

IGNATIAN CONTEMPLATION

This prayer form intends to engage the whole psyche, from one's thoughts to one's imaginations, to one's feeling, and even to one's will. You begin by taking a narrative scene from the Bible. For example, one could pray over Mark 10:46-52. This is the story of the blind man Bartimaeus who is healed by Jesus. One places oneself in the scene, and imagines how it looks and feels down to the last detail. One imagines how it smells, the temperature, the time of day, what people look like, how one feels, and so on. One could even imagine oneself *in* the story, perhaps Bartimaeus himself seeking healing from Jesus. How does the situation attract or repel you? What does Jesus want from me here? What do I want from him? What are the implications? And so on. How To:

- A. Preparatory Prayer: Ask for the grace that all one's intentions and actions be directed purely to the service and love of God.
- B. Prelude: Imagine the scene, or conceptualize the matter of meditation.
- C. Second Prelude: Ask for the appropriate grace of the meditation. For example, if one is meditating on the crucifixion, one may ask for the grace of deepening one's compassion for the world.
- D. Meditation: Chew on the matter of the meditation, recall the scene a number of times, entering into it, finding what may emerge. This should take from 20-40 minutes.
- E. Colloquy: Seek the grace to integrate the mediation into one's heart.
- F. Close with the Lord's Prayer.

IGNATIAN CONSCIOUSNESS EXAMEN

This prayer should be done at the end of the day. It is not an *examination of conscience*, where one would look at moral failings and successes of the day. But rather, the emphasis is on recognizing God's graced presence during the day and one's response to that presence. How To:

- A. Recall that you are in the presence of God.
- B. Give thanks to God for the favors received.
 - 1. Pause and look at the day's gifts. Be concrete. Notice the clues that guided your living in God's love that day.
 - 2. Look at your more permanent gifts and see how they have been participating in God's graces that day.
 - 3. Pause in thanksgiving.
- C. Ask the Holy Spirit to increase your awareness. The Spirit gives us freedom to look upon ourselves in freedom, in honesty, in humility, and without condemnation.
- D. Recall the specific events of the day, exploring the context of your actions.
 - 1. Review the day, hour by hour, searching for the internal events in your life
 - 2. See the situations where your heart was divided.
 - 3. See opportunities for more faith, hope, and love.
 - 4. Notice where you acted with the truest freedom of spirit.
 - 5. See where Christ entered your decisions, implicitly or explicitly.
- E. Offer a prayer of gratitude, seek forgiveness, and ask for continued growth in love.