

Ignatius Loyola began to open himself to God when he became aware of interior movements – desires, feelings, impulses – which, upon reflection, he realized had their origin in God. Thus we can say that Ignatius’ spiritual journey began, not simply by his having experienced God’s action in his life, but also by his having reflected on it. It seems, then, that reflection on God’s action in our prayer-life is almost as important as our prayer-life itself. In other words, it is important that we not only seek God in prayer, but also, upon completing the prayer, we reflect on what God seemed to be doing in the prayer and how God seemed to be moving us interiorly during the prayer. Moreover, by finding words to express what we experience in our prayer we grow in understanding of how God is acting in our life and to what God is inviting us. We are thus better able to respond to God.

How to do the Review

- It is helpful to move to a different location so that there is a clear distinction between your prayer and your review of it.
- The focus of the review is not so much intellectual insights, but rather your affective experience.
- You should plan to spend 5 or 10 minutes reviewing your prayer.
- You should write your reflections on your prayer in a journal.
- Some questions you may find helpful in your review:
 - What significant interior movements – feelings, reactions, intuitions, desires, understandings, or insights – did you experience?
 - What was the prevailing mood of your prayer: peace, agitation, excitement, boredom, calm, confusion?
 - Was there some word, phrase, image, or memory that had a significant effect on you during your prayer? If so, describe it.
 - Is there something happening in your life that is becoming part of your prayer? Do you feel moved to do something concrete in your life?
 - Did you make sufficient preparation for your prayer?
 - Is there anything you are doing or not doing that is impeding your prayer?
 - Do you feel that you have exhausted the subject matter of your prayer, or do you find yourself being drawn back to it the next time you pray?

How to do the Journal Entry

- As a general rule, you should head each entry with the day, date, and the subject matter of the prayer: e.g., Tuesday, July 1: Isaiah 49:1-6:
- If anything stood out for you in your prayer – affections, insights, understandings, decisions about future prayer, and such – you should include these in your journal entry.
- The style of the entry is entirely up to you. Some describe their prayer in complete sentences; others prefer shorter entries with no more than a few key words: e.g., “I chose to approach God as lover (Song of Songs 2:10-12) and as fire (1 Kings 19:11-13) – and I found much peace and consolation here. I sensed God’s love as pure gift – and, perhaps because of it, sensed a call – even a deep desire – to leave everything (Genesis 12:1) for God – and I stayed there with great affection.” Some like to include some verses of a poem or psalm to express what they feel: e.g., “When the Lord brought back the captives from Zion it seemed like a dream, and then our mouths filled with laughter, and our lips with song” (Psalm 126:1-2). Note: The focus of the review is not on insights you may have received, but rather on how God was moving you interiorly.