

sins,² should be faithfully informed of the various movements and thoughts which the different spirits put in him.³ For, according as is more or less useful for him, he can give him some spiritual exercises suited and adapted to the need of such a soul so acted upon.

[18] *Eighteenth Annotation.* The eighteenth: the Spiritual Exercises have to be adapted to the dispositions of the persons who wish to receive them, that is, to their age, education, or ability,² in order not to give to one who is uneducated or of little intelligence things he cannot easily bear and profit by.

³Again, that should be given to each one by which, according to his wish to dispose himself, he may be better able to help himself and to profit.

⁴So, to him who wants help to be instructed and to come to a certain degree of contentment of soul, can be given the particular examen [24], and then the general examen [32];⁵ also, for a half hour in the morning, the method of prayer on the commandments, the deadly sins, etc. [238].⁶ Let him be recommended, also, to confess his sins every eight days, and, if he can, to receive the Blessed Sacrament every fifteen days, and better, if he be so moved, every eight.⁷ This way is more proper for illiterate or less educated persons. Let each of the commandments be explained to them; and so of the deadly sins, precepts of the Church, five senses, and works of mercy.

⁸So, too, should he who is giving the Exercises observe that he who is receiving them has little ability or natural capacity, from whom not much fruit is to be hoped,⁹ it is more expedient to give him some of these easy exercises, until he confess his sins.¹⁰ Then let him be given some exams of conscience and some method for going to Confession oftener than was his custom, in order to preserve what he has gained,¹¹ but let him not go on into the matter of the election, or into any other exercises that are outside of the first week,¹² especially when more progress can be made in other persons and there is not time for every thing.

our temptations and fears, the consolations and lights given to us by God, and the various movements that happen within us provides most important data for the direction of our retreat. For as we speak out what is happening to us, the director can listen, mirror back to us, enlighten, and adapt the progress of the retreat according to the way we are being stirred by God to make our response. Without this openness between ourselves and our director, the retreat itself will not be able to be adapted and focused so as to facilitate the growth possible for us.

[18] 18. We should be aware that the Spiritual Exercises are meant to be adapted for us by the director who takes account of our age and maturity, education, potential, and talents. The director decides what exercises would prove useless or even harmful to us as retreatants because of our lack of physical strength or natural ability as well as what exercises would benefit and perhaps challenge us when we are properly disposed and endowed. The director may discover that at this particular time of life we have neither the ability nor the desire to go beyond what is ordinarily described as the exercises of the first week. So, too, the director should make the judgment whether the full Exercises would be profitable to us at this time. Because the Exercises are a limited instrument through which God can work, we should be aware that this retreat method does not seem to suit everyone—sometimes because of a lack of appropriate talents, perhaps because of a certain personality makeup, or because God does not draw a person to respond through the structured method of these Exercises.

[19] ¹*Nineteenth Annotation.* The nineteenth: a person of education or ability ²who is taken up with public affairs or suitable business, may take an hour and a half daily to exercise himself.

³Let the end for which man is created be explained to him, and he can also be given for the space of a half-hour the particular examen and then the general and the way to confess and to receive the Blessed Sacrament. ⁴Let him, during three days every morning, for the space of an hour, make the meditation on the first, second, and third sins [45-54]; ⁵then, three other days at the same hour, the meditation on the statement of sins [55]; ⁶then, for three other days at the same hour, on the punishments corresponding to sins [65]. ⁷Let him be given in all three meditations the ten additions [73-90].

⁸For the mysteries of Christ our Lord, let the same course be kept, as is explained below and in full in the Exercises themselves.

[20] ¹*Twentieth Annotation.* The twentieth: to him who is more disengaged, and who desires to get all the profit he can, let all the Spiritual Exercises be given in the order in which they follow.

²In these he will, ordinarily, more benefit himself, the more he separates himself from all friends and acquaintances and from all earthly cares, ³as by changing from the house where he was dwelling, and taking another house or room to live in, in as much privacy as he can, ⁴so that it be in his power to go each day to Mass and to Vespers, without fear that his acquaintances will put obstacles in his way.

⁵From this isolation, three chief benefits, among many others, follow.

⁶The first is that a man, by separating himself from many friends and acquaintances, and likewise from many not well-ordered affairs, to serve and praise God our Lord, merits no little in the sight of His Divine Majesty.

[19] 19. We may be retreatants of suitable talent and proper disposition whom the director determines to help through the full Exercises, but carried on in the face of normal occupations and living conditions for the extent of the whole retreat. Truly it is a retreat in everyday life. As retreatants we should determine, along with the director, the amount of time possible each day for prayer so that the director can divide up the matter accordingly. If an hour and an half can be secured daily by us, the retreat could progress slowly, with almost a single point providing enough material for such a consistent prayer time. For example, in the first exercise of the first week, each single example of sin might provide the matter to be considered in prayer for that day. So, too, in the mysteries of Our Lord's life, we may find it helpful in our retreat in daily life to return to the same mystery for three or four days in succession.

[20] 20. Ordinarily, if we want to give ourselves over to the movement of these Exercises, it is most helpful to go apart from what usually surrounds us—both friends and family, job and recreation, and our usual places of home and work. There are many advantages which come from this separation, for example: (1) if we are so intent on responding ever better to the love of God wherever it will lead us in our life, we will find the kind of quiet in which the movement of God in our life becomes all the more apparent; (2) our mind will not find itself divided over many

⁷The second is, that being thus isolated, and not having his understanding divided on many things, but concentrating his care on one only, namely, on serving his Creator and benefiting his own soul, ⁸he uses with greater freedom his natural powers, in seeking with diligence what he so much desires.

⁹The third: the more our soul finds itself alone and isolated, the more apt it makes itself to approach and to reach its Creator and Lord, ¹⁰and the more it so approaches Him, the more it disposes itself to receive graces and gifts from His Divine and Sovereign Goodness.

cares, but rather its one concern will be to follow the lead of God; (3) in a similar way, our powers of loving, too, will be focused for this period of time solely upon God, and the response which we will be able to make is all the more intense and intimate because the demand for such a response is so single.