

The Rich Young Ruler Turns Back (Mark 10:17-27)

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Guidelines: Protect confidentiality and follow the leader's prompts.

Ignatian Meditation Process: Ignatius focuses on cultivating holy desires (as in this Gospel reading), especially in Week 1 of *The Spiritual Exercises*. Read the introduction and then "Ask for the grace". Then quietly read the passage by using your imagination to enter into the story, sensing and feeling what's going on. Don't analyze the passage or seek insights — *experience yourself as a character in the story*. After the second reading have a "colloquy" (short, personal conversation) with the Lord. You can use the prompts and questions at the bottom to guide your prayer time and journaling (and sharing with others).

Introduction: When the disciples argue about who is the greatest Jesus shows them that the children they neglect are the greatest. Soon after this a man (traditionally referred to as "the Rich Young Ruler") comes up to Jesus. He also wants to be the greatest: he wants to keep all of God's commands and he wants to be wealthy and successful. Jesus loves this earnest man. But sadly the man's arms are loaded up so he can't embrace Jesus to enter God's kingdom. Whether we're rich or poor, the way into the greatness of the Kingdom of God is by child-like dependence on God's grace through Jesus Christ.

Ask For the Grace: God, our Lord, I ask for the grace I desire: that you order all my thoughts, intentions, and actions to praise and serve you.

Imagine Yourself in the Gospel: Mark 10 (MSG)

17 As he went out into the street, a man came running up, greeted him with great reverence, and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to get eternal life?"

18-19 Jesus said, "Why are you calling me good? No one is good, only God. You know the commandments: Don't murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, don't lie, don't cheat, honor your father and mother."

20 He said, "Teacher, I have—from my youth—kept them all!"

21 Jesus looked him hard in the eye—and loved him! He said, "There's one thing left: Go sell whatever you own and give it to the poor. All your wealth will then be heavenly wealth. And come follow me."

22 The man's face clouded over. This was the last thing he expected to hear, and he walked off with a heavy heart. He was holding on tight to a lot of things, and not about to let go.

23-25 Looking at his disciples, Jesus said, "Do you have any idea how difficult it is for people who 'have it all' to enter God's kingdom?" The disciples couldn't believe what they were hearing, but Jesus kept on: "You can't imagine how difficult. I'd say it's easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for the rich to get into God's kingdom."

26 *That* set the disciples back on their heels. "Then who has any chance at all?" they asked.

27 Jesus was blunt: "No chance at all if you think you can pull it off by yourself. Every chance in the world if you let God do it."

1st Reading: Visualize yourself in the Gospel passage. Don't seek intellectual insights — stay with the imagery. Use your senses to see, touch, feel, and hear. What part of the story are you drawn to? Which character do you identify with or are you a bystander?

2nd Reading: Experience the story in the role of the character God led you to. Then talk with the Lord. What do you feel? How does this relate to something in your life today? What is God saying to you?