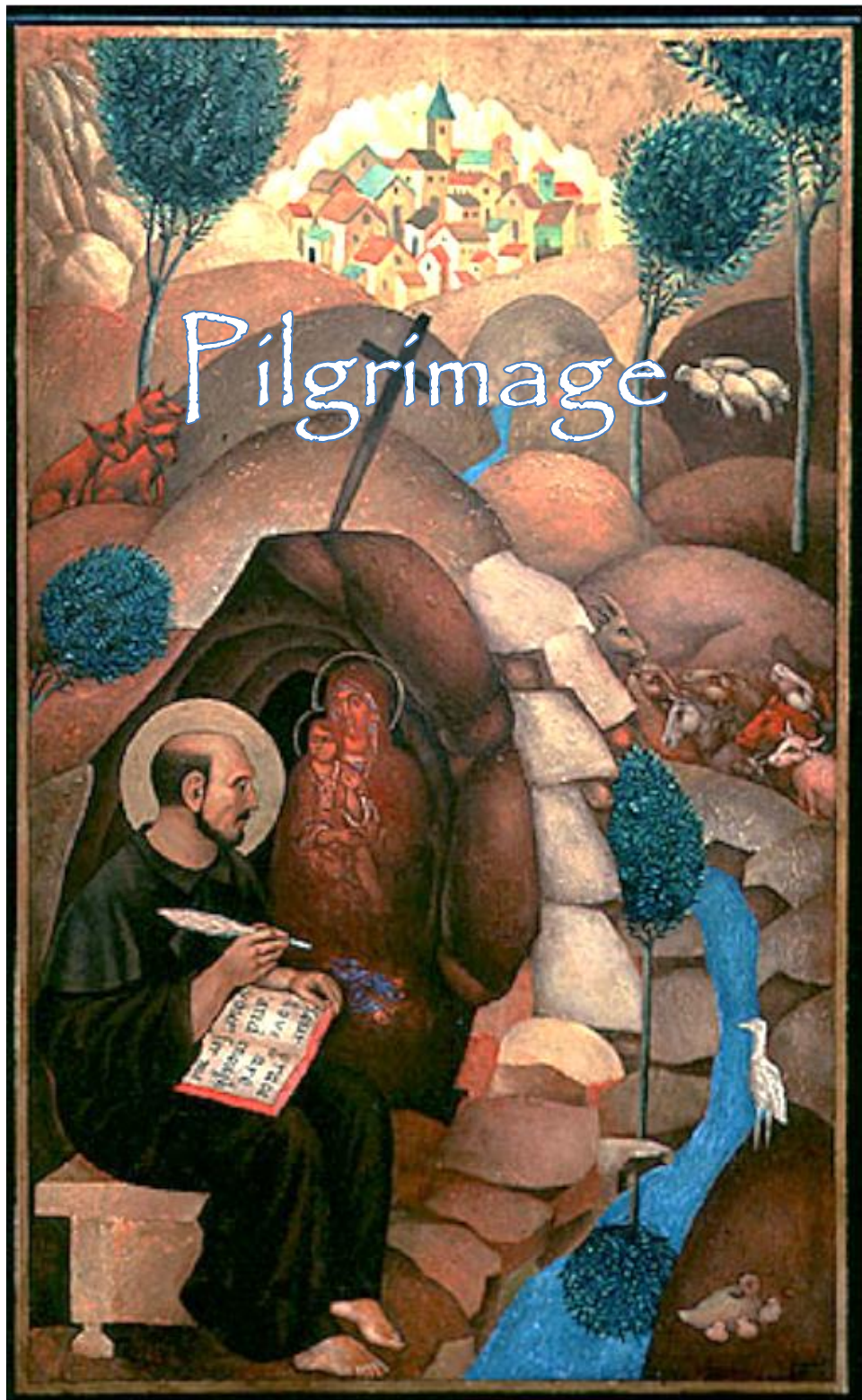


# Pilgrimage



## Prayer for Generosity

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

— *St. Ignatius Loyola*



THỦ BẢN TỰ THUẬT

*Thánh I. Nhà Loyola*

# Things You Didn't Know About Ignatius

## 1. He Was a Nobleman

Inigo de Loyola (he would not take the name “Ignatius” until after his studies in Paris) came into a Basque world dominated by staunch family traditions and loyalties and isolated by mountains. He came from a noble and ancient family; of that family, a chronicler would later write, “The Loyola’s were one of the most disastrous families our country had to endure, one of those Basque families that bore a coat of arms over its main doorway, the better to justify the misdeeds that were the tissue and pattern of its life.”

## 2. He Was, Well, a “Bon Vivant”

Ignatius, the young nobleman, certainly lived the life expected of him; existence in feudal 16th-century Basque country in the westernmost part of the Pyrenees Mountains was violent. Any nobleman worth his salt was prepared to leap for his sword at any provocation. Violence was ever prepared to meet violence, and the very stamp of a man’s masculinity and reputation lie in both his sword and his sexuality. The future saint met both expectations exceedingly well: He was neither a pacifist nor a celibate, to say the least.

## 3. He Grew Up Without His Mother

Ignatius’ mother died shortly after his birth. He spent his first few years of life living at the home of a nurse, Maria de Garin, a few miles from the family manor; Maria taught the young boy to pray. He was returned to the homestead shortly after his brother married. Ignatius’ new sister-in-law, Magdalena de Araoz, became a third mother figure;

she nursed him back to health after his encounter with the cannonball (see number five). She also was instrumental in his new discovery of God in his life.

#### **4. He Had Great In-Laws**

When Magdalena married Ignatius' brother, Queen Isabella of Spain gave her a painting of the Annunciation. This painting, installed in the chapel at the manor house, and the religious books Magdalena brought with her to her marriage, played a pivotal role in Ignatius' conversion. Although the future saint had asked for books of adventure and romance to distract him during his convalescence, Magdalena instead delivered the *Life of Christ* and the *Legends of the Saints* to his bedside.

#### **5. He Almost Died in Battle**

In 1519, at 28, Ignatius demanded that his small band of soldiers battle an undefeatable force of 12,000 French troops at Pamplona, Spain. His courage (or perhaps, more accurately, his obstinacy) earned him a cannonball to the legs, which shattered one and seriously damaged the other. The chivalric values he held so highly resulted in a long period of convalescence at the family manor house in Loyola. This period changed his life, and the world, forever.

#### **6. At 28, He Was Given Last Rites**

Told that he would die of the cannonball injuries to his legs, Ignatius was given last rites. And then he made an astounding recovery.

#### **7. He Had Cosmetic Surgery**

Don't think that Ignatius renounced his courtier ways overnight. Even after being given Last Rites and experiencing an exceptional recovery, he demanded the 16th-century equivalent of plastic surgery. Since close-fitting boots were all the fashion at the time, he was

ashamed of the bone protuberance on his leg and demanded that the protuberance be sawed off. Recall that this was several centuries before the introduction of surgical anesthesia. (The surgery cost 15 ducats, but his brother refused to pay more than 10. The in-laws might have been great, but the siblings were a bit cheap.)

When Ignatius set a goal, he would endure almost anything to attain it; his determination shown here is a precursor to what he achieved later in his life.

### **8. He Was an Early Proponent of Highlighters**

Ignatius' desire for spiritual reading during his recovery soon became insatiable. Well before the invention of highlighters, he copied passages from the lives of Christ and those of the saints; the words of Jesus were inscribed in red and those of the Blessed Mother in blue.

### **9. He Was a Dreamer**

His desire to imitate Christ and the saints resulted in his active use of what would become an integral part of Ignatian spirituality - the imagination. While early in his life he dreamed of chivalric acts that would win the admiration of men and the affection of women, he used that same imagination to dream instead of how he would lead his new life. The life, that is, he would lead when he could finally get out of bed.

### **10. He Became a Beggar**

Ignatius thought long and hard about the “spirits” in his life, the spirits that lead to God, and the spirits born of the devil. This spurred him to live in a manner that historians have called his pilgrim period. During this time, he was resolute in renouncing worldly pleasures. He donned a sackcloth and one rope-soled shoe (the other leg was still tied up with bandages) and set his sights on the Holy Land.



### **11. A Donkey Helped Lead Him to God**

In his peripatetic post-recovery years, Ignatius encountered a Moor upon the road and engaged him in conversation about the Blessed Mother. The Moor, who had chosen to convert to Christianity rather than face the Inquisition, could not admit that he believed in the life-long virginity of Mary. Frightened by the imperious manner of Ignatius, the Moor hurried his mule ahead. Ignatius however, was torn between killing the man who doubted Our Lady's virginity or letting him go, of reverting to or renouncing the violence of his past. In the end, he decided to allow the donkey upon which he rode to make the decision for him; the creature of burden turned and went the other way.

### **12. He Was Kicked Out of Israel**

One of Ignatius' most impassioned desires was to walk in the footsteps of Jesus in the Holy Land. A woman friend provided him the means to travel to Jerusalem, and he resolved to remain there for the rest of his life. The superior of the Franciscans, who was granted the supervision of Jerusalem by the pope, had other ideas. He considered Ignatius a madman and ordered him out of Jerusalem under penalty of excommunication.

### **13. Women Were Crucial, and He Knew It**

Maria de Garin and Magdalena de Loyola (nee Araoz) were the first of many women who played a crucial role in his spiritual and physical health. In fact, the Society of Jesus might have been very different if not for the assistance of important women in critical periods in his life.

And what he got, he gave back. After Ignatius' conversion, during his pilgrim years, he often devoted himself to spiritual direction for women. These experiences would have a profound influence on him.

#### **14. He Ministered to Prostitutes**

Even before the official founding of the Society of Jesus in 1540, Pope Paul III charged Ignatius and his companions to do missionary work in Rome. Perhaps the most telling of the Roman endeavors was their work with prostitutes. Rome had become the capital of European prostitution, and there were few alternatives for these women even if they could “change professions.” The opportunities for a woman without a dowry or property were negligible. Even shelter at a local convent required entrance into a religious order. Therefore, Ignatius and his companions established the house of St. Martha, where a woman could receive care, food and shelter without anything demanded in return. So intent was Ignatius on the success of the house that he ordered some of the group’s resources — ancient Roman marble and a hundred gold pieces — to be donated at a time when the young Society was financially strapped.

#### **15. His Companions Were Called Devils**

The early companions were described as the Seven Spanish Devils - not at the time, but in the 19th century, by an English historian. The companions (there were actually six of them) had met Ignatius during their studies in Paris, and they gathered in Rome to become the nucleus of the future Society. In less than a century, Ignatius and Francis Xavier would be canonized.

#### **16. He Looked Terrible**

Ignatius’ health and appearance were a problem from the time of his rendezvous with the cannonball to the end of his life. Shortly after his conversion experience, during his pilgrim years, he began severe and intensive penances. He gave up meat and wine, staples of the Basque diet, and stopped taking care of his appearance, of which he had been so proud. (One cannot help but wonder whether he regretted his pride in sawing off that bone from his leg.)



## **17. He Felt Terrible, and He Felt Terrible About It**

Ignatius lived an impoverished existence for many years, and he was severely troubled by abdominal pains throughout his life. The self-mortification, fasting and improper diet he followed had an increasingly deleterious effect on his health. In truth, he had ravaged his body so extensively through his fanatical extremism that he realized it left him ill prepared for God's work.

So when it came time to write the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, which guides the governance of the Society, he included norms and prescriptions forbidding future Jesuits from doing just what he had done. Upon his death in 1556, a renowned surgeon performed the autopsy, and he reported "almost innumerable gallstones of various colors, found in the kidneys, the lungs, the liver and the portal vein." Contemporary science would diagnose his ailment as biliary colic; the pain from that malady has crippled many a good soul.

## **18. There Were Women Jesuits**

Yes, you read that right.

As mentioned previously, the women in Ignatius' life often came to his rescue. During his pilgrim years, his spiritual conversations with women were assuredly fruitful for all concerned. However, this activity, as well-intentioned as it was, roused suspicions and slanderous accusations.

Yet Ignatius' mystical appeal continued to draw many women to his side. Among these was Isabel Roser, who befriended the poor beggar Ignatius when he was on the streets of Barcelona. (She paid for his ill-fated trip to the Holy Land.)

Isabel was also the leader of a group of Spanish noblewomen who participated in that most noble of Jesuit activities - fund raising. The generosity of Isabel and her

friends became increasingly important as the first companions (who would later be the first Jesuits) came together to study theology in Paris.

Isabel Roser was also one of the first female Jesuits. After her husband died in 1541, she returned to spiritual matters with increased enthusiasm. She initially focused her energies on monastic reform in Barcelona and Catalonia. This did not satisfy her, and she quickly settled her affairs and made plans to embark for Rome, accompanied by two Jesuits living in Barcelona. She was intent on becoming a Jesuit and wouldn't let anything stop her. When Ignatius caught wind of all this, he quickly moved to prevent those two Barcelona Jesuits from accompanying her.

Isabel was not to be outmaneuvered. With the helpful intervention of Emperor Charles V of Spain (Jesuits not being the only ones with friends in high places), she set sail for Rome with her lady-in-waiting and a friend. For two years after reaching Rome, she begged Ignatius to let her take the vows of a Jesuit. While Ignatius was able to stall for a time, Isabel eventually took the most expedient path - she wrote Pope Paul III (the same pope who had approved the founding of the Society a few years earlier), asking for permission to enter the Society of Jesus and for a papal order forcing Ignatius' hand.

By Christmas 1545, she had bequeathed her entire estate to the Society. Ignatius attempted to refuse it, but he quickly understood that he was on the losing side. Thus, on Christmas Day 1545, three women - Isabel, her lady-in-waiting Francisca Cruyllas, and her friend Lucrezia di Bradine - knelt before Ignatius and professed the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience that he had formulated for them.

The trial run was short-lived. Ignatius soon realized that Isabel was not suited for communal life, with or without a

vow of obedience. The pope was more involved in the everyday operations of the young Society at that time. Isabel had asked for Paul III's permission to enter the Jesuits, so Ignatius then requested of the pope that Isabel's vows be rescinded. Ignatius prevailed - this time.

After the dust settled, Isabel returned to Barcelona and continued to do good works. Eventually she entered a Franciscan convent in Jerusalem where she lived until her death.

### **19. The Women Jesuits, Part II**

There was one permanent woman Jesuit. She was Princess Juana of Spain. Juana was the daughter of Emperor Charles V and wife if the royal heir of Portugal. Her husband died shortly after their wedding, and she was then appointed Regent of Spain, replacing her brother Philip (who had moved on to an ill-fated marriage with Mary Tudor).

Princess Juana had string contacts with the Society, and she lived an almost monastic life as Regent of Spain. An able and intelligent ruler, Juana also discerned a vocation as a Jesuit. Ignatius wrestled with this proposition. "How do you refuse the request of one of the most powerful women in the world?," he must have been thinking. Ignatius was also wary from his previous experience as well as concerned about the future marriage prospects of a Hapsburg princess.

Nevertheless, she was admitted to the Society with the vows of a scholastic, a form devised by Ignatius by which a person (up to then, only men) would bind him- or herself, but the Society retained the right to release her or him from the vows. She was never released from her vows and was deeply involved in many of the Society's projects. She remained a Jesuit until her death.

## **20. When He Died There Were a Thousand Jesuits**

Ignatius, a tiny (barely more than five feet tall), wiry, bilious-hued, sparsely bearded, limping figure, lived his final years in a small room in Rome. From there, he governed the Society of Jesus and witnessed its growth from the original six companions in 1541 to a thousand at his death in 1556. Jesuits were dispersed throughout Europe, India and Brazil during those years.

Despite the great distances and time involved, he kept in close contact with his brothers throughout the world. His almost 7,000 letters (most of them written after 1547) attest to this fact. The Society opened 33 colleges in his lifetime.

## **21. One Cannonball and Lots of Grace Equals Glory to God**

All of this success, however, would mean nothing to Ignatius if it did not function as a means to bring people and give glory to God.

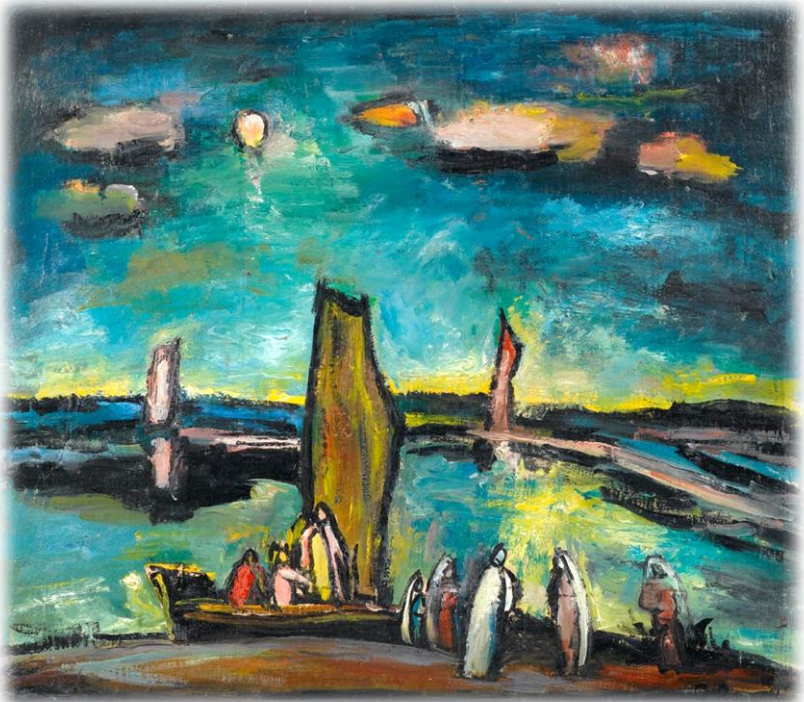
Ignatius was the founder of a school of spirituality that grew over the next four-and-a-half centuries. This spirituality might well be his greatest legacy.

His emphasis on a personal spiritual growth that creates a desire to bring greater glory to God has propagated a clear message of service through love and discernment. Each of us might dismiss the saintliness of our own particular nature. Yet we all possess the ability to “find God in all things,” as Ignatius encouraged us to do. And our personal relationship with God can lead to peace and commitment - peace with ourselves and magnanimous commitment to others. Maybe we aren’t saints. But peace and commitment sound strikingly holy, don’t they?

— Michael Power, S.J.  
Loyola Marymount University

## Jeremiah 29:11

I know what I am planning for you says the Lord.  
I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you.  
I will give you hope and a good future.



Georges Rouault, Christ et les pêcheurs, 1939

## Of Those Who ...

Of those who dream,  
    only the few turn their dreams into action.  
Of those who act,  
    only a few turn their actions into success.  
Of those who succeed,  
    only the few turn their success into greatness,  
and of those who achieve greatness,  
    there are only a few whose deeds and character  
        will outlive them for generations to come...

Almighty God, these young men and women of Brebeuf are such people, bless them and give them a realization of your love for them. Further bless them and let them show their integrity, their deep concern and above all their sense of humor. Bless them and give them the insight that they are to need as they continue to pursue their goals.

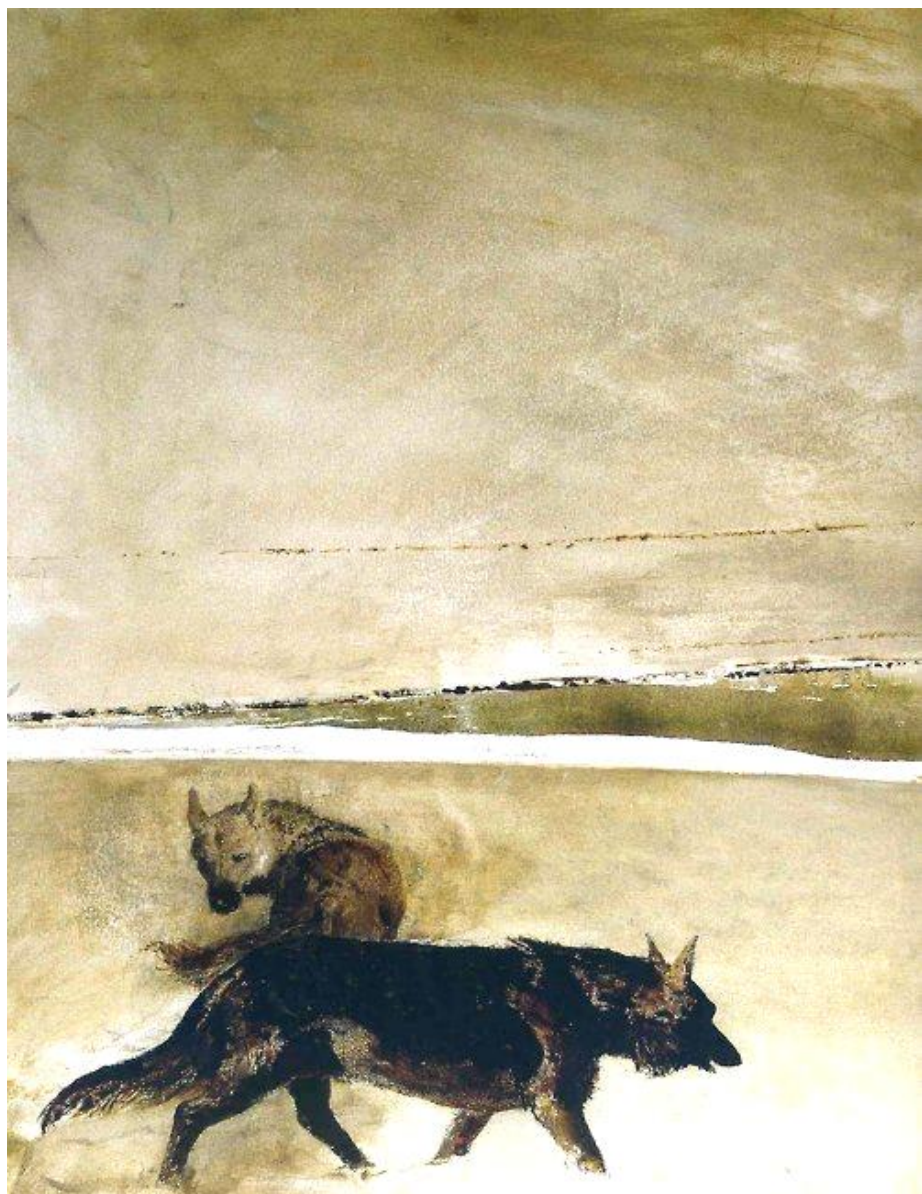


## True Friendship

A kind mouth multiplies friends,  
and gracious lips prompt friendly  
greetings.  
Let your acquaintances be many,  
but one in a thousand your confidant.  
When you gain a friend, first test him,  
and be not too ready to trust him.  
For one sort of friend is a friend when it  
suits him,  
but he will not be with you in time of  
distress.  
A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter;  
he who finds one finds a treasure.  
A faithful friend is beyond price,  
no sum can balance his worth.  
A faithful friend is a life-saving remedy,  
such as he who fears God finds;  
For he who fears God behaves accordingly,  
and his friend will be like himself.

— *Sirach 7: 5-9, 14-17*





Wyeth

## Two Wolves...

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside of all people.

He said,

“My son, the battle is between two wolves inside us all.”

One Wolf’s hunger feeds on anger and greed, self pity and resentment, arrogance and pride, lies and jealousy, envy and regret.

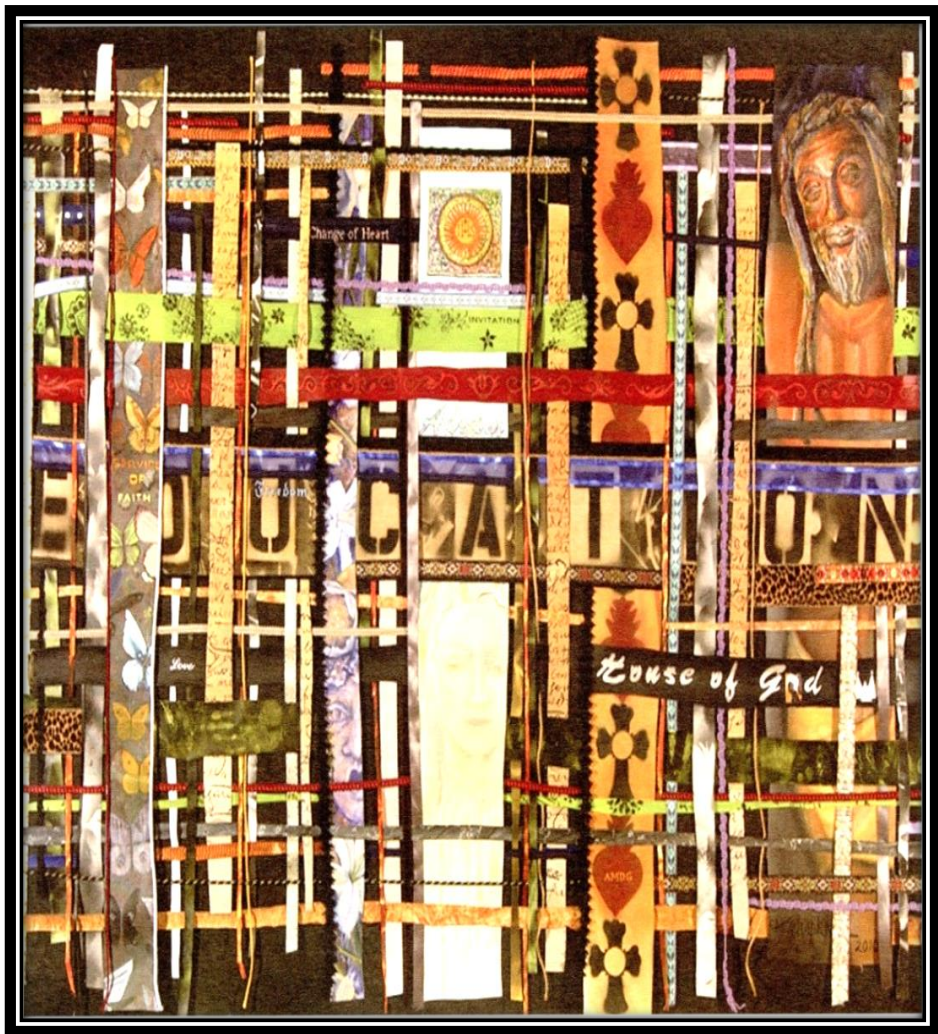
The other Wolf hungers for peace and hope, kindness and compassion, generosity and faith, humility and love, joy and truth.

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather:

“Which Wolf wins?”

The old Cherokee simply replied,

“The one you feed.”



## *Eloquentia Perfecta* Effective Speech.

Preparation and confidence

Speak loudly

Boldly

And with conviction

It's a rare person who wants to hear what he doesn't  
want to hear

Perfect eloquence

The skill to say precisely what one means

And to do so with grace and persuasive force

The right word with the right thought

# Magis

*MAG-jis. Latin – more or greater*

The “continuous quality improvement” term traditionally used by Ignatius of Loyola and the Jesuits, suggesting the spirit of generous excellence in which ministry should be carried on – “for the greater glory of God”.





From Genesis (12.1–4):

The Lord said to Abram:

Go, from your own country and your own kindred and your father's house, to the land that I will show you ...

So Abram went. He was seventy-five.

From Mark (1.35–38):

In Chapter One, after a day of miracles and healing and much success. It has been a happy day, a good day. And the disciples want to hold on to it. And Simon said to Him: Everyone is looking for you. And Jesus said to them: Let us move on to the other towns, that I may preach there also; for that is why I came out.

From Luke (9.57ff):

As they were going the road, someone said to Him: I will follow you wherever you go. And Jesus said: Foxes have holes, birds have nests. But the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.

From John (21.15–19):

Simon, do you love me? Feed my lambs. Simon, do you love me? Take care of my sheep. Simon, son of John, do you love me? Lord, you know all things. You know that I love you. Feed my sheep. When you were young, you walked where you pleased. But you will stretch out your hands and be led where you do not want to go. Do you love me? Follow me.



From Ignatius, writing in 1541:

Candidates for our Society “must go on a pilgrimage... For he who is unable to walk one day without food and with but little sleep does not seem capable of persevering in the Society.”

From the General Examen (*Constitutions*, no.67):

“The third experience is to spend another month in making a pilgrimage, without money and even in begging from door to door, at appropriate times, for the love of God our Lord, in order to grow accustomed to discomfort in food and lodging . So too the candidate, through abandoning all the reliance which he could have in money or other created things, may with genuine faith and intense love place his reliance entirely in his Creator and Lord.”

From the *Spiritual Diary* (Ignatius kept a diary, but he destroyed it before he died, and just a small fragment survived) for 23 February 1544:

“While preparing the altar, the thought of Jesus occurred to me, and I felt a movement to follow Him.”

And from the Diary again, for 5 March 1544:

“Turning to Jesus, I said: ‘Lord, where shall I go, or where [do you want to bring me], etc.; following you, my Lord, I shall never be lost.’”



Dora Nikolova Bittau: *Educated and Blessed with Companions at the University of Paris*

## The Process of Prayer

Reading crumbs first, as the basis — it provides the matter, and leads to meditation. Meditation seeks most carefully what is to be wished for, and by its digging discovers and lays bare the treasure. But of itself it is unable to grasp it, so it turns to prayer. Prayer, raised up on high with all its might to God, gets what it wants, the sweetness, gladness, joy, or contemplation. Contemplation, when it comes, rewards the work of the other three, while it quenches the parched soul with the dew of heaven, Reading, therefore, is an outward exercise, meditation an inward understanding. Prayer has to do with desire, but contemplation is above and beyond all the senses.

Reading without meditation is arid, meditation without reading will go astray; prayer without meditation is lukewarm, meditation without prayer is fruitless; prayer with devotion wins contemplation; to attain to contemplation without prayer is rare or miraculous... There are four things that prevent us from mounting this ladder — unavoidable necessity, useful and virtuous activity, human weakness, and worldly vanity. The first is understandable, the second permissible, the third is deplorable, the fourth culpable.

— Guigo the Carthusian  
from *The Ladder of Four Rungs*

## A reading from the book of Sirach

While I was still young, before I went on my travels,  
I sought wisdom openly in my prayer.  
Before the temple I asked for her,  
and I will search for her until the end.

From the first blossom to the ripening grape  
my heart delighted in her;  
my foot walked on the straight path;  
from my youth I followed her steps.

I inclined my ear a little and received her,  
and I found for myself much instruction.  
I made progress in her;  
to him who gives wisdom I will give glory.

For I resolved to live according to wisdom,  
and I was zealous for the good,  
and I shall never be disappointed.  
My soul grappled with wisdom,  
and in my conduct I was strict;

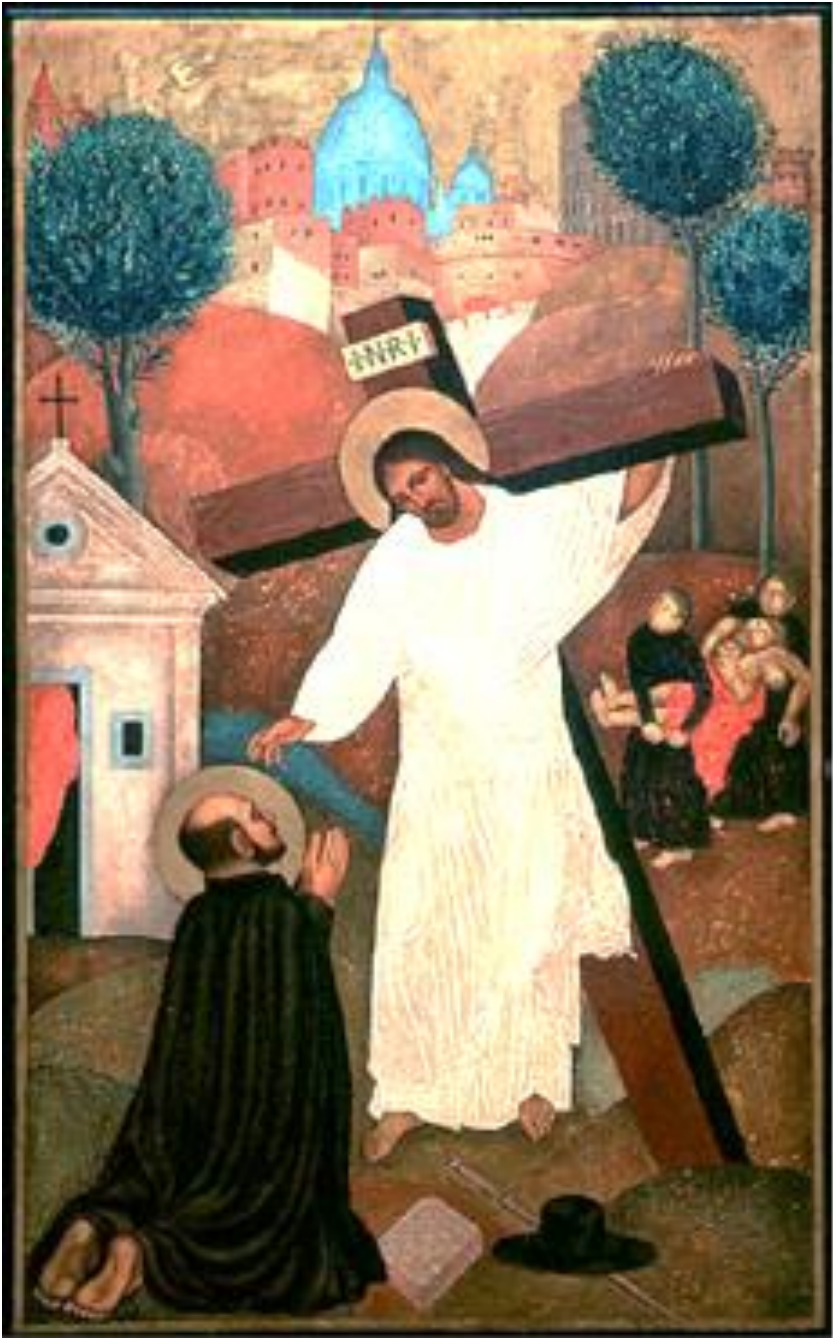
I spread out my hands to the heavens,  
and lamented my ignorance of her.  
I directed my soul to her,  
and in purity I found her.

With her I gained understanding from the first;  
therefore I will never be forsaken.  
My heart was stirred to seek her;  
therefore I have gained a prize possession.  
The Lord gave me my tongue as a reward,  
and I will praise him with it.

Draw near to me, you who are uneducated,  
and lodge in the house of instruction.  
Why do you say you are lacking in these things,  
and why do you endure such great thirst?  
I opened my mouth and said,  
Acquire wisdom for yourselves without money.

Put your neck under her yoke,  
and let your souls receive instruction;  
it is to be found close by.

— *Sirach 51:13–26*



Dora Nikolova Bittau, *Confirmed in Mission at LaStorta*

## Contemplation on the Incarnation

In the Contemplation on the Incarnation, where the Holy Trinity broods over the world, beholding persons and nations, black and white, weeping and laughing, all the beauty and hope of human hearts, human culture and human history — going down to the death of hatred, loneliness, oppression — the death of sin — and the decision of trinitarian love to work the most Holy Incarnation, becoming man in the Son, becoming man in Jesus: becoming man in the Annunciation, and in the flesh and history of Bethlehem, Nazareth, of the baptism, the public life, the death and resurrection: the Holy Trinity brooding over the world and in love becoming man in Jesus in each and every moment of his human experience: as he sits under a tree at the end of a long day when his disciples have been utterly obtuse and without understanding; as he walks weary and tired and bored in the sweat of a hot afternoon; as he rejoices with friends, as he heals the blind man, as he tells a parable, as he weeps over the dead — all through the public life, until the death and resurrection: the Holy Trinity in love becoming man in each and every detail of the humanity of Jesus — and so to the death and resurrection. But beyond that: through all human history, through the larger biography of Jesus, to our own time: the Holy Trinity bending over the world, laboring over it, loving it, working the contemporary actuality of the Incarnation. The Holy Trinity, in Jesus, taking up into the life of the very Godhead all the details of all human history: When I was hungry. When I was thirsty. When I was in prison...



A second great image of the Society occurs in the vision of La Storta, where Ignatius begs our God and Father to place him (Ignatius) with the Son. And then Ignatius sees and hears — and knows beyond the possibility of doubt that the Father asks the Son to receive Ignatius as his servant; whereon the Son, explicitly as Jesus in his humanity carrying his Cross, turns to Ignatius and says: “I will that you serve Us.” That you serve. Labor: active work. That you serve Us: the trinitarian Godhead. How? The most Holy Trinity as searched for, found, and served in the humanity of Jesus carrying his Cross. And well within Ignatius’ own lifetime, this Jesus was explicitly understood as the contemporary Jesus of the 1540’s and 50’s in his full corporate, ecclesial, worldly identity. And so He is the Jesus also of the 1960’s, the 1970’s, the 1980’s. For it is also declared to be no private grace, but a founder’s grace. Precisely as Jesuits, as Companions of Jesus, therefore, we are placed by the Father with the Son, today, with Jesus carrying his Cross. We are placed by the Father with whatever is human — individuals and whole peoples — we are placed with the full range of the beauty and the horror, the boredom and the appeal of the human, in its process of becoming or of being destroyed. Here, here alone, for a Jesuit, is the place to struggle and adore. And here is the place to serve.

This is mysticism. Meat and potatoes stuff. No psychological funny business. The kind that comes with every love affair and every *esprit de corps* that’s worth a glance. And we cannot do without it. It’s not for Ignatius only, but for the whole Society. It’s a family grace. It’s the Jesuit way of looking at the world, of feeling the world, of evaluating the world, of choosing the world. And it’s a

family obligation. In my opinion, frankly, we are on a mission that cannot tolerate its absence. I don't care much whether we talk about it, or whether we can articulate it. If it is what you do, how you choose, who you are, it will get said well enough.

The two images I have described so briefly are not from the period of Ignatius' full maturity as founder. Jerome Nadal best locked the matter in: *Etiam in actione contemplativus*: a contemplative also, even, in action. But Ignatius himself expressed the Jesuit charism almost as well, in the years of his full maturity. I turn to Constitutions 288:

All should make diligent efforts to keep their intention right, not only in regard to their state of life, but also in all particular details. In these they should always aim at serving and pleasing the Divine Goodness for its own sake and because of the incomparable love and benefits with which God has anticipated us, rather than for fear of punishment or hope of rewards, although they ought to draw help also from them. Further, they should often be exhorted to seek God our Lord in all things, stripping off from themselves the love of creatures to the extent this is possible, in order to turn their love upon the Creator of them, by loving Him in all creatures and all of them in Him, in conformity with his holy and divine will.

Let them seek God in all things — loving Him in all creatures, and all of them in Him.

Ignatius is heading for home here. The Jesuit style is fully in place. The tone is lowered, the language

undramatic, the great adventure with God fully engaged, constantly occurring — but largely unobtrusive, often almost hidden. And it's all about service. To the sensible eye, to the man who does not contemplate and who is not in love, it can seem like just doing his job, like “doing the next thing that has to be done”. And hence the Society can often be misunderstood. It can look so sensible, so unemotional, so reasonable — so worldly. That, my brothers, is and should be the very term of the mysticism: the manner is ordinary, simple, unadorned — and steady: find God in all things, all things in God. No fireworks. Just faith. A lot of faith. Much hard work. Fidelity. A fair amount of suffering — which is largely disregarded. A lot of joy. And deep, deep gratitude for the opportunity to serve a Lord so gracious and so good. Many of you know exactly what I am talking about, because this is the way you live.

We are speaking about a quality of presence — in the activity, a finding and being with God — in the activity, a contemplative quality and presence, even in action. Do we believe that this is possible, that we are capable of this? We know well enough — maybe sadly enough — that it is not automatic. But who would want love to be that way? But the question is: do we believe that it is not impossible?

Certainly it is a grace, a grace given by God alone, to be sought with much begging — much begging for ourselves and for the whole Society. But granting the grace of God — which is an easy thing to do — what are some of the means we must take — and not just for a day, or in time of retreat, but as a laboring, persistent, unsentimental way of life? What are some of the means to make this ideal a reality in our lives? What are some of the conditions and some of the

means to finding God in all things, all things in God? I want to name some:

1. First, a belief in the existence, and presence, of a personal God who knows me and loves me, here, now, in detail — the hairs on our heads and the sparrows — who knows and loves me more than I can ever realize.
2. Second, a great desire for God. Such a desire exists in every heart. But the tough school of love needed is to learn how to stay in touch with this desire, and to let it become great, magnanimous — and not to let things cool it down.



Dora Nikolova Bittau: *Abiding Intimacy with the Trinity in Rome*

## *What story from the Gospels is most vivid and alive for you, and why?*

### **Ignatian Context**

Composition of place:

“...a composition made by imagining the place. Here we should take notice of the following. When a contemplation or meditation is about something that can be gazed on, for example, a contemplation of Christ our Lord, who is visible, the composition will be to see in imagination the physical place where that which I want to contemplate is taking place.”

— *Spiritual Exercises* [47]

Why experience in our own imagination the events of Scripture?

“The ‘powers of imagining’ consist in calling on the sensuous imagination with great intensity — *exercising* the sensuous powers — in order to reenact, as it were, in one’s own life the symbolic narratives of the past, so as to feel the effects of one’s imagined present participation in the lives and events [of Jesus and his disciples].”

— Patrick A. Heelan, SJ  
in *An Ignatian Spirituality Reader*, 140

The point is the *effect in our own lives* of the events related by Scripture — by “reenacting” them through our imagination, we encounter/or *ourselves* God at work; by spending time and attention there, we encounter Jesus and grow into a deeper human connection and friendship with him.



Dora Nikolova Bittau: *Wounded at Pamplona*



Go forth  
and set  
the world  
on fire.

-St. Ignatius Loyola



LOYOLA UNIVERSITY MARYLAND

— 1852 —