

career cut short by a leg wound that left him a semi-invalid. In due course he determined to transfer his skills from the army to the church and dedicated himself to being a spiritual knight in the army of the Virgin Mary.

His initial act in 1522 put him in the Dominican monasteries with studies in Jerusalem and by 1528 at the University of Paris. Loyola found peace of soul in complete submission to the church: its tradition and its authority. He felt the monasteries lacked something in dedication to cause and began to form his own cell about himself and the concept of spiritual exercise and dedication. He was under suspicion in the monastic order...anyone too devout was not thought to be up to something good. Wisely he moved about just often enough to keep in the graces of the church without irritating negligent superiors in the local monasteries and while thinking these things through, developed a series of spiritual exercises in a four week cycle. This was an intense indoctrination program into spiritual capacities of such a severe nature that most of us know nothing about for intensity and finality.

By 1534 he had a small but militant group: a company of soldiers for Jesus. Their first attempt at work in the Islamic Jerusalem did not succeed but the concepts of loyalty to the pope and the church were watchwords that put them in good ecclesiastical standing. In 1540 the Vatican recognized the group and it quickly emerged as one of the strongest catholic orders. Each man was transient and assignable...none could hope for promotion in the church...satisfaction was found in submission and service. It was a hard-nosed group and challenged total dedication. We are always struck that such challenges are more productive than the easy ways in which we try to lure people into Christian activity.

The Society was headed by a "general", the first being Loyola himself (1541-1556) and the order has insisted on absolute obedience to the constituted rule. Among the more famous Jesuits was Francis Xavier, the outstanding mission worker of the order. But their schools, opened largely to the gifted and competent in earlier days, as well as the calculated charitable works and consistent Roman forcefulness, have marked the group as exerting an influence far beyond the numbers of the society. I had a humorous incident with a fellows student in a graduate class some years ago...He was a Jesuit from St. Joseph's and I will likely tell you about it.