Saint Ignatius of Loyola: The Wounded Soldier

Learning what leads us toward Jesus

Ages about 7-11 | Video 3:34 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth During recovery from a wound, Ignatius reads about Jesus and the saints and begins choosing a life of service.

Learning goals Children will recall the books that changed his attention, explain discernment simply, and reflect on a choice with adult guidance.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online Open this video on Servus Dei

Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask: Can something exciting leave us restless later? Watch what Ignatius notices while reading during recovery.

Watch and notice

Notice the wound and recovery, books about Jesus and saints, different lasting effects of his dreams, study, and friends forming the Society of Jesus.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. What did Ignatius read while recovering?
Books about Jesus and the saints, rather than the knightly adventures he first wanted.

2. What difference did he notice?
Dreams of praise faded and left him restless; thoughts of serving Christ brought a more lasting peace.

3. What did he do after this change?
He prayed, studied, learned, and joined companions in service through the Society of Jesus.

4. How can you think wisely about a choice?
Pray, consider truth and others' good, ask an adult, and allow time. A pleasant feeling alone is not enough.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Draw Ignatius reading, then a thoughtful choice made with guidance.

Read & Write Recall his reading and changed goals, then reflect on what makes a choice good.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: compare a pretend selfish choice with a helpful one.

Ages 9-11: discuss feelings, lasting effects, truth, and adult guidance together.

Pause, pray, and ask | Optional 4 minutes

Use a pretend choice about joining a game or excluding someone. Pause, pray briefly, consider who benefits, and ask what is true and kind. Write a next step and a trusted adult to consult if the choice is hard.

Look for understanding Children do not treat any feeling as a divine command; they include truth, kindness, time, and guidance.

Closing prayer Jesus, help us notice what draws us toward you. Guide our choices with truth, patience, and love. Saint Ignatius, pray for us. Amen.

At home Reflect with an adult on one good moment and one moment that needs help, then pray together.

Handout answer notes Books: Jesus and saints. Change: serving Christ instead of personal praise. Choices: truthful, loving, with adult guidance.

Teach with care

Preview the cannonball injury, described without graphic detail. Explain that God can help through hardship without implying that he sends injuries to teach lessons. The biography simplifies Ignatius's conversion and dramatizes feelings. Discernment is deeper than choosing whatever feels peaceful or exciting; it requires truth and wise guidance. Illness or injury is not proof of divine punishment. Children should not copy harsh penances.

Words to explain Conversion: turning toward God. Discernment: seeking what is truly good with prayer and wise guidance. Jesuits: members of the Society of Jesus.

Sources for the leader

Story source: Servus Dei video and English subtitle

Life and conversion: Our founder, our history - Jesuits