

THEMES OF ST. IGNATIUS' 14 RULES FOR DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS

WHAT IS DISCERNMENT?:

RULES 1 AND 2

- Ignatius speaks from his own experience
- Why discernment is needed
- Defining discernment
- The objective: Be Aware, Understand, Take Action
- “Spirits”, the world, flesh and devil
- Enemy goes along with regression, Good spirit collides with it
- Enemy discourages a good person; Good Spirit encourages

CONSOLATION AND DESOLATION:

RULES 3, 4, 5

- Psychological vs. spiritual causes
- Definition of spiritual consolation
- Definition of spiritual desolation
- Reflective awareness
- Maintain resolutions
- Difference from psychological depression, dark night

RESISTING DESOLATION:

RULES 6, 7, 8

- Counterattack: examination, prayer, penance
- God never deserts us
- Use natural powers to resist
- Persevere with patience
- The battle of prayer
- Alternating experiences

WHY WE SUFFER DESOLATION:

RULES 9, 10, 11

- God allows desolation for our good
- Sloth, need for purification, humility
- Store up consolation for ensuing desolation
- Take new strength
- Humble oneself in consolation
- Remember our timidity and weakness

EXPOSING ENEMY TACTICS:

RULES 12, 13, 14

- Enemy is essentially weak
- Momentum of attacks – snowball effect
- Be honest and open with someone about spiritual movements
- Importance of self-knowledge, defense