

Spanish bishop: Holiness is possible when we walk with the Church

at a Mass celebrating the memorial of St. Ignatius of Loyola

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Bishop Jose Ignacio Munilla of San Sebastian, Spain recently explained that man can only achieve holiness in communion with the tradition of the Catholic Church.

The bishop's words came at a Mass celebrating the memorial of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Bishop Munilla celebrated Mass at the parish of St. Sebastian in the city of Azpeitia, where the baptismal font used to baptize St. Ignatius is preserved. The spirituality of this Spanish saint, he said, was the best antidote to the rupture Luther introduced between Christ and His Church.

"St. Ignatius is an example of a living and unabated faith in the 'whole Christ' faithfully upheld at a historic time in which many broke with the Church. He shows us that only saints authentically interpret the Gospel, in communion with the Tradition of the Church. Everything else is a mere ideology of man, even though sometimes it may be wrapped in theological language," the bishop said.

"The followers of Jesus are called to live a life that is Christ-centered and not self-centered," as St. Ignatius did, he added.

Bishop Munilla pointed out that when belief in the divinity of Christ is weakened and He is portrayed as a mere man, the Church ends up being seen as a mere human institution. "But when Christ is proclaimed as true God and true man, the Church then becomes much more. She is the prolongation of the presence of God among us; she is the Mystical Body of Christ

through whose veins runs the Spirit of Christ,” he said.

St. Ignatius of Loyola

Inigo Lopez de Loyola was born in 1491 in Azpeitia, Spain, to a noble family. He fought in the war against France and spent long hours at the shrine of Our Lady of Montserrat, where he began a life of poverty, prayer and penance.

After a powerful mystical experience, he wrote the Spiritual Exercises and later founded the Society of Jesus, which today includes 19,000 priests, students and brothers.