

IGNATIUS - the God Seeker



Animated Documentary

Length 60 minutes

www.ignatius-godseeker.org

www.spiritual-exercises.org

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Perhaps you have known the Jesuits for some time and you have even been helped by a Jesuits on a personal level? Many have asked what the “secret” (of the Jesuits) might be. The “secret” is a profound way of seeking God: the Spiritual Exercises. They were developed by a former soldier and eventual saint, Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits.

At the pinnacle of his military career, Ignatius of Loyola was thrown off course by a serious injury. He began to ponder the meaning of life, questioning his former priorities. He discovered that following Christ meant more to him than fame and wealth. After he recovered from his injury of 1521, Ignatius spent one year in Manresa (Spain). He devoted his time to seeking God and to finding out what God had in store for his future.

In the following summer, meditating in a cave at the Cardoner River, he had a deep mystical experience which changed his life forever. Now he knew what God wanted him to do. Soon after this, he began assembling young men who were in search of a more authentic Christian life. Out of this initial group, the Jesuits (the Society of Jesus) were eventually formed. Later, his fellow Jesuits said that Saint Ignatius experienced and wrote down the core of his Spiritual Exercises while in Manresa. Up to this day, the Ignatian Exercises are the spiritual foundation for all Jesuits world-wide. They have also inspired thousands of people who have been touched by Jesuit spirituality in so many ways.

In 2022 we celebrated the 500th anniversary of this profound spiritual event in Manresa, which eventually changed the Catholic Church and the world.

Ignatius – the God Seeker – discovers in his mystical experience at the river Cardoner that God is not to be found merely in scripture or tradition, but God is truly present in everything. (As the British Jesuit and poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889), once wrote, “The world is charged with the grandeur of God.” Thus, God is not to be found in negating the world, but by discovering, embracing, and loving the world. This is the powerful message of the Jesuits, a message that up to this today can change the Catholic Church by making it more mystical, more open, more embracing, and above all more loving.

The film visualizes the essential insights and dynamics of an Ignatian retreat. In particular it takes up the image-world of Ignatius in three particularly typical exercises: “Contemplation on the Incarnation”, “Meditation on Two Standards,” and “Contemplation to Gain Love”. These three image-worlds are animated as large paintings. They are followed by short stories which translate the basic dynamics of the Exercises into the present: What does it mean that God became man (Incarnation)? Next, what is heaven or hell for a modern day audience? Which leading figures do we follow today, who is the devil or savior for us? Finally, where do we experience God’s love and his great creation?

Synopsis short: 219 characters

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Synopsis long: 1276 characters

Have you ever wondered what moves the Jesuits at their core? This innovative animated documentary about the founder of the Jesuits reveals his inner quest for God, and invites you to become a spiritual seeker yourself.

In his radical quest for God, Ignatius discovers in his mystical experience at the Cardoner river in Spain that God speaks to him not only in Scripture or Tradition, but is truly present in everything. Ignatius systematizes his spiritual experiences in his “Spiritual Exercises” into a path for all seekers of God. To this day, the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises are not only the spiritual foundation of Jesuits worldwide, but have shaped the relationship with God of thousands of people.

Can you really find God in everything? How do I find God's will for me? The film “Ignatius - the God Seeker” takes up the essential insights and processes of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises and translates them into a vivid visual language. God is not to be found by withdrawing from the world, but in its discovery, appreciation, indeed in its loving embrace. This has been the message of the Jesuits through the centuries, a message that can change the Catholic Church to this day, so that it becomes more mystical, more open, more embracing, and above all, more loving.



