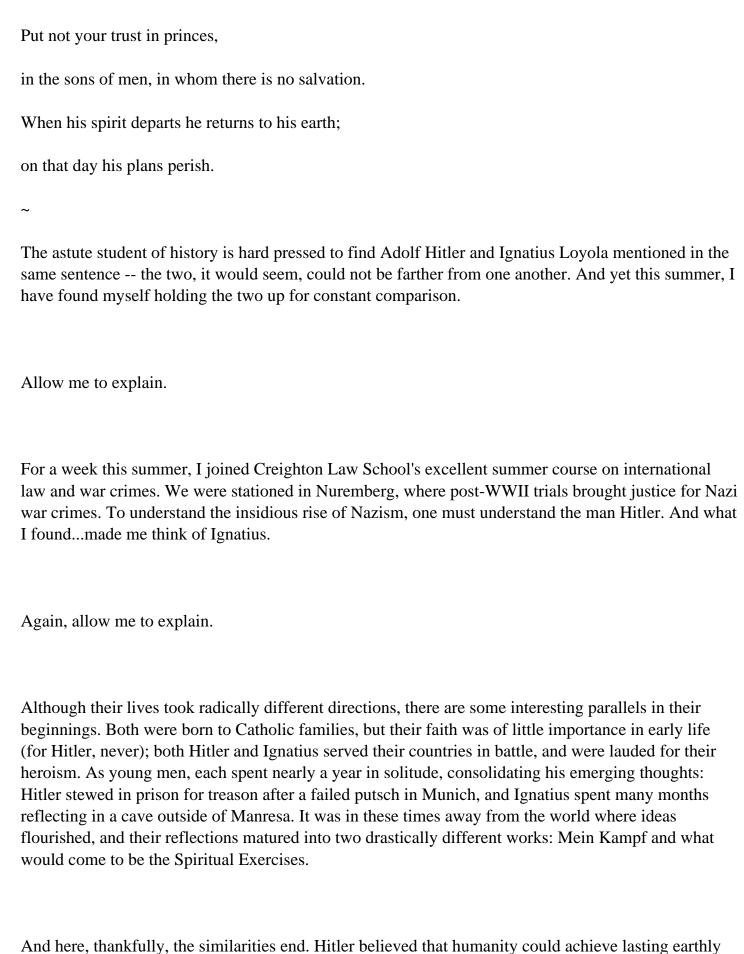
## Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Jul 31st 2014



perfection -- but to do so, humankind must rid itself of its impurities -- ideological, racial, religious,

etc. For Ignatius, humanity's chief struggle was not to destroy perceived threats outside us, but to discern the desires within us. How easily our thoughts, intentions, and actions become tinged with pride, envy, greed. Faced with the anxieties of mortality each of us frantically grasps for the greater glory of myself. Ad Majorem Mei Gloriam.

Yet Ignatius at Manresa realized that to live this way yields only hollow pleasure and dissatisfaction. True joy, strength, and freedom came from abandoning his own plans, instead dispatching his energies back to the greater glory of God. Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.

But why do this? Because Ignatius came to see how God labors in love, even as we struggle to control. God's might is revealed in sacrificial love and mercy, not power plays, fear mongering, and (at its worst) mass extermination of peoples.

Hitler tragically writes, "The stronger must dominate and not blend with the weaker, thus sacrificing his own greatness. Only the born weakling can view this as cruel." A marked contrast to St. Paul, who reminds us in Philippians that Jesus,

Though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God something to be grasped,

Rather, he emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave,

coming in human likeness;

and found human in appearance."

Ss. Paul and Ignatius knew from their conversions, as Hitler never would, that one cannot become a god by grasping at it. Instead, we must aim to pattern our lives on the God-man Jesus Christ, who willingly becomes weak. Only in this, can we share in God's great glory.

The asymmetry of this comparison -- Hitler and Ignatius -- lies not in the breadth of their reach, but in

the source of their strength. For Hitler, solitary reflection bred a hatred that led to ruination and
catastropic evil. Today, his Nazi party grounds in Nuremberg lie in ruin, like so many earthly princes'.
For Ignatius, solitude with the Lord led him to become the man through whose weakness God's glory
sings forth five hundred years later beautiful, true, and good. And it is his surrender to God which
we celebrate and honor still today.

Saint Ignatius of Loyola, pray for us.

Joe Simmons, S.J.