July 31st: St. Ignatius of Loyola

Gospel text (*Lk* 14,25-33): One day, when large crowds were walking along with Jesus, He turned and said to them, «If you come to me, without being ready to give up your love for your father and mother, your spouse and children, your brothers and sisters, and indeed yourself, you cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not follow me carrying his own cross cannot be my disciple (...)».

St. Ignatius of Loyola, priest (1492-1556)

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Today we become aware that our time is always "God's time". Saint Ignatius' epoch was not an easy one neither for Europe nor for the Church: a period of time with the Popes residing in Avignon (submitted to France); a Western schism going on (three Popes at the same time, each one claiming to be the real one)... and it all ending up into the Protestant reformation. Paradoxes of life, Ignatius of Loyola and the religious reformer Martín Luther (1546) were fully coetaneous and concurrent in time. But how different was the reaction —"reformation"— of each one.

But his forced convalescence, owing to a serious war wound, was a providential opportunity to quietly read the lives of Jesus Christ and some saints: these are the authentic reformers! This "stirred up" his spirit, and he started to wonder: "What if I would do the same as Saint Francis or Saint Domingo?".

—And behold, Saint Ignatius – by stripping himself off things and dreams - began to surrender to a life of prayer and attention to others. In that voyage, some other colleagues joined him to found the Society of Jesus.