

INTRODUCTION TO THE SPIRITUAL LIFE
SESSION FOUR—IGNATIAN AND TERESAN SPIRITUALITY
THEMES

OBEDIENCE

For as long as obedience blooms, all other virtues will also be seen to be blooming and bear the fruit that I wish for your souls, which is the same desired by Him. He redeemed, out of obedience, a world lost for lack of it. --*St. Ignatius, "Letter on Obedience,"*

RADICAL HONESTY

He (Ignatius) began to think more earnestly about his past life and about the great need he had to do penance for it...He said a prayer and arranged for a confessor. He made a general confession in writing which lasted three days. --*St. Ignatius, Autobiography*

LIVING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

[Advice to Jesuit scholars] Over and above the spiritual exercises assigned for their perfection—namely, daily Mass, an hour for vocal prayer and examen of conscience, and weekly confession and Communion—they should practice the seeking of God's presence in all things, in their conversations, their walks, in all that they see, taste, hear, understand, in all their actions, since His Divine Majesty is truly in all things by His presence, power and essence. --*St. Ignatius, Letters*

GIVING YOUR WHOLE HEART TO GOD

Eternal Lord of all, in the presence of your infinite goodness, and of your glorious mother, and of all the saints of heaven, I make this offering of myself with your grace and help. It is my fervent desire and deliberate choice, provided only that it is for your greater service and praise, to imitate you in bearing all wrong, all abuse and all poverty, both actual and spiritual, should you deign to choose me and admit me to such a state and way of life. --*St. Ignatius, "The Call of Christ the King," Spiritual Exercises*

Yours, you made me,
Yours, you saved me,
Yours, you endured me,
Yours, you called me,
Yours, you awaited me,
Yours, I did not stray.
What do You want of me?
Yours I am, for You I was born:
What do You want of me? – *St. Teresa, Poetry*

DETACHMENT. LOVE, AND HUMILITY

[The path of spiritual formation requires the practice of three virtues.] The first of these is love for one another; the second is detachment from all created things; the third is true humility, which even though I speak of it last, is the main practice and embraces all the others.” --*St. Teresa, The Way of Perfection*

COURAGE AND DETERMINATION

This is what I want us to strive for, my Sisters, and let us desire and be occupied in prayer not for the sake of our enjoyment but so as to have this strength to serve....Believe me, Martha and Mary must join together in order to show hospitality to the Lord...--*St. Teresa, Interior Castle*

SIMPLICITY OF LIFE

Provided they (her Discalced Carmelites)...are content to live simply, they will have what is necessary to sustain life. Their earnings must not come from work requiring careful attention to fine details but from spinning and sewing or other unrefined labor that does not so occupy the mind as to keep it from the Lord. --*St. Teresa, The Constitutions*

True poverty brings with it overwhelming honor. Poverty that is chosen for God alone has no need to pleasing anyone but Him. --*St. Teresa, The Way of Perfection*

SPIRITUAL PAIN AND GOOD WORKS

The best remedy [for spiritual pain] (I don't mean for getting rid of them, because I don't find any, but so that they may be endured) is to engage in external works of charity and to hope in the mercy of God who never fails those who hope in Him. --*St. Teresa, The Interior Castle*

PRAYER AS INTIMATE SHARING

...“Prayer in my opinion is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us.”—*St. Teresa, Life*

SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

The silkworm, which is fat and ugly, then dies, and a little white butterfly, which is very pretty, comes forth from the cocoon. Now if this were not seen but recounted to us as having happened in other times, who would believe it?--*St. Teresa, Interior Castle*

(Source: Patricia Blakely for EDFP, Fall, 2004)