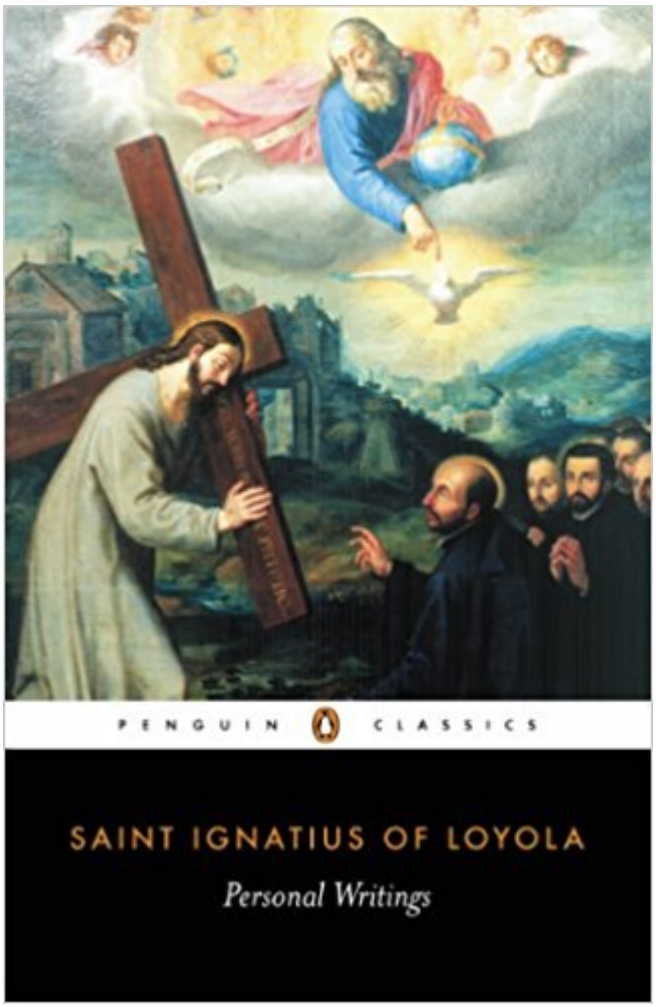
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Personal Writings (Penguin Classics)



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Synopsis

The writings of a major Christian thinkerOne of the key figures in Christian history, St. Ignatius of Loyola (c. 1491-1556) was a passionate and unique spiritual thinker and visionary. The works gathered here provide a first-hand, personal introduction to this remarkable character: a man who turned away from the Spanish nobility to create the revolutionary Jesuit Order, inspired by the desire to help people follow Christ. His Reminiscences describe his early life, his religious conversion following near-paralysis in battle, and his spiritual and physical ordeals as he struggled to assist those in need, including plague, persecution and imprisonment. The Spiritual Exercises offer guidelines to those seeking the will of God, and the Spiritual Diary shows Ignatius in daily mystical contact with God during a personal struggle. The Letters collected here provide an insight into Ignatius' ceaseless campaign to assist those seeking enlightenment and to direct the young Society of Jesus.For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

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St. Ignatius of Loyola (c. 1491-1556), founder of the revolutionary Jesuit Order, is one of the key figures in Christian history. These Personal Writings reveal the intense inwardness and devotional depths of the private man. His Reminiscences give a vivid account of his conversion and psychological turmoil, of his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and of the years of study and controversy in Spain and Paris leading to the creation of the Society of Jesus. The immensely influential Spiritual Exercises offer guidelines for helping people discover God in their lives, coming to terms with their flaws, and making choices about their future. In the Spiritual Diary Ignatius shows himself drawing on these methods to work through a period of crisis. All these major works have been included in this volume, along with forty letters specially selected by the editors. Together with the Preface, Introduction to each text and detailed notes, they make one of the greatest of religious characters freshly available to modern readers.

This is one of the most important books. It has changed my life and the way I think and feel by reading it while doing the 30 weeks Ignatius Exercises. If you get the chance to do the exercises. Go for it.

A superb new translation of some old favorites. The problems of the world are nothing that cannot be encountered with a soldier’s discipline and a saint’s faith. This is the first book I recommend to people who want to understand Jesuit spirituality after reading Martin’s "The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything".

Really cool collection. Best parts: The autobiography at the beginning and the letters (the Diary is pretty cool, but somewhat repetitive [sections of days that just say "With Tears." "No Tears" "With Copious tears"]; and of course the Spiritual Exercises are classics in themselves)

Journey of one’s inner sanctuary and spiritual growth.

Excellent book. The Steps in Discernment is a must read.

Saint Ignatius was a Basque military officer from Loyola, a great saint, and the founder of one of the most influential religious orders in world history: the Society of Jesus(the Jesuits). His personal writings reveal a truly gentle, emotional man who gave up all the pleasures of nobility to become a

poor, wretched pilgrim for the sake of Christ. His Reminisces recounts all the main events of his life, from his bravery in the battle that left him crippled for life, to his conversion in his recovery bed, and finally to his founding of the Jesuit order. His journal reveals his spirituality and describes his mystical experiences, his letters reveal his patience, wisdom, and kindness, and his tremendously popular Spiritual Exercises gives advice on how to dedicate your life to God and see His action all around you. Ignatius's writings resonate with the tender devotion and the firmness of purpose found only in the writings of the Saints. Reading this book, one can see the guiding hand of Providence in the life of Ignatius and in the history of the Church, a hand that can use even the worst sinner to bring a shattered world back to His Son.

If you are looking for a common and useful type of Catholic spiritual exercise, you should know first that the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola may be a bit too dense and problematical for what you want. Many people like to pretend that they can do them on their own without an experienced Jesuit to monitor them. That is a 'new age' invention. It has nothing to do with how these exercises are actually praticed by those who hold the rightful ownership over them, namely the Jesuit order in full communion with the Holy See.I would instead point you in the direction of The Divine Office (also called The Liturgy of the Hours) as a very wholesome and progressive type of daily prayer that is recommended to all the laity around the globe by the Holy See. The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola are certainly more than a little too heady and intense because of its meditations on topics like sinners in hell. I would recommend that you maybe read through the Spiritual Exercises and try to answer the questions without too much spiritual intensity (using more reason and logic than feelings) or adopting the extreme environmental settings that Jesuits would undertake in doing them. As laity you are not supposed to be doing these on your own anyway. After talking to a Jesuit, I found out that the exercises are not for everybody and the person undertaking the exercises, needs supervision. This can not be understated. Anything to the contrary would be a brand new invention by the reader.God is love. Christianity without love is not Christianity.Saint Ignatius of Loyola `Personal Writings' is a very interesting book that reveals a lot of details about somebody who many of us would have taken for granted as a person who was born into a Christian vacuum and probably had a life full of Christian happiness that made him a Saintly person. Nothing could be further from the truth. Saint Ignatius was a warrior who sought glory through armed combat. After having his legs shattered he spent months recovering with multiple corrective surgeries, while reading books about the lives of Saints. He then set out on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to find himself and Christ, had many visions (which he continued to have until his

death), sought alms, returned to Europe, often used his alms to support others in poverty, had one to one spiritual talks with people about Christianity, converted them, was accused by the inquisition of heresy several times, although never proven, wound up in Paris studying, went home to Spain, before going to Italy where he studied to become a priest and founded the Society of Jesus, whose members are better known as Jesuits today. This is all covered in Part 1 of the book called `Reminiscences' an 80 paged autobiography. It is interesting to note that Saint Ignatius appears to be a very strange character with possible delusions, doing many crazy things (like telling a wild ship crew that they better change their sinful ways while alone with them out at sea for months; feeling the sores of plague sufferers and walking through the middle of a battle) but none-the-less was sane enough to talk his way out of many a situation including the Inquisitions where he left many an impression on the Inquisitors and the local populace. The Holy See eventually got around to incorporating his style of conversion into the Church. Part 2 of the book is a spiritual diary that he worked on. It is here for more historical reasons than anything, often very repetitive and hard to penetrate, but an authentic writing about his private conversion experience. Part 3 is a short sample of letters from over a couple of thousand that he wrote. Part 4 are the Spiritual Exercises. I think the book is worth it for the autobiography and the letters for learning more about the historical record at this time. The Spiritual Exercises are also here, with a very good introduction. Although their value for the Church in the Middle Ages was undoubtedly of remarkable importance, post-Vatican II readers should apply great caution with them and seek guidance from clergy who have experience with them, or just read over them gently baring in mid that much of these perceptions have matured in the Church since Vatican II.

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