

THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES OF

St. Ignatius

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

The history of the composition of the Spiritual Exercises is, in a certain sense, the history of a soul's journey from spiritual childhood to spiritual adulthood. Probably almost every Christian knows the story of the conversion of St. Ignatius from a relatively worldly life to one of serious spiritual effort.

However, the providential preparation of Ignatius as an instrument in the counterreformation of the Church and as a spiritual leader began long before his well-known conversion. His whole life was oriented to this end and the various influences of racial and family background, training and experience helped to mold the future author of the *Spiritual Exercises*. In 1491 Ignatius was born at the family castle of Loyola in the Basque country. The family belonged to provincial nobility whose members had fought with the kings of Castile since 1200. Hugo Rahner notes that Ignatius kept, all his life, an aristocratic sense of form, order, and loyalty along with a practical, realistic grasp of problems, people, and principles which reflect both the nobility of his background and the fact that it was provincial nobility, close to the realities of life.¹ The traditions of soldiering characteristic of his family, members of which had fought in Hungary and in Naples, are also evidenced in Ignatius' strong sense of duty, of obedience, and of high-minded chivalry. Although Ignatius' father

¹ Hugo Rahner, *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola*, Newman, Westminster, 1953, pp. 1-16. This book, together with A Key to the *Study of the Spiritual Exercises* by Ignacio Iparaguire, will prove most helpful to one desirous of making a further study of the Exercises. A helpful commentary on the Exercises in English is A. Ambruzzi's *A Companion to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, Mangalore, 1928.

DIRECTIONS¹ FOR ACQUIRING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES THAT FOLLOW AND THUS ASSISTING BOTH THOSE WHO ARE TO GIVE THEM AND THOSE WHO MAKE THEM

ANIMA CHRISTI

*Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesu, hear me;
Within Thy wounds hide me;
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee;
From the malignant enemy defend me;
In the hour of my death call me,
And bid me come to Thee,
That with Thy Saints I may praise Thee
For ever and ever. Amen.*

1. This expression "Spiritual Exercises" embraces every method of examination of conscience, of meditation, of contemplation, of vocal and mental prayer, and of other spiritual activity that will be mentioned later. For just as strolling, walking, and running are bodily exercises, so spiritual exercises are methods of preparing and disposing the soul to free itself of all inordinate attachments, and after accomplishing this, of seeking and discovering the Divine Will regarding the disposition of one's life, thus insuring the salvation of his soul.

2. The one who is giving instruction in the method and procedure of meditation or contemplation should be explicit in stating the subject matter for the contemplation or meditation. He should limit his discourse to a brief, summary statement of its principal points; for then the one who is making the contemplation, by reviewing the true essentials of the subject, and by personal reflection and reasoning may find something that will make it a little more meaningful for him or touch him more deeply. This may happen as a result of his own reasoning or through the enlightenment of his understanding by Divine grace. This is a greater spiritual satisfaction and produces more fruit than if the one who is giving the Exercises were to discourse at great length and amplify the meaning of the subject matter, for it is not an abundance of knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul but rather an interior understanding and savoring of things.

¹ The Spanish term used is *arrnotaciones*. It is clear from the nature of the first twenty points that they were meant as preliminary instructions for those giving and making the Exercises.

3. As is true in all of the following Spiritual Exercises, one uses the intellect for reasoning while the will is employed in giving expression to the affections. We should realize that in acts of the will, when we are speaking vocally or mentally with God our Lord or His saints, more reverence is required of us than when the intellect is used for reasoning.

4. Four weeks are assigned to the following Spiritual Exercises, corresponding to the four parts into which they are divided: the first, which is the consideration and contemplation of sin; the second, the life of our Lord Jesus Christ up to and including Palm Sunday; the third, the passion of Christ our Lord; and the fourth, the Resurrection and Ascension, to which are appended Three Methods of Prayer. This does not mean that each week must cover seven full days. It may happen that some exercitants are slower than others in finding the contrition, sorrow, and tears for their sins that they are seeking. In like manner some may be more diligent than others, or be more disturbed or tried by different spirits. It may be necessary sometimes to shorten the week and on other occasions to lengthen it. The same is true for the following weeks. The time should be set according to the needs of the subject matter. However, the Exercises should be completed in about thirty days.

5. Anyone making the Exercises will benefit greatly if he enters into them with great courage and generosity with his Creator and Lord, offering Him his entire will, that His Divine Majesty may make use of his person and all that he possesses in accordance with His most holy will.

6. When the one who is giving the Exercises feels that the soul of the exercitant is experiencing neither consolation nor desolation nor any other spiritual movement, or that he has not been troubled by different spirits, he should question him closely about the Exercises; whether he is making them at the appointed time, and in what manner he makes them. He should question him also as to whether he is following the additional directions attentively, and he should require a detailed account of each of these points. Consolation and Desolation are treated on page 129. The additional directions are given on page 60.

7. If the master of the Exercises sees that the exercitant is in desolation or tempted, he should be careful not to be severe or harsh with him but rather gentle and kind. He should give him courage and strength for the future, helping him to see the wiles of the enemy of our human nature, and having him prepare and dispose himself for consolation to come.

8. If the one who is giving the Exercises perceives a need for instruction on the part of the exercitant regarding desolation and the snares of the enemy, as also with respect to consolation, he may explain to him the rules of the first and second week on the discernment of spirits.

9. It is well to observe that when the exercitant is making the Exercises of the first week, if he is a person not well versed in spiritual matters and is tempted strongly and openly, for example, by being shown the obstacles to his further advancement in the service of our Lord, such as, hardships or shame or fear for his worldly honor, etc., then the one giving the Exercises should not talk with him on the rules for discerning different spirits, which are found in the second week. This matter is too subtle and too advanced for him to comprehend, and is likely to do him as much harm as the rules of the first week are likely to be of assistance to him.

10. When the one giving the Exercises feels that the exercitant is being attacked and tempted under the appearance of good, then it would be well to speak with him about the rules of the second week just mentioned. It is more usual for the enemy of our human nature to tempt under the appearances of good when a person is exercising himself in the illuminative way, which corresponds to the Exercises of the second week, and not so much in the purgative way, corresponding to the Exercises of the first week.

11. It is preferable that the person making the Exercises of the first week know nothing of what is to be done in the second week. He should rather work in the first week to acquire what he is seeking, as though he no longer expected to find any good in the second.

12. The one giving the Exercises should impress upon the exercitant that since he must devote one hour to each of the

five Exercises or contemplations that are to be made each day, that he should always be completely satisfied in his conscience that he has spent a full hour at the Exercise. It is better to spend even more than an hour rather than less; since the enemy frequently tries to have us shorten the hour for such contemplation, meditation, or prayer.

13. It should be noted also that just as in time of consolation it is simple and easy to remain in contemplation for an entire hour, so it is quite difficult in time of desolation to complete the hour. Therefore, to fight against desolation and to conquer temptation, the exercitant should continue a little beyond the full hour. Thus he will accustom himself not only to resist the adversary, but even to vanquish him completely.

14. If the one who is giving the Exercises sees that the exercitant is making them very fervently and in consolation, he should advise him and admonish him against making any hasty or unconsidered promise or vow. The more aware he is of the exercitant's fickleness of character the more he should warn and admonish him. Even though one may rightfully urge another to embrace the religious life, where it is understood that he will take vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, and although a good work done under vow is more meritorious than one done without vow, still one should consider carefully the individual circumstances and character of the person concerned, and what help or obstacles he would meet in accomplishing what he wishes to promise.

15. The one who gives the Exercises should not encourage the exercitant to embrace poverty, or to make any other promise rather than its contrary; neither should he encourage him to embrace one state of life rather than another. Even though apart from the Exercises it would be both lawful and meritorious to urge all who are probably fitted for it to embrace continence, virginity, religious life, and all other forms of evangelical perfection, in these Spiritual Exercises it is much better and more fitting in seeking the Divine Will, that our Lord and Savior should communicate Himself to the devout soul, inflaming it with His love and praise, and disposing it to the way in which it can best serve Him in the future. Thus, the one who gives the Exercises should not

lean either to one side or the other, but standing in the middle like the balance of a scale, he should allow the Creator to work directly with the creature, and the creature with its Creator and God.

16. In order that the Creator and Lord may work more surely in His creature, if such soul has any inordinate inclinations or attachments, it will be most useful for it to work as forcefully as possible to attain the contrary of that to which the present attachment tends. For instance, if a soul is inclined to seek or keep some office or benefice, not for the honor and glory of God our Lord nor for the salvation of souls, but for its personal convenience and temporal gain, the soul must change the direction of its affections. By earnest prayer and other spiritual exercises it must ask the contrary of God our Lord. That is to say it should desire to have no such office or benefice, nor anything else, unless the Divine Majesty, restoring order to the soul's wishes change its first desire, so that now the reason for desiring or holding such office or benefice is solely the service, the honor, and the glory of God.

17. The one giving the Exercises need not inquire into, nor know the personal thoughts and sins of the one who is making the Exercises, but it will be very useful for him to be kept faithfully informed of the various disturbances and thoughts which the different spirits awaken in him. In this way, depending on whether the exercitant progresses little or much, the director can give the spiritual exercises most in conformity with the needs of his soul.

18. The Spiritual Exercises should be adapted to the requirements of the persons who wish to make them, that is to say, according to their age, their education and their aptitudes. A person who is uneducated or of little natural ability should not be given matter which he could not conveniently bear or from which he could get no profit. In like manner to each should be given those exercises which will be of the most profit to him depending on his disposition and the amount of progress he wishes to make. Thus one who wishes to be helped only to get instruction and to reach a certain degree of spiritual contentment, may be given the

Particular Examination of Conscience (page 48) and afterwards the General Examination of Conscience, (page 50) together with the Method of Prayer on the Commandments, the Deadly Sins, etc., for a half hour in the morning. Weekly confession of his sins is also to be recommended, and if possible, Holy Communion every two weeks, or better, if he is so inclined, every week. This method of giving the Exercises is best suited to those who are illiterate or poorly educated: each commandment should be explained, and also the Deadly Sins, the precepts of the Church, the uses of the five senses, and the Works of Mercy.

If the director of the Exercises sees that the exercitant has little aptitude, or little natural ability or that he is one from whom little fruit could be expected, it is better to give him some of the easier exercises until he has gone to confession, and then to give him some methods of examination of conscience and a program for more frequent confession than has been his custom, so that he may preserve what he has gained, without going further into the matter of the election² nor into any other exercises beyond those of the first week, especially when greater profit may be gained with others, since there is insufficient time for everything.

19. A person engaged in public affairs or necessary business, if he is educated and has ability, can make the Exercises by taking an hour and a half for them each day. First, the end for which man is created should be explained to him, then he can also be given the Particular Examination of Conscience for half an hour; and afterwards the General Examination of Conscience and also the method of confessing and of receiving the Blessed Sacrament. He can make each morning for three days, one hour of meditation on the first, second, and third sins (page 54). For three more days, at the same hour, the meditation should be a review of his sins (page 56). Three more days, at the same hour, he should meditate on the punishment due to sin (page 59).

² The Spanish term *eleccion* is used by St. Ignatius to refer to the choice of a way of life, or a manner of living. The manner of making this choice is found in the Exercises of the second week.

With all three meditations he should be given the Ten Additional Directions (page 60). He should use the method described in the following Exercises for meditation on the mysteries of Christ our Lord.

20. One who is not involved in worldly affairs and who wishes to make the greatest possible progress, should be given all the Spiritual Exercises in the manner in which they are here set forth. In these Exercises, as a general rule, he will profit all the more if he is separated from all of his friends and from all worldly cares; for example, if he moves from the house where he lives and chooses another home or room where he may dwell as privately as possible, so that he may be free to go to Mass and Vespers every day, without fear of hindrance from his friends. There are three principal advantages, among many others to be gained by such seclusion: the first is that the person who withdraws from many friends and acquaintances and from distracting temporal concerns, in order to serve and praise God our Lord, gains no little merit from His Divine Majesty. The second is that being thus separated, not having his mind divided by many things but giving all his care to only one, which is the service of his Creator and the profiting of his own soul, he is more at liberty to use his natural ability in searching more diligently for what he desires so strongly. The third advantage is that the more the soul finds itself alone and away from men, the more apt it is to approach and be united with its Creator and Lord. The closer the soul approaches Him, the more it is disposed to receive graces and gifts from His divine and sovereign goodness.

FIRST WEEK

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISES

The purpose of these Exercises is to help the exercitant to conquer himself, and to regulate his life so that he will not be influenced in his decisions by any inordinate attachment.

PRESUPPOSITION

In order that the one who gives these Exercises and he who makes them may be of more assistance and profit to each other, they should begin with the presupposition that every good Christian ought to be more willing to give a good interpretation to the statement of another than to condemn it as false. If he cannot give a good interpretation to this statement, he should ask the other how he understands it, and if he is in error, he should correct him with charity. If this is not sufficient, he should seek every suitable means of correcting his understanding so that he may be saved from error.

PRINCIPLE AND FOUNDATION

Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul. All other things on the face of the earth are created for man to help him fulfill the end for which he is created. From this it follows that man is to use these things to the extent that they will help him to attain his end. Likewise, he must rid himself of them in so far as they prevent him from attaining it.

Therefore we must make ourselves indifferent to all created things, in so far as it is left to the choice of our free will and is not forbidden. Acting accordingly, for our part, we should

not prefer health to sickness, riches to poverty, honor to dishonor, a long life to a short one, and so in all things we should desire and choose only those things which will best help us attain the end for which we are created.

PARTICULAR EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE TO BE MADE EVERY DAY

This Exercise is performed at three different times, and there are two examinations to be made.

The first time: As soon as he arises in the morning the exercitant should resolve to guard himself carefully against the particular sin or defect which he wishes to correct or amend.

The second time: After the noon meal he should ask God our Lord for what he desires, namely, the grace to remember how many times he has fallen into the particular sin or defect, and to correct himself in the future. Following this he should make the first examination demanding an account of his soul regarding that particular matter which he proposed for himself and which he desires to correct and amend. He should review each hour of the time elapsed from the moment of rising to the moment of this examination, and he should make note on the first line of the following diagram, a mark for each time that he has fallen into the particular sin or defect. He should then renew his resolution to improve himself until the time of the second examination that he will make.

The third time: After the evening meal he will make a second examination, reviewing each hour from the first examination to this second one, and on to the second line of the same diagram he will again make a mark for each time that he has fallen into the particular sin or defect.

FOUR ADDITIONAL DIRECTIONS

The following directions will help to remove more quickly the particular sin or defect.



1. Each time that one falls into the particular sin or defect, he should place his hand on his breast, repenting that he has fallen. This can be done even in the presence of many people without their noticing it.

2. Since the first line of the diagram represents the first examination, and the second line, the second examination, at night the exercitant should observe whether there is an improvement from the first line to the second, that is, from the first examination to the second.

3. He should compare the second day with the first, that is to say, the two examinations of the present day with the two examinations of the preceding day, and see if there is a daily improvement.

4. He should also compare one week with another and see if there is a greater improvement during the present week than in the past week. It may be noted that the first large C denotes Sunday. The second is smaller and stands for Monday, the third, for Tuesday, and so forth.

GENERAL EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

To help the exercitant purify himself and make better confessions.

I presuppose that I have three kinds of thoughts in my mind. The first is a thought which is my own and which comes solely from my own liberty and will; the other two come from without, the one from the good spirit and the other from the evil one.

Thoughts: There are two ways of gaining merit from an evil thought which comes from without:

1. The thought comes to me to commit a mortal sin. I resist the thought immediately and it is conquered.
2. When the same evil thought comes to me and I resist it, and it returns again and again, but I continue to resist it until it is vanquished. This second way is much more meritorious than the first.

One is guilty of venial sin if the same thought of committing mortal sin comes to him and he gives it some attention or takes some sensual pleasure in it, or when there is some negligence in rejecting it.

There are two ways of sinning mortally:

The first exists when one consents to an evil thought with the intention of carrying it out later, or with the intention of doing so if he could.

The second way of sinning mortally is to put the thought of the sin into action. This is a more grievous sin for three reasons:

1. Because of the greater length of time.
2. Because of the greater intensity.
3. Because of the greater injury done to both persons.

Sins of words:

One must not swear by the Creator nor by any creature unless it concerns the truth, and unless it be through necessity and with reverence. By necessity I mean, not when any truth at all is affirmed under oath, but when it is of real importance, for the profit of the soul or the body or for the protection of temporal goods. By reverence I mean that one will reflect on the honor and reverence due his Creator and Lord when he uses His name.

It should be noted that when we take an unnecessary oath we sin more seriously if we swear by the Creator than if we swear by a creature. Still, it is more difficult to swear in the proper manner, that is with truth, necessity, and reverence, by a creature than by the Creator, for the following reasons:

1. When we want to swear by some creature, the desire to name the creature does not make us so attentive and prudent in telling the truth, or to consider whether it is necessary to swear, as we would be when we use the name of the Creator and Lord of all things.

2. When we swear by any creature, it is not so easy to show reverence and respect to the Creator as when we swear in the name of the Creator and Lord Himself, for the wish to use the name of God our Lord carries with it a greater respect and reverence than the wish to take an oath in the name of a creature. This is why it is more permissible for those who are perfect than for those who are imperfect to swear by a creature. Due to their continued contemplation and the enlightenment of their understanding, the perfect are more able to consider, meditate, and contemplate God our Lord as existing in all creatures by his essence, presence, and power. Thus, when they swear by a creature they are more likely to be disposed to show respect and reverence for their Creator and Lord than those who are imperfect.

3. In frequently swearing by a creature, idolatry is more to be feared in the imperfect than in the perfect.

Idle words should not be spoken. By idle words I mean words which serve no good purpose, and do not profit me or anyone else, nor are they intended to do so. Words spoken for a useful purpose or words intended for the good of one's soul or that of another, or for the good of the body, or for one's temporal welfare are never idle words. Neither are words idle because one speaks of matters which are foreign to his state, for example, if a religious speaks of wars or of commerce. In all that has been mentioned there is merit if the words are directed to a good end, and it is sinful if they are directed to a bad end, or spoken idly.

Nothing should be said to defame or slander another. If I reveal a hidden mortal sin committed by another, I sin mortally. If I reveal another's hidden venial sin, I sin venially. In revealing the defects of another I thereby make known my own defect. If the intention is good, the defect or sin of another may be spoken of:

1. When the sin is public, as in the case of a woman openly engaged in prostitution, or a sentence passed by a court of justice, or a known error which is corrupting the souls of those with whom we are conversing.
2. When the hidden sin is made known to someone to help him rise from his own sin. There must, however, be some grounds or probable reasons for expecting that this will help him.

Sins of deeds:

The subject matter is the Ten Commandments, the precepts of the Church, and the recommendations of superiors. Any action committed against any of these three groups is a more or less serious sin according to the gravity of the matter. By recommendations of superiors I mean, for example, the Indulgences attached to the Crusade and other Indulgences, such as those for peace, requiring confession and reception of the most Holy Sacrament. For we would not sin lightly if we acted or caused others to act against such pious recommendations and exhortations of superiors.

METHOD OF MAKING THE GENERAL EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

This examination contains five points:

1. The first point is to render thanks to God for the favors we have received.
2. The second point is to ask the grace to know my sins and to free myself from them.
3. The third point is to demand an account of my soul from the moment of rising until the present examination; either hour by hour or from one period to another. I shall first make an examination of my thoughts, then my words, and then my actions in the same order as that given in the Particular Examination of Conscience.
4. The fourth point is to ask pardon of God our Lord for my failings.
5. The fifth point is to resolve to amend my life with the help of God's grace. Close with the "Our Father."

GENERAL CONFESSION AND HOLY COMMUNION

Anyone who of his own accord wishes to make a general Confession during the period of the Spiritual Exercises will find, among many other advantages, these three:

1. Although anyone who confesses once a year is not required to make a general confession, by doing so he will gain much more profit and merit because of the greater sorrow he will have for his sins and for the wickedness of his whole life.
2. Just as during the Spiritual Exercises a person gains a more intimate knowledge of his sins and their malice than at a time when he is not occupied with his interior life, so now because of this greater understanding and sorrow for his sins, he will find greater profit and merit than he would have had before.

3. After making a better confession and being better disposed, he will be more worthy and better prepared to receive the most Holy Sacrament, which will help him not only to avoid sin but also to preserve and increase grace.

It would be best to make this general confession immediately after the Exercises of the first week.

THE FIRST EXERCISE

This meditation is made with the three powers of the soul, and the subject is the first, second, and third sins. It contains, the preparatory prayer, two preludes, three principal points, and a colloquy.

Prayer: The purpose of the preparatory prayer is to ask of God our Lord the grace that all my intentions, actions, and works may be directed purely to the service and praise of His Divine Majesty.

The first prelude is a mental image of the place. It should be noted at this point that when the meditation or contemplation is on a visible object, for example, contemplating Christ our Lord during His life on earth, the image will consist of seeing with the mind's eye the physical place where the object that we wish to contemplate is present. By the physical place I mean, for instance, a temple, or mountain where Jesus or the Blessed Virgin is, depending on the subject of the contemplation. In meditations on subject matter that is not visible, as here in meditation on sins, the mental image will consist of imagining, and considering my soul imprisoned in its corruptible body, and my entire being in this vale of tears as an exile among brute beasts. By entire being I mean both body and soul.

The second prelude is to ask God our Lord for what I want and desire. The request must be according to the subject matter. Therefore, if the contemplation is on the Resurrection I shall ask for joy with Christ rejoicing; if it is on the passion, I shall ask for pain, tears, and suffering with Christ suffering. In the present meditation I shall ask for shame and confusion, for I see how many souls have been damned for a

single mortal sin, and how often I have deserved to be damned eternally for the many sins I have committed.

NOTE

The preparatory prayer without change, and the two preludes mentioned above, which may be changed at times if the subject matter requires it, are to be made before all contemplations and meditations.

The first point will be to recall to memory the first sin, which was that of the angels, then to apply the understanding by considering this sin in detail, then the will by seeking to remember and understand all, so that I may be the more ashamed and confounded when I compare the one sin of the angels with the many that I have committed. Since they went to hell for one sin, how many times have I deserved it for my many sins. I will recall to mind the sin of the angels, remembering that they were created in the state of grace, that they refused to make use of their freedom to offer reverence and obedience to their Creator and Lord, and so sinning through pride, they fell from grace into sin and were cast from heaven into hell. In like manner my understanding is to be used to reason more in detail on the subject matter, and thereby move more deeply my affections through the use of the will.

The second point is to employ the three powers of the soul to consider the sin of Adam and Eve. Recall to mind how they did such long penance for their sin and what corruption fell upon the whole human race, causing so many to go to hell. I say to recall to mind the second sin, that of our first parents. Recall that after Adam had been created in the Plain of Damascus and placed in the earthly paradise, and Eve had been formed from his rib, they were forbidden to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and eating it they committed sin. After their sin, clothed in garments of skin and cast out of paradise, without the original justice which they had lost, they lived all their lives in much travail and great penance.

The understanding is likewise to be used in considering

the subject matter in greater detail and the will is to be employed as already explained.

The third point is to recall to mind the third sin. This is the particular sin of any person who went to hell because of one mortal sin. Consider also the innumerable others who have gone to hell for fewer sins than I have committed. I say to consider the third particular sin. Recall to mind the grievousness and malice of sin against our Creator and Lord. Let the understanding consider how in sinning and acting against Infinite Goodness, one has justly been condemned forever. Close with acts of the will, as mentioned above.

Colloquy. Imagine Christ our Lord before you, hanging upon the cross. Speak with Him of how, being the Creator He then became man, and how, possessing eternal life, He submitted to temporal death to die for our sins.

Then I shall meditate upon myself and ask "What have I done for Christ? What am I now doing for Christ? What ought I do for Christ?" As I see Him in this condition, hanging upon the cross, I shall meditate on the thoughts that come to my mind.

The colloquy is made properly by speaking as one friend speaks to another, or as a servant speaks to his master, now asking some favor, now accusing oneself for some wrong deed, or again, making known his affairs to Him and seeking His advice concerning them. Conclude with the "Our Father."

THE SECOND EXERCISE

This is a meditation on sin. It consists of the preparatory prayer, two preludes, five points, and a colloquy.

Prayer: This is the same as the first Exercise.

The first prelude is the same as in the first Exercise.

The second prelude is to ask for what I desire. I shall here beg for an ever increasing and intense sorrow and tears for my sins.

The first point is the review of my sins. I shall recall to mind all the sins of my life, looking at them year by year, and period by period. Three things will help me to do this:

first, I shall recall to mind the place and house where I lived; secondly, the associations I have had with others; thirdly, the positions which I have filled.

The second point is to weigh my sins, considering the loathsomeness and the malice that every mortal sin committed has in itself, even though it were not forbidden.

The third point is to consider who I am and abase myself by these examples:

1. What am I in comparison to all men?
2. What are men in comparison with the angels and saints of heaven?
3. What is all creation in comparison with God? Then myself alone, what can I be?
4. Let me consider all my own corruption and foulness of body.
5. Let me see myself as a sore and an abscess from whence have come forth so many sins, so many evils, and the most vile poison.

The fourth point is now to consider who God is against whom I have sinned, recalling his attributes and comparing them to their contraries in me: His wisdom to my ignorances; His omnipotence to my weakness; His justice with my iniquity, His goodness with my sinfulness.

The fifth point is to be struck with amazement and filled with a growing emotion as I consider how creatures have suffered me to live, and have sustained me in life. How the angels, the swords of Divine Justice, tolerated me, guarded me, and prayed for me. How the saints have interceded and prayed for me. How the heavens, moon, and stars, and the elements; fruits, birds, fishes, and animals have all served my needs. How the earth has not opened and swallowed me up, creating new hells that I might suffer eternal torment in them.

Colloquy. I will end this meditation with a colloquy directing my thoughts to God's mercy. I will give thanks to Him for having granted me life until now, and I will resolve with the help of His grace to amend my life for the future. Close with an "Our Father."

THE THIRD EXERCISE

This is a repetition of the first and second Exercises, with three colloquies.

After the preparatory prayer and the two preludes, the first and second Exercises are to be repeated. I will note and dwell upon the points in which I have felt the greatest consolation or desolation, or the greatest spiritual relish. I will then make these colloquies in the following manner.

The first colloquy is with our Lady, that she may obtain grace for me from her Son and Lord for three things:

1. That I may have a thorough knowledge of my sins and a feeling of abhorrence for them.
2. That I may comprehend the disorder of my actions, so that detesting them I will amend my ways and put my life in order.
3. That I may know the world, and being filled with horror of it, I may put away from me worldly and vain things.

Conclude with the "Hail Mary."

The second colloquy is with the Son of God. I will beg Him to intercede with the Father to obtain these graces for me. Conclude with the "Anima Christi."

The third colloquy is with our Eternal Father. I will request that He Himself grant these graces to me. Conclude with the "Our Father."

THE FOURTH EXERCISE

This is a résumé of the third Exercise.

I have called this a résumé because the intellect, without digression, is to recall and review thoroughly the matters contemplated in the previous Exercises. The same three colloquies should then be made.

THE FIFTH EXERCISE

This is a meditation on hell. It contains a preparatory prayer, two preludes, five points, and a colloquy.

Preparatory prayer: This prayer will be as usual.

First prelude: This is the representation of place. Here it will be to see in imagination the length, breadth, and depth of hell.

Second prelude: I will ask for what I desire. Here it will be to ask for a deep awareness of the pain suffered by the damned, so that if I should forget the love of the Eternal Lord, at least the fear of punishment will help me to avoid falling into sin.

First point: To see in imagination the great fires, and the souls enveloped, as it were, in bodies of fire.

Second point: To hear the wailing, the screaming, cries, and blasphemies against Christ our Lord and all His saints.

Third point: To smell the smoke, the brimstone, the corruption, and rotteness.

Fourth point: To taste bitter things, as tears, sadness, and remorse of conscience.

Fifth point: With the sense of touch to feel how the flames surround and burn souls.

Colloquy: Enter into a colloquy with Christ our Lord. Recall to mind the souls in hell, some are there because they did not believe in His coming; others, though they believed, did not act according to His Commandments.

I can divide these souls into three classes:

1. Those who went to hell before the coming of Christ.
2. Those who were damned during His lifetime.
3. Those condemned to hell after His life in the world.

I will now give Him thanks for not having permitted me to fall into any of these classes, thus putting an end to my life.

I will also thank Him for the great kindness and mercy

He has always shown me until this present moment. Conclude with an "Our Father."

NOTE

The first Exercise will be made at midnight; the second, immediately on rising in the morning; the third, before or after Mass but before dinner; the fourth, at the hour of Vespers. It is understood that this arrangement of hours, more or less, is to be observed during the entire four weeks, in so far as age, disposition, and physical constitution enable the exercitant to make five exercises or fewer.

ADDITIONAL DIRECTIONS

To help the exercitant make the Exercises better and to assist him in finding what he desires:

1. After going to bed, as I am about to go to sleep, for the space of a "Hail Mary," I should think of the hour when I have to rise, and for what purpose, summing up the Exercises I have to make.

2. When I wake up, I will not permit my mind to wander to other things, I will turn it at once to the subject that I am going to contemplate in the first Exercise at midnight. I shall be filled with confusion for my many sins, thinking of such examples as that of a knight who finds himself in the presence of his king and the entire court and is filled with shame and confusion for having so greatly offended him from whom he had already received so many gifts and favors.

In like manner, in the second Exercise, I will see myself as a great sinner, bound in chains, who is about to appear before the supreme, eternal Judge; and I will take as an example how prisoners in chains and worthy of death appear before their earthly judge. As I dress I will think over these thoughts, or others, according to the subject matter.

3. A step or two from the place where I am going to meditate or contemplate, I will stand for the space of an "Our Father," and with my mind raised on high, I will consider that God our Lord sees me, etc. And I will make an act of reverence or humility.

4. I will enter into the meditation, at times kneeling, at times prostrate on the ground, at other times supine, or seated or standing, always intent on seeking what I desire. Two things should be noted:

a. If I find what I am seeking while kneeling I will not change my posture, and if prostrate, I will continue in that position, etc.

b. When I find that which I desire, I will meditate quietly, without being anxious to continue further until I have satisfied myself.

5. After I have finished an Exercise I will examine for the space of a quarter of an hour, either while sitting or walking, how I have succeeded in the meditation or contemplation. If I have performed the Exercise poorly, I will seek out the cause, and when I have found it, I will be sorry, so that I may make amends in the future. If I have performed the Exercise well, I will thank God our Lord, and follow the same method next time.

6. I will not think of pleasant and joyful things as heaven, the Resurrection, etc., for such consideration of joy and delight will hinder the feeling of pain, sorrow, and tears that I should have for my sins. It would be better for me to keep in mind that I want to feel sorrow and pain, remembering death and the judgment.

7. For the same reason I will deprive myself of all light, closing the shutters and doors when I am in my room, unless I need the light to say my prayers, to read, or to eat.

8. I will neither laugh nor say anything that will provoke laughter.

9. I will restrain my eyes except in looking to receive or dismiss the person with whom I have to speak.

10. This direction is concerned with penance, which is divided into interior and exterior. Interior penance is sorrow for one's sins, and a firm resolution not to commit them or any others. Exterior penance is the fruit of interior penance, and is the punishment we inflict upon ourselves for the sins committed. We perform this penance in three ways:

a. Regarding food. It will be noted that when we deny ourselves what is superfluous, it is not penance but temperance. It is penance when we deny ourselves what is proper for us to have, and the more we deny ourselves the greater and better is the penance, provided we do not harm ourselves or cause ourselves serious illness.

b. Regarding sleeping. Here again it is not penance when we deny ourselves the superfluity of delicate and soft things. But it is penance when we deny ourselves what is suitable for us. Again, the more we deny ourselves the greater is the penance, provided we cause ourselves no injury or serious illness. Nor should we deny ourselves our due amount of sleep unless we have the bad habit of sleeping too much. It may then be done to arrive at a proper mean.

c. By chastising the flesh, thereby causing sensible pain. This is done by wearing hairshirts, cords, or iron chains on the body, or by scourging or wounding oneself, or by other kinds of austerities.

What seems the most suitable and safest thing in doing penance is for the pain to be felt in the flesh, without penetration to the bones, thus causing pain but not illness. Therefore it seems more fitting to scourge oneself with light cords, which cause exterior pain, than in another way that might cause internal infirmity.

FOUR OBSERVATIONS ON PENANCE

1. Exterior penances are performed principally to produce three effects:

- a.* To satisfy for past sins.
- b.* To overcome ourselves, so that sensuality will be obedient to reason and our lower inclinations be subject to higher ones.
- c.* To seek and find some grace or gift that we wish to obtain, as for instance, a deep sorrow for our sins, or to grieve for them or for the pains and sufferings that Christ

our Lord endured in His passion, or for the solution of some doubt that is troubling us.

2. It is to be noted that the first and second additional directions should be applied to the Exercises at midnight and at daybreak, and not for the Exercises that are made at other times. The fourth direction will never be followed in Church in the presence of others, but only in private, as at home, etc.

3. When the exercitant still does not find what he is seeking, for example, tears, consolations, etc., he will often find it advantageous to change his penance in the matter of food, sleep, or the other acts that he has been performing. Thus we may alternate, doing penance for two or three days, and then for two or three days omitting it. For some it is better to do more penance and for others less. We often fail to do penance also out of love for what pleases the senses and through a false conviction that human nature cannot bear it without notable illness. Sometimes, on the contrary, we may do too much penance, thinking that our body can bear it. Since God our Lord knows our nature infinitely better than we do, often in such changes He grants to each of us to understand what best suits us.

4. The Particular Examination of Conscience will be made to remove defects and negligences relating to the Exercises and the additional directions. This will also be done in the second, third and fourth weeks.

2. When anyone feels that he is inclined and attached to those persons to whom he wishes to give alms, he should pause and consider well the four rules given above. He should not give an alms until he has examined and tested his affections and, in conformity with these rules, removed and cast aside all inordinate attachments.

3. There is no wrong in accepting the goods of God our Lord for distribution if one is called to such a ministry by our God and Lord. However, there may easily be fault or excess in the amount and quantity that one ought to keep for his own needs out of that which he holds to give to others. He should therefore reform his life and his state by the rules given above.

4. For these and many other reasons, it is always better and safer, in matters that concern himself and his household, if one retrench and reduce his expenses as much as possible, and thus approach as near as possible our great High Priest, our model and rule, who is Christ our Lord.

In conformity with this doctrine, the Third Council of Carthage, at which St. Augustine was present, decrees and orders that the furniture of a bishop be plain and poor. The same consideration applies to all states of life, making allowance for the condition and rank of each, and observing due proportion. In the married state we have the example of St. Joachim and St. Anne, who divided their means into three parts and gave the first to the poor, the second to the ministry and service of the Temple, and used the third for the support of themselves and their family.

NOTES CONCERNING SCRUPLES

The following notes will be of help in discerning and understanding scruples and the snares of our enemy.

1. The name scruple is ordinarily given to that which proceeds from our judgment and free will; for example, when I freely judge something to be a sin which is not a sin. This might happen when someone, after having accidentally stepped on a cross formed by two straws, of his own accord judges that he has sinned. This is in reality an erroneous judgment and not a real scruple.

2. After I have stepped upon that cross, or after I have thought, said, or done some other thing, the thought comes to me from without that I have sinned, and on the other hand, it seems to me that I have not sinned; nevertheless I am disturbed in this matter, doubting and not doubting that I have sinned. This is truly a scruple and a temptation from our enemy.

3. The first scruple, mentioned in the first note should be much abhorred because it is completely erroneous. But the second type of scruple mentioned in the second note, is for a certain period of time of no little advantage to the soul that devotes itself to spiritual exercises. It may even greatly purify and cleanse such a soul, separating it far from all appearance of sin, according to that saying of St. Gregory: "It is a mark of good souls there to recognize a fault when there is none."

4. The enemy observes very carefully whether one has a delicate or lax conscience. If the conscience is delicate he strives to make it excessively so in order to disturb and ruin it more easily. For example, if the enemy sees that a soul consents to no sin, mortal or venial, or even to the appearance of deliberate sin, since he cannot make the soul fall into what has the appearance of sin, he strives to make it

judge that there is sin where there is none, as in some insignificant word or thought.

If the conscience is lax, the enemy strives to make it still more lax. Thus, if before it took no account of venial sins, he will strive to have it take little account of mortal sins. If before, it did take some account of them, now he will strive that it care much less or not at all about them.

5. The soul that desires to advance in the spiritual life must always take a course contrary to that of the enemy. If the enemy seeks to make the conscience lax, he must strive to make it more sensitive, and if the enemy endeavors to make it delicate to excess, the soul must strive to establish itself solidly in moderation so that it may better maintain its tranquility.

6. When such a good soul wishes to say or do something that is acceptable to the Church and to the mind of our superiors, something that may be for the glory of God our Lord, there may come to it from without, a thought or temptation not to say or do it because it is motivated by vainglory or some other specious reason. On such occasions one must raise his mind to his Creator and Lord, and if he sees that the action is for God's service, or at least not contrary to it, he ought to act in a manner diametrically opposed to the temptation, as St. Bernard answered a like temptation: "I did not begin this because of you, nor because of you will I desist."

RULES FOR THINKING WITH THE CHURCH

In order to have the proper attitude of mind in the Church Militant we should observe the following rules:

1. Putting aside all private judgment, we should keep our minds prepared and ready to obey promptly and in all things the true spouse of Christ our Lord, our Holy Mother, the hierarchical Church.
2. To praise sacramental confession and the reception of the Most Holy Sacrament once a year, and much better once a month, and better still every week, with the requisite and proper dispositions.
3. To praise the frequent hearing of Mass, singing of hymns and psalms, and the recitation of long prayers, both in and out of church; also the hours arranged for fixed times for the whole Divine Office, for prayers of all kinds and for the canonical hours.
4. To praise highly religious life, virginity, and continence; and also matrimony, but not as highly as any of the foregoing.
5. To praise the vows of religion, obedience, poverty, chastity, and other works of perfection and supererogation. It must be remembered that a vow is made in matters that lead to evangelical perfection. It is therefore improper to make a vow in matters that depart from this perfection; as, for example, to enter business, to get married, and so forth.
6. To praise the relics of the saints by venerating them and by praying to these saints. Also to praise the stations, pilgrimages, indulgences, jubilees, Crusade indulgences, and the lighting of candles in the churches.
7. To praise the precepts concerning fasts and abstinences, such as those of Lent, Ember Days, Vigils, Fridays, and Saturdays; likewise to praise acts of penance, both interior and exterior.

8. To praise the adornments and buildings of churches as well as sacred images, and to venerate them according to what they represent.

9. Finally, to praise all the precepts of the Church, holding ourselves ready at all times to find reasons for their defense, and never offending against them.

10. We should be more inclined to approve and praise the directions and recommendations of our superiors as well as their personal behavior. Although sometimes these may not be or may not have been praiseworthy, to speak against them when preaching in public or in conversation with people would give rise to murmuring and scandal rather than to edification. As a result, the people would be angry with their superiors, whether temporal or spiritual. Still, while it does harm to our superiors in their absence to speak ill of them in the presence of the people, it might be useful to speak of their bad conduct to those who can apply a remedy.

11. To praise both positive and scholastic theology, for as it is more characteristic of the positive doctors, such as St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Gregory, and others, to encourage the affections to greater love and service of God our Lord in all things, so it also is more characteristic of the scholastic doctors, such as St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, and the Master of the Sentences, etc., to define and explain for our times the things necessary for eternal salvation, and to refute and expose all errors and fallacies. Also, the scholastic doctors, being of more recent date, not only have a clearer understanding of the Holy Scripture and of the teachings of the positive and holy doctors, but also, being enlightened and inspired by the Divine Power, they are helped by the Councils, Canons, and Constitutions of our Holy Mother Church.

12. We must be on our guard against making comparisons between the living and those who have already gone to their reward, for it is no small error to say, for example: "This man knows more than St. Augustine"; "He is another St. Francis, or even greater"; "He is another St. Paul in goodness, holiness, etc."

13. If we wish to be sure that we are right in all things,

we should always be ready to accept this principle: I will believe that the white that I see is black, if the hierarchical Church so defines it. For, I believe that between the Bridegroom, Christ our Lord, and the Bride, His Church, there is but one spirit, which governs and directs us for the salvation of our souls, for the same Spirit and Lord, who gave us the Ten Commandments, guides and governs our Holy Mother Church.

14. Although it be true that no one can be saved unless it be predestined and unless he have faith and grace, still we must be very careful of our manner of discussing and speaking of these matters.

15. We should not make predestination an habitual subject of conversation. If it is sometimes mentioned we must speak in such a way that no person will fall into error, as happens on occasion when one will say, "It has already been determined whether I will be saved or lost, and in spite of all the good or evil that I do, this will not be changed." As a result, they become apathetic and neglect the works that are conducive to their salvation and to the spiritual growth of their souls.

16. In like manner, we must be careful lest by speaking too much and with too great emphasis on faith, without any distinction or explanation, we give occasion to the people to become indolent and lazy in the performance of good works, whether it be before or after their faith is founded in charity.

17. Also in our discourse we ought not to emphasize the doctrine that would destroy free will. We may therefore speak of faith and grace to the extent that God enables us to do so, for the greater praise of His Divine Majesty. But, in these dangerous times of ours, it must not be done in such a way that good works or free will suffer any detriment or be considered worthless.

18. Although the generous service of God for motives of pure love should be most highly esteemed, we should praise highly the fear of His Divine Majesty, for filial fear and even servile fear are pious and most holy things. When one cannot attain anything better or more useful, this fear

is of great help in rising from mortal sin, and after this first step one easily advances to filial fear which is wholly acceptable and pleasing to God our Lord, since it is inseparable from Divine Love.

APPENDIX