

## NOTES TOWARDS AN AUTOGRAPH DIRECTORY

Father General Ignatius Loyola

*Case in Brief: Fr General Ignatius never wrote a handbook, a "directory," on the manner of giving Spiritual Exercises, though his companions kept asking him to. However, he did write some notes, on a page that has disappeared. Fortunately, the page had been copied by Frs Juan Polanco and Jerónimo Nadal. These notes give some vivid points on how St Ignatius guided the complete Exercises aimed at making an election. Among them: Consolation and its opposite must be clearly explained. The exercitant must have reached at least the second kind of humility. He or she may go through the three "times" of decision one after the other. There are two ways of living the third kind of humility. [Note: The translator did not find a way to make current gender-sensitive language fit the historical requirements of the text. --Ed.]*

### I. Leading into the Exercises

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The initial Annotations may be shown, and this can be more helpful than not.

The place where he makes the Exercises should be where he will be least able to be seen or talk with anyone, whenever the Exercises are being given in full form.

He should eat or drink nothing but what he has asked for.

Where possible, it is better for someone other than the person giving the Exercises to hear his confession.

The one giving the Exercises should always ask him about his consolation and desolation, and what he has experienced in the exercise or exercises he has made since he last spoke with him.

Upon entering the three or four times of election, he should remain especially secluded, not wishing to see or experience anything that is not from above.

Prior to this, the director should dispose him immediately to be completely resigned to either the counsels or the commandments.

So that he will be more disposed toward God's greater glory and his own greater perfection, the director should dispose him to desire the counsels over the commandments if this should be for God's greater service.

The director should dispose him and make him realize that greater signs from God are needed for the commandments than for the counsels, inasmuch as Christ our Lord advises the counsels and places difficulty in the ownership of property that is possible in the commandments.

When, upon explaining the first part [the first time] of the election, no basis for seeking it can be had there, he should go on to the second.

In the second--by consolation and desolation--the director should give a full explanation of what consolation is, going through all its aspects, that is to say, inner peace, spiritual joy, hope, faith, love, tears, and elevation of mind, all of which are gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Desolation is the opposite, coming from the evil spirit, bringing gifts from the same. Its components are war versus peace, sadness versus spiritual joy, hope in base things versus hope in lofty ones; similarly, base versus lofty love, dryness versus tears, wandering of mind amid base things versus elevation of mind.

## II. Directory for the Second Week

In the case of those who in the First Week show little fervor or desire for going on to decide their state of life, it will be better not to give the exercises of the Second Week, at least for a month or two.

Those who have a strong desire to go on to decide their state, after finishing their general confession, may be allowed on that day, and on the day they receive Communion, to rest until the following morning without being given any exercise in the form of an exercise--although they might be given something easy, for instance, on the commandments of God.

The one giving the Exercises should not bring along the book of the Exercises to read to the person but should have the matter he will speak about carefully studied beforehand.

If he has time, it is preferable not to bring the points written out but to explain the material and then dictate the points for the person to write in his own hand. Lacking the time for this, he can bring them to him written out and leave them. But in either case, the one giving the Exercises should explain them as they are in the book, and leave only the points succinctly put in writing.

## III. Directory for Elections

First of all, it must be insisted that a person entering upon the elections do so with total resignation of his will; and, if possible, that he reach the third degree of humility, in which for his own part he is more inclined, should it be for the equal service of God, toward that which is most in accord with the counsels and example of Christ our Lord. Anyone who is not in the indifference of the second degree is not suited to enter upon the elections, and it is better to occupy him with other exercises until he reaches it.

Among the three modes [times: 175-177] of making an election, if God does not move him in the first he ought to dwell on the second, that of recognizing his vocation by the experience of consolations and desolations. Then, as he continues with his

meditations on Christ our Lord, he should examine, when he finds himself in consolation, in which direction God is moving him; similarly in desolation. A full explanation should be given of what consolation is; that is, spiritual joy, love, hope for things above, tears, and every interior movement which leaves the soul consoled in our Lord. The opposite of this is desolation: sadness, lack of confidence, lack of love, dryness, and so on.

When no decision has been reached in the second mode, or one that is not good in the judgment of the one giving the Exercises, whose task it is to help discern the effects of the good and evil spirit, then the third manner should be resorted to--that of the discursive intellect by means of the six points [178-183].

Finally, the method that follows this one can be resorted to, that is, that of the four points--as a final resort [184-188].

The person may proceed by presenting one side to God on one day and the other on the next, that is to say, the counsels on one day and the commandments on the next; and noting in which direction God our Lord gives a greater indication of his divine will--like someone presenting various foods to a prince and noting which of them is to his liking.

The matter proposed for deliberation is: first, whether the counsels or the commandments; secondly, if the counsels, then whether inside or outside a religious institute; thirdly, if in a religious institute, which one; fourthly, after that, when and how. If it is the commandments, then in what station or style of life, and so on.

*Addition.* In the Second Week, where elections are dealt with, those who have already decided their state of life should not be made to deliberate on their state of life. In lieu of this deliberation, they can be offered one of two things on which they might wish to make a choice:

The first is, where it is equally for God's service and without scandal or harm to the neighbor, to desire injuries, opprobrium, and abasement in all things with Christ, in order to be clothed in his livery and imitate him in this aspect of his cross.

The other is to be willing to suffer patiently anything of this kind whenever it should befall him for love of Christ our Lord.

**Note:** This translation is taken from Martin E. Palmer, S.J., *On Giving the Spiritual Exercises: The Early Jesuit Manuscript Directories and the Official Directory of 1599* (Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996). Reprinted with permission.