

SOURCE OF VITALITY - REFLECTION



I ask for what I desire as we begin this topic



I pray that my entire being become open to God's grace



I imagine these texts being addressed to me, and note my response

Grace: That I connect to moments of consolation and spiritual vitality

“While he was seated there, the eyes of his understanding began to be opened; though he did not see any vision, he understood and knew many things, both spiritual things and matters of faith and learning, and this was with so great an enlightenment that everything seemed new to him. It was as if he were a new man.”

“Such was the abundance of this light in his mind that all the divine helps received, and all the knowledge acquired up to his sixty-second year, were not equal to it.”

Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola [30]

... And so, for the first time in my life perhaps (although I am supposed to meditate every day!), I took the lamp and, leaving the zone of everyday occupations and relationships where everything seems clear, I went down into my inmost self, to the deep abyss whence I feel dimly that my power of action emanates. But as I moved further and further away from the conventional certainties by which social life is superficially illuminated, I became aware that I was losing contact with myself. At each step of the descent a new person was disclosed within me of whose name I was no longer sure, and who no longer obeyed me. And when I had to stop my exploration because the path faded from beneath my steps, I found a bottomless abyss at my feet, and out of it came – arising I know not from where – the current which I dare to call *my* life.

Fr. Teilhard de Chardin SJ, The Divine Milieu (II, 1)

As I stood before a flowering currant bush on a summer day there suddenly arose in me without warning, and as it from a depth not of years but of centuries, the memory of that earlier morning at the Old House when my brother had brought his toy garden into the nursery. It is difficult to find words strong enough for the sensation which came over me; Milton's “enormous bliss” of Eden... comes somewhere near it. It was a sensation, of course, of desire; but desire for what? not, certainly, for a biscuit tin filled with moss, nor even (though that came into it for my own past... and before I knew what I desired, the desire itself was gone, the whole glimpse withdrawn, the world turned common place again, or only stirred by a longing for the longing that had just ceased. It had taken only a moment of time; and in a certain sense everything else that had ever happened to me was insignificant in comparison.

C.S. Lewis, Surprised by Joy (1955,22)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What personal experiences left you with a sense of consolation, of plenitude, and inner peace? What impressions did they leave and what invitations did they carry?