

The SJ Temperament

Those with the SJ temperament have a deep sense of obligation and always want to feel useful. They want to be givers rather than receivers. Charity and service come easily to SJs. They are deeply committed to caring for those in need and desire to contribute to the good of society. Very practical, they have a well-developed work ethic and a strong sense of tradition and continuity with the past. They like order and hierarchy in society and have a strong sense of history and a great respect for elders and customs handed down from the past.

They are great observers and stabilizers of society. Since they tend to be incapable of refusing responsibility, they are often over-worked. Suspicious of change except when clearly necessary, they usually opt for the status quo and tend to be conservative in their tastes and choices. They are great law-and-order people. They are careful, cautious, thorough, accurate, and industrious. They make good administrators and take deadlines seriously. SJs will do routine jobs without protest as long as these jobs have value and meaning.

SJs may lean toward pessimism, firmly believing Murphy's Law, that if something can go wrong, it will. They tend to look on the dark side and to be prophets of gloom and doom. Therefore, they need to work at developing hope and trust to enable them to look on the bright side and become more optimistic.

The spirituality of the SJ temperament is a carefully organized regimen of striving toward a relationship with God. SJs prefer an orderly, well-planned agenda to follow and become upset when too many changes are suddenly introduced. As the historical dimension of Christian faith is especially important for SJs, they need to see the continuity between what we believe and practice today and what has been believed and practiced during the past twenty centuries of Christianity. They need the experience of both continuity with the past and new growth toward a previously identified goal.

SJs experience the history of salvation in the present by using their sense perceptions and sensible imagination to provide them with passage into the mysteries of Christ's life through the reading of scriptures. The SJ employs the senses to relive in imagination and by observation the scripture stories and then employ a sense of duty to follow the admonition of St. Ignatius "to draw some practical fruit" by service to others.

Ignatian spirituality is probably best expressed in the celebration of the liturgical year. Through the annual celebration of the events of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus during the church year, Christians not only commemorate past events but actually make them present and operative for us today. Gratitude for past events and benefits is very much a part of the SJ temperament, and expressing faith through the liturgy is particularly meaningful for SJs.