

THE ADDITIONS IN THE EXERCISES IN DAILY LIFE

In the various ways of making Exercises in Daily Life, the Additions that deal with regular times of prayer have to be adapted; those on the approach to prayer acquire new force [74-75]; those which the author calls 'Additions of discernment' [76-77] must be fundamentally respected; and those that aim at preserving the spiritual climate and the feeling and praxis of penance have to be re-created [78-90]. At the end, the author attempts a reformulation of the Additions, drawn from points that Ignatius makes throughout the Exercises, so that they might be applied to the Exercises in Daily Life.

The theme is thought-provoking. For whatever process is followed in *Spiritual Exercises*, an exercitant does not take long figuring out the meaning and value of the body positions for prayer. The aids to concentration, the surroundings of each day of the retreat, the physical arrangements--the *ecology*, to sum it up, of the experience of prayer--form an important part of the labor which is the spiritual analogue of "taking a walk, travelling on foot, and running" [*SpEx* I].

Ignatius's interest in urging and ardently recommending the minute details called "Additions" is well known [*SpEx* 73-89]. He is careful to modify them meticulously for each Week [130, 131, 206, 229] and he advises keeping them in mind throughout the whole month [90, 160, 207, 226].

They are nothing more than sensible advice (consonant with monastic tradition, for the most part) to help a person concentrate when engaging in prayer, along with some instructions to keep the surroundings devout during the day. But among these are also two elements essential to bringing this whole experience to fruition. The two present what is perhaps Ignatius' most genuine idea in this field. They indicate, no more and no less, how to set oneself deliberately and correctly to learn the ways of "exercising oneself": to know what I want [76] and to ask myself at the end "how well I did" [77]. Ignatius knows that inner conviction [*sentir*] is not easy and he does not fail to offer helps and ways so that the experience is available to the exercitant. All the helps and ways have been thoroughly thought out and rethought out to help the exercitant along this way.

The inadequacy of Annotation I9

The problem arises in finding out that everything Ignatius advises seems to be geared exclusively to the type of Exercises that we call "closed" retreats, whether they last for thirty days or fewer. For the present style of the Exercises in Daily Life never managed to stir Ignatius' imagination and it would be illogical to ask that he should have thought of it back then. Today, nonetheless, this type of *Exercises* is fortunately on the rise, and we are still far from exhausting its pastoral possibilities.

Would everything mentioned in Annotation 19 be valid for this type of Exercises in Daily Life? Evidently not.

The Exercises which Ignatius calls "open" were meant for very busy people, who could not be separated from friends and acquaintances for a number of days. Those "open" Exercises were not exactly the Exercises in Daily Life that Van Schoote, Cusson, and Giuliani started in Belgium, Canada, and France in the second half of the twentieth century (four centuries following the approval of the Exercises). In these, as is known, the determinative element is that the normal unfolding of the experience be realized "in immediate relation with all of life's events".¹ It is this same daily life of the exercitant that is creatively converted into "the place of the experience of the *Exercises*". It can be said that what is meant to be the final result of the Four Weeks--becoming "contemplatives in action"--will in some sense be being asked of the Lord at the very first moment of the process¹.

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This is not what Ignatius has in mind when he drew up a new format of Exercises in Annotation 19. Rather, Ignatius is thinking of a kind of compartmentalizing of a busy life: An hour and a half or two hours are reserved each day ("in the morning") to engage in the Exercises ("to exercise oneself and stop conversing"), and the rest of the day is left free to "attend to usual business". With this division, Ignatius offers to carry out the 'month' in a much slower way, during more days of less intensity (three days, for an hour and a half daily, for each exercise). As is logical, he clearly recommends that the ten Additions be given for each meditation or exercise [19]. There is no place for other types of physical or environmental aids for the experience conceived this way.

The Exercises in Daily Life aim to go much further. In these, one searches for the experience of God in a two-pronged effort: in the practice of the Exercises proposed by Ignatius, and in the ordinary experiences and usual responsibilities of one's own life. During part of the day, one can pray with closed eyes, on the condition that one try to pray with the eyes wide open for the rest of the day. The two styles of prayer, unavoidably intertwined, create the framework for this new type of Exercise. It stands to reason that the "encountering God in all things" has to be as much in the beginning (at least somewhat) as in the end (confirmed and consolidated) of the Exercises in Daily Life.²

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Would the ten Additions that Ignatius offers us be valid for these Exercises? We must acknowledge that they would not be. In these new circumstances, some of them are impractical; others are certainly out of place; and one or other perhaps turns out to be an anachronism.³

The Additions for the "fixed times" of prayer

To analyze and eventually re-interpret or transform them, it helps to divide them into two large units: the first five focus on the actual exercises or "fixed times" of prayer; the next five, on the indirect preparation of this prayer or to creating a "spirit of prayer" in the exercitant.

This simple division already throws light on the possible use of this format in the Exercises in daily life. Effectively, one projects using the same meditative or contemplative exercises as Ignatius proposes for the month, and of course the first five Additions would be useful for them, with the possible exception of the first [73], as well as the determined time of the second ("when I awake", "as I dress") [74]. Both of these Additions were almost literally initiated by Cassian, and both evidently assume the monastic lifestyle of engaging in prayer at midnight or at daybreak.⁴ Even Ignatius admits their limited applicability and does not insist on them any further [88].

If the exercitant in question here is absorbed by contemporary life, and therefore leads a noticeably relaxed lifestyle or is distracted at the end of the day (spending hours in front of the television or reading, or unavoidably worn out), and is almost frenetically compulsive at the start of the day (an early work schedule, anxiety-filled public transportation, getting up in a hurry and racing out of the house), it would not seem sensible to insist on observing these two Additions. They would only be justified in the special situation, perhaps enviable but less and less common, where the exercitant does the period of formal prayer at the first hour of the day.

The Second Addition [74], though, contains more than the mere reference to a determined time of day. Even Ignatius states this with great clarity when he modifies it for the Second and the Third Week [131 and 206] and when he returns to it and cites it as the only Additional Direction for the Three Methods Prayer [239, 250, 258]. The proposed new method is this: "before entering into the prayer, I should briefly recollect myself in spirit, either seated or pacing to and fro, as I find better; and I should consider where I am going and for what," and before whom am I to appear [239].

This expresses well the determination (so like Ignatius) to aim directly at what is sought and in pursuit of that to appeal to all the sentiments and to focus the full attention of the one preparing for prayer. All fixed times of prayer, at whatever hour of the day, need to begin this way--even during Exercises in Daily Life.

The Third Addition [75] is an immediate continuation of the prior one and in some way makes a unit with it [31]. Taking into consideration "that God our Lord beholds me" will become part of the same wake-up call the one praying asks himself in the Second Addition, so that the whole "I" turns around to God. "See to it that he beholds

you contentedly", Teresa of Avila will say gracefully some years later. Teresa will also say that "prayer is played out, to a great extent, during the first few minutes". For it is the one who prays, rather than the material, who is the object of the preparatory acts done beforehand. How would one ask oneself "where do I go and before whom am I to appear", if one does not already feel waited for by Him to whom one goes? Only the bountiful gaze of the Lord, remembered once again, is reason strong enough to entice us to prayer.

Ignatius furthermore advises in this Addition making an act of "reverence or humility" upon entering the exercise [75]. In reality, this is a repetition of the previous Addition [74]. It is also an echo of the Principle and Foundation [23]. Further, it is an express reference to the confident prayer of "Our Lady who humbles herself and offers thanks to the Divine Majesty" [108], in opposition to the condition of the angels who, "falling into pride...did not want to make use of the freedom God gave them to reverence and obey their Creator and Lord" [50]. If this can be put in language better suited to our own day than that of medieval courtesy and chivalry, it would probably best be put in terms of the thankfulness and confidence that are elicited when Ignatius so positions the exercitant "that the Creator and Lord himself should communicate himself to the devout soul, embracing it with love, inciting it to praise of himself" [15]. Both sentiments, gratefulness and trust, are the necessary foundation of the whole process of prayer.

The Additions for discernment

In whichever way one undertakes the Ignatian Exercises, the Fourth and Fifth Additions have to be meticulously respected, since these are the most original ones.

In the first place, the Fourth Addition [76] refers to the accommodation of bodily positions. Ignatius is far from wanting to standardize the posture of his exercitants for all situations in prayer. It is not that the matter is unimportant, but rather that each person will have to determine carefully what is appropriate in each circumstance, in total freedom--except when "in front of others" [88]. This freedom of choice requires that the exercitant know very clearly what one is looking for in each exercise and makes this the operative point which determines the bodily disposition in prayer. In each concrete exercise, the expression "what I desire" is an essential preamble (thus, "to ask what I desire" in [48, 55, 65, 91, and so on]). Taking the method as a whole, "what I desire" is "understanding profoundly and savoring interiorly" [2]. Expressed in another manner (not meant to be restrictive) I desire "consolation" [183, 316, 329-330].

The appeal to "asking for what I desire" correlates perfectly with "savoring with my whole being ("until I am fully satisfied" [76]) and with asking myself later and with a certain distancing, "how well I did"--to rectify the direction, if it went poorly, or to better and consolidate the savor, if all went well, "I will give thanks to God our Lord, and the next time try to follow the same method" [77].

Ignatius' appreciation for all forms of examination, better called "prayer of revision", is well known. A man such as he was--who made mistakes many times during his life and many times knew how to amend his ways because of a great talent for reflection--wanted to give us all the invaluable tools that arose from his own experience. Discernment has its beginning in the reflections of Ignatius convalescing in Loyola and at Manresa in his knowing to ask himself, "What is this new life that we are now beginning?" (*Autobiography*, 21). From then on, it became the key piece in the Ignatian method.

Consequently, the structure of various "exercises" or "fixed times" of prepared and discerned prayer ["five exercises or fewer," Ignatius says [72]] is inevitably characteristic of every form of Ignatius' *Exercises*. And from there it follows that these two Additions are essential to the method. The exercitant (the whole being of the exercitant) has to examine the time of formal prayer; to recover the motions that without fail come in it [6]; to describe and confront them with the one who gives the Exercises [17]; and therefore to be able to ask himself the fundamental question: Where do they lead me? What does the Lord desire of me? The exercitant in daily life cannot prescind from these two Additions, either, for all of these same reasons.

The Additions for the rest of the day

The valuation, however, has to be rather different for the second set of Additions [73-81], which we can classify as "atmospheric" [*ambientales*]. The exercitant in daily life understands right away that it would be out of place to suggest that, during the day, one "deprive oneself of all light", or that one "not laugh", or "control where one looks", or that one control, artificially and with contortions, one's inmost sentiments, such as sorrow and joy. Could this reality be what is called "daily life"? Quite the contrary! The exercitant in daily life has to be encouraged to regard everyday life as well-fitted to seek and find God. It is evident, however, that the dynamic of everyday life cannot be expected to coincide either with the rhythm of conventual life or with the dynamic proper to the Week of *Exercises* which one is making at a given moment. Hence, it is not out of place to note that this block of Additions will, in principle, be out of place when applied to someone making Exercises in everyday life.

We can ask, nonetheless, which of the means might be helpful to the exercitant's spirit of prayer during the rest of the day? What physical or "atmospheric" helps are provided for the exercitant, so that one really feels that one's whole self is put to pray?

I believe that for the Exercises in Daily Life, it is feasible to take advantage of something that Ignatius will indicate later [130, 206] apropos of the Sixth Addition: "to call to mind frequently the mysteries of the life of Christ our Lord... I am contemplating". This is a desirable thing to do, even for very brief moments, during

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each and every one of the Four Weeks, because it indirectly helps afterward to center the soul in the subject of prayer.

It is equally useful to help the "memory of the heart" with various minutes of daily or weekly reading, a more everyday thing in our time than it was during the sixteenth century. Ignatius himself directs us toward spiritual books (it does not have to be *The Imitation of Christ!*), the life of Jesus or the lives of saints [100]. Actual experience with exercitants confirms beyond cavil the appropriateness of this particular piece of advice. As the process of Exercises of Daily Life normally lasts from six to nine months, reading material has proven in practice a very effective means of keeping interest alive during that lengthy time.

It is possible to insist on yet another recommendation for the exercitant in daily life. I refer to cultivating *devotion* (including *devotions*) always a very enabling means for finding God in all things.

Here is the summary that Ignatius makes, almost at the end of his lifetime, of what his spiritual development had been all along (as he told it to P. Gonçalves da Câmara): "he had always grown in devotion, that is, ease in finding God, and now more than ever in his whole life. Every time, any hour, that he wished to find God, he found him" (*Auto.* 99). The example that he continues with (confirmed, we know, by his *Spiritual Diary*), is "drawing up the Constitutions". That was enhanced by "the usual prayer" and Masses, with great devotion "to the Holy Trinity, to Our Lady, to Jesus, to the Father".

During the exercises, he also suggests repeating "the usual preparatory prayer" before each exercise [46, 65, 91, 101, etc.]; and he repeats many times suggestions to turn to "Our Lady and to all the saints, interceding for me" [63 and 232].

We are dealing here with a double dynamic: on one hand, asking God for prayer; and on the other, being careful even of little details in the search for God, in all things possible. Feeling devoutly accompanied by God throughout the day, and addressing Him frequently "as one friend speaks to another" [54], could very well be the proven road to help oneself encounter God in all things.

The subject of penance

The enormous cultural distance between the fervent Christian at the end of the Middle Ages and the aware and responsible Christian today is fully instantiated in a theme like corporal penance. It is now impossible to read and understand in the same way the advice formulated and well understood at that former time. The appreciation of the body has become more complex and has a positive feeling that four centuries ago would not have been easily imagined. So what would advice mean now about the various ways of doing corporal penances? How contemporary could Ignatius sound saying these things?

In the first place, one must not forget that the Tenth Addition [82-89] appears for the explicit purpose of reducing the valorization of and the myths about external penances in the spiritual life. Ignatius calculatedly calls on the authority of Saint

Thomas to confirm certain claims which, in his time, might well have been branded "laxity".⁵ It is in this precise sense that one has to discern them today.

In the second place, one must not ignore the clear truth that Ignatius burnt out his health in the first months of his conversion with exaggerated penances, "not looking to any interior thing, nor knowing what humility was or charity or patience, or the discretion that regulates and measures these virtues. His whole intention was to do such great external works because the saints had done so for the glory of God, without considering any more particular detail" (*Auto.* 14). Starting from his own experience, Ignatius learned to demythologize external penances, not wishing in any way that his mistake should be repeated by others. For this reason, he writes to Teresa Rejadell (September 11, 1536): "With a healthy body you can accomplish a great deal; with an unhealthy one, I do not know what you might be able to do".

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Ignatius advises no corporal penances except those that do no damage to the body, "nor incur notable illness" [83 and 84]. He advises that their timing and measure be gauged by care and love for the body, itself, for--as he reasons with Francis Borgia (20 September 1548)--"we must take care of and love our body, insofar as obeys and helps our soul; and our soul, with such help and obedience, will dispose itself to the service and praise of Our Creator and Lord".

The most profound appreciation of penance is to consider it an excellent means for our sensibility to grow aware of what our freedom has opted for and decided. In the measure in which we know how to find penances that we order to this end, given that they honor the body, they will be clearly preferable. Why not then, search for those that support the personal attitudes that lead to greater service, to listening respectfully and willingly, to deeper compassion--in brief, to all those marks of love which Paul describes in I Corinthians 13? Could penance have a more plausible objective in the spiritual life?

Understood this way, the penances that Ignatius proposes are not only always entirely useful, but would never need to be hedged in with advice against excess. And the practice of love is beneficial in two directions: for the one who exercises love, because it makes one more and more like the model and Master, Jesus; and for the suffering People of God who receive its fruits (this is "the more we do, the better the penance" of [83 and 84]), because they find through its mediation the goodness of God. The exercitant in daily life cannot do without this penitence.

An essay in synthesis of all that was said

In summary, I believe it possible to reformulate seven Additions which are of value for the Exercises in Daily Life. Modernizing the language a bit, while at the same time respecting as far as possible Ignatius's expressiveness, they would be the following (with references to the texts from which they were drawn).

Additions for the Exercises in Daily Life

First Addition. When you begin the exercise you have decided to do, let your spirit grow quiet for a while, either by sitting or walking, whichever may seem better for you, considering "where I am going and for what", and rehearsing a bit the exercise you wish to engage in [131 and 239].

Second Addition. Before entering prayer, raise your mind on high for a moment, considering "how God Our Lord beholds me", and go on with confidence and thankfulness [75 and 131].

Third Addition. As there are many different positions which are correct while praying, (as long as you not in a public place or in front of people) it is useful to keep clear always what you are looking for, which is, to feel and savor the material, and consolation. So on any point where you find these, remain there peacefully and feel no anxiety to move on, until you are satisfied. [2, 76, 88, 252, 254]

Fourth Addition. After an exercise is completed, for the space of a quarter of an hour, either sit or walk a bit, considering "how well I did in it". If you did poorly, analyze the reason so that you can repent and correct yourself in the future. If you did well, give thanks to God Our Lord, and turn again to do it the same way another time [77].

Fifth Addition. Throughout the day, try to keep frequently in your mind (even for brief moments), the main considerations of the Week of the *Exercises* that you are in, or of the mysteries in the life of Jesus you are contemplating. You will be much helped in this by reading spiritual books for a little while each day or each week, say, a life of Jesus or the lives of the saints [100, 130, 206].

Sixth Addition. Just as an exercitant must diligently ask each day that God grant you prayer or contemplation (for without this Divine Grace you cannot obtain them), so also you do well to further your own devotion throughout the day in little details, for this will make it easier for you to find God in all things [46 and 232].

Seventh Addition. Penance helps a good deal for orienting our sensibility to God, and consequently, for living more and more prayerful: fostering diligently all day long some form of opening to those who are around us--be it stirring ourselves to serving them more or better, be it in listening to them more, be it even bearing up better their reactions or ways of acting that always aggravate us. And all of this--"how much more and much better"--because it is a penance pleasing in the eyes of God, from which flow many good things. First, as we make up for many of our past blunders, done because of pressures, lack of interest, or egoism. Second, as our sensibility grows better informed of the end that we are seeking, which is to imitate and follow Christ our Lord, who acted this way. Third, as with this penance--rather internal than external and not at all flashy--our body does not suffer (which we ought to care for and love, insofar as it obeys and loves the spirit), and we help ourselves seek more directly the Lord of all [84, 87] (Letter to Francis Borgia, 20 September 1548).

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NOTES

¹Giuliani, Maurice, *La experiencia de los Ejercicios Espirituales en la vida*, Mensajero, 1994, p. 13. See also Josep M. Rambla, "Ejercicios en la vida corriente", *Cristianisme i Justícia*, 1991, p.7; and Gilles Cusson, *Los Ejercicios Espirituales en la vida corriente*, Sal Terrae, 1976.

²Mollá, Darío, "Encontrar a Dios en la vida", *Cristianisme i Justícia*, 1993, p. 15; Jean Laplace, *El camino espiritual a la luz de los Ejercicios ignacianos*, Sal Terrae, 1988, p.62; see also Maurice Giuliani, op.cit.; and Rodrigo Mejía, *La dinámica de la integración espiritual: Buscar y hallar a Dios en todas las cosas*, CIS, 1980.

³Boulon, Robert, "Sur la place du corps dans les Exercices", *Cahiers de Spiritualité Ignatienne*, 76 (1995), p. 285. See also Marie-Luce Brun, "Quelques réflexions sur la place du corps au cours des Exercices dans la vie", *Cahiers de Spiritualité Ignatienne*, 74 (1995).

⁴Arzubialde, Santiago, *Ejercicios Espirituales de S.Ignacio: Historia y análisis*, Mensajero, 1991, p.195.

⁵Arzubialde, Santiago, op.cit., p.200-212.

1. Giuliani, Maurice, *La experiencia de los Ejercicios Espirituales en la vida*, Mensajero, 1994, p. 13. See also Josep M. Rambla, *Ejercicios en la vida corriente*, Cristianisme i Justícia, 1991, p.7; and Giles Cusson, *Los Ejercicios Espirituales en la vida corriente*, Sal Terrae, 1976.
2. Mollá, Darío, *Encontrar a Dios en la vida*, Cristianisme i Justicia, 1993, p. 15; Jean Laplace, *El camino espiritual a la luz de los Ejercicios ignacianos*, Sal Terrae, 1988, p.62; see also Maurice Giuliani, op.cit. and Rodrigo Mejía, *La dinámica de la integración espiritual: Buscar y hallar a Dios en todas las cosas*, CIS, 1980.
3. Boulon, Robert, *Sur la place du corps dans les Exercices*, Cahiers de Spiritualité Ignatienne, 76 (1995), p. 285. See also Marie-Luce Brun, *Quelques réflexions sur la place du corps au cours des Exercices dans la vie*, Cahiers de Spiritualité Ignatienne, 74 (1995).
4. Arzubialde, Santiago, *Ejercicios Espirituales de S. Ignacio: Historia y análisis*, Mensajero, 1991, p.195.
5. Arzubialde, Santiago, op.cit., p.200-212.