

Bach: Organ Fugue  
E b

Gloria to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, so be it now and forever. Amen. This organ music I've carried over from last Thursday and the feast of St Anne, because it's known (sometimes) as the St Anne fugue. And tho' it was written some 150 yrs or more after his death, the man I want to talk briefly about today <sup>tried to describe</sup> ~~was~~ a mystic experience he had of the Blessed Trinity as being like 3 perfect notes on an organ. But then, he was also known as having no ear at all for music. However, I like to think of Bach being a good friend in heaven of a man called Inigo, who came from Loyola in the Basque country of northern Spain, and is better known as St Ignatius Loyola whose feast day is tomorrow. Already some weeks ago, when the TV news and the newspapers had their now-annual pictures of the running of the bulls at Pamplona (also in the Basque country), I was thinking of that connection with Ignatius, and his connection with St Anne, and both of them with pilgrimages and holiday-time, and the Wisdom-theme of the O.T. that I've been reflecting on with you these weeks in reading the Bk of Proverbs. Now: that's quite a mouthful and a complicated confusion <sup>as well,</sup> isn't it? Well, it is holiday time, schools are out, people are away, offices aren't at full strength, and it's generally too hot and humid for much activity outdoors, except maybe in water. Time, then, in prayer to give thanks to God for leisure-time, for all His gifts, and to ask that He may guard and keep in His special care all our friends, people we know, that they may be really refreshed and re-created by their holidays, that those who are travelling may have safe and peaceable journeys. Maybe someone you know is also not just touring but making a religious pilgrimage somewhere: for them, too,

and all who are pilgrims at this time, let us pray today: and make our prayer with the intercession of St Ignatius. Of all the things he's remembered for, the important role he played in the history of the church not merely in his own time but through his influence since then too. I don't know that you'd put "being a pilgrim" very high on the list. But that's what he called himself, in the autobiographical notes he made, and it's what he was, both literally <sup>and figuratively</sup> for a number of years of his life ~~when~~ he tried and eventually succeeded in getting to the Holy Land, and then went to Rome in a pilgrim kind of way: earlier he'd gone as a pilgrim up the mountains of northern Spain to the famous monastery of Montserrat to keep vigil there and make an important turning in his life. Journeys were nothing strange to Ignatius — in this, like the wise men of the biblical wisdom books, wise because they travelled and learned from their experiences. Ignatius' own devotions definitely included pilgrimaging — and not only for himself, either. One of his closest, best friends, he sent on what must have been one of the longest journeys of the era: St Francis Xavier cross-crossed this part of the world, going from India to Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan and back again, ending up not so far from modern Hong Kong. And Pamplona? That's where his real pilgrimage began — a battle there, a serious wound, a long period of immobile convalescence when he was bored and had nothing to read, but began that perceptive reflection on his experiences that eventually led him to be the spiritual guide and moulder of his age. He tells about it himself, in his Pilgrim's story. We'll listen to a little of that after this prayer in music, from the Monastery of Montserrat: from 'Maria Mater Dei' MUSIC (Brev.) PRAYER 31 July