject of trouble and agitation. The good spirit, on the other hand, as soon as we begin to amend, encourages, fortifies, consoles, softens even to tears, enlightens the understanding, spreads peace in the heart, smoothes all difficulties and obstacles, so that every day more freely, more joyously and more rapidly, we advance in virtue by the practice of good works.

3. [316] True spiritual consolation may be known by the following signs. A certain interior impulse raises the soul toward the Creator, makes it love Him with an ardent love and no longer permits it to love any creature but for Him; sometimes gentle tears cause this love, tears that flow from repentance of past faults or the sight of the sorrows of Jesus Christ or any other motive that enlightened religion inspires; finally, all that increases faith, hope, charity; all that fills the soul with holy joy, makes it more attached to meditation on heavenly things and more careful of salvation; all that leads it to find repose and peace in the Lord—all this is true and spiritual consolation.

4. [317] On the contrary, all that darkens the soul, that troubles it, that inclines it to inferior and terrestrial objects, that disquiets and agitates it, that would lead it to despair of salvation, that weakens hope and banishes charity, that renders the soul sad, tepid, languid, distrustful even of the clemency of its Creator and its Redeemer—this is what may be called spiritual desolation. *Desolation* and *consolation* are two opposite terms; so the thoughts and affections arising from each are diametrically opposite.

5. [318] During times of desolation, the bad spirit makes us feel his influence. By following his inspirations, we cannot arrive at any good or useful decision; we must, therefore, beware at such times of reconsidering or making any innovation whatsoever in what relates to our resolutions or choice of a state of life; but we must persevere in what we have

decided on in the day or hour of consolation, and consequently under the influence of the good spirit.

6. [319] And yet, without changing anything that was before laid down and defined, man, when a prey to desolation, would do well to employ means, or to multiply them, in order to dissipate it—such as prayer offered with more importunity, examination, awakening and arousing the conscience, some penance as a punishment for faults known or unknown.

7. [320] Under the pressure of desolation the following are the thoughts that should sustain us: divine grace remains to us although it may have ceased to be sensible; although the first ardor of our charity is no longer felt, we still have all that is requisite for doing good and working out our salvation. What, then, does Our Lord expect of us? He would see whether, if furnished with the ordinary assistance of nature and grace, we can resist our enemy. Oh, without doubt we can!

8. [321] The unquiet spirit, which agitates and torments us, has a direct antagonist and adversary in the spirit of patience. To preserve patience and calm will, then, be of wonderful assistance to us against it. Finally, we must call hope to our aid; and if we know how to employ the above means against desolation, we may say to ourselves, “Consolation will not be long in coming.”

9. [322] Desolation most frequently arises from one of these three causes: (1) Perhaps we have deserved from want of

diligence and fervor in our spiritual exercises to be deprived of Divine consolations. (2) Perhaps God is trying us, and He wishes to see what we are and how we employ ourselves for His service and glory, even though He does not bestow on us every day the rewards of His Spirit in gifts and sensible graces. (3) Or it is perhaps a lesson He is giving us: He wishes to prove to us by experience that to procure fervor of devotion, ardent love, abundant tears, or to preserve ourselves in these spiritual joys, is beyond our natural strength, and is a gratuitous gift of His Divine bounty. All this cannot be claimed by us as our right, unless we are possessed by a pride and self-love very dangerous to our salvation.

10. [323] When consolation abounds in the heart, we must consider the conduct to be observed in time of trial; and to sustain the shock, we must provide in good time a supply of courage and vigorous resolution.

11. [324] We must also humble ourselves, depreciate ourselves, foresee as much as possible how weak, how cowardly we shall be under the stroke of desolation if Divine grace does not quickly come to our aid; while the tempted man must, on the contrary, persuade himself that with the aid of God he is all powerful and that he will easily overcome all his enemies, provided he establishes his confidence on the Divine strength and is courageous.

12. [325] Satan, with his weak but obstinate character, may be compared, when he attacks us, to a woman daring to contend with her husband. Let her husband oppose her firmly, she soon lays aside her warlike mood and quickly leaves the

field to him; on the contrary, let her see in him any timidity or inclination to fly or give way, she becomes audacious, insolent, cruel as a fury. So when Satan sees the soldier of Jesus Christ, his heart imperturbable, his head erect, repulsing every attack without flinching, he immediately loses courage; but if he perceives him trembling at the first shock and ready to ask quarter, he immediately attacks him with a rage, a fury, a ferocity that is unexampled among wild beasts enraged against their prey: obstinate in his infernal malice, he only seeks and breathes our ruin.

13. [326] We may also compare him in some of his artifices to a libertine seeking to lead astray a young girl, the child of good parents or the wife of an honest man. What he recommends to the object of his passion is, above all things, secrecy—secrecy as to his propositions, secrecy as to his interviews; if he does not obtain this secrecy, if the daughter does not observe it toward her parents, the wife toward the husband, all is lost for him; his projects are ruined. So the grand artifice of the great calumniator is to induce the soul he wishes to gain to keep secret his suggestions; and when they are discovered to a confessor or an enlightened director, his rage and torment are at their height, because his snare is discovered and his efforts rendered useless.

14. [327] Finally, in his tactics our enemy imitates a general of an army besieging a citadel, who first studies the ground and the state of the fortifications, so as to concentrate his attack upon the weakest part. To make a like study, our enemy makes, as it were, the round of our soul: he examines

the theological or moral virtues that serve as its ramparts or in which it is wanting, and against the point we have left without guard and defense he turns all his batteries and says, “It is here I will try the assault.”

PRELECTION: SECOND WEEK

RULES FOR DISCERNMENT

“Father, remember the soul’s salvation is to be preferred to everything else.”

—St. John de Goto, S.J., last words to his father, *Jesuit Saints and Martyrs*, p. 40

Editor: With Samurai warriors watching over him and two other Japanese Jesuits crucified on a hill overlooking Nagasaki beach, the adolescent seminarian St. John de Goto, S.J. (1578–1597), noticed his father in the crowd as he spoke these words from the cross. In response, his father gave thanks for his son’s martyrdom, promising that he and John’s mother also felt ready to die for the holy faith. Saint John de Goto, together with his fellow Jesuits St. Paul Miki and St. James Kisai, had embraced the cross and sang a *Te Deum* before being fastened to it. Even as they died, these martyrs of a rising anti-colonialist and xenophobic political tide in feudal Japan experienced deep consolation from God.

In this next section of the Exercises, St. Ignatius now offers his second set of Rules for Discernment of Spirits, focusing on what to do in consolation when one senses a growing joy in following Jesus Christ during the Second

Week. His advice to recall that consolation passes, and to save it up internally without obsession while it lasts, reminds us that consolation sometimes comes in painful as well as joyful moments. The sixteenth-century Japanese Jesuit martyrs, like the early martyrs of the Catholic Church in pagan Rome, likewise discovered a paradoxical joy in sharing the death on a cross that their Savior had suffered before them.

As you read this second set of eight rules for discernment, focusing on what to do in consolation, reflect in your journal: Which of these rules speak most strongly to me right now and why? Which rules provoke internal resistance in me and why? When have I experienced consolation in my spiritual life without knowing or understanding the cause?

[328] [The Second Week]

Other Rules for the Better Discerning of Spirits

(Applicable more particularly to the second week.)

1. [329] The operation proper to God and His good angels is to shed on the soul on which they act true spiritual joy in banishing the sorrow and trouble that the devil has introduced into it. On the contrary, the latter, finding this joy in the soul, labors to destroy it by certain sophistries covered by a false appearance of truth.
2. [330] The Creator alone can penetrate His creature, raise him, change him, enkindle in him the fire of His love. Hence, when nothing has been presented to the senses, the

intellect, the will of a nature to cause joy, and yet the soul is consoled all at once without antecedent cause, then it is God that acts upon it.

3. [331] When a natural cause of consolation has preceded, who has sent it? Perhaps our good angel, perhaps the bad. The purpose of the good would be to assist us to know and to do right; the bad to lead us to evil and to destroy us.

4. [332] The bad spirit knows well how to transform himself into an angel of light. Aware of the pious desires of the soul, he will begin by seconding them, but soon he will begin to lead it to his own ends. Thus, at first he will feign to consent to your good and holy thoughts and even applaud them, but by degrees he will draw you into his hidden snares and entangle you in his dark meshes.

5. [333] We must, therefore, submit our inspirations and thoughts to a strict and attentive examination. Their beginning, progress and end must all be carefully considered. Are all these good? It is, then, our good angel that inspired them. On the other hand, is there anything intrinsically bad, anything that leads us away from good, or that urges us to something below what we had chosen; anything that fatigues the soul, casts it into anguish and trouble, makes it lose the peace, the repose, the serenity that it enjoyed? If we discover on reflection that such is the case, it is an evident sign that the inspiration comes from the spirit of darkness and that it conceals some snare he is laying for us.

6. [334] When we have discovered the infernal serpent; when, by the evil result to which his insinuations always tend, we have discovered his diabolical purpose, it is very useful to go over again in spirit the way by which the tempter led us, to take to pieces the plot he had so cleverly laid, to note by what specious pretexts he began to make us listen to him; how he succeeded by degrees in changing that pure taste, that spiritual sweetness, that perfect serenity that we enjoyed before; how he endeavored to instill his venom into the soul. This study of his odious maneuvers will render us more capable of escaping them for the future.

7. [335] Both spirits seek to insinuate themselves into the souls of those who advance in the way of salvation; but they make use of very different means: the good angel comes with sweetness, peace, suavity, like a drop of water falling on a sponge; the bad angel rushes in rudely, violently, noisily, like rain in a storm beating on a rock. With those who, day by day, go farther from God, and plunge deeper into evil, the contrary happens. Moreover, a spirit enters the soul gently or harshly, according as the disposition of the soul is suitable to it or opposed to it. If it finds opposition and antipathy, it announces itself by a sudden shock that it is easy to remark; if it finds the soul tending the same way as itself, it enters quietly, as if into a dwelling belonging to it and open to it.

8. [336] We have before stated that it is God who visits the soul when not any natural cause has led to the consolation with which it is suddenly filled. This sentiment, therefore, cannot be subject to illusion; yet we must distinguish with

great care this first moment of happiness from those that immediately follow, although the soul still feels its ardor and the heavenly favors it has received; for in this second period it frequently happens, whether from habit, personal manner of judging and seeing, or inspiration of the good or evil spirit, that we conceive certain thoughts or form certain projects that, not coming immediately from God, require to be carefully examined before giving our consent to them or putting them into execution.

[Rules for the Distribution of Alms]

PRELECTION: GIVING TO THE POOR

“I believe my days are few. I feel such an extraordinary desire to work and serve God . . . that I cannot believe God would have given it to me, if he did not mean to take me at once.”

—St. Aloysius Gonzaga, S.J., to his spiritual director St.

Robert Bellarmine, *Jesuit Saints and Martyrs*, p. 188

Editor: When the holy young Jesuit seminarian St. Aloysius Gonzaga, S.J. (1568–1591), caught the plague while ministering to its victims in Rome, he rapidly sickened and died at twenty-three. St. Robert Bellarmine, S.J., the great Doctor of the Church and cardinal who then served as Gonzaga’s spiritual director, felt so impressed by his holiness that he later requested to be buried next to him. Saint Aloysius, who had renounced his Italian noble family’s inheritance to enter the Society and left the comforts of theology studies to care for the dying poor, thus became the patron saint of youth and an inspiration to Jesuit schoolboys for all time.

In the Jesuit order, where faith bears fruit in just actions, the image of St. Aloysius putting his belief into practice by serving the dying at risk of his own health flows from the graces of the Exercises. At this point, St. Ignatius offers us

the following rules for giving alms to the poor, as St. Aloysius did. He does so with the assumption that retreatants, properly moved by grace to live out their values in charitable works, will conceive a desire on this retreat to serve the poor.

As you read these rules for the distribution of alms, reflect in your journal: Which of these rules seem more helpful for me at this point in my life? Which of these rules provoke resistance in me? What desires do I find in myself about responding to the poor and afflicted?

[337] SOME RULES FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF OUR GOODS IN ALMS

Do you feel inclined to give a part of your goods to your relations or friends from the lively affection you bear them? Submit this disposition to the four rules already given for election, which are a little more developed as follows:

1. [338] All the love I bear my neighbor, to be perfect, ought to be derived from the love of God; I ought to feel that this pure charity is the beginning and the motive of all my affections and attachments. In this circumstance, as in all others, it must appear as the principal motive of my determination.
2. [339] If an unknown person, but one whom I wished to see fulfilling the duties of his state and acting on a similar occasion with all the perfection possible, came to ask my advice, what should I advise him to do in the interest of the

Divine glory and for his own perfection? I ought to adopt the same course myself.

3. [340] If I were on the point of death, what should I wish that I had done on this occasion? The same I ought to do now.

4. [341] When called before the tribunal of God, what distribution of my goods should I be glad to have made? This certainly is the one I ought to make now.

5. [342] If I feel my heart too much attached to the persons united to me by the bonds of nature, I must first submit this attachment itself to the four preceding rules, without as yet occupying myself with the question of the distribution of goods or alms. Before coming to any arrangement whatever, this inclination must be rectified.

6. [343] What is the portion of the revenues of his church that a perfect ecclesiastic ought to employ in his own expenses? This question gives rise to many scruples, and many are always in fear of going too far. To resolve it, and to determine the just proportion, the rules mentioned above should be observed.

7. [344] On the subject of the expenses to be determined on for our person, our house, our furniture or servants, the most perfect and the most sure way is to retrench as much as possible of our convenience and comforts and to conform ourselves faithfully to the example of Jesus Christ, our great High priest. It is after this general rule, which is applicable to all states (although we must make due allowance for

different persons and even different conditions), that the third Council of Carthage, at which St. Augustine assisted, decided that all the furniture of a Bishop should be of low price, and should speak of poverty. In the married state, the best example we can cite is that of St. Joachim and St. Anne, who every year divided their revenues into three parts: one for the poor, the second for the temple and the divine service, and the third for themselves.

[Some Notes Concerning Scruples]

PRELECTION: THE DEVIL AND SCRUPLES

“While things were going on in this way, the demons were afraid that the entrance of the Society into these regions would mean the loss of their own long-held power; so they tried to spread a rumor throughout the whole Parana region that we were spies and magicians and that we brought death with us in our books and statues.”

—St. Roch Gonzalez, S.J., from the Office of Readings for his feast, *Supplement to the Divine Office for the Society of Jesus*

Editor: The Apostle of Paraguay, St. Roch Gonzalez, S.J. (1576–1628), entered the Society from his native Asunción to serve as a missionary in Spain’s colonies. Stirring up the superstitions of the natives, in whose irrational fears he saw the devil at work, St. Roch was murdered by an ax through the machinations of a jealous Guaraní witch doctor. Yet the Jesuit *reductions*, missionary cities that gathered natives out of the forests into Christian communities safe from colonial slavers, proved so popular that colonists ultimately destroyed them out of greed through a series of events fictionalized in the movie *The Mission*.

For St. Ignatius, who struggled early in his conversion with confessing his sins again and again, scruples arise in us as inspirations of the Evil Spirit. Like the irrational anger and fear that drove a small party of Guarani Indians to kill Gonzalez, scruples turn our energies inward, leading us to spend more time hating sin than loving virtue. In the following Notes Concerning Scruples, St. Ignatius offers guidelines based on his own experience, as he ultimately discovered that loving others through apostolic service proved more productive than punishing his own body through disproportionate fasts and penances which nearly killed him.

As you read the following notes on scruples, reflect in your journal: What do I find helpful or challenging here? If I look honestly at my spiritual life right now, do I spend more time fixating on human sinfulness or reflecting on divine goodness? When praying, do I focus more on where God is present or on where God is absent?

[345] REMARKS ON THE SCRUPLES THAT THE DEVIL RAISES IN THE SOUL

1. [346] What is generally called scruple is the judgment by which, with all the liberty of our mind, we call an action sinful, though it is not. Such would be the judgment of one who, having walked on two straws forming a cross, should reproach himself with the occurrence as a fault; this, however, is not properly a scruple, it is rather an erroneous judgment that instruction and good sense must rectify.

2. [347] But you have trampled on this cross, or you have thought, or said, or done, something equally unimportant; all your intellectual and moral faculties tell you that you have not sinned, and yet in your conscience the idea arises that you have done wrong. From this comes perplexity and trouble, which the evil spirit keeps up; this is a scruple properly speaking.

3. [348] Scruples of the first kind, being moral errors, ought to be the object of just abhorrence. As to the second, they serve as purgatives—very active ones sometimes—to a soul that has just arisen from sin. They are useful to him for some time and inspire him with fear and aversion as regards even the shadow of sin. “It is a good soul,” says St. Gregory, “that thinks itself guilty even when it is not.”

4. [349] Our infernal enemy observes with malignant attention what the stamp of our conscience is; whether it is delicate or relaxed. If delicate, he tries to render it more susceptible still; he endeavors to reduce it to the last degree of trouble and anguish, so as to stop its progress in the spiritual life. To this timid Christian, who never consents to any sin either mortal or venial and who dreads even the appearance of a voluntary fault, as he cannot present the bait of a real sin, he shows an imaginary fault as a frightful phantom. Sin will appear to him in a trifling word, a thought that only crossed the mind, and so on. On the contrary, if he finds anywhere a relaxed conscience, he studies to make it still more so. This soul not being afraid of venial sin, he

familiarizes it by degrees with mortal sin, and day by day weakens the horror of it in his eyes.

5. [350] That the soul may advance with sure step in spiritual ways, it must walk with constancy in the opposite direction from that in which the enemy of salvation wishes to lead it. If he seek to relax the conscience, let it contract; if he seek to contract it, let it relax. Avoiding the two extremes, it will establish itself in a middle path that will be for it a state of assurance and peace.

6. [351] When, with regard to a word or an action that presents itself, having nothing contrary to the sentiment of the Church and to Catholic traditions, and that tends to glorify God, a thought strikes you sent by a spirit foreign to your own—a thought that dissuades you from speaking or acting, under the pretext that it will cause you to be vainglorious, or excites in you any other chimerical fear, then raise your mind to God; and if it still appears to you that this word or this action tends to the glory of your Divine Master, or at least that it has nothing contrary to Him, then proceed direct against this thought; and while the enemy murmurs in your ear, reply to him like St. Bernard: “It was not for thee I began; it shall not be for thee I will desist.”

[Rules for Thinking with the Church]

PRELECTION: RULES FOR THINKING WITH THE CHURCH

“The rules ‘for thinking with the Church’ are not to be read as precise instructions on controversial points (some might be anachronistic), but rather as examples where Ignatius extended the invitation to ‘act against’ the anti-ecclesial spirit of his time, inclining always and decisively on the side of our Mother, the Church; not to justify a controversial point, but rather to open up space in which the Spirit could work in his time.”

—Pope Francis, Address of His Holiness to the 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus

Editor: Pope Francis, formerly Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, S.J. (1936–present), of Argentina, has written and spoken often of the Jesuit gift of discernment to the whole Catholic Church. As the first Jesuit pope, speaking to the 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus in the excerpt above, he emphasizes how the Rules for Thinking with the Church help us combat “the anti-ecclesial spirit,” opening up a space where the Holy Spirit may lead us to

best defend and promote Holy Mother Church. St. Ignatius provides these rules in this section.

As you pray over these Rules for Thinking with the Church, or Rules of the Orthodox Faith, reflect in your journal: Which of these rules speak to my experience? Which of these rules challenge or confuse me? In what ways do I strive in my life to think with Holy Mother Church, rather than against her, even when I disagree with the actions of her leaders?

[352] RULES OF THE ORTHODOX FAITH

1. [353] Always to be ready to obey with mind and heart, setting aside all particular views, the true spouse of Jesus Christ, our holy mother, our infallible and orthodox mistress, the Catholic Church, whose authority is exercised over us by the hierarchy of its pastors.
2. [354] To approve of the confession of sins as it is practiced in the Church; the reception of the Holy Eucharist once a year, and better still every week, or at least every month, with the necessary preparation.
3. [355] To recommend to the faithful frequent and pious assistance at the holy sacrifice of the Mass, the ecclesiastical chant, the divine office, and in general the prayers and devotions practiced at stated times, whether in public in the churches or in private.

4. [356] To have a great esteem for the religious state and to give the preference to celibacy or virginity over the married state.

5. [357] To approve of the religious vows of chastity, poverty, perpetual obedience, as well as the other works of perfection and supererogation. Let us remark in passing, that we must never engage by vow to take a state (e.g., marriage) that would be an impediment to one more perfect; for a vow is essentially an engagement to perfection—the promise of a higher good, as theology says.

6. [358] To approve of the veneration and invocation of saints, respect to images, processions, pilgrimages of devotion, indulgences, jubilees, the custom of lighting candles and burning lamps before altars and other practices of this kind useful to piety.

7. [359] To observe the abstinences and fasts, not only of precept, as Lent, the Ember days, vigils, but also such as are of pure devotion, as also of voluntary mortifications and penance, not only interior but exterior.

8. [360] To approve the magnificence of the construction and ornaments of churches and the holy images that we justly honor because of the things they represent.

9. [361] Far from censuring in any matter the precepts of the Church, to defend them boldly by all the reasons that study can furnish us with against those who attack them.

10. [362] To study to approve the decrees, the statutes, the traditions, the ordinances, the rites and customs of our fathers in the faith or of our superiors. As to their conduct, although there may not be everywhere the integrity of morals that there ought, yet there is more scandal and disorder than utility in speaking against them in private conversations or public discourses. These sort of invectives only embitter the people and raise them against their princes and pastors; we must, then, avoid these reproaches, never incriminating absent masters before their subjects. It would be better to address ourselves in private to those who have in their hands the necessary authority to remedy the evil.

11. [363] To have a great esteem for the teachings of the Fathers and theologians. The former, like St. Jerome, St. Augustine and St. Gregory, have labored above all to form the hearts of Christians; the latter, following the course opened by St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure and others, have had for their aim to cure the errors of the times and to enlighten the faithful with exact notions and well defined dogmas. Coming in an age succeeding the Fathers, they have had, like them, the Holy Scriptures and the writings of antiquity to instruct them. They have had besides the ordinances and definitions of councils, the rules and constitutions of the holy Church; and the spirit of God has powerfully assisted them in profiting by all these resources in order to direct the faithful in the ways of salvation.

12. [364] Avoid all comparison of living men, however great their merit, with the saints; for example, avoid saying, "Such

a one is more learned than St. Augustine; this is another St. Francis; this one is as zealous, as eloquent as St. Paul,” and so forth.

13. [365] To be with the Church of Jesus Christ but one mind and one spirit, we must carry our confidence in her, and our distrust of ourselves, so far as to pronounce that true that appeared to us false, if she decides that it is so; for we must believe without hesitation that the Spirit of Our Lord Jesus Christ is the spirit of His spouse, and that the God who formerly gave the decalogue is the same God who now inspires and directs His Church.

14. [366] Although it is very true that not any one arrives at salvation if not predestined, we must speak with great circumspection on this matter, for fear that, giving too much to grace, we should appear to destroy man’s free will and the merit of good works; or that, giving too much to free will, we should weaken the power and efficacy of grace.

15. [367] For the same reason, we must seldom speak of predestination; and if it should happen that we do so, it must not be in such a way that people can say, “If my eternal fate is fixed, whether I do ill or well, it will only be what God has decided”; this too frequently leads to the neglect of good works and of all the means of salvation.

16. [368] We must take care lest, by exalting the merit of faith, without adding any distinction or explanation, we furnish people with a pretext for relaxing in the practice of good works.

17. [369] We must also be on our guard against exalting Divine grace so much as to make our hearers no longer believe themselves free: we must speak of it as the glory of God requires, that we may not raise doubts as to liberty and the efficacy of good works.

18. [370] Although it is very praiseworthy and useful to serve God through the motive of pure charity, yet we must also recommend the fear of God; and not only filial fear but also servile fear, which is very useful and often even necessary to raise man from sin. Once risen from the state and free from the affection of mortal sin, we may then speak of that filial fear that is truly worthy of God and that gives and preserves the union of pure love.

N.B. These rules are more particularly useful to evangelical laborers and those who preach the word of God. Although written for other times and specially directed against the innovators of the sixteenth century, yet they are mostly applicable to our own day and refer indeed more or less directly to the present wants of society, which is constantly undermined by the same lawless spirit.

Appendix

[Editor: To better aid self-directed retreatants in following the directives of St. Ignatius, Fr. De Place provides this appendix with suggestions for spiritual reading during the retreat as well as the texts of several traditional prayers commonly referenced in the Exercises.]

PRELECTION: SPIRITUAL READING DURING THE EXERCISES

“Many of us in later years wish that someone would have told us, when we were younger, about certain things, often certain books, which, as we look back on it, would have greatly helped us in the project of our lives. In particular, certain books, we suspect, would have at least helped us know the truth of things. Some of these books are directed to what is true, to reality, to *what is*.”

—Fr. James Schall, S.J., *The Life of the Mind*, p. 1

Editor: Some of us know this old truism: What we think about gets bigger in our minds. The books, music, and films we enjoy in our quiet moments influence and shape our perspectives. Father James V. Schall, S.J. (1928–2019), longtime Georgetown University political philosophy professor, wrote

and read books the way some people breathe air. Known for providing recommended reading lists in each of his own books, Fr. Schall argues in *The Life of the Mind* that every educated person benefits from building a personal library. In this excerpt, he makes the point that certain books lend themselves better than others to certain situations and stages in life, reminding us of the great truth that we may profit more from perusing Dante's *Inferno* than from reading "The Life of Socrates" in our teenage years.

Retreats likewise feed the whole person, not merely the mind, and the Exercises do not lend themselves to reading the *Summa Theologica*. For St. Ignatius, retreats provide a time to *experience* God in prayer rather than *study* God in theology, and Schall agrees with him that the right kind of books make all the difference. Therefore, before starting a retreat, we may benefit from choosing supplemental readings that help us engage rather than evade a personal encounter with God, and we may benefit even from watching a movie like "Jesus of Nazareth" (1977) or "Ignatius of Loyola" (2016) to inspire our imaginations. In addition to Fr. De Place's suggested excerpts from the New Testament and *Imitation of Christ*, people making the Exercises typically begin reading lives of the saints and books on the life of Christ (see no. 100) during the Second Week, insofar as they help focus us on God. As you pray the Second Week exercises, you might consider compiling your own little book list that include some of the topics from the prelections in this volume, but please remember that biographies of saints deepen our contemplation of holy persons, while theology and philosophy tend to promote the sort of abstract study disconnected

from our actions that St. Ignatius earnestly hoped anyone discerning God's will on a retreat would strenuously avoid.

As you peruse Fr. De Place's suggested readings below, reflect in your journal: What saint biographies and devotional books might I read starting in the Second Week of the Exercises? What books might I do well to avoid as temptations to get stuck in my head and avoid actually experiencing God? What movie about Jesus or the saints might I watch to help likewise focus my imagination?

READINGS

Spiritual Reading From the New Testament and From The Imitation of Christ

End of man *N. T.* Matt. 16:14–28; Luke 6:30–33

Imit. of Christ Bk. 3 ch. 9, 22, 26

Mortal sin *N. T.* Matt. 25:1–31

Imit. of Christ Bk. 1 ch. 21, 22; 2.6; 4.7

Death *N. T.* Luke 12:33–43; Apoc. 3

Imit. of Christ Bk. 1 ch. 23

Judgment *N. T.* Matt. 25:31–46

Imit. of Christ Bk. 3 ch. 14

Hell *N. T.* Luke 16:19–31

Imit. of Christ Bk. 1 ch. 25

Reign of Christ *N. T.* John 15; Col. 3

Imit. of Christ Bk. 1 ch. 1; bk. 3 ch. 13–32

The Incarnation *N. T.* Luke 1:26–56

Imit. of Christ Bk. 2 ch. 1, 7, 8

The Nativity *N. T.* Luke 2:1–21

Imit. of Christ Bk. 3 ch. 1, 2, 18

The hidden life of Jesus Christ *N. T.* Luke 2:40–52

Imit. of Christ Bk. 1 ch. 20; Bk. 3 ch. 44, 53

Public life of Jesus Christ *N. T.* Matt. 10

Imit. of Christ Bk. 1 ch. 15, 16; bk. 3 ch. 4

The two standards, three classes and three degrees of humility *N. T.* Matt. 19

Imit. of Christ Bk. 3 ch. 23, 27, 31, 56

Change of a state *Imit. of Christ* Bk. 3 ch. 54

The Eucharist *N. T.* Matt. 26:17–30

Imit. of Christ Bk. 4 ch. 1, 2

The Passion *N. T.* Matt. 26:36–75; 27

Imit. of Christ Bk. 2 ch. 11, 12; Bk. 4 ch. 8

The Resurrection and Ascension *N. T.* Matt. 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; Acts 1

Imit. of Christ Bk. 3 ch. 47, 48

Love of God *N. T.* John 17; 1 John 4

Imit. of Christ Bk. 3 ch. 5, 6, 34

Holy Communion *N. T.* Luke 22:14–21; John 6; 1 Cor. 11:23–31

Imit. of Christ Bk. 4 ch. 17

PRELECTION: VOCAL PRAYERS IN THE EXERCISES

“My child, I cannot agree to that. I prefer to die.”

—St. James Berthieu, S.J., last words, *Jesuit Saints and Martyrs*, p. 162

Editor: When the Malagasy rebelled against French rule in Madagascar, they targeted the wise missionary St. James Berthieu, S.J. (1838–1896), in a persecution of Catholics. Pressured to renounce his faith, the French-born African missionary responded with the words above, simply telling the truth without equivocation. Having tortured him, the rebels clubbed Berthieu to death and threw his body in the river, which carried it away forever.

In prayer, understood as communication with God, we strive for the same level of honesty. Vocal prayer, consisting of written or freely composed words that we speak to God silently or out loud, invites us to express the fullness of our hearts to God. But when we pray vocally, especially using a written traditional prayer like the Our Father or Soul of Christ, we must do so with a deep vulnerability that seeks to hide nothing of ourselves from God. We must speak our truth with the courage of the martyrs. Father De Place provides the following written prayers which retreatants commonly use throughout the Exercises.

As you read each of these written prayers that we commonly use at the end of prayer periods in the Exercises, reflect in your journal: Which of these prayers do I like best when my own words fail me? What words or phrases from these prayers stand out to me? What images of God do I find in these prayers?

PRAYERS

Pater Noster

(Our Father)

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Ave Maria

(Hail Mary)

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Suscipe

Take, O Lord, and receive my entire liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my whole will. All that I am and all

that I possess, Thou hast given me: I surrender it all to Thee to be disposed of according to Thy will. Give me only Thy love and Thy grace: with these I will be rich enough, and will desire nothing more. Amen.

Credo

(The Apostles' Creed)

I Believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Regina Caeli

This prayer is recited morning, noon and evening during Paschal Time (from Easter through the evening of the Saturday after Pentecost) instead of the Angelus. It is traditionally recited standing.

V. Queen of Heaven, rejoice. Alleluia.

R. For He whom thou wast worthy to bear. Alleluia.

V. Has risen as He said. Alleluia.

R. Pray for us to God. Alleluia.

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary. Alleluia.

R. For the Lord is truly risen. Alleluia.

Let Us Pray

O God, Who by the Resurrection of Thy Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, hast been pleased to give joy to the whole world, grant, we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may attain the joys of eternal life. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Ave Maris Stella

Hail, bright star of ocean,
God's own Mother blest,
Ever sinless Virgin,
Gate of heavenly rest.
Taking that sweet Ave,
Which from Gabriel came,
Peace confirm within us,
Changing Eva's name.
Break the captives' fetters,
Light on blindness pour,
All our ills expelling,
Every bliss implore.
Show thyself a Mother;
May the Word Divine,

Born for us thine Infant,
Hear our prayers through thine.
Virgin all excelling,
Mildest of the mild,

Freed from guilt, preserve us
Pure and undefiled.
Keep our life all spotless,
Make our way secure,
Till we find in Jesus
Joy forevermore.
Through the highest Heaven
To the Almighty Three,
Father, Son and Spirit,
One same glory be. Amen.

Veni, Creator

Come, O Creator Spirit blest!
And in our souls take up Thy rest;
Come with Thy grace and heavenly aid,
To fill the hearts which Thou hast made.
Great Paraclete! To Thee we cry,
O highest gift of God most high!
O font of life! O fire of love!
And sweet anointing from above.
Thou in Thy sevenfold gifts art known,
The finger of God's hand we own;
The promise of the Father, Thou!
Who dost the tongue with power endow.
Kindle our senses from above,
And make our hearts o'erflow with love;
With patience firm and virtue high,
The weakness of our flesh supply.
Far from us drive the foe we dread,

And grant us Thy true peace instead;
So shall we not, with Thee for guide,
Turn from the path of life aside.
Oh, may Thy grace on us bestow
The Father and the Son to know,
And Thee through endless times confessed
Of both the Eternal Spirit blest.
All glory while the ages run
Be to the Father, and the Son
Who rose from death; the same to Thee,
O Holy Ghost, eternally. Amen.

Stabat Mater

At the Cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.

Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Lo! the piercing sword had passed.

O how sad and sore distressed
Was that Mother, highly blessed,
Of the sole-begotten One.

Woe-begone, with heart's prostration,
Mother meek, the bitter passion
Saw she of her glorious Son.

Who on Christ's dear Mother gazing,
In her trouble so amazing,
 Born of woman, would not weep?

Who on Christ's dear Mother thinking,
Such a cup of sorrow drinking,
 Would not share her sorrow deep?

For His people's sins rejected,
Saw her Jesus unprotected,
 Saw with thorns, with scourges rent:

Saw her Son from judgment taken,
Her Beloved in death forsaken,
 Till His spirit forth He sent.

Fount of love and holy sorrow,
Mother! may my spirit borrow
 Somewhat of thy woe profound;

Unto Christ, with pure emotion,
Raise my contrite heart's devotion,
 Love to read in every wound.

Those five wounds on Jesus smitten,
Mother! in my heart be written,
 Deep as in thine own they be;

Thou, thy Saviour's Cross who bearest,
Thou, thy Son's rebuke who sharest,
 Let me share them both with thee.

In the passion of my Maker,
Be my sinful soul partaker,
Weep till death and weep with thee;

Mine with thee be that sad station,
There to watch the great salvation,
Wrought upon the atoning tree.

Virgin, thou of virgins fairest,
May the bitter woe thou bearest,
Make on me impression deep.

Thus Christ's dying may I carry,
With Him in His passion tarry,
And His wounds in memory keep.

May His wound both wound and heal me,
He enkindle, cleanse, anneal me,
Be His Cross my hope and stay.

May He, when the mountains quiver,
From that flame which burns forever
Shield me on the judgment day.

Jesus, may Thy Cross defend me,
And Thy Mother's prayer befriend me,
Let me die in Thine embrace;

When to dust my dust returneth,
Grant a soul that to Thee yearneth
In Thy Paradise a place. Amen.