

# ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

by Rev. Alban Butler

A.D. 1556.

THE conversion of many barbarous nations, several heretofore unknown to us, both in the most remote eastern and western hemisphere; the education of youth in learning and piety, the instruction of the ignorant, the improvement of all the sciences, and the reformation of the manners of a great part of Christendom, is the wonderful fruit of the zeal with which this glorious saint devoted himself to labour in exalting the glory of God, and in spreading over the whole world that fire which Christ himself came to kindle on earth. St. Ignatius was born in 1491, in the castle of Loyola, in Guipuscoa, a part of Biscay that reaches to the Pyrenean mountains. His father, Don Bertram, was Lord of Ognez and Loyola, head of one of the most ancient and noble families of that country. His mother, Mary Saez de Balde, was not less illustrious by her extraction. They had three daughters and eight sons. The youngest of all these was Inigo or Ignatius. He was well shaped, and in his childhood gave proofs of a pregnant wit and discretion above his years; was affable and obliging, but of a warm or choleric disposition, and had an ardent passion for glory. He was bred in the court of Ferdinand V. in quality of page to the king, under the care and protection of Antony Manriquez, Duke of Najara, grandee of Spain, who was his kinsman and patron; and who, perceiving his inclinations, led him to the army, took care to have him taught all the exercises proper to make him an accomplished officer. The love of glory and the example of his elder brothers, who had signalized themselves in the wars of Naples, made him impatient till he entered the service. He behaved with great valour and conduct in the army, especially at the taking of Najara, a small town on the frontiers of Biscay; yet he generously declined taking any part of the booty, in which he might have challenged the greatest share. He hated gaming as an offspring of avarice, and a source of quarrels and other evils; was dextrous in the management of affairs, and had an excellent talent in making up differences among the soldiers. He was generous, even towards enemies, but addicted to gallantry, and full of the maxims of worldly honour, vanity, and pleasures. Though he had no tincture of learning, he made tolerable good verses in Spanish, having a natural genius for poetry. A poem which he composed in praise of St. Peter was much commended.

Charles V., who had succeeded King Ferdinand, was chosen emperor, and obliged to go into Germany. Francis I., King of France, a martial prince, having been his competitor for the empire, resented his disappointment, and became an implacable enemy to the emperor and the house of Austria. He declared war against Charles, with a view to recover Navarre, of which Ferdinand had lately dispossessed John of Albert, and which Charles still held, contrary to the treaty of Noyon, by which he was obliged to restore it in six months. Francis therefore, in 1521, sent a great army into Spain, under the command of Andrew de Foix, younger brother of the famous Lautrec, who passing the Pyreneans, laid seige to Pampeluna, the capital of Navarre. Ignatius had been left there by the viceroy, not to command, but to encourage the garrison. He did all that lay in his power to persuade them to defend the city, but in vain. However, when he saw them open the gates to the enemy, to save his own honour, he retired into the citadel with only one soldier who had the heart to follow him. The garrison of this fortress deliberated likewise whether they should surrender, but Ignatius encouraged them to stand their ground. The French attacked the place with great fury, and with their artillery made a wide breach in the wall, and attempted to take it by assault. Ignatius appeared upon the breach, at the head of the bravest part of the garrison, and, with his sword in his hand endeavoured to drive back the enemy; but, in the heat of the combat, a shot from a cannon broke from the wall a bit of stone, which struck and bruised his left leg; and the ball itself in the rebound broke and shivered his right leg. The garrison seeing him fall, surrendered at discretion.

The French used their victory with moderation, and treated the prisoners well, especially Ignatius, in consideration of his quality and valour. They carried him to the general's quarters, and soon after sent him, in a litter carried by two men, to the castle of Loyola, which was not far from Pampeluna. Being arrived there he felt great pain; for the bones had been ill set, as is often the case in the hurry after a battle. The surgeons therefore judged it necessary to break his leg again, which he suffered without any concern. But a violent fever followed the second setting, which

was attended with dangerous symptoms, and reduced him to an extreme degree of weakness, so that the physicians declared that he could not live many days. He received the sacraments on the eve of the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, and it was believed that he could not hold out till the next morning. Nevertheless God, who had great designs of mercy upon him, was pleased to restore him to his health in the following manner: Ignatius always had a singular devotion to St. Peter, and implored his intercession in his present distress with great confidence. In the night he thought he saw, in a dream, that apostle touch him, and cure him. When he awaked he found himself out of danger; his pains left him, and his strength began to return, so that he ever after looked upon this recovery as miraculous; yet he still retained the spirit of the world. After the second setting of his leg, the end of a bone stuck out under his knee, which was a visible deformity. Though the surgeons told him the operation would be very painful, this protuberance he caused to be cut off, merely that his boot and stockings might sit handsomely; and he would neither be bound nor held, and scarce ever changed countenance whilst the bone was partly sawed and partly cut off, though the pain must have been excessive. Because his right leg remained shorter than the left, he would be for many days together put upon a kind of rack, and with an iron engine he violently stretched and drew out that leg; but all to little purpose, for he remained lame his whole life after.

During the cure of his knee he was confined to his bed, though otherwise in perfect health, and finding the time tedious he called for some book of romances, for he had been always much delighted with fabulous histories of knight-errantry. None such being then found in the castle of Loyola, a book of the lives of our Saviour, and of the saints, was brought him. He read them first only to pass away the time, but afterwards began to relish them and to spend whole days in reading them. He chiefly admired in the saints their love of solitude and of the cross. He considered among the anchorets many persons of quality, who buried themselves alive in caves and dens, pale with fasting, and covered with haircloth; and he said to himself, "These men were of the same frame I am of; why then should not I do what they have done?" In the fervour of his good resolutions he thought of visiting the Holy Land, and becoming a hermit. But these pious motions soon vanished; and his passion for glory, and a secret inclination for a rich lady in Castile, with a view to marriage, again filled his mind with thoughts of the world; till, returning to the lives of the saints, he perceived in his own heart the emptiness of all worldly glory, and that only God could content the soul. This vicissitude and fluctuation of mind continued some time; but he observed this difference, that the thoughts which were from God filled his soul with consolation, peace, and tranquillity; whereas the others brought indeed some sensible delight, but left a certain bitterness and heaviness in the heart. This mark he lays down in his book of spiritual exercises, as the ground of the rules for the discernment of the Spirit of God, and the world in all the motions of the soul; as does Cardinal Bona, and all other writers who treat of the discernment of spirits in the interior life. Taking at last a firm resolution to imitate the saints in their heroic practice of virtue, he began to treat his body with all the rigour it was able to bear; he rose at midnight, and spent his retired hours in weeping for his sins.

One night being prostrate before an image of the Blessed Virgin, in extraordinary sentiments of fervour, he consecrated himself to the service of his Redeemer under her patronage, and vowed an inviolable fidelity. When he had ended his prayer he heard a great noise; the house shook, the windows of his chamber were broken, and a rent was made in the wall which remains to this day, says the latest writer of his life. God might by this sign testify his acceptance of his sacrifice; as a like sign happened in the place where the faithful were assembled after Christ's ascension,(1) and in the prison of Paul and Silas;(2) or this might be an effect of the rage of the devil. Another night, Ignatius saw the Mother of God environed with light, holding the infant Jesus in her arms; this vision replenished his soul with spiritual delight, and made all sensual pleasure and worldly objects insipid to him ever after. The saint's eldest brother, who was then, by the death of their father, lord of Loyola, endeavoured to detain him in the world, and to persuade him not to throw away the great advantages of the honor and reputation which his valour had gained him. But Ignatius being cured of his wounds, under pretence of paying a visit to the Duke of Najara, who had often come to see him during his illness, and who lived at Navarret, turned another way, and sending his two servants back from Navarret to Loyola, went to Montserrat. This was a great abbey of near three hundred Benedictine monks, of a reformed austere institute, situate on a mountain of difficult access, about four leagues in circumference and two leagues high, in the diocese of Barcelona. The monastery was first founded for nuns by the sovereign counts of

Barcelona about year 880, but was given to monks in 990. It has been much augmented by several kings of Spain, and is very famous for a miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin, and a great resort of pilgrims.

There lived at that time in this monastery a monk of great sanctity, named John Chanones, a Frenchman, who being formerly vicar-general to the Bishop of Mirepoix, in the thirty-first year of his age, resigned his ecclesiastical preferments, and took the monastic habit in this place. He lived to the age of eighty-eight years, never eating any flesh, watching great part of the night in prayer, dividing his whole time between heavenly contemplation and the service of his neighbour; and giving to all Spain an example of the most perfect obedience, humility, charity, devotion, and all other virtues. To this experienced director, Ignatius addressed himself, and after his preparation, was three days in making to him a general confession, which he often interrupted by the abundance of his tears. He made a vow of perpetual chastity, and dedicated himself with great fervour to the divine service. At his first coming to this place he had bought, at the village of Montserrat, a long coat of coarse cloth, a girdle, a pair of sandals, a wallet, and a pilgrim's staff, intending, after he had finished his devotions there, to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Disguised in this habit, he remained at the abbey. He communicated to his director a plan of the austerities he proposed to practise, and was confirmed by him in his good resolutions. He received the blessed eucharist early in the morning on the feast of the Annunciation of our Lady in 1522; and, on the same day, left Montserrat for fear of being discovered, having given his horse to the monastery, and hung up his sword on a pillar near the altar in testimony of his renouncing the secular warfare, and entering himself in that of Christ. He travelled with his staff in his hand, a scrip by his side, bare-headed, and with one foot bare, the other being covered because it was yet tender and swelled. He went away infinitely pleased that he had cast off the livery of the world, and put on that of Jesus Christ. He had bestowed his rich clothes on a beggar at his coming out of Montserrat; but the poor man was thrown into prison on suspicion of theft. Ignatius being sent after by the magistrates, and brought back, told the truth to release him, but would not discover his own name.

Three leagues from Montserrat is a large village called Manresa, with a convent of Dominicans, and a hospital without the walls for pilgrims and sick persons. Ignatius went to this hospital, and rejoicing to see himself received in it unknown and among the poor, began to fast on water and the bread (which he begged) the whole week, except Sundays, when he ate a few boiled herbs, but sprinkled over with ashes. He wore an iron girdle and a hair shirt; disciplined himself thrice a day, slept little, and lay on the ground. He was every day present at the whole divine office, spent seven hours on his knees at prayer, and received the sacraments every Sunday. To add humiliation to his bodily austerities, he affected a clownishness in his behaviour, and went begging about the streets with his face covered with dirt, his hair rough, and his beard and nails grown out to a frightful length. The children threw stones at him, and followed him with scornful shouts in the streets. Ignatius suffered these insults without saying one word, rejoicing secretly in his heart to share in the reproaches of the cross. The more mortifying the noisomeness of the hospital and the company of beggars were, the more violence he offered to himself, that he might bear them cheerfully. The story of the fine suit of clothes given to the beggar at Montserrat, and the patience and devotion of the holy man, made him soon to be revered as some fervent penitent in disguise. To shun this danger, he privately hid himself in a dark deep cave in a solitary valley, called The Vale of Paradise, covered with briers, half a mile from the town. Here he much increased his mortifications till he was accidentally found half-dead, and carried back to Manreea, and lodged in the hospital.

After enjoying peace of mind and heavenly consolations from the time of his conversion, he was here visited with the most terrible trial of fears and scruples. He found no comfort in prayer, no relief in fasting, no remedy in disciplines, no consolation from the sacraments, and his soul was overwhelmed with bitter sadness. The Dominicans, out of compassion, took him out of the hospital into their convent; but his melancholy only increased upon him. He apprehended some sin in every step he took, and seemed often on the very brink of despair; but he was in the hands of Him whose trials are favours. He most earnestly implored the divine assistance, and took no sustenance for seven days, till his confessor obliged him to eat. Soon after this, his tranquillity of mind was perfectly restored, and his soul overflowed with spiritual joy. From this experience he acquired a particular talent for curing scrupulous consciences, and a singular light to discern them. His prayer was accompanied with many heavenly raptures, and he received from God a supernatural knowledge and sense of sublime divine mysteries: yet he concealed all from the eyes of men, only

disclosing himself to his two confessors, the pious monk of Montserrat, and the Dominican of Manresa ; however, the people began to reverence him as a living saint, which they particularly testified during a violent fever into which his austerities cast him three times.

Too nice a worldly prudence may condemn the voluntary humiliations which this saint sometimes made choice of; but the wisdom of God is above that of the world, and the Holy Ghost sometimes inspires certain heroic souls to seek perfectly to die to themselves by certain practices which are extraordinary, and which would not be advisable to others; and if affected or undertaken with obstinacy, and against advice, would be pernicious and criminal. Ignatius, by perfect compunction, humility, self-denial, contempt of the world, severe interior trials, and assiduous meditation, was prepared, by the divine grace, to be raised to an extraordinary gift of supernatural prayer. He afterwards assured F. Laynez that he had learned more of divine mysteries by prayer in one hour at Manresa, than all the doctors of the schools could ever have taught him. He was there favoured with many raptures, and divine illustrations concerning the Trinity, of which he afterwards spoke with so much light and unction, that the most learned admired him, and the ignorant were instructed. In like manner, in various wonderful ecstasies, he was enlightened concerning the beauty and order of the creation, the excess of divine love which shines forth to man in the sacrament of the altar, and many other mysteries. So imperfect was his knowledge of his duties when he first renounced the world, that, hearing a certain Moresco, or Mahometan, speak injuriously of the holy Mother of God, when he set out from Loyola for Montserrat, he deliberated whether, being an officer, he ought not to kill him, though the divine protection preserved him from so criminal an action. But at Manresa he made so good a progress in the school of virtue, as to become qualified already to be a guide to others. He stayed there almost a year, during which time he governed himself by the advice of the holy monk of Montserrat, whom he visited every week, and that of his Dominican director.

Spain, in that and the foregoing age, abounded with many learned and experienced persons in that way, endowed with an eminent spirit, and a perfect experimental knowledge of Christian piety; witness the works of St. Peter of Alcantara, John of Avila, St. Teresa, Bartholomew de Martyrbus, Lewis of Granada, and others. Our saint had the happiness to fall into the hands of prudent and able guides, and giving his heart to God without reserve, became himself in a short time an accomplished master; and whereas at first he only proposed to himself his own perfection, he afterwards burned with an ardent desire of contributing to the salvation of others; and commiserating blindness of sinners, and considering how much the glory of God shines in the sanctification of souls purchased with the blood of his Son, he said to himself, "It is not enough that I serve the Lord; all hearts ought to love him, and all tongues ought to praise him." With this view, in order to be admitted more freely to converse with persons in the world, he chose a dress which, being more decent than the penitential garments which he at first wore, might not be disagreeable to others; and he moderated his excessive austerities.

He began then to exhort many to the love of virtue; and he there wrote his *Spiritual Exercises*, which he afterwards revised, and published at Rome, in 1548. Though the saint was at that time unacquainted with learning, any further than barely to read and write, yet this book is so full of excellent maxims, and instructions in the highest points of a spiritual life, that it is most clear that the Holy Ghost supplied abundantly what was yet wanting in him of human learning and study. The spirit which reigns in this book was that of all the saints. Frequent religious retirement had been practised by pious persons, in imitation of Christ and all the saints from the beginning; likewise the use and method of holy meditation were always known; but the excellent order of these meditations, prescribed by Ignatius, was new: and, though the principal rules and maxims are found in the lessons and lives of the ancient fathers of the desert, they are here judiciously chosen, methodically digested, and clearly explained. One of these is, that a person must not abridge the time, or desist from meditating, on account of spiritual dryness; another, that no one make any vow in sudden sentiments of fervour, but wait some time, and first ask advice. St. Ignatius establishes in this book the practice of a daily particular examination against a person's predominant passion, or on the best means and endeavours to acquire some particular virtue, besides the daily general examination of conscience. He lays down this excellent maxim:(3)—"When God hath appointed out a way, we must faithfully follow it, and never think of another, under pretence that it is more easy and safe. It is one of the devil's artifices to set before a soul some state, holy indeed, but impossible to her, or at least different from hers; that by this love of novelty, she may dislike or be slack in her present state, in which God hath placed her, and which is best for her. In like manner, he represents to her other

actions as more holy and profitable, to make her conceive a disgust of her present employment.” When some pretended to find fault with this book of St. Ignatius’s *Spiritual Exercises*, Pope Paul III., at the request of St. Francis Borgia, by a brief, in 1548, approved it, as full of the Spirit of God, and very useful for the edification and spiritual profit of the faithful.

The pestilence which raged in Italy having ceased, Ignatius, after a stay of ten months at Manresa, left that place for Barcelona, neither regarding the tears of those who sought to detain him, nor admitting any to bear him company, nor consenting to accept any money for the expenses of his journey. He took shipping at Barcelona, and in five days landed at Gaeta, whence he travelled on foot to Rome, Padua, and Venice, through villages, the towns being shut for fear of the plague. He spent the Easter at Rome, and sailed from Venice on board the admiral’s vessel, which was carrying the governor to Cyprus. The sailors were a profligate crew, and seemed entirely to neglect prayer and all duties of religion, and their discourse was often lewd and profane. Ignatius having reproved them for their licentiousness, his zeal made them conspire to leave him ashore in a desert island; but a gust of wind from the land hindered the ship from touching upon it. He arrived at Cyprus, and found in the port a vessel full of pilgrims, just ready to hoist sail. Going immediately on board, he made a good voyage, and landed at Jaffa, the ancient Joppe, on the last day of August, 1523, forty days after he had left Venice. He went on foot from thence to Jerusalem in four days. The sight of the holy places filled his soul with joy, and the most ardent sentiments of devotion and compunction, and he desired to stay there to labour in the conversion of the Mahometans. The provincial of the Franciscans, by virtue of his authority from the holy see over the pilgrims, commanded him to leave Palestine. Ignatius obeyed, but slipped privately back to satisfy his devotion again in visiting twice more the print of our Saviour’s feet on Mount Olivet.

He returned to Europe in winter, in extreme cold weather, poorly clad, and came to Venice at the end of January, in 1524; from whence he continued his journey by Genoa to Barcelona. Desiring to qualify himself for the functions of the altar, and for assisting spiritually his neighbour, he began at Barcelona to study grammar, and addressed himself to a famous master named Jerom Ardebal, being assisted in the meantime in his maintenance by the charities of a pious lady of that city, called Isabel Rosella. He was then thirty-three years old; and it is not hard to conceive what difficulties he must go through in learning the rudiments of grammar at that age. Moreover, he seemed, by his military employments, and after his retreat by his contemplative life, very unfit for such an undertaking. At first, his mind was so fixed only on God, that he forgot every thing he read, and conjugating *amo*, for example, could only repeat to himself, “I love God; I am loved by God,” and the like; but resisting this as a temptation, he began to make some progress, still joining contemplation and extraordinary austerities with his studies. He bore the jeers and taunts of the little boys, his schoolfellows, with joy. Hearing that a poor man, called Lasano, had hanged himself on a beam in his chamber, he ran to him, cut the rope, and prayed by him till the man returned to himself, though he had before seemed perfectly dead to all the bystanders. Lasano made his confession, received the sacraments, and soon after expired. This fact was regarded in the city as miraculous.

Some persons persuaded Ignatius to read Erasmus’s *Christian Soldier*, an elegant book wrote by that master of style, as the request of an officer’s pious lady, for the use of her husband, a man of loose morals. The saint always found his heart dry after reading this or any other of that author’s works; which made him afterwards caution those of his society against reading them, at least very much. Though in that writer’s paraphrase on the Lord’s Prayer, and other such treatises of piety, we find very pious sentiments collected great authors, and elegantly and concisely expressed, yet a devout reader finds the language of the heart wanting. On the other side, it is well known how St. Ignatius read daily, and recommended to all others the incomparable book, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, which he made frequent use of, to nourish and increase the fervour of his soul. He lodged at the house of one Agnes Pascal, a devout woman. Her son, John Pascal, a pious youth, would sometimes rise in the night to observe what Ignatius did in his chamber, and saw him sometimes on his knees, sometimes prostrate on the ground, his countenance on fire, and often in tears repeating such words as these: “O God, my love, and the delight of my soul, if men knew thee, they could never offend thee! My God, how good art thou to bear with such a sinner as I am!”

The saint, after studying two years at Barcelona, went to the university of Alcala, which had been lately founded by Cardinal Ximenes, where he attended at the same time to lectures in logic, physics, and divinity; by which multiplicity he only confounded his ideas, and learned nothing at all, though he studied night and day. He lodged in a

chamber of an hospital, lived by begging a small subsistence, and wore a coarse grey habit, in which he was imitated by four companions. He catechised children, held assemblies of devotion in the hospital, and by his mild reprehensions converted many loose livers, and among others one of the richest prelates in Spain. Some accused him of sorcery, and of the heresy of certain visionaries lately condemned in Spain, under the name of the Illuminati, or Men of New Light; but, upon examination, he was justified by the inquisitors. After this, for teaching the catechism, being a man without learning or authority, he was accused to the bishop's grand vicar, who confined him to close prison two-and-forty days, but declared him innocent of any fault by a public sentence, on the first day of June, 1527; yet forbidding him and his companions to wear any singular habit, or to give any instructions in religious matters, being illiterate persons. Ignatius rejoiced in his jail that he suffered though innocent, but spoke with such piety that many called him another St. Paul in prison. Being enlarged, he went about the streets with a public officer, to beg money to buy a scholar's dress, in which action he rejoiced at the insults and affronts which he met with. However, he went himself to the Archbishop of Toledo, Alphonsus de Fonseca, who was much pleased with him, but advised him to leave Alcala, and go to Salamanca, promising him his protection. Ignatius, in this latter place, began to draw many to virtue, and was followed by great numbers, which exposed him again to suspicions of introducing dangerous practices, and the grand vicar of Salamanca imprisoned him; but after two-and-twenty days declared him innocent, and a person of sincere virtue. Ignatius looked upon prisons, sufferings, and ignominy as the height of his ambition; and God was pleased to purge and sanctify his soul by these trials. Recovering his liberty again, he resolved to leave Spain.

He from that time began to wear shoes, and received money sent him by his friends, but in the middle of winter travelled on foot to Paris, where he arrived in the beginning of February, 1528. He spent two years in perfecting himself in the Latin tongue; then went through a course of philosophy. He lived first in Montaigne College; but being robbed of his money was obliged to lodge in the hospital of St. James, to beg his bread from day to day, and in the vacation time to go into Flanders, and once into England, to procure charities from the Spanish merchants settled there, from whom and from some friends at Barcelona he received abundant supplies. He studied his philosophy three years and a half in the college of St. Barbara. He had induced many of his schoolfellows to spend the Sundays and holy-days in prayer, and to apply themselves more fervently to the practice of good works. Pegna, his master, thought he hindered their studies, and finding him not corrected by his admonitions, prepossessed Govea, principal of the college of St. Barbara, against him, so that he was ordered by him to undergo the greatest punishment then in use in that university, called "The Hall," which was a public whipping, that this infamy might deter others from following him. The regents came all into the hall with rods in their hands, ready to lash the seditious student. Ignatius offered himself joyfully to suffer all things; yet, apprehending lest the scandal of this disgrace should make those whom he had reclaimed fall back, when they saw him condemned as a corrupter of youth, went to the principal in his chamber, and modestly laid open to him the sentiments of his soul, and the reasons of his conduct; and offered himself, as much as concerned his own person, that any sacrifice should be made of his body and fame, but begged of him to consider the scandal some might receive, who were yet young and tender in virtue. Govea made him no answer, but taking him by the hand led him into the hall, where, at the ringing of the bell, the whole college stood ready assembled. When all saw the principal enter, and expected the sign for the punishment, he threw himself at the feet of Ignatius, begging his pardon for having too lightly believed such false reports; then, rising, he publicly declared that Ignatius was a living saint, and had no other aim or desire than the salvation of souls, and was ready to suffer joyfully any infamous punishment. Such a reparation of honour gave the saint the highest reputation, and even the ancient and experienced doctors asked his advice in spiritual matters. Pegna himself was ever after his great admirer and friend, and appointed another scholar, who was more advanced in his studies, and a young man of great virtue and quick parts, to assist him in his exercises. This was Peter Faber, a Savoyard, a native of the diocese of Geneva, by whose help he finished his philosophy, and took the degree of master of arts with great applause, after a course of three years and a half, according to the custom of the times. After this Ignatius began his divinity at the Dominicans.

Peter Faber had from his childhood made a vow of chastity, which he had always most faithfully kept, yet was troubled with violent temptations, from which the most rigorous fasts did not deliver him. He was also tempted to vainglory, and laboured under great anxiety and scruples about these temptations, which he at length disclosed to

Ignatius, his only pupil, whose skilful and heavenly advice was a healing balsam to his soul. The saint at last prescribed him a course of his spiritual exercises, and taught him the practices of meditation, of the particular examination, and other means of perfection, conducting him through all the paths of an interior life. St. Francis Xavier, a young master of philosophy, full of the vanity of the schools, was his next conquest. St. Ignatius made him sensible that all mortal glory is emptiness; only that which is eternal deserving our regard. He converted many abandoned sinners. When a young man, engaged in a criminal commerce with a woman of the city, was proof against his exhortations, Ignatius stood in a frozen pond by the way side up to the neck, and as he passed by in the night, cried out to him, "Whither are you going? Do not you hear the thunder of divine justice over your head, ready to break upon you? Go then; satisfy your brutish passion; here I will suffer for you, to appease heaven." The lewd young man, at first affrighted, then confounded, returned back and changed his life. By the like pious stratagems the saint recovered many other souls from the abysses into which they were fallen. He often served the sick in the hospitals; and one day finding a repugnance to touch the ulcers of one sick of a contagious distemper, to overcome himself he not only dressed his sores, but put his hand from them to his mouth, saying, "Since thou art afraid for one part, thy whole body shall take its share." From that time he felt no natural repugnance in such actions.

James Laynez, of Almazan, twenty-one years of age; Alphonsus Salmeron, only eighteen; and Nicholas Alphonso, surnamed Bobadilla, from the place of his birth, near Valencia, all Spaniards of great parts, at that time students in divinity at Paris, associated themselves to the saint in his pious exercises. Simon Rodriguez, a Portuguese, joined them. These fervent students, moved by the pressing instances and exhortations of Ignatius, made all together a vow to renounce the world, to go to preach the gospel in Palestine, or if they could not go thither within a year after they had finished their studies, to offer themselves to his holiness to be employed, in the service of God, in what manner he should judge best. They fixed for the end of all their studies the 25<sup>th</sup> day of January, in 1537, and pronounced this vow aloud, in the holy subterraneous chapel, at Montmartre, after they had all received the holy communion from Peter Faber, who had been lately ordained priest. This was done on the feast of the Assumption of our Lady, in 1534. Ignatius continued frequent conferences, and joint exercises, to animate his companions in their good purposes; but soon after was ordered by the physicians to try his native air, for the cure of a lingering indisposition. He left Paris in the beginning of the year 1535, and was most honourably and joyfully received in Quipuscoa, by his elder brother, Garcias, and his nephews, and by all the clergy in processions. He refused to go to the castle of Loyola, taking up his quarters in the hospital of Azpetia. The sight of the places, where he had led a worldly life, excited in him the deepest sentiments of compunction, and he chastised his body with a rough hair shirt, iron chains, disciplines, watching, and prayer. He recovered his health in a short time, and catechised and instructed the poor with incredible fruit. Ignatius, in his childhood, had, with some companions, robbed an orchard, for which another man had been condemned to pay the damages. In the first discourse he made he accused himself, publicly, of this fact, and calling the poor man, who was present, declared that he had been falsely accused, and for reparation gave him two farms which belonged to him, begging his pardon before all the people, adding that this was one of the reasons of his journey thither.

In the mean time three others, all doctors in divinity, by the exhortations of Faber, joined the saint's companions in Paris. Claudius le Jay, a Savoyard, John Codure, a native of Dauphine, and Pasquier Brouet, of Picardy; so that with Ignatius they were now ten in number. The holy founder, after a tedious and dangerous journey, both by sea and land, arrived at Venice about the end of the year 1536, and his nine companions from Paris met him there on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January, 1537; they employed themselves in the hospitals, but all, except Ignatius, went to Rome, where Pope Paul III. received them graciously, and granted them an indult, that those who were not priests might receive holy orders from what bishop they pleased. They were accordingly ordained at Venice by the Bishop of Arbe. Ignatius was one of this number. After their ordination they retired into a cottage near Vicenza, to prepare themselves in solitude, by fasting and prayer, for the holy ministry of the altar. The rest said their first masses in September and October, but Ignatius deferred his, from month to month, till Christmas-day, overflowing in his retirement with heavenly consolations, and in danger of losing his sight through the abundance of his tears. Thus he employed a whole year in preparing himself to offer that adorable sacrifice. After this they dispersed themselves into several places about Verona and Vicenza, preaching penance to the people, and living on a little bread which they begged. The emperor and the Venetians

having declared war against the Turks, their pilgrimage into Palestine was rendered impracticable. The year therefore being elapsed, Ignatius, Faber, and Laynez went to Rome, threw themselves at his holiness's feet, and offered themselves to whatever work he should judge best to employ them in. St. Ignatius told his companions at Vicenza, that if any one asked what their institute was, they might answer, "the Society of Jesus;" because they were united to fight against heresies and vice under the standard of Christ. In his road from Vicenza to Rome, praying in a little chapel between Sienna and Rome, he, in an ecstasy, seemed to see the eternal Father, who affectionately commended him to his Son. Jesus Christ appeared at the same time also shining with an unspeakable light, but loaded with a heavy cross, and sweetly said to Ignatius, "I will be favourable to you at Rome." This St. Ignatius disclosed to F. Laynez, in a transport when he came out of the chapel; and F. Laynez, when he was general, related it to all the fathers in Rome in a domestic conference, at which F. Ribadeneira, who records it, was present. The same was attested by others to whom the saint had discovered this signal favour. Pope Paul III. accordingly received them graciously; and appointed Faber, called in French Le Fevre, to teach in the Sapienza at Rome scholastic divinity, and Laynez to explain the holy scripture; whilst Ignatius laboured, by means of his spiritual exercises and instructions, to reform the manners of the people.

The holy founder, with a view to perpetuate the work of God, called to Rome all his companions, and proposed to them his design and motives of forming themselves into a religious Order. After recommending the matter to God by fasting and prayer, all agreed in the proposal, and resolved, first, besides the vows of poverty and chastity already made by them, to add a third of perpetual obedience, the more perfectly to conform themselves to the Son of God, who was obedient even to death; and to establish a general whom all, by their vow, should be bound to obey, who should be perpetual, and his authority absolute, subject entirely to the pope, but not liable to be restrained by chapters. He likewise determined to prescribe a fourth vow of going wherever the pope should send them for the salvation of souls, and even without money, if it should so please him; also that the professed Jesuits should possess no real estates or revenues, either in particular, or in common; but that colleges might enjoy revenues and rents for the maintenance of students of the Order. In the meanwhile Govea, principal of the college of St. Barbara at Paris, had recommended the Jesuits to the King of Portugal as proper missionaries for the conversion of the Indies, and that prince asked of Ignatius six labourers for that purpose. The founder having only ten, could send him no more than two, Simon Rodriguez, who remained in Portugal, and Xavier, afterwards the apostle of the Indies. The three cardinals appointed by the pope to examine the affair of this new Order, at first opposed it, thinking religious orders already too much multiplied, but changed their opinions on a sudden, and Pope Paul III. approved it under the title of "The Society of Jesus," by a bull, dated the 27<sup>th</sup> of September, 1540. Ignatius was chosen the first general, but only acquiesced in obedience to his confessor. He entered upon his office on Easter-day, 1541, and the members all made their religious vows, according to the bull of their institution.

Ignatius then set himself to write constitutions or rules for his Society, in which he lays down its end to be, in the first place, the sanctification of their own souls by joining together the active and the contemplative life; for nothing so much qualifies a minister of God to save others as the sanctification of his own soul in the first place. Secondly, to labour for the salvation and perfection of their neighbour, and this, first, by catechising the ignorant (which work is the basis and ground of religion and virtue, and though mean and humble, is the most necessary and indispensable duty of every pastor); secondly, by the instruction of youth in piety and learning (upon which the reformation of the world principally depends); and thirdly, by the direction of consciences, missions, and the like.

St. Ignatius would have the office of general to be perpetual or for life, being persuaded this would better command the respect of inferiors, and more easily enable him to undertake and carry on great enterprises for the glory of God, which require a considerable time to have them well executed. Nevertheless, he often strenuously endeavoured to resign that dignity, but was never able to compass it; and at length the pope forbade him any more to attempt it. He had no sooner taken that charge upon him than he went into the kitchen, and served as a scullion under the cook, and he continued for forty-six days to catechise poor children in the church of the Society. By preaching he gained such an ascendant over the hearts of the people as produced many wonderful conversions. Among the pious establishments which he made at Rome, he founded a house for the reception of Jews who should be converted, during the time of their instruction, and another for the reception and maintenance of lewd women who should be desirous to

enter upon virtuous courses, yet were not called to a religious state among the Magdalens or penitents. When one told him that the conversion of such sinners is seldom sincere, he answered, "To prevent only one sin would be a great happiness, though it cost me ever so great pains." He procured two houses to be erected at Rome for the relief of poor orphans of both sexes, and another for the maintenance of young women whose poverty might expose their virtue to danger. The heart of this blessed man so burned with charity, that he was continually thinking and speaking of what might most contribute to promote the divine honour and sanctification of souls; and he did wonders by the zealous fathers of his Society in all parts of the globe. He was entreated by many princes and cities of Italy, Spain, Germany, and the Low Countries to afford them some of his labourers. Under the auspicious protection of John III., King of Portugal, he sent St. Francis Xavier into the East Indies, where he gained a new world to the faith of Christ. He sent John Nugnez and Lewis Gonzales into the kingdoms of Fez and Morocco to instruct and assist the Christian slaves; in 1547, four others to Congo in Africa; in 1555, thirteen into Abyssinia, among whom John Nugnez was nominated by Pope Julius III. patriarch of Ethiopia, and two others, bishops; lastly, others into the Portuguese settlements in South America.

Pope Paul III. commissioned the fathers James Laynez and Alphonsus Salmeron to assist, in quality of his theologians, at the council of Trent. Before their departure St. Ignatius, among other instructions, gave them a charge in all disputations to be careful above all things, to preserve modesty and humility, and to shun all confidence, contentiousness, or empty display of learning. F. Claudius Le Jay appeared in the same council as theologian of Cardinal Otho, Bishop of Ausberg. Many of the first disciples of St. Ignatius distinguished themselves in divers kingdoms of Europe, but none with greater reputation, both for learning and piety, than Peter Canisius, who was a native of Nimeguen, in the Low Countries, and having with wonderful success employed his zealous labours at Ingolstadt and in several other parts of Germany, and in Bohemia, died in the odour of sanctity, at Fribourg, in 1597, seventy-seven years old.(4) Whilst F. Claudius Le Jay was at Trent, Ferdinand, King of the Romans, nominated him Bishop of Trieste. The good father seemed ready to die of grief at this news, and wrote to St. Ignatius, humbly requesting him to put some bar to this promotion. The holy founder was himself alarmed, and by a pressing letter to the king, prevailed upon him not to do what would be an irreparable prejudice to his young Society. He urged to the pope and sacred college many reasons why he desired that all the fathers of his Society should be excluded from all ecclesiastical dignities, alleging that this would be a means more easily to preserve among them a spirit of humility and poverty, which is the very soul and perfection of their state; and that, being missionaries, it was more advantageous to the church that they should remain such, always ready to fly from pole to pole, as the public necessity should require. The pope being satisfied with his reasons, the saints obliged all professed Jesuits to bind themselves by a simple vow never to seek prelatures, and to refuse them when offered, unless compelled by a precept of the pope to accept them.

In 1546 the Jesuits first opened their schools in Europe, in the college which St. Francis Borgia had erected for them at Gandia, with the privileges of an university.(5) The seminary of Goa, in Asia, which had been erected some years before for the Indian missions, was committed to the Jesuits, under the direction of Francis Xavier, the preceding year. King John also founded for them, in 1546, a noble college at Coïmbra, the second which they had in Europe. F. Simon Rodriguez directed this establishment, and many others in Portugal, Spain, and Brazil, and died at Lisbon, in the highest reputation for sanctity and learning, in 1579. Among the rules which St. Ignatius gave to the masters, he principally inculcated the lessons of humility, modesty, and devotion; he prescribed that all their scholars should hear mass every day, go to confession every month, and always begin their studies by prayer; that their masters should take every fit occasion to inspire them with the love of heavenly things; and that by daily meditation, self-examinations, pious readings, retreat, and the constant exercise of the divine presence, they should nourish in their own souls a fervent spirit of prayer, which without the utmost care is extinguished by a dry course of studies and school disputations, and with it are destroyed the very soul of a religious or spiritual life. He recommended nothing more earnestly, both to professors and scholars, than that they should dedicate all their labours, with the greatest fervour to the greater glory of God, which intention will make studies equal to prayer. He treated very harshly all those whom learning rendered self-conceited or less devout; and removed all those masters who discovered any fondness for singular opinions. It is incredible with what attention and industry he promoted emulation and every means that could

be a spur to scholars. He required that copies of some of the principal literary performances should be sent from all the colleges to Rome, where he had them examined before him, that he might better judge of the progress both of masters and scholars.

He encouraged every branch of the sciences, and would have the fathers in his Society applied to those functions, whether in teaching, preaching, or the missions, for which God seemed chiefly to qualify and destine them by their genius, talents, and particular graces; yet so that one should neglect the duties either of assiduous prayer, and an interior life, or of instructing and catechising others. He recommended to them all, especially the masters of novices, &c., to read diligently the conferences, lives, and writings of the fathers of the desert, and other pious ascetics, in order to learn their spirit. With what success many among them did this appears from the Practice of Christian Perfection, compiled by F. Alphonsus Rodriguez, one of the most eminent persons whom our saint had admitted into his Society. In this excellent work he gathered and digested, in a clear and easy method, the most admirable maxims and lessons of the ancient monks; and having many years trained up, according to them, the novices of his Order in Spain, died holily in the year 1616, the ninetieth of his age. We have other eminent instances of this holy spirit and science among the primitive disciples of St. Ignatius, in the works of F. Lewis de Ponte, or Puente, who died in 1624, and whose canonization has been often desired by the kings of Spain; in those of F. Alvarez de Paz, who died in Peru, in 1620; and in the writings and life of F. Baltassar Alvarez, who died in Spain, in 1580, in the odour of sanctity.

St. Francis Borgia, in 1551, gave a considerable sum towards building the Roman college for the Jesuits. Pope Julius III. contributed largely to it; Paul IV., in 1555, founded it for perpetuity with great munificence; afterwards Gregory XIII. much augmented its buildings and revenues. St. Ignatius, intending to make this the model of all his other colleges, neglected nothing to render it complete, and took care that it should be supplied with the ablest masters in all the sciences, and with all possible helps for the advancement of literature. He made it a strict rule in the Society, that every one should study to speak correctly the language of the country where he lives;(6) for, without being perfect in the vulgar tongue, no one can be qualified to preach or perform many other functions with profit. On this account be established in the Roman college daily lessons in the Italian tongue, and he carefully studied that language, and appointed others to put him in mind of all the faults which he should commit in speaking. St. Ignatius also directed the foundation of the German college in Rome made by Julius III., but afterwards finished by Gregory XIII. He often met with violent persecutions, but overcame them by meekness and patience. When the French king, Henry II., gave the Society letters patent to settle in France, the parliament of Paris made the most outrageous remonstrances, and the faculty of Sorbon, though not without opposition, passed a virulent decree against it. The other fathers at Rome thought it necessary to answer these censures; but St. Ignatius would have nothing printed or written in their defence, saying, that it was better to commit their cause to God, and that the slanders raised against them would fall of themselves; and so it happened. Indeed, the storm was too violent to last. Upon other occasions the saint modestly defended his institute against slanderers.

The prudence and charity of the saint in his conduct towards his religious won him all their hearts. His commands seemed rather entreaties. The address with which he accommodated himself to every one's particular genius, and the mildness with which he tempered his reproofs, gave to his reprehensions a sweetness which gained the affections, whilst it corrected a fault. Thus chiding one for his too little guard over his eyes, he said to him with tenderness, "I have often admired the modesty of your deportment, yet observe that unguarded glances often escape you." When another had fixed his eye steadfastly upon him a long time, the saint enjoined him to make the government of his eye the subject of his particular examination, and to say every day a short prayer for fifteen months. He extremely recommended a strict modesty in the whole exterior as the index of the interior, and a means absolutely necessary for the regulating of it, and the government of the senses and passions. He always showed the affection of the most tender parent towards all his brethren, especially towards the sick, for whom he was solicitous to procure every spiritual and even temporal succour and comfort, which it was his great delight to give them himself. The most perfect obedience and self-denial were the two first lessons which he inculcated to his novices, whom he told at the door as they entered, that they must leave behind them all self-will and private judgment. In his famous letter to the Portuguese Jesuits, On the Virtue of Obedience, he says, this alone bringeth forth and nourisheth all other virtues; and calls it the peculiar virtue, and distinguishing mark and characteristic of his Society, in which, if any member suffer

himself to be outdone by those of other Orders in fasting or watching, that he must yield to none in obedience. He adds, true obedience must reach the understanding as well as the will, and never suffer a person even secretly to complain of, or censure the precept of a superior, whom he must always consider as vested with the authority of Jesus Christ over him. He says, it is not a less fault to break the laws of obedience in watching than in sleeping, in labouring than in doing nothing.

When F. Araos, whose spiritual labours were very successful in the court of Spain, seemed to seek the conversation of the great ones of the world, upon pretence of conciliating their favour to his ministry, St. Ignatius sent him a sharp reprimand, telling him that the necessary authority for the ministers of the word of God is to be gained only by a spirit of recollection, and the exercises of Christian humility; for the loss of every thing is to be feared in an intercourse with the great ones of the world. He used to say that prosperity caused in him more fear than joy; that when persecution ceased, he should be in apprehension lest the Society should somewhat relax in the observance of its regular discipline; that good fortune is never to be trusted, and that we have most to fear when things go according to our desires. He made a most severe regulation, that in the Society no one should even visit women, even of the highest quality, alone; and that when they discoursed with them, or heard their confessions, this should be so ordered that the companion might see all that passed, without hearing what ought to be secret, this being a means to prevent the possibility of evil suspicions or slanders. In the assigning the employments of those under his charge, he had usually a regard to their inclinations, though he always required that, on their parts, they should be wholly indifferent, and disposed cheerfully to accept and discharge any.

Notwithstanding the fatigue and constant application which the establishment of his Order in all parts of the world, and so many other great enterprises undertaken to promote the glory of God required, he was all on fire with an excess of charity, and a restless desire of gaining souls to God, and wearied himself out in the service of his neighbour, always labouring to extirpate vice, and to promote virtue in all, and set on foot several practices which might conduce to the divine service and the salvation of men. It is not to be believed how many and how great affairs this blessed man was able to go through, and with what courage and spirit he bore so continual a burden, and this with so weak health and infirm body. But he was assisted by the powerful hand of our Lord, that furnished him with strength for all his labours; so that he then appeared strongest and most courageous, when he was weary, sickly, and unprovided of human and natural helps; for, in his infirmity, the power of God manifested itself, and the saint seemed to support the weakness of his body with the vigour of his soul. This interior strength he chiefly maintained by an eminent spirit of prayer, and the constant and closest union of his soul with God. For he was favoured with an extraordinary grace of devotion, which he, out of humility, thought God had given him out of compassion for his weakness and misery, which he said was greater than that of any other. In saying the holy mass, and reciting the divine office, the abundance of heavenly delights which God poured into his soul, was often so great, and made such showers of tears stream from his eyes, that he was obliged to stop in a manner at every word, sometimes to make a considerable interruption whilst he gave vent to his tears. It was once feared, lest his continual effusion of tears should hurt his eye-eight. At other times, though his eyes were dry at his devotion, and the sluices of his tears were shut up, yet their influence and effect was not wanting; for his spirit was still watered with heavenly dew, and the divine illustrations ceased not to flow copiously into his soul.

In matters of concern, though reasons were ever so convincing and evident, he never took any resolution before he had consulted God by prayer. He let not an hour pass in the day without recollecting himself interiorly, and examining his conscience, for this purpose banishing for a while all other thoughts. He never applied his mind so much to exterior affairs as to lose the sweet relish of interior devotion. He had God always and in all things present to his mind. Every object served him for a book, wherein he read the divine perfections, and by that means raised his heart to the Creator. He recommended this manner of prayer to every one, especially to those who are employed in spiritual functions for the help of their neighbour. Before he betook himself to public or private prayer, he prepared his soul with great fervour, and entering into the oratory of his heart, enkindled his affections, so that this appeared in his countenance, and he seemed to be all on fire, as we ourselves frequently observed, says Ribadeneira. The saint being once asked by F. Laynez what manner of prayer he used, gave this answer, that in matters concerning Almighty God he behaved himself rather passively than actively. He prayed sometimes standing, and profoundly adored the majesty

of God present to his soul; he often bowed his body low, and most frequently prayed on his knees. No sooner had he recollected his mind in God, but his countenance put on an air which appeared altogether heavenly, and often streams of tears fell sweetly from his eyes.

He prescribed to the priests of his Order to be about half an hour at the altar in saying mass, to avoid on one side the least appearance of indecent hurry and precipitation in that tremendous sacrifice; and on the other, not to be tedious to the people by unseasonably indulging their private devotion. Nevertheless, he was himself about an hour in saying mass, to excuse which he alleged the plea of necessity, being often obliged to make pauses through an irresistible tenderness of devotion. After mass he spent two hours in private prayer, during which time no one was admitted to speak to him except on some pressing necessity. F. Lewis Gonzales, who for some time governed the college under him, says, "As often as I went to him at that time, which necessity frequently obliged me to do, I always saw his face shining with an air so bright and heavenly, that, quite forgetting myself, I stood astonished in contemplating him. Nor was his countenance like that of many devout men in whom I have admired a wonderful serenity at their prayers, but it breathed something quite unusual, and, as it were, divine." On other occasions, the like was remarked in him; on which account F. Laynez compared him to Moses when he came from conversing with God. Nicholas Lanoy testified, that he one day saw a fire flame on his head whilst he was saying mass. St. Philip Neri, who often visited St. Ignatius, used to assure his friends that he had seen his face shining with bright rays of light, as F. Antony Galloni, his disciple and confidant in all his concerns, and Marcellus Vitelleschi declared they had often heard from his own mouth; of which Cardinal Taurusius, Archbishop of Sienna, published an authentic certificate.(7) John Petronius, a famous physician in Rome, declared publicly that, when sick, he once saw his own chamber, which was then very dark, by reason of the windows being shut, filled with a dazzling light from such rays from the blessed man's coming into it. Isabel Rosella, John Pascal, and several other persons testified, that they had sometimes beheld his countenance at prayer sparkling with radiant beams of light, the abundant consolations which replenished his soul, redounding on his body. John Pascal added, that he had seen him in prayer raised more than a foot above the ground, and heard him say at the same time, "O my God! O my Lord! O that men knew thee!" The saint was often favoured amidst the tears and fervour of his devotion, with wonderful raptures, visions, and revelations; and some of these visions and other supernatural favours St. Ignatius mentioned himself in short notes which he wrote, and which were found in his own hand after his death, some of which notes are published by F. Bartoli.(8) Others are mentioned by Ribadeneira, who inserted in the saint's life, as he declares, only what himself had seen, or had heard from his mouth, or from persons of unquestionable authority, and whose life of his holy founder, by the order of St. Francis Borgia, was carefully examined and approved by the principal persons then living who had frequently conversed with the saint, as Salmeron, Bobadilla, Polancus, who had been the saint's secretary, Natalis, &c.

If the spirit of prayer was that virtue by which our saint was admitted to the familiar intercourse with God, was the key which unlocked to him the treasure of all other virtues and graces, and was the continual comfort, support, and light of his soul, and the constant advancement of its supernatural life in his mortal pilgrimage, this spirit was itself founded in the most perfect self-denial. The Holy Ghost never communicates himself, by the infusion of this grace, but to a heart that is entirely dead to itself and its passions, and crucified to the world. This St. Ignatius understood so well, that hearing another once say, that a certain person was endowed with a great gift of contemplation, and was eminently a man of prayer, he corrected the expression, saying, "Call him rather a man of the most perfect self-denial;" because the spirit of grace and prayer requires a perfect purity and disengagement from all inordinate affections, and a heart empty of itself. This victory over himself the saint obtained by an habitual practice of the exterior mortification of his senses; and by that perfect patience, resignation, and confidence in God, and constancy with which he bore the most severe interior and exterior trials. To complete the most essential interior mortification of his will and passions, he added the practice of an unlimited obedience to his directors and superiors, and of the most profound and sincere humility. Even when broken with age and infirmities, he said, that should his holiness command it, he would with joy go on board the first ship he could find; and if he were so ordered, though it had neither sails nor rudder, and without any warning, would immediately set out for any part of the globe. It was his perpetual lesson to his novices,—"Sacrifice your will and judgment by obedience. Whatever you do without the consent of your spiritual guide will be imputed to wilfulness, not to virtue, though you were to exhaust your bodies by labours or austerities."

Humility is the sister virtue of obedience, the foundation of a spiritual life, and the distinguishing mark or characteristic of all the saints. This virtue St. Ignatius embraced with the utmost ardour, from his first entering upon a spiritual course of life. He went a long time in old tattered rags, and lived in hospitals, despised, affronted, and persecuted; this he desired, and in it he found his great joy and satisfaction. He ever retained this affection for humiliations, out of a sincere contempt of himself; for acknowledging himself a sinner, he was thoroughly persuaded that contempt and injuries from all creatures, as instruments of the divine justice, were his due, and that he was most unworthy of all comforts, favour, or regard. Nothing but charity and zeal to procure his neighbour's good restrained him from doing ridiculous things on purpose to be laughed at by all; and he always practised such humiliations as were consistent with prudence and his other duties. All his actions, and whatever belonged to him, breathed an air of sincere humility. His apparel was poor, though clean; his bed was very mean, and his diet coarse, and so temperate, that it was a perpetual abstinence. He employed himself often most cheerfully in the meanest offices about the house, as in making beds, and in cleansing the chambers of the sick. It was his great study to conceal his virtues, and nothing was more admirable in his life than the address with which he covered his most heroic actions under the veil of humility. Though he was superior, he frequently submitted to inferiors with wonderful meekness and humility, when he could do it without prejudice to his authority. In things of which he was not certain, he readily acquiesced in the judgment of others; and was a great enemy to all positiveness, and to the use of superlatives in discourse. He received rebukes from any one with cheerfulness and thanks. If in his presence any thing was said that redounded to his praise, he showed an extreme confusion, which was usually accompanied with many tears. He was seldom heard to speak of himself, and never but on very pressing occasions. Though visions, revelations, and the like favours were frequently vouchsafed him, he scarce ever mentioned such things; but all his discourse was of humility, charity, patience, divine zeal, prayer, mortification, and other such virtues, of which we are to make the greatest account, and by which alone men become saints, and friends of God. Ribadeneira heard him say, that every one in the house was to him an example of virtue, and that he was not scandalized at any one besides himself.

It was his usual saying, that he did not think there was a man in the world that on one side received from God so great and continual favours, and yet on the other side was so ungrateful, and so slothful in his service as himself. It was his desire, that after his death, his body might be thrown upon some dunghill, in punishment of the sins he had committed by pampering it. The chief reasons why he would have his Order called the Society of Jesus, were lest his name should be given it, and that his followers might be known by their love and zeal for their Redeemer. As often as he spoke of his Order, he called it, "This least Society;" for he would have his children to look upon themselves as the last and least of all persons in the church.

From the perfect mortification of all his passions and inordinate affections resulted an admirable peace and evenness of mind which nothing seemed able ever to disturb or ruffle. His contempt of the world appeared by the disinterestedness with which he rejected legacies and presents whenever they might give occasion to complaints. When he looked up towards the heavens, he used feelingly to repeat, "How contemptible doth earth appear when I behold the heavens!"

Charity, or the most ardent and pure love of God, was the most conspicuous, and the crown of all his other virtues. He had often in his mouth these words, which he took for his motto or device, "To the greater glory of God," referring to this end, with all his strength, himself, his Society, and all his actions, in which he always chose that which appeared to him the most perfect. He often said to God, "Lord, what do I desire, or what can I desire besides thee!" True love is never idle; and always to labour, to promote God's honour, or to suffer for his sake, was this saint's greatest pleasure. He said that no created thing can bring to a soul such solid joy and comfort as to suffer for Christ. Being asked what was the most certain and the shortest way to perfection, he answered, "To endure for the love of Christ many and grievous afflictions. Ask this grace of our Lord; on whomsoever he bestoweth it, he does him many other signal favours, that always attend this grace." Out of this burning love of God he most ardently desired the separation of his soul from his mortal body, when it should be God's will, and when he thought of death, he could not refrain from tears of joy, because he should then see his loving Redeemer; and, beholding God face to face, should love and praise him eternally, without let, abatement, or intermission.

From this same love of God sprang his ardent thirst for the salvation of men, for which he undertook so many and so great things, and to which he devoted his watchings, prayers, tears, and labours. When he dismissed any missionaries to preach the word of God, he usually said to them, "Go, brethren, inflame the world, spread about that fire which Jesus Christ came to kindle on earth." To gain others to Christ, he, with admirable address, made himself all to all, going in at their door, and coming out at his own. He received sincere penitents with the greatest sweetness and condescension, so as often to take upon himself part of their penance. When a brother, growing weary of the yoke of Christ, had determined to leave the Society, St. Ignatius, by his remonstrances, made such an impression upon his heart, that, falling at the feet of the general, he offered to undergo whatever punishment he would impose upon him. To which the saint replied, "One part of your penance shall be, that you never repent more of having served God. For the other part, I take it upon myself, and will discharge it for you." He endeavoured to bring all his penitents to make, without reserve, the perfect sacrifice of themselves to God, telling them, that it is not to be expressed what precious treasures God reserves for, and with what effusion he communicates himself to, those who give themselves to him with their whole heart. He proposed to them for their model this prayer, which he used often to recite:—"Receive, O Lord, all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my whole will. You have given me all that I have, all that I possess, and I surrender all to your divine will, that you dispose of me. Give me only your love, and your grace. With this I am rich enough, and I have no more to ask."

St. Ignatius was general of the Society fifteen years, three months, and nine days; but was in the end so worn out with infirmities that he procured that the Society should choose him an assistant in that office. This was F. Jerom Nadal. After which, the saint reserved to himself only the care of the sick, and spent his time in continual prayer, and in preparing himself for death.

By way of his last will and testament, he dictated certain holy maxims concerning the obligation and conditions of religious obedience, which he bequeathed to his brethren of the Society. The saint, on the day before he died, charged F. Polancus to beg his holiness's blessing for him at the article of death, though others at that time did not think it so near. The next morning having lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven, and pronouncing, both with his tongue and heart, the sweet name of Jesus, with a serene countenance, he calmly gave up his happy soul into the hands of his Creator on the last day of July, in the year 1556, the sixty-fifth of his age, the thirty-fifth after his conversion, and the sixteenth after the confirmation of the Society. The people esteemed him a saint both living and after his death; and the opinion of his sanctity was confirmed by many miracles. He saw his Society in very few years divided into twelve provinces, with above one hundred colleges, and spread over almost the whole world. In 1626, it contained thirty-six provinces, and in them eight hundred houses, and fifteen thousand Jesuits, since which time it is much increased. St. Ignatius's body was buried first in the little church of the Jesuits, dedicated in honour of the Blessed Virgin in Rome. When Cardinal Alexander Farnesius had built the stately church of the professed house called Il Gesu, it was translated thither in 1587; and in 1637, was laid under the altar of the chapel, which bears his name. This church is one of the most magnificent examples of building in the world, next to the Vatican, and is not less admired for the elegance of the architecture than for its riches, consisting in costly beautiful ornaments of gold, silver, jewels, exquisite paintings, statues, and carving, and a great profusion of fine marble. Among the many chapels which it contains those of the Blessed Virgin, of the Angels, of SS. Abundius and Abundantius, martyrs, of St. Francis Borgia, and of St. Ignatius, are the admiration of travellers, especially the last, in which the remains of the holy founder lie, in a rich silver shrine under the altar, exposed to view. The other glittering rich ornaments of this place seem almost to lose their lustre when the statue of the saint is uncovered. It is somewhat bigger than the life, because raised high. Its bright shining gold, silver, and sparkling diamonds, especially in the crown of glory over the head, dazzle the eye. In the professed house are shown the pictures of St. Ignatius and St. Philip Neri, taken from the life. St. Ignatius's chamber is now a chapel, his study is another, in which prelates, and sometimes popes, come to say mass on the saint's festival. He was beatified by Paul V. in 1609, and canonized by Gregory XV in 1622, though the bull was only published the year following by Urban VIII.

The example of the saints evinces that to disengage our affections from earthly things, and to converse much in heaven by the constant union of our hearts to God, is the short road to Christian perfection. Those who are employed in the active life, ought to learn the art of accompanying all their actions with a lively attention to the divine presence,

as our guardian angels are faithful in discharging every duty of that external ministry which God hath committed to them, yet so as never to intermit their contemplation of the Godhead, and their incessant homages of praise and love, which are the uninterrupted employment of their happy state. Without this precaution, by the hurry of dry studies, and even the discharge of the sacred ministry itself, the spirit of piety and devotion is extinguished in the heart, and the more sacred functions are easily profaned.

Footnotes:

1. Acts ii.
2. Acts xvi. 26.
3. Exer. Spir. Max. 2, 3.
4. See his edifying life by Raderus and Sacchini.
5. Bouhours, lib. iv.; Orlandin. Hist. Soc. lib. vii. c. 25.
6. Orland. Hist. Soc. lib. xvi.
7. Extant in Bartoli, lib. iv. p. 372.
8. Lib. iv. n. 29, p. 355.

\*\*\*\*\*