

JESUIT PRINCIPLES.

THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES OF ST. IGNATIUS.

Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Meditations—The Prodigal Son—The Most Holy Sacrament—The Reign of Christ—The Incarnation of the Son of God.

FIFTEENTH MEDITATION—THE PRODIGAL SON.

First Point.—The son fled from his father's house; losing the peace, security, contentment and happiness of home. So with the sinner who flies from the protection of God, his Father—(so with me—both literally and figuratively). When all he had was squandered he became a hireling amongst strangers—a hireling to a swine-dealer. Apply this to myself—1st, having abandoned God and herding with swine of iniquity; 2nd, abandoning home and becoming a tramp.

Second Point.—His repentance: 1st. He entered into himself and saw that "how many hired servants have abundance of bread in my father's house, and here I perish with hunger." I have but to reflect on this; the story is too recent to need comment. 2nd. "I will arise and go to my father, I will say, 'I have sinned against heaven and before thee; I am not worthy to be called thy son, only receive me as a servant.'" Do the same; arise from the mire of sin and return to God. 3rd. He executed his resolve, and though half-naked, miserable and covered with shame, he returned home. Since I imitated him in sin and in reality, let me do the same. There is hope here below; there is mercy in heaven.

Third Point.—The reconciliation: The humility with which he cast himself at his father's feet. But what a Father! He goes forth to meet the son; he is overflowing with joy; he will not allow him to make a full confession; gets new clothes, proposes a banquet and calls upon all to rejoice. What must that son have felt—so easily pardoned—what admiration, tenderness, gratitude and love. What a resolution he must have taken never again to offend that father! "I say to you that there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance." May God grant me now to go to my heavenly Father and be pardoned, and to then my earthly parents and soothe their old age!

SIXTEENTH MEDITATION—THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

This gift must be considered, like all gifts, from three standpoints. First, as to its *intrinsic worth*; second, as to the *intensity of love* with which it was given; third, as to its *relative usefulness*.

First Point.—This gift could not be greater, since the Saviour may be said to have exhausted the treasures of His infinite goodness, by communicating the treasures of His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, with all His merits, graces and virtues. Done in such a way that it could never have occurred to the most exalted intellect of the seraphims. Let us thank Christ for His infinite liberality to so base a creature as me. I only ask that He may give me a due appreciation of His goodness.

Second Point.—In the greatness of the love is the true greatness of the favour. The institution of this sacrament is an effect of the purest and most holy love. At the very hour when we're coming to seize Him and crucify Him, He performs the dread mystery and leaves to men this treasure unmeasured. He knew all the contempt, ridicule, irreverences, sacrileges that He would be subjected to. How is it that I correspond so coldly to that love? Why am I not filled with a heavenly love after so repeatedly being filled with the fire of His affection? I ask to worthily receive Him in communion that I may have Him with me even unto death and be with Him for all eternity.

Third Point.—Let us consider the advantages that we receive from the Bread of Angels, called *communion*, because Christ communicates to each one the treasures of virtues, gifts and merits acquired during His Holy Life, Passion and Death. Not satisfied with placing His Sacred Body on the Altar of the Cross He renews daily that sacrifice on our altars. Not only does He impart grace through the other sacraments, but even He comes personally to shower them with

His own hand, illumining the intellect, inflaming our will, subduing the strength of our passions, reforming our vitiated senses and leaving in our very flesh the seeds of immortality.

O, my God! how admirable is this compendium of your wondrous deeds, a proof of incomprehensible love, a certain pledge of eternal felicity. How ungrateful I have been for so great a favor. What do I say, *fruit*? I who every day become worse, less devout, more vain, more self-interested and fonder of worldly pleasures. Assist me with your powerful grace; let your love triumph in me; and since you performed such a miracle to become the food of my soul kindle in my heart the furnace of divine love that I may forever live in grace and obtain glory eternal! Amen!

SEVENTEENTH MEDITATION—THE REIGN OF CHRIST.

It would be impossible for St. Ignatius to conceive as the foundation for the second and third weeks a meditation either more conformable to his military genius, better adapted to further his present design, or which would have impelled the soul with more efficacy to this happy end. It is the imitation of Jesus Christ, and all subjects will be drawn from His life. What can be better calculated to stimulate the Christian, who has already deplored his sins, and is fully determined to save his soul, than to propose to himself so excellent a model as that of the Redeemer of the world, represented as a warrior who conquers the Kingdom of Heaven for himself and for us? It is worthy of the military spirit of the Saint. There are two parts to the exercise—each in three points.

FIRST PART.

First Point.—Let us suppose a temporal king, whom all Christian nations obey; he is wise, just, prudent, courageous, generous, and so full of love for his subjects that he only seeks their happiness. A man of God—in fact!

Second Point.—Calling his subjects together; he says, "I am resolved to subdue all the infidel nations; I want you to follow me. I shall lead, and be the first to bear the hardships of war, watches, marches, heat, cold, hunger, toil, and blows. But the spoils of victory shall be yours: I want none of them."

Third Point.—What should be the answer to an offer from such a venerable and excellent king? All will doubtless offer to follow him; and if there be one who would refuse to take part in so glorious an expedition, he would be treated as a coward, and be condemned, despised and disgraced.

SECOND PART.

First Point.—The Hero is the King of Angels, the Son of God, the Saviour of men—the desired of all nations, Son of Mary the Immaculate Queen of Heaven. Redeemer of the world, Conqueror of Sin and Hell: a legislator who is the first to comply with his own law; whose counsels are feasible, useful, and tending to our greater happiness, safety and glory. He asks us to follow Him against the enemies of our souls, and He will cover us with honor and riches. He wishes to crown us with His own hand when we are worthy of Him eternally.

Second Point.—"Follow me," He says, "to the conquest of the Kingdom of Heaven, a home for man, a region of peace and bliss. I go before you to encourage you; I will suffer fatigue, hunger, thirst, &c.; all day I will toil under a burning sun, during the night I will watch for you. I shall be foremost in the fight; but all the advantages of victory shall be yours. For each who is faithful and valiant I have a kingdom in store, that the reward may exceed the services."

Third Point.—The conditions are so exciting, victory so sure, the exhortation and example of the Leader so soul-inspiring, that the one must have lost both reason and judgment who could refuse to follow. And those who wish to distinguish themselves to labor, but laying aside all earthly affections and denying their own flesh and sensuality, will make Him offerings of great value, determined upon clinging to His person as closely as possible, and will address Him thus: "Eternal Lord, in presence of your Majesty, of your glorious Mother, of all the celestial court, I make my offering, and I desire and wish, with your aid, to imitate you in suffering all kinds of injury, contempt, poverty of spirit and even real poverty, if you desire to adopt such a life. As all desires

proceed from you, confirm my resolutions and grant me firmness and perseverance. Amen!"

EIGHTEENTH MEDITATION—THE INCARNATION OF THE SON OF GOD.

First Point.—Let us go back to the time when the mystery took place, and glancing at the earth, contemplate the divers nations, tongues, dress, customs; some in peace, some in war; some prosperous and healthy, others downtrodden and ill, &c., &c. All come from a common source, just at first, criminal afterwards, condemned to eternal chastisement, had not the mercy of the Redeemer interposed itself. Then imagine the adorable Trinity contemplating with compassion the misfortune of the world. Chiefly gaze upon the pure Virgin, the source of our bliss. Let us bless the goodness of Christ and His Mother. Let each one resolve to follow, as best he can, in the footsteps of our Saviour and Chief.

Second Point.—Listen to the people of the earth; lies, blasphemies, murmurs, calumnies, obscenities, oaths, &c., &c. We live in blindness like children of wrath. We are undeserving of God's mercy. His patience has been infinite. His mercy our only hope. Behold the benefit of the Redemption. The Trinity speaks: "Let us perform the work of man's redemption." Compare the kindness of these words with the wickedness of ours. Then hear the message of heaven's envoy: "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Thou wilt conceive a son—the Son of the Most High. Thou shalt call him Jesus; He will save the world." Then her reply: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done unto me according thy word."

Let us thank her for this consent which was the beginning of her happiness.

Third Point.—Let us see how the actions of men correspond with their words. How many injustices, murders, treasons? What rage, lawless cruelty in war, and in peace what ease, idleness and luxury! The greater part weep without any fault on their part. Those who enter the world are born in misery and tears; those who live in it are addicted to all species of guilt. Those who leave it end in anguish and despair, and often hell. What would have become of us had not the Redeemer, through an act of mercy, wished to save us?

Whilst men thus give proof of their wretched need, the Persons of the Blessed Trinity put into execution the mystery of the Incarnation of the Divine Word, a mystery, I might be allowed to say, in which the wisdom, love and power of the Deity is exhausted; which fills heaven and earth with wonder. The Word became flesh, in the womb of Mary, to redeem man and lead him to life eternal by way of humility. And the most pure Virgin, at the very instant when God raises her to the dignity of His Mother, humbles herself as much as she can, thus giving of this, as well as of all other virtues, a bright example.

Having considered this, let each one reflect what he ought to say to the Holy Trinity, to the Incarnate Word, and to His Virgin Mother. Let him act according to the impulse of his grateful heart; and, as if he were to see the Saviour present, let him ask powerful grace from his Divine Lord, to follow His footsteps, to fight according to His example, to conquer with His Divine assistance, and finally to triumph with Him in heaven.

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TWO INTERESTING LETTERS

From Far Alaska to Bishop Clut (Translated from the Chipewigan language.)

MOOSE ISLAND, Dec. 14, 1893. For the Great Man of Prayer, Bishop Isidore Clut:

Father,—I wish to write to you a little. Here we are until to-day in good health. And you also, if you could see this letter, it would be well surely. But when I saw you the last time, you remember, alas! you were far from being in good health.

My old Father (Mgr. Clut) is he still living? Will he see my letter? In this uncertainty why do I write to him, I ask myself. This is why I do not write you a long letter; and that I am ill at ease, it is real embarrassing. Still to prove my faithful remembrance, I write a little to you.

If you are still alive, and if you receive this letter, and if you answer it, then I shall write you for good.

As to us, here is the way we are just at present: that by which we live (provisions). Oh! there are not much. At our place there is no meat, and fish is equally scarce. That which the ground produces (potatoes), also we have very little of. For that reason we will have to try and procure some fish. This is the way we shall pass the winter.

They say that way off towards the prairies that there is an abundance of reindeer. But from here it so far that we have not yet gone after some meat.

Around the country where we live, we used to kill the animals of the forests, but this winter it is not thus. That is why it happens that the people live only of fish. There are no traces of moose-deer. If there were no fish, it would be a great misfortune for all the world. But thanks to the fish and rabbits, all the people live. That is why it is a pretty good chance.

I wish also to tell you this: during the summer a powerful disease spread among the people. Still there are not many persons who died of it. Among those who died and of whom we heard, are Basile Najere, (Sore Eyes,) and Isaac, (Beaver Foot). At the mountain of the Island, Fort Rae, they say that many died there, but I do not know them. That is enough for the present,—I only give you these news.

Will you not return to the country? I do not know how it will be, that is why that which you are going to do, write it to me. It is only when I shall have seen your letter that I shall write to you in earnest.

That with which I would entertain myself with you, (news) there are no more. That which I used to ask you I shall say it again: you will pray for me.—I also pray for you, so that God will take pity on us.

This is finished: I shall touch your hand.

Michael Mandeville, your child who loves you, and of whom you have undoubtedly kept a remembrance—these are his words.

My wife tells you this: I have not yet lost the remembrance of my old father (Mgr. Clut.) I do not write to him, still I love him with all my heart, even if he be far from me, seeing he prays for me, I place my hope in him. She tells you this and she says besides I shall touch your hand.

Here are the words of Eliza Mandeville for the Great Man of Prayer. (Bishop):

MY LORD,—I wish to write to you a little. It is not that I know the news, but to let you know that I always remember you. Yes, I should always keep you in remembrance, for you have been so good to me. I know where you live, so it is my duty to write to you. Until to-day I am in very good health; my children, also, are well. They say that my daughter Marie desires to become a religious. I would be very happy of it. I would be very satisfied if you prayed for her. As to me, each day, for you, I pray. I shall probably never see you again in this world. I lead a good life, so shall see you again in heaven. Pray much for me. Well, my Lord, I touch your hand. It is Eliza Mandeville who said this.

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