

A REFLECTION ON THE

FEAST OF SAINT IGNATIUS



Saint Ignatius of Loyola, oil on canvas,
Peter Paul Rubens

An Excerpt from Fr. Jim's Homily

Before he founded the Jesuits and became a saint, Ignatius of Loyola pursued a military career in hopes of advancement and worldly glory. But after he incurred life-threatening injuries at the Battle of Pamplona in 1521, he returned to his family castle to recuperate. There, reading the Bible and the lives of the saints alone in his room, he began to ask the question we've all wondered at times:

“What is my life really about?”

You often hear us talk at St. Ignatius Parish about discernment. Discernment in the Ignatian sense

means being attentive to the action of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and being attentive to how we are called to follow Jesus. The time Ignatius spent recovering at Loyola castle was really only the beginning, the beginning of his lifelong process of discernment.

For you see, he had his whole life ahead of him after his recovery. He used that tool of discernment, the constant question, “Jesus, where do you want me to go?” as his guidepost.

Today, as we celebrate the eve of his feast day on July 31, I am reminded of Ignatius's famous prayer taken from the *Spiritual Exercises*:

“Dear Lord, teach me to be generous. Teach me to serve you as you deserve. To give. To labor. To seek no reward other than knowing that I am following your invitation and your will for me.”

As we remember St. Ignatius, let us pray that his famous and heartfelt prayer might be our prayer as well. May we always remember that following God is the ultimate purpose of our lives and that our ongoing question should always be, **“Jesus, where do you want me to go?”**