

Day 3

NOVENA

TO

ST IGNATIUS OF
LOYOLA



VIIDYANIKETAN

South Indian Common Juniorate

St. Xavier's College

Thiruvananthapuram

Kerala

Day 3

A PILGRIM IN ABANDONMENT TO THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE.



Gladwin SJ

Opening prayer

Father of my very soul, always caring and solicitous of me, I revere you with all my heart and I humbly pray you as though I had you here present before me, to commend me earnestly and much to God our lord, that he may grant me light clearly to know his most holy will, and grace to fulfil it perfectly. And the same petition I make to all of our society, especially those I have known here on earth and are now with you in heaven. Amen

Introduction

Life is a journey and all of us are pilgrims on the journey of life. As we journey along the road of life, we are filled with different experiences. When we take up any journey, we arrange everything. Nothing to worry about. For example, when we make a pilgrimage, food, shelter and clothing are arranged well in advance. But it was so in the life of St. Ignatius. He, as a pilgrim, abandoned everything. No money, no power, no possession was with him. He left everything to the Providence of God. Yes, he emptied himself in order to possess Christ. The life of St Ignatius demonstrates the true and unshakable trust in the divine plan and the total surrender to God's will. He had a profound trust in God's providence which led him to surrender himself completely into the hands of God. We, the sons of Ignatius, must seek in attaining that unwavering faith in God so as to embrace the Divine plan with a heart full of trust.

Reading from the autobiography of St Ignatius

When he was thinking of the worldly things, he took much delight in them, but afterwards, when he was tired and put them aside, he found himself dry and dissatisfied. But when he thought of going to Jerusalem barefoot, and eating nothing but vegetables and of practising all the other rigours that he saw in the saints, not only was he consoled but even after putting them aside he remained satisfied and joyful.

Reflection

What are we to say of the nature of the Divine Providence to whom it is said to be made? There is nothing so small or so apparently indifferent that God does not ordain or permit even the fall of a leaf. God is wise and good, and powerful, and merciful to turn even the most, apparently, disastrous events to the advantage and profit of those who humbly adore and accept his will in all that he permits." (Culled from Daily Readings with Fr. Jean Pierre de Caussade, *The Flame of Divine Love*).

The deep spiritual conversion that happened in the life of St Ignatius of Loyola, which transformed him from being a passionate soldier to becoming a humble pilgrim and a servant-like priest. The cannonball

moment of Inigo de Loyola at the battle of Pamplona in 1521 was but a starting point of the long process of St Ignatius's conversion experiences in the successive years as a pilgrim.

St Ignatius of Loyola calls himself a pilgrim not because he moved from shrine to shrine but because he moved from temporal desires to the Divine will. Ignatius had no worry about anything since he always felt the constant accompaniment of his Divine Master. He was able to open up to Divine providence because he entrusted his heart and soul to the Lord. For it is only by giving, we could receive. Divine providence was the only support he had during his tough times. What made him walk even after being wounded and had unbearable pain? How did he get the stamina and energy to remain a pilgrim? This poor pilgrim was filled with sparks of enkindling his companions to become pilgrims on a mission. He is inviting us also to become pilgrims who deeply believe in the providence of God. Only by depending on God, we as Jesuits would be able to pray as St Ignatius prayed: "Take Lord and receive all my liberty, my memory, understanding and my entire will."

Petitions

1. Lord, we pray for the people who are abandoned and neglected by society. As they fully depend on your everlasting love, bless them and console them with your caring hand. For this intention let us pray.
2. "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them." Loving Lord we pray for widows and their families. May your constant support and guidance strengthen them to face the challenges of society today. For this intention let us pray.
3. "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Heavenly Father, we pray for those who are specially-abled. As they depend constantly on your providential care, may your merciful love protect them and comfort them. For this intention let us pray.

Concluding prayer

O God, for the greater glory of your name you chose Ignatius to be your servant, to battle for Christ and the Church under the banner of the cross. Grant to us who have received this grace of being his sons in the society that bears your Son's name, that through the help and example of our Father, we may fight on earth for the defence and spread of faith, so that your name be glorified and your people may be saved. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen