

In our spiritual life we can expect various interior thoughts, experiences or movements within our hearts. It is within these movements that we can discern two ways of being: One moving us towards God and the other away from God. St. Ignatius of Loyola calls them in his Spiritual Exercises consolation and desolation. He writes that consolation is “when some interior movement in the soul is caused, through which the soul comes to be inflamed with love of its Creator and Lord.” There is a peace, a closeness to God, and an intense desire within the person to unite their heart to the Heart of God. Faith, hope, and charity are strengthened.

Conversely, St Ignatius says, desolation is “without hope, without love, when one finds oneself all lazy, tepid, sad, and as if separated from his Creator and Lord.” In desolation, the things we were doing for the love of God and neighbor in consolation like prayer become difficult. This, as St Ignatius says, “moves one toward lack of faith and leaves one without hope and without love.”

What should we do in times of desolation: One of the most essential things to do is to pray and listen to the voice of God; seeking our Divine Healer who infinitely love us and knows the way. When prayer feels dry, difficult, or we feel distant from God, turn to scripture.

Romans 12:12: “Rejoice in hope, endure in affection, persevere in prayer.”

1 Thessalonians 5:17: “Pray without ceasing.”

Philippians 4:5-6: “The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Luke 18:1: “And he told them a parable, to the effect that they ought always to pay and not lose heart.”

1John 5:14: “And this is the confidence which we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.”

Jeremiah 33:3: “Call to me and I will answer you and will tell you great and hidden.” things which you have not known.”

Hebrews 4:16: “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

1 Peter 5:7: "Cast all your anxieties on him, for he care about you."

Psalm 145:18: "The Lord is near to all who call upon him."

1 Chronicles 16:11: "Seek the Lord and his strength seek his presence continually!"

1 Thessalonians 5:16: "Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all." circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

God Bless,
Aaron Epkey