

A PRAYER BOOKLET
FOR
REFLECTING AND PRAYING
ON
THE DOCUMENTS
OF
GENERAL CONGREGATION XXXV
OF
THE SOCIETY OF JESUS





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The preparation of this booklet has been a communal effort. In selecting the paragraphs to be used for prayer material, I was fortunate to be able to draw on the full age-spread of the Province: Frs. Joseph Downey and Glenn Williams sent in their selections from Colombiere, while from Loyola House I got choices from a group signed simply, the Novices. I am grateful for their help and the promptness of their response.

Technical help has come from the Province Assistant Vocation Promoter, Janet O'Keefe. My thanks to Janet for doing the page composition speedily and accurately --a task I'd still be working on without her help. Janet also put the finishing touches on formatting a print-ready copy of the booklet. My thanks, also, to Mary O'Keefe Re for her invaluable assistance in proofreading the final draft of this booklet.

Walt Farrell, SJ
Editor

CLARIFICATION OF ABBREVIATIONS

The references to the Congregation documents used throughout this booklet, which are presented in **bold text**, are to be read in the following way:

FOR EXAMPLE:

A reference like **D 1.3** is to be read:
Decree One, Paragraph No. 3

A reference like **D 4.6.2** is to be read:
Decree Four, Paragraph No. 6, Sub-paragraph No. 2



HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

It was assumed in the preparation of this booklet that people generally will have already done reading in the GC 35 Documents. Hence, this booklet, while still using the documents, takes a different approach to them.

The fresh approach was found in the letter of Fr. Nicolás dated Oct. 19, 2008 to the Society. There he speaks of sifting through "with the new Council and the Conference Presidents" the documents and other materials and finding that six topics seemed to recur: spiritual depth, formation, leadership, creativity, intellectual apostolate and community life. This booklet, then, takes these topics and uses them as the themes for the first five weeks of Lent. The sixth week will focus on three other documents. The materials gathered under a given theme are materials relevant to the theme but drawn from any of the six decrees: e.g., for the first week of Lent the theme is Spiritual Depth, and under this theme, relevant material from Decrees 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 have been gathered for use in one's reflection and prayer. At the end of each week's readings a page of reflection questions has been provided as a help for both personal reflection and any small-group sharing that might take place.

In practice, then, what does a sample week look like? First, nothing is provided for Sundays, so people can keep in touch with the Lenten season. Then, one turns to the page headed "Spiritual Depth," where relevant prayer material from the decrees has been gathered for use from Monday, March 2 through Friday, March 6. On Saturday, March 7, it is suggested that people gather in small groups to share what has emerged from their personal prayer earlier in the week. Then, one is back to the second Sunday of Lent and the process repeats itself.

There are two variations on the above routine. The first comes in the Fifth Week of Lent where, without changing the routine, two topics are covered instead of one. The second, comes in the sixth week (Holy Week), which only runs through Wednesday. The materials for this sixth week are from three documents connected with the Congregation: first, Pope Benedict's allocution to the Congregation (which also covers what he wrote earlier in his letter to the Congregation); second, the Congregation's response to the Pope (D 1. 8-17); and third is Fr. General's homily at the closing Mass of the Congregation. One can pray on each document in turn, but it could also be useful to see the three as "a kind of exchange" centered on the work of the Congregation, but taken from three different perspectives.