

**CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITY
OF
SOUTH AFRICA**

RESOURCE BOOKLET 2011

(A working document)

Compiled

by the

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of the

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HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITY

Rooted in the 16th Century

Directory of International Associations of the Faithful, published by the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

Official Name: Christian Life Community

Acronym: CVX/CLC

Established: 1952

History: The origins of CVX/CLC date back to the Marian congregations created in 1563 by the Jesuit priest Jean Leunis and a group of students from the Roman College who wished to follow in the foot steps of the lay groups that had developed since 1540 in different parts of the world thanks to the work of St. Ignatius Loyola and his companions.

In 1584, Pope Gregory XIII approved the first congregation in his bull "Omnipotentis Dei," and in 1587 Pope Sixtus V issued his bull "Superna Dispositione" authorizing the institution of other congregations affiliated to the original one and open to everyone.

The serious crisis which the Society of Jesus suffered in the 18th century, leading in 1773 to its suppression by Pope Clement XIV, weakened the congregations which became a mass movement

that was quite different from what the founder had originally intended.

It was not until 1948, following the publication of the apostolic constitution "Bis Saeculari" in which Pope Pius XII laid down guidelines for the lay apostolate, that the need was felt to renew the Marian congregations -- or sodalities as they are called in some countries -- and to group them together into an international federation.

In 1952 the World Federation of the Marian Congregations was established, and after changing its name to the World Federation of the Christian Life Communities it was recognized by the Holy See in 1971 as a Catholic international organization. Its present name dates back to 1979. CVX/CLC is a member of the Conference of ICOs and as a nongovernmental organization it has consultative status with the U.N. Economic and Social Council and UNICEF. On Dec. 3, 1990, the Pontifical Council for the Laity decreed the Christian Life Community to be an international association of the faithful of pontifical right.

Identity: CVX/CLC is made up of Christians -- men and women, young people and adults of every social condition -- who wish to follow Jesus Christ and cooperate in building up the Kingdom, bearing witness to their faith in every area of life, committed to taking the teachings of the Church into the heart of human culture to build up a more just and more fraternal society.

Membership to CVX/CLC comes as a response to a personal vocation, and is preceded by a period of formation and temporary

commitment. Its educational method, centered on Christ and participation in the paschal mystery, is based on Scripture, the liturgy, study of the magisterium of the Church, reading the will of God in the events of history and in the signs of the times.

The source and the instrument of CVX/CLC spirituality are the Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola. A central position is given to Our Lady in the life of the community, for her cooperation in the work of redemption is the supreme model for the members on which to base their own cooperation with Christ's mission.

Organization: CVX/CLC is governed by the General Assembly, made up of the Executive Council and the delegates of the national communities. The Executive Council, which is responsible for implementing the decisions and policies adopted by the General Assembly, comprises the president, the vice president, the secretary, the treasurer, ecclesiastical assistant, the deputy ecclesiastical assistant and three council members.

Similar management bodies exist at the national level. Other associations of people wishing to share its lifestyle, without being full members, may also be affiliated with the CVX/CLC.

Membership: CVX/CLC has about 123,000 members in 52 countries, in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and South America.

Works: CVX/CLC, whose members take part in the activities promoted worldwide by the Society of Jesus, manages schools in

Chile and Hong Kong, spiritual retreat houses in France and various kinds of institutions in the Philippines and in Chile.

Publications:

Progressio, a biannual magazine;

Projects, a quarterly newsletter

Web site: www.CVX/CLC-clc.net

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IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA (1491-1556)

The youngest child of a noble Basque family fiercely loyal to the Spanish crown (Ferdinand and Isabella), he was named Inigo after a local saint. Raised to be a courtier, he was trying valiantly to defend the fortress town of Pamplona in 1521 when a French cannonball shattered his leg. During a long convalescence, he found himself drawn away from the romances of chivalry that had filled his imagination from an early age to more spiritual reading—an illustrated life of Christ and a collection of saints' lives.

After his recovery, he set out for the Holy Land to realize a dream of "converting the infidel." On the way he stopped in the little town of Manresa and wound up spending nearly a year there during which he experienced both the depths of despair and great times of enlightenment. Ordered to leave Palestine after being there little more than a month, Ignatius decided that he needed an education in order to be able to "help souls."

In Barcelona, he went to school with boys a quarter his age to learn the rudiments of Latin grammar, and then moved on to several other Spanish university cities. In each he was imprisoned and interrogated by the Inquisition, because he kept speaking to people about "spiritual things," having neither a theology degree nor priestly ordination.

Finally, turning his back on his homeland, he went to the foremost university of the time, the University of Paris, where he began his education all over again and with diligence, after five years, was finally awarded the degree "Master of Arts." It was here at Paris that he changed his Basque name to the Latin Ignatius and its Spanish equivalent Ignacio.

While at the University, he had roomed with and become good friends with a fellow Basque named Francis Xavier and a Savoyard named Peter Faber. After graduation, these three, together with several other Paris graduates, undertook a process of communal discernment and decided to bind themselves together in an apostolic community that became the Society of Jesus.

Unanimously elected superior by his companions, Ignatius spent the last 16 years of his life in Rome directing the fledgling order, while the others went all over Europe, to the Far East, and eventually to the New World. And wherever they went they founded schools as a means of helping people to "find God in all things."

AIMS OF CLC

Individual CLCers aim to:

- participate in the Eucharist whenever possible
- lead an active sacramental life
- practise daily personal prayer, especially that based on Sacred Scripture
- discern by means of a daily review of life (the Examen) and regular spiritual direction, to strive for a continuing personal and social growth which is spiritual, human and apostolic
- strive for an annual retreat
- foster an awareness of the Mother of God

We aim to live community through our membership of small groups. The group allows the individual to practise Ignatian Spirituality. One cannot do it on one's own. We need community. CLC encourages the discipline of a regular prayer life.

Groups are the life blood but CLC is greater. It is an international body embracing a missionary, apostolic and spiritual ideal.

Small groups consist of members who are facilitated and lead by a group member fulfilling each of these roles.

The facilitator and leader may be one and the same person, but each meeting may be facilitated by one of the group members. The leader is responsible for the broad organisation of the group.

Each group has as well a guide who is not a member of the group. In a new group the guide will attend most meetings and help the group in formation of the CLC process.

In established groups the guide meets regularly but less frequently and the role of the guide at this stage is to view the group objectively and to offer advice, encouragement and discernment, and to help discern the way forward of the group in the long term.

The guide may be called in to help resolve specific problems.

The guide facilitates a review of the group at regular intervals.

The Ecclesiastical Assistant who is not necessarily one of the clergy, is appointed by the Superior of the Jesuits. S/he is a server and companion and is conscious of, and enthusiastic about, serving the CLC as a mission. The EA values the laity, respects people and makes proposals. S/he does not create dependencies in others toward him or herself. S/he promotes especially the Spiritual Exercises, paying close attention to how they are given as well as CLC's integration into the local Church.

WAYS OF IGNATIAN PRAYER IGNATIAN CONTEMPLATION

Contemplation is the fundamental prayer in Ignatian Spirituality. It is not a type of prayer that seeks solutions to questions or problems. Contemplation is being present to the mystery of an event and to its meaning. It is not about discovering ideas or finding practical conclusions, it is about being present to a scene in such a way that the scene produces its effects in the depths of our hearts.

This is not an experience that is unknown to us. We do it all the time. When we gaze at a sunset or the ocean, when we feel held by the magic of a baby's smile, or the timeless awe of death, we are present to the mystery of the event. There are no conclusions to be drawn or solutions to be applied, we simply are in the reality of the moment, in the eternal now.

Ignatian contemplation is about becoming more deeply in love with God. It is a "looking long" at Jesus in the Gospels, his words, his actions, his attitudes, his way of being, the quality of his presence. It is letting the beauty, the truth, the mystery of his person and personality sink deeply into our hearts. When they do, we are affected, we are changed, we are transformed and lifted to his level of beauty and truth. We feel more acquainted with Jesus, more in touch with him. In other words, we have fallen more deeply in love with him.

Contemplation does not bring the Gospel down to our level, it lifts us up to the level of the Gospel. Looking long lets the mystery penetrate to the depths of the heart and transforms us into Christ.

An example may help. Let us consider the story of the "Prodigal Son." We place ourselves in the scene. Where are we? Do we find ourselves with the father out looking for his son to return? With the son in his uncertain walk back to his father? With the angry older son? What are we feeling? hope? resentments? indifference? Maybe none of the above. Be with whatever strikes you and thank God, if nothing strikes you, thank God.

There is no pass or fail in prayer. It's the intention, the desire that counts. We don't judge our feelings, we simply accept them and ask what the Spirit is trying to show us. We open our hearts to the truth of this story and see what it is saying to us. There is no hurry or expectations about what we should be getting out of this. We simply stay in the presence of God and be attentive to whatever strikes us.

The more this becomes our practice, the more we see the events of our lives with contemplative eyes and find ourselves encountering God in all things. This is the fruit of Ignatian Contemplation.

Larry Gooley, SJ *Guideposts - A Resource Handbook for Christian Life Community, 2006*

SOME PRACTICALITIES ON IGNATIAN CONTEMPLATION

From Savio Rodrigues SJ

Ignatian contemplation makes use of guided imagery and active imagination within a selected gospel text. It is advisable to choose an action filled passage, so that it brings one's personal desires, inclinations, emotions, problems, shadows, etc. into focus in prayer, without planning to air these.

Read the passage. Stop for about five seconds for the scene to settle in your mind. Read it once again so as to take in some of the details you may have overlooked. Stop and let it sink in. Read it once or twice more in case you feel you need to do so. Do not struggle to remember details or words or passages. Be fully satisfied with whatever you remember. Remembering the passage or its details is of no importance at all.

Now close the Bible and let yourself sink into the scene you have created for yourself through the reading of the passage. Let yourself get lost in the scene and identify yourself with some person or something in the scene. Try and re-live the actual situation. You may soon find yourself in active conversation, or helping or sharing or just being with someone in the scene. Be passive, but alert. Let the others in the scene control the events, you just go along, but always being a part of that reality that is re-enfolding.

After you have emerged from your contemplation you spend some time in reviewing¹ your prayer. At this time you check as to what actually happened during that hour. What did you notice in your mind, feelings, sentiments, emotions etc. Write these down and reflect on what they are saying to you.

¹ See Review of prayer in the Glossary, 37.

IGNATIAN MEDITATION

1. This is meant as an Introduction. It'll probably not be helpful to those with a great deal of experience.

2. Ignatian meditation is counter-intuitive to many of us. Mommies and Daddies should actually have the easiest time, I reckon, with this sort of prayer. Why? Because they have watched their children "assume" roles: Harry Potter, Spiderman, Dora. Ignatian Meditation asks that you enter into the story of scripture, that you become a part of the action. It engages the imagination...a faculty that we "modern" folk seem to have abandoned.

My advice for this prayer: be a child again. Let the wonder and excitement of taking on a new character, of 'putting on' another, captivate you. Allow this naiveté to open you to the movement of the Spirit, enkindling your heart.

Points for Ignatian Meditation

1. Find a quiet place to pray. This may be in your room, a chapel, your office with its door closed.

2. Establish a sense of inner peace and tranquility. Let the cares and concerns of the moment slip away. Sometimes reciting a decade of the Rosary or a favorite prayer from memory will help to ease you into the prayer.

3. As you relax into God's presence, take a moment to greet the Lord. Ask God to give you the grace to see what God desires for you.

4. Slowly read a passage from scripture. Get a sense of its geography and flow. Is there something that stands out to you?

5. Read it again. Is there something in particular that is touching your heart - either enlivening or frightening you?

6. Now be a child: place yourself in the scene. Are you a main character? A spectator? Think about the following:

1. What are you wearing?

2. What are the sights? Smells? Textures? Sounds?

3. What is going on around you?

4. Who else is there? Do you recognize those around you?

7. Surrender to the story. Interact with your surroundings,, allow yourself to be guided by the Spirit as you speak and engage with others.

8. Do not try to control the prayer. Surrender! Let the Spirit guide you.

9. How are you feeling? Is your "heart on fire?"

10. As you bring your prayer to a close, perhaps you might take a few minutes to speak to the Lord about your experience. Be candid - tell God what/how you have felt.

Here's a **sample Ignatian Meditation**, which is summarized from Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises (second week).

Choice of topic: the Incarnation.

1. **Preparatory prayer.**
2. **Composition of place:** See the great extent of the world with its many different races; then see the particular house of Mary and its rooms in the town of Nazareth in the province of Galilee.
3. **Petition for special grace needed:** "I ask for what I want: here I ask for interior knowledge of the Lord who became human for me so that I may better love and follow Him."
4. **See and reflect:** "This is to see the various kinds of persons: first, those on the face of the earth, in all their diversity of dress and appearance, some white and some black, some in peace and others at war, some weeping and others laughing, some healthy, others sick, some being born and others dying, etc.: second, I see and consider the three divine Persons, as though They are on the royal throne of their Divine Majesty, how they look down on the whole round world and on all its peoples living in such great blindness, and dying and going down into hell; third, I see Mary and the Angel who greets her."
5. **Listen and reflect:** "This is to hear what the people on the face of the earth talk about, i.e. how they talk with each other, how they swear and blaspheme, etc. In the same way what the Divine Persons are saying, viz., 'Let us bring about the redemption of the human race etc.' Then what the Angel and Mary are talking about."
6. **Consider and reflect:** "Now I look at what the people on the face of the earth are doing, e.g. wounding, killing, and going to hell, etc., and in the same way, what the divine Persons are doing, that is, accomplishing the sacred Incarnation, etc., and similarly, what the Angel and Mary are doing, the Angel fulfilling his role of legate and Mary humbling herself and giving thanks to the Divine Majesty."

7. Draw some practical fruit.

8. Colloquy with the Father and Jesus: "I think about what I ought to be saying to the three Divine Persons, or to the eternal Word incarnate.... and I make a request, according to my inner feelings, so that I may better follow and imitate Our Lord, thus newly incarnate."

9. Closing with the Lord's Prayer.

Other Suggestions:

1. While taking a walk, use this method for Jesus' walk to Calvary, for the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, for Paul and company on the road to Damascus.

2. Don't worry if you get the steps out of order. Ignatius didn't mind - he was results-oriented and wanted to see hearts change more than form followed.

3. Sing a hymn or biblical song with many images, and think about the images.

From *Quiet on the set: Ignatius's cinematic meditation*
<http://slowreads.com/RuminationsMeditationIgnatius.htm>

THE EXAMEN 1.²

The structure of the *Examen*.

Know that the Examen is a prayer and you will need to take a little time to enter into it.

1. Adopt a reflective and attentive attitude.
2. Make an *Act of the Presence*³ of God by acknowledging God's attentive presence to you.
3. Offer a *Prayer of Reciprocity* by expressing your desire to be attentive to God and seeking the gift of being able to find God in every experience of the day.
4. Reflectively review the time since your last *Examen* – rather like fast forwarding the 'tape' of your day , but allowing both God and yourself to be holding the pause button so that both of you can pause at any moments of significance.
 - Ponder the significance of the pauses –
 - How was God being revealed?

² Margaret Silf in her book *Taste and See. Adventuring into prayer* has a good practical example of the Examen on pages 64-66.

³ See p 55.

- How was God leading me in that moment?
- How was I responding?
- What were my desires?
- What is my response now?
- What are my desires now?

5. Ask God for the grace of gratitude for God's love and God's gifts to you.

6. Ask also for healing sorrow for the brokenness of your response.

7. Look to the time from now until your next *Examen* with a renewed sensitivity to God's presence and God's call.

THE EXAMEN 2

We are called to be in relationship with God. God is communicating with us constantly and desiring to be involved in our lives. The Examen is a way of praying where we reflect on what is happening in our lives and becoming aware of God's gentle action day by day.

Step 1

Is asking God to be with me as together we look back over the day

Step 2

I remember my day – let the memory of the day unfold almost like a movie across my inner eye.

Step 3

For what am I most grateful?

Where did I notice an increase in faith, hope and love?

Where do I see evidence of the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control?

Step 4

I give thanks for these moments in my day.

Step 5

For what am I not grateful?

Where did I feel trapped, angry, irritated, shamed, frightened, lost, overwhelmed, ignored, diminished?

Where was I less loving, less generous, less creative?

I ask God for healing and forgiveness for these places

Step 6

I ask God for whatever grace will best help me tomorrow.

JOURNALING - KEEPING A DAILY SPIRITUAL DIARY

When journaling is done within the context of faith or God's presence it is meditative writing. When we place pen on paper, spirit and body cooperate to release our true selves.

To journal is to experience ourselves in a new light as expression is given to the fresh images which emerge from our less-than-conscious psyche. Journaling requires putting aside preconceived ideas and control; and so affections well up within us and memories are recalled, convictions are clarified.

In writing we may discover that emotions are intensified and prolonged. Because of this, journaling can also serve in identifying and healing some hidden, suppressed emotions such as anger, fear and resentment.

There are many ways of using journaling in prayer. Among them are the following:

- Writing a letter addressed to God or some other person;
- Writing a dialogue between oneself and an event, experience, value, etc. For example, the death of someone can be imaged as a person with whom one enters into conversation;
- Allowing Jesus or some other person from the scripture to "speak" to us through the pen.

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE / DIRECTION

Spiritual Direction constitutes guidance or direction in spiritual matters from one who is qualified to guide and accompany others in the spiritual life.

People are often helped to integrate their faith and their life by talking on a regular basis (e.g., monthly) with someone they can trust. This person acts as a guide (sometimes also called a spiritual friend, companion, or director) for the journey, helping them to find the presence and call of God in the people and circumstances of their everyday lives.

The assumption is that God is already present there, and that another person, a guide, can help them to notice God's presence and also to find words for talking about that presence, because they are not used to doing so.

The guide is often a specially trained listener skilled in discernment and therefore able to help them sort out the various voices within and around them. While he/she may suggest various kinds of spiritual exercises/ways of praying, the focus is much broader than that; it is upon the whole of a person's life experience as the place to meet God.

THE MEETING FORMAT

A GENERAL FORMAT FOR A GROUP MEETING⁴

OPENING PRAYER: This can include praying for a grace – asking for the gift the group is seeking through the meeting.

MEDITATION: generally on a scripture reading:

SHORT CHECK-IN:

We take it in turns to share and listen within the group – We just listen prayerfully and attentively to each person. We do not comment on anyone's sharing at all, we just prayerfully and respectfully receive each others' words. We are not obliged to share but it is a good thing to do and we keep it short and to the point.

Questions to put to one's self for this check-in can include:

- Where have I experienced God's presence?
- When have I felt disconnected from God?
- How have I found God (or been found by God) in prayer?
- What am I grateful for this week
- What am I sorry for this week

⁴ THE CLC CHARISM 11, 1996 No 50: Meetings. See also the General Principles Nos 11 & 12 (These are paraphrased in this document, but for the full text see the World CLC webpage <http://www.cvx-clc.net> under *Resources – CLC Documents*.)

FOCUS EXERCISE: Reflection which may be on some subject of formation such as the General Principles and General Norms or the charism of CLC. Or some explanation and learning about Ignatian spirituality. This section may be used in a great variety of ways.

In more established groups a second sharing may take place. At times the sharing of members in the group resonates with another person and this time may be used to reflect on the first sharing. This is a moment to explore the thoughts and feelings of how something has touched or inspired or drawn me. However it is important to remember that it remains a time of reflection on one's own feelings thoughts etc and not a time for fixing someone else's problems. We still listen in respectful silence to each others words and without comment.

REVIEW OF THE MEETING: Each person briefly reflects back to the group their

experience of the meeting. This might include reflection on the following questions:

- How was I affected/moved during this meeting? Did I experience a shift in my mood?
- Where did I feel positive energy, where did I feel discomfort or challenged?
- Where did I experience consolation (movement toward God)? or
- Desolation (movement away from God)?

BUSINESS same time same place next week, or any other business.,

CLOSING PRAYER: Stand and join in The Lord's Prayer

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
COMMUNITY
A Paraphrased Version For England And Wales
PREAMBLE

1 GOD LOVES US AND SAVES US

The three divine persons, looking upon the whole of humanity, and seeing so much selfishness, greed, violence and indifference to the needs and rights of others decide to give themselves completely to all men and women and to make them free from all that drives them.

Out of love 'the word was made flesh' and born of Mary, who relied, not on herself,, but on God.

This gift of God to us and our response continues to this day through the influence of the Holy Spirit in all our own personal experiences and circumstances of life.

Therefore we, the members of the Christian Life Community, have composed these General Principles to aid us in choosing to imitate Jesus Christ and to take part through him, with him and in him in this living initiative which expresses God's everlasting faithfulness.

2 GUIDED BY THE SPIRIT

Our community is a way of living the Christian life; hence, these principles are to be interpreted by the spirit of the Gospel and the interior law of love,

which the Holy Spirit inscribes in our hearts, rather than by the letter of this text.

This interior law of love is always open to meet new situations in daily life.

It respects the uniqueness of each personal vocation and enables us to be open and free always at the disposal of God.

It challenges us to recognise our serious responsibilities, to continue seeking the answers to the needs of our times, and to work together with the entire People of God and all those of good will for progress and peace, justice and charity, liberty and the dignity of all people.

3 A HISTORY OF GRACE⁵

The CLC has an executive office in Rome and local and national communities in many parts of the world.

It is the continuation of the Sodalities of Our Lady founded by Jean Leunis SJ and approved by Pope Gregory XIII in 1584.

Before the Sodalities there were committed groups of lay people around St Ignatius of Loyola and his companions.

⁵ **History of the Christian Life Community** p 3 of this document.

Inspired by their apostolic achievements we live in communion with all those who have preceded us.

In love and prayer we relate to all those men and women of the Ignatian tradition whom the Church offers us as friends and intercessors, helping us to fulfil our mission.

PART ONE: OUR CHARISM

4 PURPOSE

Our community is made up of Christians, men and women, adults and young people of all social conditions, who want to follow Christ more closely and work with him for the building of the Kingdom, having recognised the CLC as their particular vocation within the Church.

Our aim is to be committed Christians hearing witness to those human and gospel values within the Church and society which affect the dignity of the person, the welfare of the family and the integrity of creation.

In particular we recognise the urgent need to work for justice by trying to see our world through the eyes of the weak, the oppressed and the poor and by seeking it simple lifestyle which expresses our freedom and solidarity with those in need.

To prepare our members for apostolic witness and service we form communities of those who strongly desire to unite their lives completely with their Christian faith according to our charism.

We hear Christ speaking through our everyday lives calling us to this unity of life.

Sources

The spirituality of our Community is centred on Christ and on participation in his life, passion, death and resurrection.

It is helped by the scriptures, the liturgy, the doctrinal development of the Church, and the revelation of God's will through the signs of our time.,

Amongst these universal sources, we especially treasure the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius as the specific source and the characteristic instrument of our spirituality.

We are called to be open to whatever God wishes in each concrete situation of our daily lives. So we need prayer and discernment, both personal and communal, a daily Examen of consciousness, and spiritual guidance in order to seek and find God in all things.

6 Sense of the Church

Union with Christ leads to union with the Church, where Christ here and now continues his mission of salvation.

By learning to recognise the signs of the times and the movements of the Spirit, we will be better able to encounter Christ in all people and situations.

Sharing the riches of membership of the Church, we take our part in the liturgy, meditate upon the scriptures and learn, teach, and promote Christian doctrine.

We work together with the hierarchy and other Church leaders, motivated by a common concern for the problems and progress of all people, and open to the challenges facing the Church today.

This leads us into creative co-operation in advancing the reign of God on earth and into readiness to serve where we are needed.

7 Community Bonds

We each commit ourselves to the World Community, through a freely chosen local community.

This local community is united in the Eucharist, a unity expressed in love and action.

Each of our communities is a gathering together in Christ, a cell of his mystical body. We are bound together by our common commitment to, our common way of life, and our recognition and love of Mary, as our mother.

We aim to extend these bonds of unity to the National and World Christian Life Community, and to the Church communities of which we are part, to the whole Church, and to all people of good will.

8 Apostolic Life – The CLC way of life

As members of the pilgrim People of God, we have been sent by Christ to be his witnesses to all people by our attitudes, words and actions.

We take as our own his mission to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free and to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.

Our life is essentially apostolic.

The field of CLC mission knows no limits: it extends both to the Church and to the world, in order to bring the gospel of salvation to all people and to serve individuals and society by opening hearts to conversion and struggling to change oppressive structures.

1. we each receive from God a call to make Christ and his saving action present to our own environment. This personal apostolate is necessary for extending the gospel in an effective way among the great diversity of people, places and structures.
2. we also exercise a communal apostolate in a great variety of forms, whether through group action initiated or sustained by our Community, or through the involvement of our members in existing secular or religious organisation and events.
3. the Community helps us to live the different dimensions of this apostolic commitment, through personal and communal discernment. We try to give an apostolic sense even to the most ordinary parts of our daily life.

4. the Community ruffs us to proclaim the Word of God and to work for the reform of the structures of society, taking part in efforts to free victims of all sorts of discrimination and especially to abolish differences between rich and poor. We want to play our part in the evangelisation of cultures from within. Our desire is to achieve all this in an ecumenical spirit, ready to collaborate with those initiatives which bring about unity among Christians. Our life finds its lasting inspiration in the gospel of the poor and humble Christ.

9 Union with Mary

Because the spirituality of our community is centred on Christ, we see the role do Mary in relation to Christ: she is the model of our collaboration in Christ's mission.

Mary's cooperation with God began with her 'yes' in the mystery of the Annunciation/Incarnation.

Her effective service as shown in her visit to Elizabeth and her solidarity with the poor as reflected in the Magnificat, make her an inspiration for our action for justice in the world today.

Mary's lifelong cooperation in her son's mission inspires us to give ourselves totally to God in union with Mary, who by accepting the designs of God became our mother and the mother of us all.

This confirms our own mission of service to the world which we received in baptism and confirmation.

We honour Mary, the mother of God, in a special way, and we rely on her intercession in fulfilling our vocation.

PART TWO

LIFE AND ORGANISATION OF THE COMMUNITY⁶

10 MEMBERS

Membership of the Christian Life Community requires a personal vocation.

For a period of time the candidate is introduced to the CLC way of life.

Once a decision regarding the candidates vocation has been taken by the candidate and the wider community the member makes a temporary commitment to allow time to test with the help of the wider community his or her ability to live according to the end and spirit of CLC.

Then, after a suitable period of time a permanent commitment is made.

11 Building Community

In order to grow in the CLC way of life, members meet regularly⁷ in a stable local community to encourage a deep sharing of their faith and human life, a

⁶ The CLC document *The Process of Growth in CLC: Guidelines for formation*, Supplement No 64, is a useful document to reflect on in the growth of one's experience in CLC.

⁷ See Meeting Format on p18

true community atmosphere and a strong commitment to mission and service.

12 Way of life

1. The CLC way of life commits members to strive with the help of the community for a continuing personal and social growth which is spiritual, human and apostolic. In practice, this means participation in the Eucharist wherever possible, an active sacramental life, daily personal prayer, preferably based on Scripture, discernment by means of a daily Examen of consciousness and if possible regular spiritual direction, an annual retreat, in accordance with our spirituality and a love for the Mother of God.
2. Since the Christian life Community aims to work with Christ for the coming of the Kingdom each individual member is called to be active in the vast field of apostolic service. Apostolic discernment, both individual and communal is the ordinary way of discovering how best to bring Christ to our surroundings. Our broad and demanding mission asks each member to be willing to take part in social and political life and to develop their human qualities and professional skills in order to become more competent workers and convincing witnesses. Moreover it calls for simplicity in all aspects of life so that we may follow Christ more closely in his poverty and preserve our inner freedom.
3. Finally each member is responsible for taking part in the meetings and other activities of the Community and for helping and encouraging other members to follow their personal vocation, always ready to give and receive advice as friends in the Lord.

13 Government

1. The World Christian Life Community is governed by the General Assembly which determines norms and policies, and by the Executive Council which is responsible for carrying them out. (The General Norms give more details about the Worlds Community and its Executive council.)
2. The National Community consist of all those members who are trying to live out the CLC way of life and mission within a given country or countries. The National Community is set up according to the General Norms and is governed by a National Assembly and an Executive Council. Their goals are the harmonious development of the whole Community and its effective participation in the mission of the Church. Their role is to determine means to achieve these ends and to work for their accomplishment.

(Besides our General Principles, which are concerned with our vocation and our relationship with the Church and its mission, we also have the General Norms, which deal with the practical ways in which the General Principles are put into effect. The full text of the GPs and Gns may be downloaded from the CLC website)

GLOSSARY OF IGNATIAN TERMS USED IN PRAYER

A.M.D.G.--*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* (Latin) - "For the greater glory of God."
Motto of the Society of Jesus.

Annotations

St. Ignatius of Loyola recorded his spiritual experiences during a year of prayer at Manresa, Spain (34 miles north of Barcelona) from March of 1522 to February of 1523. The Spiritual Exercises were to form the basis of many retreats given to priests, religious, and lay people. They are offered in closed sessions of a weekend, five, eight or the full thirty days at retreat houses as well as retreats in everyday life made at home over the course of about nine months (technically referred to as a 19th Annotation retreat).

Asking for a Grace

In each prayer exercise, the directee is instructed to "ask for grace" -- that is, to express his/her desires to God. We know that, ultimately, it is only from God and not from one's own effort that one can receive what one desires in the prayer exercises. The very asking for a Grace or the articulation of one's desires for a deepening of one's relationship with God in some particular way, comes from God. The initial impulse, the consequent shift in one's consciousness, the openness to the gift, the reception of the gift, the presence of God's self in one -- all this is grace. See Grace.

Application of Senses

In suggesting how to apply the senses of smell and taste, Ignatius writes: "to smell and to taste, with the sense of smell and the sense of taste, the infinite fragrance and sweetness of the Divinity". This implies that he includes

something deeper than the physical imagining of tasting, smelling, seeing, touching, etc., something more intuitive -- called by some 'the spiritual senses.' The Application of Senses is not so much the active application of one's senses but more the passive reception of deep intimacy. In the Exercises journey, this is helped by the use of Repetition which fosters a passive and gradual simplification of the mystery that one is contemplating.

Agere Contra

This Latin phrase literally means "to act against." It comes from Annotation 97 of the Spiritual Exercises where it is expected that the more zealous followers of Jesus desire to act against their Sensuality and from Annotation 319 where we are instructed to act against the desolating spirit. It has also come to mean an act of discipline or mortification in which one makes a choice that goes against one's personal preference.

Centering Prayer: A contemplative prayer form or method in which a person empties oneself before God and attempts to create an inner stillness, sometimes by using a mantra.

Centering Prayer helps in the opening of our hearts to the Spirit dwelling within us. In this prayer we spiral down into the deepest centre of ourselves. It is the point of stillness within us where we most experience being created by a loving God who is breathing us into life. Basil Pennington writes, "In Centering Prayer we go beyond thought and image, beyond the senses and the rational mind to that center of our being where God is working a wonderful work." According to Thomas Keating, this is a prayer activity which reduces the obstacles within and allows God to take the lead. When this happens, it becomes Contemplation. Keating outlines the following steps:

1. Choose a word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action;

2. Sit comfortably with eyes closed and silently introduce the sacred word (this word is the symbol of one's consent to God's presence and action within);
3. As you become aware of thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word;
4. When the period of centering comes to a close, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

This prayer requires an acceptance of God's presence and action. It is both therapeutic and purgative as it leads to deepening conversion -- the sacred word becomes less important and the Spirit becomes more alive within. See Meditation, Contemplative Prayer Methods.

Colloquy - a conversation between two friends, especially God and me.

"The colloquy is made, properly speaking, as one friend speaks to another ... communicating one's affairs, and asking advice in them" It is the conversation in which one engages at any time during a prayer exercise. This dialogue can be with Jesus, with God the Father, with the Holy Spirit, with God by some other name or image, with some saint, etc.

Contemplation⁸

Contemplation refers to a stage in one's inward journey. One has reached the stage of Contemplation when, during the time of prayer, there are few images, little reflection and very little fluctuation of one's affectivity. At the same time there is total involvement with God. This is called the stage of Contemplation by writers following the traditions which stress the transcendence and unknowability of God. At this stage, a person is so in union with God through stillness that it becomes disharmonious to attempt to be with God in any other way. God has put one there in spite of

⁸ See section on page 8 for an explanation of Ignatian Contemplation.

one's own activity. In other words, it is not just momentary experiences during prayer where there is such an absence of one's activities (many experience moments like this); it is a prayer state in which a person usually finds oneself this way during the time of prayer.

Contemplatio

Contemplatio is the Latin phrase (pronounced con-tem-plaht-see-oh) used to describe the normal outcome of the traditional method known as Lectio Divina. The first phase of this method, Lectio, sometimes referred to as meditative reading or listening with the heart, leads one by a natural process to Meditatio (reflection with one's heart), leading one to Oratio (responding from one's heart), moving one toward Contemplatio which implies, at least, those special quiet moments or still points described in the above paragraph. Most traditions advocate the use of Lectio Divina, and they indicate that the practice of Lectio Divina may ultimately dispose one for the gift of Contemplation as a stage of growth. See Contemplation, Lectio Divina.

Contemplative Attitude

One can have the Contemplative Attitude without being in the stage of Contemplation as described above. **A person with a Contemplative Attitude has an openness toward life, a sense of wonder, a capacity to experience life as mystery.** By this phrase, we mean that one has the ability to allow God to affect one's interior reactions. The phrase itself has nothing to do with any one method of prayer. It simply has to do with one's attitude or ability to listen. One allows God's word to penetrate and to affect one's hidden self -- God's mystery is allowed to touch one's own mystery. In one translation of the letter to the Hebrews, the author speaks of God's word as being alive and active like a two-edged sword, revealing the secret emotions of the heart. This is the Contemplative Attitude. There is a certain free-flow between a person and God. Since discernment, in the strict sense of the word, is dependent on noticing one's own interior reactions, one must

have the Contemplative Attitude in order, first of all to allow, and secondly to notice, one's key interior reactions.

Contemplative Prayer Methods

These are methods of prayer leading to Contemplation such as Centering Prayer, Meditation, the Jesus Prayer, etc. Such methods show some similarities to the characteristics of the prayer of a person in the stage of Contemplation -- little fluctuation of feelings, thinking, or imaging during the time of private prayer. With these methods, a person is just there with God, in faith. Therefore, like one who is in the stage of Contemplation, a person who is practised in one of these methods, may come out of the period of prayer with little or no awareness of the fluctuation of feelings or thinking or imaging. There may be some thoughts and images at the beginning of the prayer time to get oneself settled into the prayer, and some fluctuations of images, feelings and thoughts as one is coming out of this prayer experience. But once the breathing of the Jesus Prayer or the repetitive mantra of Christian Meditation takes over, one enters into a kind of being with God in deep faith. Often after the reception of the Eucharist such as in the Lutheran, Anglican, and Roman Catholic traditions, many people experience moments of being with God in deep faith. Contemplative Prayer Methods are just that -- prayer methods. They do not necessarily mean that a person is in the stage of Contemplation because such ways of praying and some of the consequent experiences can be achieved more or less by a person's own efforts. That is why the older authors on prayer tend to call the fruit from these Contemplative Prayer Methods "acquired contemplation."

Composition of Place

Literally, "composition, seeing the place". In each prayer exercise, the Composition is the 'prelude' which instructs a directee to settle into the prayer exercise by composing (gathering together) oneself to become

interiorly stilled and as present as possible to God through the material of the prayer exercise. Ignatius suggests that this be done by making use of one's imaginative powers; that is, by recalling and making oneself present to certain aspects of the mystery upon which one is contemplating or meditating. This helps a directee at prayer to disregard what is going on around oneself and to give oneself to the exercise with a relaxed but focused attention.

Discernment of spirits

-A process for making choices, in a context of faith, when the option is not between good and evil, but between several possible courses of action all of which are potentially good. For Ignatius the process involves prayer, reflection, and consultation with others-all with honest attention not only to the rational (reasons *pro* and *con*) but also to the realm of one's feelings, emotions, and desires (what Ignatius called "movements" of soul).

A fundamental question in discernment becomes "Where is this impulse from-the good spirit [of God] or the evil spirit [leading one away from God]?" A key to answering this question, says Ignatius in his *Spiritual Exercises* is that, in the case of a person leading a basically good life, the good spirit gives "consolation"--acts quietly, gently, and leads one to peace, joy, and deeds of loving service--while the bad spirit brings "desolation"--agitates, disturbs the peace, and injects fears and discouragement to keep one from doing good.

Finding God in All Things:

invites a person to search for and find God in every circumstance of life.

Ignatian spirituality is summed up in this phrase. It invites a person to search for and find God in every circumstance of life, not just in explicitly religious situations or activities such as prayer in church (e.g., the Mass) or

in private. It implies that God is present everywhere and, though invisible, can be "found" in any and all of the creatures which God has made. They reveal at least a little of what their Maker is like--often by arousing wonder in those who are able to look with the "eyes of faith." After a long day of work, Ignatius* used to open the French windows in his room, step out onto a little balcony, look up at the stars, and be carried out of himself into the greatness of God.

How does one grow in this ability to find God everywhere? Howard Gray draws the following paradigm from what Ignatius wrote about spiritual development in the Jesuit* *Constitutions*: (1) **practice attentiveness** to what is really there. "Let that person or that poem or that social injustice or that scientific experiment become (for you) as genuinely itself as it can be." (2) Then **reverence** what you see and hear and feel; appreciate it in its uniqueness. "Before you judge or assess or respond, give yourself time to esteem and accept what is there in the other." (3) If you learn to be attentive and reverent, "then you will **find devotion**, the singularly moving way in which God works in that situation, revealing goodness and fragility, beauty and truth, pain and anguish, wisdom and ingenuity."

Gospel Contemplation⁹

With this method, one primarily uses the active imagination upon a particular event in Jesus' life. The gospel story is the guided-imagery context for the imagination. Gospel Contemplation differs from our present-day, psychological, guided imagery techniques in that the person at prayer actively keeps oneself more or less within the gospel framework. Ignatius names this method simply with the word contemplation.

⁹ Cf page 8.

One enters the gospel story imaginatively through one or some combination of one's feeling powers, picture-making powers, hearing powers, etc. The details of the gospel story serve as a guide to the imagination. Here is a simple way of explaining it:

- Enter the story as if you were there.
- Become part of the mystery either by being yourself or assuming some other role.
- Be present and allow yourself to interact with the other individuals in the event by feeling the actions in your body; by watching what happens; by participating in the conversations -- look, listen, taste, smell, touch, etc.
- Allow the event to unfold itself through your imagination. At times you will need to be more passive to allow this to take place. At other times you will need to be more active and stress one or other of your powers of imagination.
- Before you take your leave make a Colloquy.

Ignatian indifference: striving for balance. This is not I *couldn't care less* or a denial that we have desires and preferences, or seeking out suffering, humiliation etc, it is not an act of spiritual masochism. It is a state of inner freedom, openness, and balance that allows us not to choose one option more than another, but to put our desires and preferences to the service of God, because whatever serves God more is what we desire.

Not easy to attain, indifference is a poised freedom that preserves our ability to go one way or another depending on the indication of God's lead. By calling for indifference, Ignatius is calling for a willingness right from the start to be influenced in the process by God's guidance. Unfortunately, indifference is a bad choice of a word to convey Ignatius's meaning, since it often connotes apathy and complacency. For Ignatius, it has nothing to do

with the absence of feelings; nor does it mean disinterest in people and situations.

The sculpture of the discus thrower is a helpful image in understanding Ignatian indifference. Manifesting taut muscles ready to be sprung and pent-up energy ready to be released, the statue captures at once the paradoxical combination of action and rest. It is as if the discus thrower has been caught at a moment when he is ready to hurl the discus but is in waiting. Similarly, Ignatian indifference calls for a spiritual posture that imitates that of the discus thrower.

We are called to be ever ready to embody the love of God in any way we can, but we must have the inner discipline to wait and to withhold action until we get an indication of directionality from God. If unable to achieve indifference, discussing the matter in spiritual direction can help us understand what we are struggling with and what the next peaceful step might be in our discernment.

IHS--The first three letters, in Greek, of the name Jesus. These letters appear as a symbol on the official seal of the Society of Jesus.

Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Loreto Sisters are women drawn to companionship in the service in the Gospel. Inspired by Mary Ward and the Ignatian spiritual tradition, they strive to support growth into freedom through spiritual ministries, education, and any other works which meet the needs of our times.

Jesus Prayer

The Jesus Prayer consists in repeating the name of Jesus or some variation associated with his name in coordination with the rhythm of

one's breathing and with one's attention fixed on the meaning of the words. The name of "Jesus" can be used alone or "Jesus mercy" or "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner," etc. Sometimes it has the same effect as the practice of the Contemplative Prayer Methods. According to the teachings in the Way Of The Pilgrim one can develop the Jesus Prayer as a constant prayer even while doing other activities. It can become a way of praying continuously.

Journaling

keeping a daily spiritual diary.

Lectio Divina

This is pronounced as lek-see-oh dee-vee-nah in ecclesiastical Latin. **LD is a method of prayer by which a person listens with one's heart to God's word in the scriptures or to some other manifestation of God such as in a personal experience, or as in some outward event such as in a sunset, etc.** Some spiritual directors often explain LD as meditative reading only (which is one way of going about it) but it was practised in early Christian times by monks who often could not read. It developed as a key form of meditation in the monasteries. LD is a natural process which, when one begins to listen with the heart (Lectio), one moves through a pondering or reflection with the heart (Meditatio), through a response of the heart (Oratio) to a resting in God (Contemplatio).

Mantra

A word or phrase repeated slowly within oneself in harmony with one's breathing.

One means of keeping one's focus on God in prayer is the use of a mantra. The mantra can be a single word or phrase. It may be a word from scripture

or one that arises spontaneously from within one's heart. The word or phrase is repeated slowly within oneself in harmony with one's breathing. For example, if one were to use the phrase "Jesus, redeemer," one might say "Jesus" while inhaling and "redeemer" while exhaling. Some people experience the recitation of the rosary as a kind of mantra.

Among the instructions usually given for using a mantra certain elements are usually emphasized: a relaxed but alert posture; a repetition of the mantra in rhythm with one's breathing to quiet the mind; and the twenty-to-thirty minute time period.

Meditation¹⁰

This method of prayer can be done in the same manner that one uses when one ponders carefully a very special letter. As one does this, **one is seeking a deep-felt understanding of a particular focus in order to dispose oneself for the gift from God that s/he desires at this time of prayer.** Here is a way of going about this:

- Choose a particular image or truth that arises from some scriptural or personal story.
- Attend to and focus on it either by reading the passage slowly and letting the words wash over you or by remembering imaginatively the different aspects of the story or truth. Savour these aspects; stay with them; allow them to catch your attention; absorb them the way the thirsty earth receives the rain. Become aware of the feelings that are awakened in the same way you might when pondering the words of a letter from a dear friend, or when singing softly the repetitive chorus of a song.⁷
- Occasionally you might want to ask yourself questions concerning this story, image, truth or scriptural passage upon which you are focusing: Why? How? When? How might this apply to me now? What does it look like? How do I feel about it? I wonder why it is this way? How else might it be?

¹⁰ Cf page 12.

- During all this respond spontaneously in dialogue with God.

Ignatius of Loyola calls every prayer exercise during the First Week of the Spiritual Exercises a "meditation ... using the three powers of the soul" [45]. The powers of the soul to which he refers are memory, understanding and will. These human powers along with the imagination are enmeshed with each other and lead organically (naturally and together) to a felt understanding. This method of prayer differs from Lectio Divina because it is more focused in that the person using this method seeks a heart-felt understanding of the meditation material (image, truth, personal story, etc.) to dispose her/himself for the particular gift from God that s/he presently desires.

Passive Prayer

This term is often used to denote a person's prayer that is becoming or has become Contemplation in the Carmelite sense of the word. As one's personal activity of pondering and imagining during the time of prayer habitually becomes less and less, the prayer is said to become "passive."

Review

A distinct method or spiritual exercise used in the Exercises journey by which the directee reflects, by oneself, on one's own experiences of the prayer exercise just finished and notices, by oneself, the spiritual movements that were taking place during the time of the prayer exercise.

Repetition

A spiritual exercise by which one intentionally returns, in a later prayer exercise, to a point where one has experienced some movement in prayer-- moments of Consolation (a sense of being lifted up, a sense of God's presence, an unexpected understanding or meaning, etc.); or moments

of Desolation (struggle, uncomfortableness, a sense of God's absence, etc.); or moments of spiritual appreciation (a sense of the beginning or deepening appreciation of some insight or awareness).

Spiritual / spirituality

The *spiritual* is often defined as that which is "nonmaterial," but this definition runs into problems when applied to human beings, who are traditionally considered "bodyspirits," both bodily and spiritual. In some modern philosophies and psychologies, however, the spiritual dimension of the human is denied or disregarded.

Fundamentally, **the spiritual dimension of human beings can be recognized in the orientation of our minds and hearts toward ever more than we have already reached** (the never-satisfied human mind and the never-satisfied human heart). We are drawn inevitably toward the "Absolute" or the "Fullness of Being" Consequently, there are depths to our being which we can only just begin to fathom. If every human being has this spiritual dimension and hunger, then everyone will have-at least at times-some awareness of it, even if that awareness is not explicit and not put into words. When people talk of a "spirituality," however, they usually mean, not the spirituality that human beings have by nature, but rather a set of attitudes and practices (spiritual exercises) that are designed to foster a greater consciousness of this spiritual dimension and (in the case of those who can affirm belief in God) a more explicit seeking of its object- the Divine or God.

spiritual exercises [small s and e]

Any of a variety of methods or activities for opening oneself to God's spirit and allowing one's whole being, not just the mind, to be affected. The methods--some of them more "active" and others more "passive"--might include vocal prayer (e.g., the Lord's Prayer), meditation or contemplation, journaling or other kind of writing, reading of scripture or other great works

of verbal art, drawing, painting or moulding with clay, looking at works of visual art, playing or listening to music, working or walking in the midst of nature. All of these activities have the same goal in mind-discontinuing one's usual productive activities and thus allowing God to "speak," listening to what God may be "saying" through the medium employed.

The Spiritual Exercises [capital S and E]

An organized series of spiritual exercises put together by Ignatius of Loyola, and practised down the centuries. See Sp Exx

They arose out of his own personal spiritual experience and that of others to whom he listened. They invite the "retreatant" or "exercitant" to "meditate" on central aspects of Christian faith (e.g., creation, sin and forgiveness, calling and ministry) and especially to "contemplate" (i.e. imaginatively enter into) the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Ignatius set all of this down in the book of the *Spiritual Exercises* as a handbook to help the guide who coaches a person engaged in "making the Exercises." After listening to that person and getting a sense for where he/she is, the guide selects from material and methods in the book of the *Exercises* and offers them in a way adapted to that unique individual. The goal of all this is the attainment of a kind of spiritual freedom, the power to act-not out of social pressure or personal compulsion and fear - but out of the promptings of God's spirit in the deepest, truest core of one's being--to act ultimately out of love.

As originally designed, the "full" Spiritual Exercises would occupy a person for four weeks full-time, but Ignatius realized that some people could not [today most people cannot] disengage from work and home obligations for that long a time, and so it is possible to make the "full" Exercises part-time over a period of six to nine or ten months--the "Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life." In that case, the "exercitant," without withdrawing from home or work, devotes about an hour a day to prayer (but this, like nearly everything in the Exercises, is adaptable) and sees a guide every week or two to process what has been happening in prayer and in the rest of his/her life. Most of the time people make not the "full" Spiritual Exercises but a retreat in the Ignatian

spirit that might last anywhere from a weekend to a week. Such a retreat usually includes either a daily individual conversation with a guide or several daily presentations to a group, as preparation for prayer/spiritual exercises. Ignatius had composed and revised his little book over a period of twenty-five or more years before it was finally published in 1548. Subsequent editions and translations--according to a plausible estimate--numbered some 4,500 in 1948 or about one a month over four centuries, the total number of copies printed being around 4,500,000. It is largely on his *Exercises*--with their implications for teaching and learning in a holistic way--that Ignatius' reputation as a major figure in the history of western education rests.

Spiritual Guidance / Direction

Guidance in spiritual matters from one who is qualified to guide/accompany others in the spiritual life.

Vocal Prayer

This usually refers to the prayer that one says when one makes use of a formula or some form of written prayer. **The Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, Soul of Christ, the Psalms, the Serenity Prayer, the Rosary, The Mass etc., are examples of Vocal Prayer.**

SELECTED PRAYERS OF ST IGNATIUS

Suscipe

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding
and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.

You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace.
That is enough for me.

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me
Body of Christ, save me
Water from the side of Christ, wash me
Passion of Christ, strengthen me
Good Jesus, hear me
Within the wounds, shelter me

from turning away, keep me
From the evil one, protect me
At the hour of my death, call me
Into your presence lead me
to praise you with all your saints
Forever and ever
Amen

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.

Two versions of the First Principle and Foundation

1 as paraphrased by David L. Fleming, S.J.

St. Ignatius begins his Spiritual Exercises with The First Principle and Foundation. While not typically thought of as a prayer, it still contains much that is worth reflecting on.

The Goal of our life is to live with God forever.

God, who loves us, gave us life.

Our own response of love allows God's life
to flow into us without limit.

All the things in this world are gifts from God,
Presented to us so that we can know God more easily
and make a return of love more readily.

As a result, we appreciate and use all these gifts of God
Insofar as they help us to develop as loving persons.

But if any of these gifts become the center of our lives,
They displace God
And so hinder our growth toward our goal.

In everyday life, then, we must hold ourselves in balance
Before all of these created gifts insofar as we have a choice
And are not bound by some obligation.

We should not fix our desires on health or sickness,
Wealth or poverty, success or failure, a long life or a short one.
For everything has the potential of calling forth in us
A deeper response to our life in God.

Our only desire and our one choice should be this:

I want and I choose what better leads
To God's deepening his life in me.

2 A more direct translation from the Spiritual Exercises.

The First Principle and Foundation

The human person is created to praise, reverence, and serve God Our Lord, and by doing so, to save his or her soul.

All other things on the face of the earth are created for human beings in order to help them pursue the end for which they are created.

It follows from this that one must use other created things, in so far as they help towards one's end, and free oneself from them, in so far as they are obstacles to one's end.

To do this, we need to make ourselves indifferent to all created things, provided the matter is subject to our free choice and there is no other prohibition.

Thus, as far as we are concerned, we should not want health more than illness, wealth more than poverty, fame more than disgrace, a long life more than a short one, and similarly for all the rest, but we should desire and choose only what helps us more towards the end for which we are created.

A Prayer from the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius

My Lord, my God, my Creator, my All

I pray today for the grace

That all my actions, intentions and decisions

May be ordered wholly to your divine service and praise.

I pray also for the grace today that

And I pray that I may live faithfully in your presence today and always.

I ask this in the name of your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Act of the Presence of God: Third Addition, paragraph 75, of the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius

A step or two before the place where I have to contemplate or meditate, I will put myself standing for the space of an *Our Father*, my intellect raised on high, considering how God our Lord is looking at me, and make an act of reverence or humility.

A prayer of reverence and humility:

Lord, I acknowledge that you are looking at me in love and attending to me always and most especially in this moment. I thank you for this privilege, this graced moment. I ask you now for the grace to be able to look upon you and attend to you this day. May I also receive the grace to see myself as you see me and see others in this world as you see them.

The words of Pedro Arrupe SJ in his final address as General to the Jesuits.

“Nothing is more practical than finding God, that is, than falling in a love in a quite absolute, final way. What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination will affect everything.

It will decide what will get you out of bed in the mornings, what you will do with your evenings, how you spend your weekends, what you read, who you know, what breaks your heart, and what amazes you with joy and gratitude. Fall in love, stay in love, and it will decide everything.”

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