

Week Six

After the Exercises

*Conversion*

How to use this booklet:

These passages have been chosen to underscore a theme that is very important in Ignatian Spirituality and in our walk with Jesus. The general direction of prayer that is envisioned by this booklet is one of Lectio Divina. In this method, the passage one reads is meant to help one to reflect, then to move into prayer with God and then to move into a silent and deep communion with God. This trajectory has been described as a ladder: reading—thinking—praying—contemplating. As one finds oneself distracted at any time in the prayer, one simply goes back to reading the passage, letting the words open us to thinking and praying and contemplating. One might end up reading the passage many times or one might not be able to get through the passage because one stops to think, pray and/contemplate so frequently.

You might want to use one passage all week long, rotate through them or repeat one or another of them. There should be enough material to help someone pray for one week.

You probably want to give yourself at least 30 minutes for this.

### Preparatory Prayer:

Ask the Lord to help you to find Him more fully in all the aspects of your life.

### Lectio Divina:

Read the passage that you choose, stopping as soon as you feel drawn to reflect on the passage or you feel moved to pray. Let go of your sense of wanting to learn or to finish the passage, but instead desire to be open to God and, if you feel a call to just sit quietly in the presence of God, indulge in that. As you get distracted, return gently to the passage and read some more or read parts of it again. Distractions are natural.

### Conclusion:

Thank God for your time and be specific about a time or two that you felt the grace of God or felt touched by God's wisdom.

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## Quotation of St. Ignatius:

*From one of his letters:* You are mistaken in thinking that the cause of your disquiet, or little progress in the Lord, is due to the place, or your superiors, or your brethren. This disquiet comes from within and not from without. I mean from your lack of humility, obedience, prayer, and your slight mortification, in a word, your little fervor in advancing in the way of perfection. You could change residence, superiors, and brethren, but if you do not change the interior man, you will never do good. And you will everywhere be the same, unless you succeed in being humble, obedient, devout, and mortified in your self-love. This is the only change you should seek. I mean that you should try to change the interior man and lead him back like a servant to God.

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Psalm 51

- <sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God,  
according in your everlasting love;  
according to your great compassion  
erase my transgressions.
- <sup>2</sup> Wash away all my sinfulness  
and cleanse me from my iniquity.
- <sup>3</sup> For I know my sins,  
and my trespass is always before me.
- <sup>4</sup> Against you, you alone, have I transgressed  
and done what is wrong before your eyes;  
so you are right in your judgment  
and justified when you indict.
- <sup>5</sup> Surely I was sinful at birth,  
guilty from the time I was conceived in my mother.
- <sup>6</sup> Yet you wanted faithfulness even from the womb;  
you taught me wisdom in that hidden place.
- <sup>7</sup> Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- <sup>8</sup> Allow me to hear the sound of joy and gladness;  
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
- <sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my sins  
and take away all my iniquity.
- <sup>10</sup> Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a faithful spirit within me.
- <sup>11</sup> Do not take me from your presence

or remove your Holy Spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and give me a willing spirit, that I may be sustained.

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From *The Imitation of Christ*

The saints of God and all devout friends of Christ did not look to what pleases the body nor to the things that are popular from time to time. Their whole hope and aim centered on the everlasting good. Their whole desire pointed upward to the lasting and invisible realm, lest the love of what is visible drag them down to lower things. Do not lose heart, then, my brother, in pursuing your spiritual life. There is yet time, and your hour is not past. Why delay your purpose? Arise! Begin at once and say: "Now is the time to act, now is the time to fight, now is the proper time to amend."

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## Matthew 18:1-4

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

He called a little child to him, and placed the child in their midst. And he said: “Amen, amen, I tell you, unless you turn and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever becomes lowly as this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.