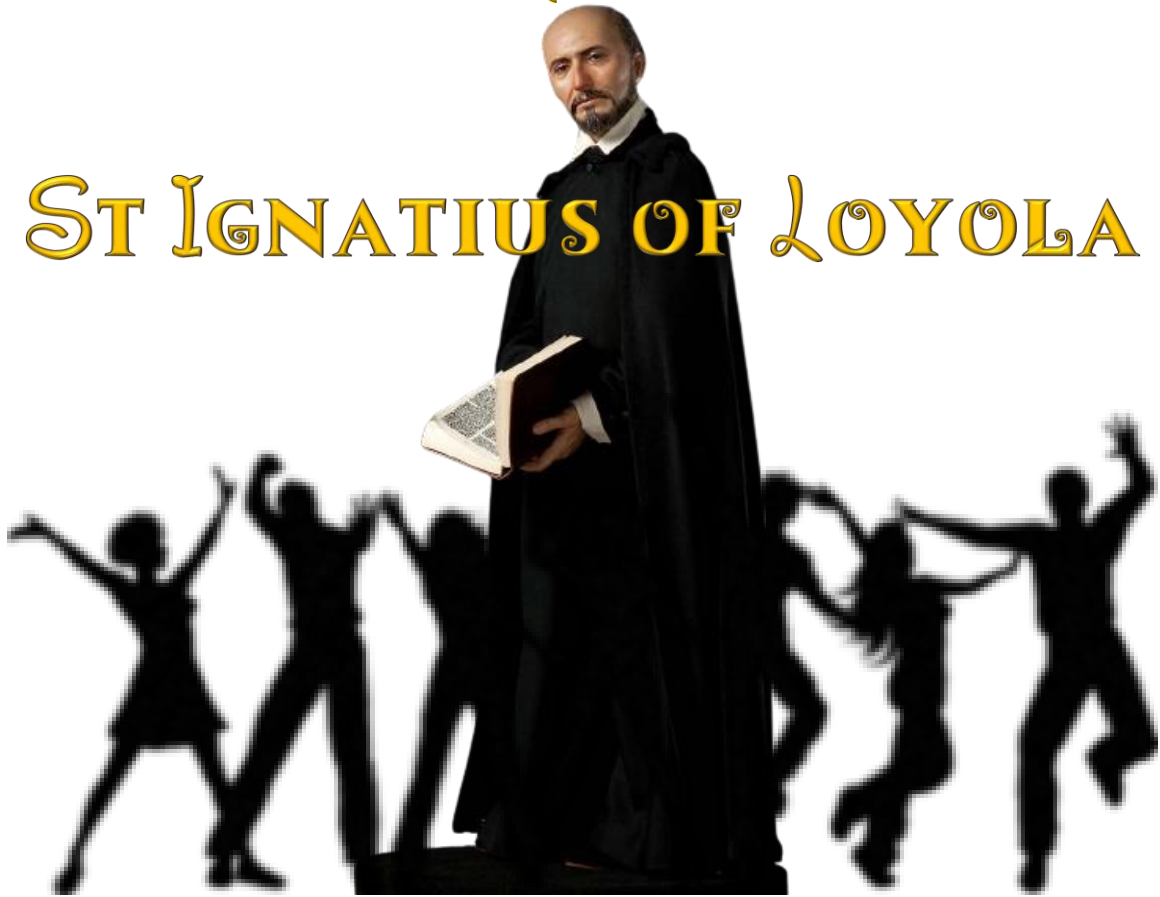


Day 8

NOVENA

To

ST IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA



VIIDYANIKETAN

South Indian Common Juniorate

St. Xavier's College

Thiruvananthapuram , Kerala

Day 8

To Accompany Young People in The Creation of a Hope Filled Future

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

Youth is the stage of human life when each individual makes the fundamental decisions by which they insert themselves into the broad Society and influenced the world. Pope Francis is very much connected with the youth and he encourages them to be bold and alive. He challenges them to be courageous and not to run away in times of hardships and consequences. All these are the means to re-orient their lives in the right direction. Today we need to accompany them. They are in need of our accompaniment and support.

India holds a large number of young people. They are the pillar and future of the nation. They are a real asset to our country. India has developed a lot in the area of education, science technology and so on but on the other hand, we see in the present scenario many young people are deprived of education. There are many young people, facing enormous challenges in our world today such as reduced job opportunities, economic instability, lack of education, political violence and multiple forms of discrimination. Many youths are caught up with different addictions. All these challenges make it difficult for them to find true purpose and meaning in their lives. Today they need the guidance of the Holy Spirit, our support and accompaniment. To accompany young people demands of us the authenticity of our life, spiritual depth and openness to share the life mission.

Gospel Passage: Mathew-: 5:13-16

Hymn: What a Friend We have in Jesus

A short Video of Pope Francis interacting with youth

“*Christus Vivit*” is a historic document: It’s the first-ever Vatican document on young people. In the opening paragraphs, Pope Francis states that “With great affection, I address this Apostolic Exhortation to all Christian young people. It is meant to remind you of certain convictions born of our faith, and at the same time to encourage you to grow in holiness and in commitment to your personal vocation”

Pope Francis writes, “It is important to realize that Jesus was a young person. He gave his life when he was, in today’s terms, a young adult” (23).

This is a beautiful line for all young people to pray through. Jesus, our savior, took on human flesh and walked among us. He grew up and lived as a young person and even gave his life at the age of 33, as young adult man. As Christians, we are called to imitate Jesus. This is a call to total self-giving; it is not something that we should wait to answer until we are old, but something that especially starts in our youth. Pope Francis is inviting the youth of the today to live with that same sacrificial love.

Young people are called to be leaven in the world — but we cannot be leaven without first being filled with Christ. We need to turn repeatedly to attending Mass, praying daily, reading the Bible and asking for Mary’s intercession. It is here that we will find the strength to be ever renewed in Christ and be a joyful presence in the world.

The Holy Father says that “we must dare to be different, to point to ideals other than those of this world” (para. 36). Our ability to point to these ideals comes from Christ, and only in Jesus will the human heart find peace, joy and freedom.

At the end of the second chapter of “Christus Vivit,” Pope Francis offers a litany of young saints that young people should emulate and request the intercession of today. These are great saints for young people and all Christians to befriend today and ask for their intercession for the youth of the world.

As Pope Francis said, “The very first words, then, that I would like to say to every young Christian are these: Christ is alive and he wants you to be alive!” (1).

Reflection

1. Besides economic support or any other, young people are in dire need of guidance and accompaniment. Am I able to spare some time for them; to sit with them, listen to them, understand their feelings and guide them with words of support and consolation?
2. Contemporary youth are caught up with lots of addictions like mobile addiction, alcohol addiction, pornography, etc. Human values are lost. What efforts can I make to help them lead a meaningful life?
3. Youth are disoriented by the political wings like RSS, VHP and divided in the name of caste and religion and fraught with feelings of enmity. How can we make them understand the values of life and become makers of equality, liberty and fraternity?
4. As today’s youths seem to be seekers of short-term pleasures and easygoing because of growing consumeristic attitudes and use and throw culture, social consciousness is the need of the hour. How can we bring social consciousness among the modern youth to understand social stratification better and work for the betterment of society?

Petitions: Response: Lord, Bless the youth and guide them

1. Ever loving God, we thank you for sending your beloved Son into this world to show us the way to you. We humbly implore your unceasing graces and blessings so that we may be able to show your way to young people. For this intention let us pray to the Lord.
2. Almighty and Eternal God, we place all the youngsters under your care and support. We humbly beseech your grace. Lord, bless us with the gift of generosity so that we may

accompany the youth in all their challenges and difficulties and enlighten their minds and hearts with our exemplary life and teachings. For this intention let us pray to the Lord.

3. We pray for all the youth of our nation. Compassionate Lord, shower your graces and blessings upon them so that they may realize their purpose in life and creation. They may have a better understanding of their life thus they may be able to make their future meaningful. For this intention let us pray to the Lord.
4. We pray for the young who are addicted to social media and drugs. Lord, bless them so that they be able to understand the value of precious life. Bless each one of us present here so that we may be able to accompany them in their challenges. For this intention let us pray to the Lord.

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 defense 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