

Reflection Friday Week 17 – St Ignatius of Loyola 2020

In the spiritual exercises of St Ignatius, number 18 is about seeking to change one's life in a way to better serve God; changing unhelpful habits or desires so as to live more simply, less selfishly, more honestly and openly for God. We can call them unwanted *attachments* for which there are three kinds of response.

1. Wanting to free oneself from an attachment to be more attentive to God's calls but never getting around to doing it. This type of responder has good intentions but never puts them into action.

2. Wanting to free oneself from an attachment but rationalizing it in such a way that you convince yourself that this way of being attached is actually what God wants.

3. Responding to the attachment by neither trying to keep it nor get rid of it. By not focusing on the attachment at all, one becomes no longer attached to it. This will give you the freedom to respond to however God might be moving you to act here and now. The desire is gradually purified; the desire to be of greater service to God. Then whatever would be of greater service becomes the motivation of your choices.

In the 16th century, St Ignatius turned his life around. From being a military soldier, he gave his life completely to God. This is possible for all of us whether in the single life, the married life or the religious life. All you have to do is when you wake up in the morning, after thanking God for the new day, pray: *"God what have you got in store for me today? Whatever it is, I am going to need your help and lots of it. Amen."*

Wrong type of music . . .

A man is walking in a graveyard when he hears the Third Symphony played backward. When it's over, the Second Symphony starts playing, also backward, and then the First. "What's going on?" he asks a cemetery worker.

"It's Beethoven," says the worker. "He's de-composing."