



Ignatian Retreat
Fr. Mike French, SJ



Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You for bringing us here these days, to spend this time in Your presence and listen to Your words. We ask that You fill us all with the gifts of Your Spirit, that we can draw ever closer to You, and deepen our own faith.

As we begin this retreat, let us grow in our gratitude for all Your gifts to us, and confirm our resolve to follow You more faithfully every moment of our lives.

We ask this prayer through Christ our Lord. AMEN.



Talk #1

- *Welcome*
- *Overall view of our retreat process*
- *Shared prayer on John 1:35-39*



Psalm 131

Humble Trust in God

Lord, my heart is not proud;

nor are my eyes haughty.

I do not busy myself with great matters,

with things too sublime for me.

Rather, I have stilled my soul,

Like a weaned child to its mother,

weaned is my soul.

Israel, hope in the Lord,

now and forever.



M E D I T A T I O N O F T H E D A Y

Instructed in the Kingdom of Heaven

When the Lord called the prophet Samuel as a boy, he was instructed to respond: *Speak, Lord, your servant is listening* (1 Sm 3:9). I have to admit that my prayer often goes more like, "Listen, Lord, your servant is speaking." But prayer is a genuine conversation only if it includes truly listening to the Lord. And the best way to listen to him is through Scripture, his living Word.

When I first began to study the Bible, I experienced what the disciples on the road to Emmaus felt: *Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?* Gradually I formed a daily habit of *lectio divina*, which simply means reading Scripture in conversation with God.... Through daily *lectio divina* I experience the Lord renewing my mind. Scripture is inexhaustible, and even after reading the same passage for the hundredth time, the Holy Spirit may reveal something new about it. Saint Augustine wrote, "How amazing is the profundity of your words.... How amazing their profundity, O my God, how amazingly deep they are!"

When I wake up in the morning, I am not typically overflowing with godly thoughts and heavenly charity. In fact, I need to be reconverted every day. I may wake up distracted, or grumpy, burdened with the concerns of the day, with my mind on worldly things, not at all attuned to God. I need time with the Lord.... I need to be immersed once again in his love so that I can walk through the day in communion with him. That is why early morning is the best time to pray. *Awake, my soul! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn!* (Ps 57:9). And each morning, whether I feel it or not, God is there with a far greater desire to lavish his grace on me than my desire to receive it. *Deep calls to deep* (Ps 42:8)—he is there inviting me to enter in, receive, partake, and enjoy the fullness of life he has for me. He invites you, too, to come to him every day in prayer, so that he can *strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being...that you may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God* (Eph 3:16-19).

MARY HEALY

Mary Healy is a professor of Sacred Scripture and a member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission. [From When Women Pray: Eleven Catholic Women on the Power of Prayer. © 2017, Kathleen Beckman, I.H.S. Sophia Institute Press, Manchester, NH. www.sophiainstitute.com. Used with permission.]

Lay It All Down

United Pursuit, Will Reagan

Bring your worry, grief and pain
 Every cause you have for shame
 lay it all down, lay it all down
 When your cares have buried you
 and there's nothing left to do
 lay it all down lay it all down
 at the feet of Jesus, at the feet of Jesus
 Carried on, but your heart was tired
 Feared the worst and felt the fire
 lay it all down, lay it all down
 Filled with all those anxious thoughts
 and your doubts became your god
 lay it all down, lay it all down
 at the feet of Jesus, at the feet of Jesus

Lay it all down
 Lay it all down
 Lay it all down
 Lay it all down
 (3x)

at the feet of Jesus
 at the feet of Jesus


When we've given up on better days
 there are memories we can't erase
 lay it all down, lay it all down
 We've come to fear what we can't
 explain
 and there's nothing here that can ease
 the pain
 lay it all down, lay it all down
 at the feet of Jesus, at the feet of Jesus

Lay it all down
 Lay it all down
 Lay it all down
 Lay it all down
 (3x)

at the feet of Jesus
 at the feet of Jesus


Lay it all down
 Lay it all down
 Lay it all down
 Lay it all down
 (3x)

at the feet of Jesus
 at the feet of Jesus



Points for prayer:

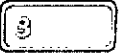
- Where am I tonight?
- What gift(s) can I thank God for this retreat?
- What gift(s) can I pray for this retreat?
- What do I need to lay down?





Talk #2

- **Week 1**
- *Principle and Foundation (part 1)*
- *Who is our God?*
- *Who are we?*



Principle and Foundation

God who loves us creates us and wants to share life with us forever. Our love response takes shape in our praise and honor and service of the God of our life.

All the things in this world are also created because of God's love and they become a context of gifts, presented to us so that we can know God more easily and make a return of love more readily.

As a result, we show reverence for all the gifts of creation and collaborate with God in using them so that by being good stewards we develop as loving persons in our care of God's world and its development. But if we abuse any of these gifts of creation or, on the contrary, take them as the center of our lives, we break our relationship with God and hinder our growth as loving persons.

In everyday life, then, we must hold ourselves in balance before all created gifts insofar as we have a choice and are not bound by some responsibility. We should not fix our desires on health or sickness, wealth or poverty, success or failure, a long life or a short one. For everything has the potential of calling forth in us a more loving response to our life forever with God.

Our only desire and our one choice should be this: I want and I choose what better leads to God's deepening life in me.

David L. Fleming. What Is Ignatian Spirituality? (pp. 2-3)

Psalm 100: A psalm of thanksgiving

Shout joyfully to the Lord, all you lands;
 serve the Lord with gladness;
 come before him with joyful song.
 Know that the Lord is God,
 he made us, we belong to him,
 we are his people, the flock he shepherds.
 Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
 his courts with praise.
 Give thanks to him, bless his name;
 good indeed is the Lord,
 His mercy endures forever,
 his faithfulness lasts through every generation.

7. Through Jesus we know Abba.

Who is the God of your imagination—really? Is He the invisible honorary president of outer space? A Great Hangman in the sky? The policeman who bats you over the head with his nightstick every time you stumble and fall? The niggling customs officer rifling through your moral suitcase looking for your good deeds and bad? The omnipotent thug who invades to rob you of peace and joy?

All these are common human projections. By projection, I mean that we are imposing on God our own impoverished understanding of Him. What a costly deception! To pray to any God other than a Father who finds sheer delight in reconciliation is illusion, cowardice, and superstition. Worse, it is idolatry.

The true God is no other than the One we see in the person of Jesus. Jesus came to make the invisible God both visible and audible — “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father,” He said (John 14:9).

You want to know what your heavenly Father is like? Look into the eyes of Jesus. Jesus Christ alone shows us the full and astonishing revelation of the Father. Jesus is the human face of God.

One day, the disciples asked Jesus, “Lord, teach us to pray.” Jesus replied, “When you pray, you are to say, ‘Our Father...’” Our Father. Familiar words to us, certainly. But to the twelve apostles, revolutionary words never heard by prophets and priests who had come before. In that revelation of Jesus, all the false images of God are blown away.

Do you believe that God is your Father, or do you still find that news too good to be true?

Reading: John 14:6–11.

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart, Naught is all else to me, save that thou art.
 Thou my best thought by day and by night, Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
 Be thou my wisdom, thou my true word; I ever with thee, thou with me, Lord.
 EIGHTH-CENTURY IRISH PRAYER

Brennan Manning, The Ragamuffin Gospel, p. 237 (Kindle edition)

How Great Thou Art – Chris Rice – Peace Like A River

Oh Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder
Thy power throughout the universe displayed

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

When through the woods, and forest glades I
wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And see the brook, and feel the gentle breeze

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

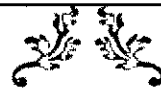
And when I think that God, His Son not sparing
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
And then proclaim, "My God, how great Thou art"

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

Songwriters: David Delargy / Mike Hedges / Salli Isaak / Eugene O'hagan / Martin O'hagan / Herbert Sally
How Great Thou Art lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC



Points for prayer:

- *What are my images of God?*
- *What method(s) of prayer work for me right now?*
- *Where have I encountered His "unconditional love"?*
- *What graces do I need to ask from my God to deepen my own relationship with Him these days?*





Talk #3

- *Week 1 (contd.)*
- *Principle and Foundation (part 2)*
- *The call to stewardship?*
- *The "hidden challenges" in that call*
- *The "Culture of Meritocracy"*
- *The call to TRUST*



Psalm 139

The All-knowing and Ever-present God

I

Lord, you have probed me, you know me:
 you know when I sit and stand;
 you understand my thoughts from afar.
 You sift through my travels and my rest;
 with all my ways you are familiar.
 Even before a word is on my tongue,
 Lord, you know it all.
 Behind and before you encircle me
 and rest your hand upon me.
 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
 far too lofty for me to reach.
 Where can I go from your spirit?
 From your presence, where can I flee?
 If I ascend to the heavens, you are there;
 if I lie down in Sheol, there you are.
 If I take the wings of dawn
 and dwell beyond the sea,
 Even there your hand guides me,
 your right hand holds me fast.
 If I say, "Surely darkness shall hide me,
 and night shall be my light"—
 Darkness is not dark for you,
 and night shines as the day.
 Darkness and light are but one.

II

You formed my inmost being;
 you knit me in my mother's womb.
 I praise you, because I am wonderfully made;
 wonderful are your works!
 My very self you know.
 My bones are not hidden from you,
 When I was being made in secret,
 fashioned in the depths of the earth.
 Your eyes saw me unformed;
 in your book all are written down;
 my days were shaped, before one came to be.

III

How precious to me are your designs, O God;
 how vast the sum of them!
 Were I to count them, they would outnumber
 the sands;
 when I complete them, still you are with me.
 When you would destroy the wicked, O God,
 the bloodthirsty depart from me!
 Your foes who conspire a plot against you
 are exalted in vain.

IV

Do I not hate, Lord, those who hate you?
 Those who rise against you, do I not loathe?
 With fierce hatred I hate them,
 enemies I count as my own.
 Probe me, God, know my heart;
 try me, know my thoughts.
 See if there is a wicked path in me;
 lead me along an ancient path.

It Is Well – Bethel Music

Grander earth has quaked before
 Moved by the sound of His voice
 Seas that are shaken and stirred
 Can be calmed and broken for my regard

Through it all, through it all
 My eyes are on You
 Through it all, through it all
 It is well

Through it all, through it all
 My eyes are on You
 It is well with me

Far be it from me to not believe
 Even when my eyes can't see
 And this mountain that's in front of me
 Will be thrown into the midst of the sea

Through it all, through it all
 My eyes are on You
 Through it all, through it all
 It is well
 Through it all, through it all
 My eyes are on You
 It is well, It is well

So let go my soul and trust in Him
 The waves and wind still know His name
[x3]
 The waves and wind still know His name

It is well with my soul
 It is well with my soul
 It is well with my soul
 It is well with my soul ...
[repeat]

It is well it is well with my soul ... *[repeat]*


Through it all, through it all
 My eyes are on You
 Through it all, through it all
 It is well
 Through it all, through it all
 My eyes are on You
 And it is well with me



Points for prayer:


- How can I “flesh out” my own call to “stewardship”?
- What concerns, fears, questions, anxieties lie beneath the surface in my acknowledging that call?
- “**God’s deepening Life in me**”: how, what, where, when do I find those invitations, and my own desires?
- Can I honestly pray for the courage and humility to accept His Blessed Assurance that “It is well”?





Talk #4

- *Week 1 (contd.)*
- *The mystery of sin*
- *The story of Creation*
- *"Radical Woundedness"*
- *The Discernment of Spirits and the "Enemy of our Human Nature"*
- *Guilt vs. Shame*



Romans 7:17-25 (The Message)

But I need something more! For if I know the law but still can't keep it, and if the power of sin within me keeps sabotaging my best intentions, I obviously need help! I realize that I don't have what it takes. I can will it, but I can't do it. I decide to do good, but I don't really do it; I decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway. My decisions, such as they are, don't result in actions. Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time. It happens so regularly that it's predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. I truly delight in God's commands, but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. Parts of me covertly rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge. I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn't that the real question? The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does. He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different.

Empty & Beautiful (Matt Maher)

My past won't stop haunting me
 In this prison there's a fight between
 Who I am and who I used to be

This thorn in my side is a grace
 For because of it the flesh and blood of God
 Was offered in my place, my place

You fought the fight in me
 You chased me down and finished the race
 I was blind but now I see
 Jesus You kept the faith in me

Where did my best friends go?
 In my defense they disappeared
 Just like Your friends did to You, oh Lord

But You were there, You gave me strength
 So this little one might come to know
 The glory of Your name, Your name

You fought the fight in me
 You chased me down and finished the race
 I was blind but now I see
 Jesus You kept the faith in me

Awaiting, set apart like incense to Your heart
 A libation I'm pouring out
 Empty and beautiful, beautiful, beautiful

You fought the fight in me
 You chased me down and finished the race
 I was blind but now I see
 Jesus You kept the faith in me

You fought the fight in me
 You chased me down and finished the race
 I was blind but now I see
 Jesus You kept the faith in me
 Jesus You kept the faith in me
 Savior, You kept the faith in me

15. Freedom from your own contempt.

Self-hatred is an enormous obstacle to loving other people. Usually we dislike others not because we love ourselves too much, but because we're not able to love ourselves enough. We fear and distrust others because we feel inadequate. We hide behind anger, sarcasm, or judgmentalism because we're convinced that we don't measure up ourselves.

Interestingly, you can read the Gospels line by line and find that Jesus devoted not one minute of His ministry to reinforcing negative self-concepts. By contrast, much conventional Christianity says that we should look in the mirror every morning and exclaim, "Worm! Maggot! You despicable wretch!"

That is not the gospel of Jesus Christ. He said, "Love your neighbor as yourself." In other words, my capacity to love you lies in direct proportion to my ability to love myself. Father Adrian von Kahn has written, "Gentleness toward my precious, fragile self as called forth uniquely by God constitutes the core of my gentleness with others, and it is also the main condition for my presence to God."

My friend, do you ever allow yourself to believe that Jesus appreciates you for wanting Him? For wanting to say no to so many things that would separate you from Him? Do you ever permit yourself to think that Jesus is grateful to you for giving comfort to another person? For pausing to smile at one of His children who has such a great need to see a smile? For learning more about Him? Do you ever think that Jesus can be saddened and disappointed in you for not believing that He has forgiven you totally?

The mystery of our faith is this: God loves us and Jesus Christ would have died for us, even if we had been the only person on earth. Paul Tillich never tired of saying, "Faith is the courage to accept acceptance, to accept that God loves me as I am and not as I should be, because I'm never going to be as I should be."

The gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to recognize our intrinsic worth and dignity, to love ourselves humbly and wholesomely, and to forgive ourselves as we have been forgiven. Anything less is a refusal to accept God's love for us. In fact, it is a rejection of Christ's death on the cross for us as a colossal blunder.

Consider this: If Jesus sat at your dining room table tonight and laid out your whole life story—the miserable, recurring sins, the hidden agenda, the skeletons in the closet, the dark desires unknown even to yourself—you would still experience joy, peace, and acceptance in His presence. Why? Because you would finally recognize the being of inestimable value that Jesus sees in you. And because you would hear Him say, "Your sins go over here. It's you that I've come for, My friend."

Reading: Psalm 51.

If the Lord Jesus Christ has washed you in His own blood and forgiven you all your sins, how dare you refuse to forgive yourself? FRANCIS MCNUTT

Brennan Manning, The Ragamuffin Gospel, p. 250 (Kindle edition)



Points for prayer:

- *In what ways do I yield to the Evil Spirit's exaggerations of my genuine life in God's love for me?*
- *How willing am I to truly accept God's unconditional forgiveness?*
- *What are the "lesser gods" that I allow (sometimes unconsciously) to guide my choices?*
- *What place do **guilt** and **shame** play in my own spiritual life?*
- *How can I surrender my pride; and replace it with gentleness and compassion; and gratitude?*





Talk #5

- **Week 2**
- *God's response to our need for redemption: The Incarnation*
- *A prayerful consideration of the Annunciation story*
- *The 2nd-week grace: "an interior knowledge of the Lord, Who for me has become man, that I may the more love and follow Him"*
- *The Awareness Examen: becoming aware, and responding to, the graced moments of encounter that come to us*



The Annunciation
Luke 1:26-38 (New American Bible)

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

You Say

Lauren Daigle



I keep fighting voices in my mind that say I'm not enough

Every single lie that tells me I will never measure up

Am I more than just the sum of every high and every low?

Remind me once again just who I am because I need to know

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing

You say I am strong when I think I am weak

And You say I am held when I am falling short

And when I don't belong, oh You say I am Yours

And I believe, oh I believe

What You say of me

I believe

The only thing that matters now is everything You think of me

In You I find my worth, in You I find my identity

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing

You say I am strong when I think I am weak

And You say I am held when I am falling short

When I don't belong, oh You say that I am Yours

And I believe, oh I believe

What You say of me

Oh, I believe

Taking all I have and now I'm laying it at Your feet

You have every failure God, You have every victory

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing

You say I am strong when I think I am weak

You say I am held when I am falling short

When I don't belong, oh You say that I am Yours

And I believe, oh I believe

What You say of me

I believe

Oh, I believe, yes I believe

What You say of me

I believe



Points for prayer:

- "Emmanuel": "God-With-Us":
 - Do I truly believe that?
 - Do I truly desire to believe that?
- Ask God how He looks at me as He decides to send His Son?
 - The humility and the courage to accept how I continue to need redemption
- **The Awareness Examen:** do I see that as a way to "re-sensitize" myself to God's presence to me
- You Say lyrics: Can I hear those words speaking my words in an honest conversation with my God?





Talk #6

- *Week 2 (contd.)*
- *The underlying grace we ask for these days: a deeper, personal, and intimate relationship with Jesus in our lives*
- *Paul's deepest desire: "to know Christ Jesus, my Lord"*
- *The call to surrender, in grace-filled trust, to God*
- *The story of the calming of the seas (Matthew)*
- *"I Am Not Alone"*



Philippians 3:7-14

[But] whatever gains I had, these I have come to consider a loss because of Christ. More than that, I even consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having any righteousness of my own based on the law but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God, depending on faith to know him and the power of his resurrection and [the] sharing of his sufferings by being conformed to his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

It is not that I have already taken hold of it or have already attained perfect maturity, but I continue my pursuit in hope that I may possess it, since I have indeed been taken possession of by Christ [Jesus]. Brothers, I for my part do not consider myself to have taken possession. Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus.

Mark 6: 30-34

The apostles gathered together with Jesus and reported all they had done and taught. He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." People were coming and going in great numbers, and they had no opportunity even to eat. So they went off in the boat by themselves to a deserted place. People saw them leaving and many came to know about it. They hastened there on foot from all the towns and arrived at the place before them. When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

Matthew 14:22-33

Then he made the disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When it was evening he was there alone. Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them, walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. "It is a ghost," they said, and they cried out in fear. At once [Jesus] spoke to them, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how [strong] the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God."

John 15:9-17

As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another.

I Am Not Alone – Kari Jobe

When I walk through deep waters
 I know that You will be with me
 When I'm standing in the fire
 I will not be overcome
 Through the valley of the shadow
 I will not fear

I am not alone
 I am not alone
 You will go before me
 You will never leave me

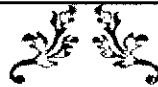
In the midst of deep sorrow
 I see Your light is breaking through
 The dark of night will not overtake me
 I am pressing into You
 Lord, You fight my every battle
 And I will not fear

I am not alone
 I am not alone
 You will go before me
 You will never leave me

You amaze me
 Redeem me
 You call me as Your own

 You're my strength
 You're my defender
 You're my refuge in the storm
 Through these trials
 You've always been faithful
 You bring healing to my soul

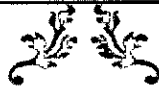
I am not alone
 I am not alone
 You will go before me
 You will never leave me



Points for prayer:

- ***"To see Him more clearly, love Him more dearly, follow Him more nearly..."***
 - *How true is that desire in me?*
 - *Where does the Devil's rhetoric still keep me hiding from that invitation?*
 - *Who, in my life, has shown me that witness?*
 - *Do I pray daily, in trust and gratitude, for the Lord's presence in all I do and am today (the Awareness Examen)*
- ***(Paul) "I have been taken possession of by Christ Jesus"***
 - *What about me?*
 - *Does that conviction evoke fear, gratitude, hope, peace, ..."*
- ***I Am Not Alone***
 - *Where, when, how have I experienced that consoling grace?*
 - *How have I "paid it forward"?*



**Talk #7**

- **Week 2 (contd.)**
- *The underlying question for Week 2 of the Spiritual Exercises: **Who is Jesus***
- *Two fundamental dimensions of who He is:*
 - *Healer*
 - *Forgiver*
- *Jesus' healing ministry*
- *The Gerasene Demoniac (Mark)*
 - *Naming my own demons, and surrendering them to Jesus*
- *"Shattered"*

***Healing of the Gerasene Demoniac (Mark 5:1-20)***

They came to the other side of the sea, to the territory of the Gerasenes. When he got out of the boat, at once a man from the tombs who had an unclean spirit met him. The man had been dwelling among the tombs, and no one could restrain him any longer, even with a chain. In fact, he had frequently been bound with shackles and chains, but the chains had been pulled apart by him and the shackles smashed, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the hillsides he was always crying out and bruising himself with stones. Catching sight of Jesus from a distance, he ran up and prostrated himself before him, crying out in a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me!" (He had been saying to him, "Unclean spirit, come out of the man!") He asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "Legion is my name. There are many of us." And he pleaded earnestly with him not to drive them away from that territory. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside. And they pleaded with him, "Send us into the swine. Let us enter them." And he let them, and the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine. The herd of about two thousand rushed down a steep bank into the sea, where they were drowned. The swineherds ran away and reported the incident in the town and throughout the countryside. And people came out to see what had happened. As they approached Jesus, they caught sight of the man who had been possessed by Legion, sitting there clothed and in his right mind. And they were seized with fear. Those who witnessed the incident explained to them what had happened to the possessed man and to the swine. Then they began to beg him to leave their district. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed pleaded to remain with him. But he would not permit him but told him instead, "Go home to your family and announce to them all that the Lord in his pity has done for you." Then the man went off and began to proclaim in the Decapolis what Jesus had done for him; and all were amazed.

Healing of Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52)

They came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a sizable crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind man, the son of Timaeus, sat by the roadside begging. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he kept calling out all the more, "Son of David, have pity on me." Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage; get up, he is calling you." He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.

Shattered

Blanca

I have seen valleys, the lowest of lows
I have felt heartache that would not let go
I have been shaken, deep in my soul
I have been broken more than you know

But here I am still standing
So believe me when I say

If you shatter
Every piece of you that's on the floor
He can restore
And after
You'll be even stronger than before
He can restore
What'd shattered

Nothing is wasted, there's always a plan
He has a purpose you may not understand
He's never been closer if you just hold on
He'll take you deeper, He'll give you a song

'Cause here I am still standing
So believe me when I say

If you shatter
Every piece of you that's on the floor
He can restore
And after
You'll be even stronger than before
He can restore
What'd shattered

If I am still here standing
You can believe me when I say
That He is more than able to redeem Your every
pain

If you shatter
Every piece of you that's on the floor
He can restore
And after
You'll be even stronger than before
He can restore, oh

If you shatter
Every piece of you that's on the floor
He can restore
And after
He will make you stronger than before
I know He'll restore
What'd shattered



Points for prayer:

- *How open am I to acknowledging to the Lord my needs for healing?*
- *What are the “mixed emotions” that battle inside me when I honestly face my own demons?*
- *How humble am I in accepting the love and compassions of others for me?*
- *Are there ways the “Enemy of our Human Nature” is inviting me to wallow in my own “unworthiness”?*
- *Can I give names to my own demons?*
- *[Fr. Gallagher (Discerning the Spirits)]: **Aware, Identify, Choose***
 - *Where can this bring me healing?*
- *Shattered*
 - *“Every piece... He can restore ... He’ll give you a song”*
 - *How, where, ... is this true for me*





Talk #8

- **Week 2 (contd.)**
- *Jesus's forgiving ministry*
- *Now, we focus more on the One Who forgives, rather than the one who has sinned*
 - *Jesus' loving mercy: the only pathway to freedom and life for us*
- *Some "preliminary" images of Jesus to keep in focus*
- *Jesus and the Woman Caught in Adultery (John)*
 - *Use our Ignatian contemplative skills to replace that woman with ourselves*
- *Forgiveness = Who Jesus IS – not simply what he does*
- *We are called to accept forgiveness, and to "pay it forward"*
- *"Forgiveness"*



The Woman Caught In Adultery (John 8:1-11)

Then each went to his own house, while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him. Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on, do not sin any more."

1 Tim 1:15-17

(I am the foremost of sinners)

This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Of these I am the foremost. But for that reason I was mercifully treated, so that in me, as the foremost, Christ Jesus might display all his patience as an example for those who would come to believe in him for everlasting life. To the king of ages, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Forgiveness

Matthew West

It's the hardest thing to give away
And the last thing on your mind today
It always goes to those who don't deserve

It's the opposite of how you feel
When the pain they caused is just too real
Takes everything you have to say the word

Forgiveness, forgiveness

It flies in the face of all your pride
It moves away the mad inside
It's always anger's own worst enemy

Even when the jury and the judge
Say you've got a right to hold a grudge
It's the whisper in your ear saying set it free

Forgiveness, forgiveness
Forgiveness, forgiveness

Show me how to love the unlovable
Show me how to reach the unreachable
Help me now to do the impossible

Forgiveness, forgiveness

Help me now to do the impossible

Forgiveness

It'll clear the bitterness away
It can even set a prisoner free
There is no end to what its power can do

So, let it go and be amazed
by what you see through eyes of grace
The prisoner that it really frees is you

Forgiveness, forgiveness
Forgiveness, forgiveness

Show me how to love the unlovable
Show me how to reach the unreachable
Help me now to do the impossible

Forgiveness

I want finally to set it free
Show me how to see what your mercy sees
Help me now to give what You gave to me

Forgiveness, forgiveness
Forgiveness, forgiveness

Songwriters: Matthew West / Matthew Joseph West
Forgiveness lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc



Points for prayer:

- *What keeps me from experiencing the grace of forgiveness:*
 - *from **accepting** forgiveness (from others, from God)*
 - *from **offering** forgiveness (to myself, to others)*
- ***Pride** <-> **Humility**: what roles do they play in my struggles with forgiveness?*
- *What roles do resentment, self-condemnation, shame, fear, ... play in making forgiveness hard for me?*
- *How does the refusal to live forgiveness keep me imprisoned?*
- ***"Help me now to give what You gave to me"***
 - *How can I make that prayer my own?*





Talk #9

- **Week 3**
- *The Paschal Walk of Jesus*
- *The 3rd week grace to ask: the grace of COMPASSION*
 - *A silent "keeping watch" with Our Lord*
- *Phil. 2:5-11 -- the lens through which we need to view the Passion*
 - *Jesus "hiding His Divinity" in the depth of His love for us*
- *Some possible scenes from Luke's Passion to consider...*
- *Other Paschal meditations to consider (from Fr. Rich Buhler, SJ)*
- *"Once and For All"*



Philippians 2:5-11 (An early Christian hymn)

Have among yourselves the same attitude
that is also yours in Christ Jesus,
Who, 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,
he humbled himself,
becoming obedient to death, even death on
a cross.

Because of this, God greatly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name
that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
of those in heaven and on earth and under
the earth,
and every tongue confess that
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

The Passion in Luke's Gospel

Luke 22:1-23:56

(Brendan Byrne, The Hospitality of God: A Reading of Luke's Gospel)

Passover preparation: 22:1-13

Passover meal: 22:14-38

Mount of Olives: 22:39-53

Hearing before Jewish Council: 22:54-71

Roman trial: 23:1-25

Way of the Cross: 23:26-32

Crucifixion and death: 23:33-49

Aftermath: 23:50-56

Some Thoughts on Carrying Our Crosses

Jesus is Emanuel: God is with Us!

(Rev. Richard Buhler, SJ)

Accepting the cross in our lives means that we have to make peace with the unalterable fact that we are human, and that frustrations, pain, illness, sadness and death are all part of being human and must ultimately be accepted without bitterness to experience the gifts of the Risen Savior: love, peace and joy. As long as we nourish the notion that pain is something we refuse to accept we will find ourselves bitter – bitter for not having accepted the cross.

Second, taking up our cross means that in our suffering we may not pass on any bitterness to others. When we are suffering we have a strong inclination to make others suffer. If I am unhappy I am tempted to make others around me unhappy. This does not mean that we can't share our pain with others but there is a healthy way of doing this as opposed to any unhealthy kind of sharing which subtly tries to make others unhappy because we are unhappy. There is a difference in groaning under the weight of our cross and unhealthy whining and self-pity that leads to unkindness. Jesus groaned but expressed no self-pity or bitterness.

Third, walking in the footsteps of Jesus as He carries His cross means that we must accept some other deaths before our physical death. If we live in adulthood there are a myriad of other deaths we will experience before we die physically. Christian maturity is about naming our deaths and mourning our losses and letting go of what has died. This allows us to claim our new births and receive new life and joy in the Spirit. These daily deaths and new births are the stages of spiritual growth and maturity. **Carrying our cross means that we must wait for the resurrection.** In this life all symphonies remain unfinished. So much of our life is about waiting, longing and battling self-centeredness. Jesus' invitation to follow Him implies living inside an unfinished symphony. The cross reminds us that God's gifts to us are often not what we expect. God always answers our prayers by giving us what we really need rather than what we think we need. The resurrection often does not come the way we expect it and rarely fits our notion of how a resurrection should happen. To carry our cross is to be open to surprises.

Finally, it means living a life that believes that nothing is impossible with God. It affirms that God is God and is greater than the human imagination. If we succumb to the idea that God can't offer us a way out of our pain it is because we have reduced God down to the size of our own limited imagination. If we believe in the Resurrection it is possible to carry our cross, to live in trust and not grow bitter. We can take up our cross when we put our faith in the Risen Jesus Who is always there to help us.

The Way of the Cross
(Rev. Richard Buhler, SJ)

1. **Jesus Before Pilate:** I consider a time in my life when I was misunderstood or condemned, and I speak to the Lord about it.
2. **Jesus Carries the Cross:** I recall a time when I received a cross in my life. I offer it to the Lord and ask His help with it.
3. **Jesus Falls the First Time:** I recall when I first experienced failure, my limits & realized that with Jesus' help I can get up.
4. **Mary Faithfully Stands by Jesus:** I remember someone who encouraged me or stood by me, and I thank God for them.
5. **Simon helps Jesus Carry the Cross:** I offer myself to be a "Simon" to my family & friends in their time of need.
6. **Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus:** I thank God for those who stood by me, comforted me, even at their own risk. I pray for courage.
7. **Jesus Falls a Second Time:** I recall times when I have had the opportunity to help others in their needs. I pray for them.
8. **The Women Comfort Jesus:** I remember the faces of those I have reached out to comfort even in my own pain & I ask God's blessings.
9. **Jesus Falls a Third Time:** I recall a time when I felt as if I had fallen and could not go on & I thank the Lord for His help.
10. **Jesus is Stripped of His Clothing:** I remember the experiences of my life that have left me feeling poor and vulnerable before others.
11. **Jesus is nailed to the Cross:** I consider what it is that fastens me to some cross in my life. Is it the cross of Christ or some cross that I have put on myself?
12. **Jesus Dies on the Cross:** I recall the interior call to faithful love; to be forgiving even when there seems to be no return.
13. **Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross and Given to Mary:** I hold in loving and grateful memory those who received me in my pain.
14. **Jesus' Body is Buried:** I consider what it is in my life that most holds me entombed; where I most experience death.
15. **Jesus Rises from the Dead:** "I am aware not only of the pain of my life but of new life emerging & deepening within me with Jesus' grace."

The Way of the Cross helps me to see my life/my ministry in the perspective of Christ's loving sacrifice and to draw strength for my life and my ministry from His!

Once and For All

Lauren Daigle

God I give You all I can today
These scattered ashes that I hid away
I lay it all at Your feet

From the corners of my deepest shame
The empty places where I've worn Your name
Show me the love I say I believe

Oh Help me to lay it down
Oh Lord I lay it down

Oh let this be where I die
My lord with thee crucified
Be lifted high as my kingdoms fall
Once and for all, once and for all

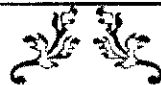
There is victory in my Saviors loss
In the crimson flowing from the cross
Pour over me, pour over me, yes

Oh let this be where I die
My lord with thee crucified
Be lifted high as my kingdoms fall
Once and for all, once and for all

Oh Lord I lay it down
Oh Lord I lay it down
Help me to lay it down
Oh Lord I lay it down

Oh let this be where I die
My Lord with thee crucified
Be lifted high as my kingdoms fall
Once and for all, once and for all

Oh once and for all
Once and for all



Points for prayer:

- *Does the call to quiet vigil with the Lord unnerve me in some way(s)?*
- *Can I be honest with my Lord in sharing with Him my own emotions when I walk with Him in His Passion?*
- *What "limits" do I place on accepting and living that kind of self-emptying love?*
- *Do I recognize how this struggle for redemption is still going on:*
 - *In me?*
 - *In my own relationships?*
 - *In our world?*
- *What, in particular, does "sharing the Cross of Jesus" entail for me?*
- *How honestly can I make the prayer voiced in "Once and For All" my own?*





Talks #10 & #11 (Week 4)

Talk #10

- *Grace: to share the Lord's joy*
- *A quick review of our "4-week" journey*
- *The Resurrection encounter between Jesus and Mary*
- *The new intimate relationship with Jesus being offered to us*
- *"I Will Rise"*

Talk #11

- *The Contemplation on the Love of God*
- *"Finding God In All"*
- *Take And Receive*



Christ Is Risen!

Today the Church repeats, sings, shouts: "Jesus is Risen!" But why is this? Peter, John, the women went to the sepulcher and it was empty. He was not there. They went away with their hearts closed in sadness, the sadness of defeat: the Teacher, their Teacher, the One whom they loved so much, had been put to death; he is dead. And there is no return from death. This is the defeat. This is the path of defeat, the path towards the sepulcher. But the Angel says to them, *He is not here, he is Risen.*

It is the first announcement: "He is Risen." And then the confusion, the closed hearts, the apparitions. But the disciples stayed locked in the Upper Room the entire day because they were afraid that what happened to Jesus would happen to them. The Church does not cease to say before our losses, our closed and fearful hearts: "Stop, the Lord is Risen." But if the Lord is Risen, why is it that these things happen? Why is it that there is so much adversity: illness, human trafficking, human slavery, war, destruction, mutilation, vengeance, hatred? Where is the Lord then?...

Yesterday I phoned a young man with a grave illness, an educated young man, an engineer, and while talking to him, to give him a sign of faith, I said: "There are no explanations for what is happening to you. Look at Jesus on the cross. God did this to his Son, and there is no other explanation." And he answered: "Yes, but he asked his Son and the Son said 'yes.' I was not asked if I wanted this." This moves us. None of us is asked: "Are you happy with what is happening in the world? Are you willing to carry this cross further?" And the cross goes forth and faith in Jesus comes down from it. Today, the Church continues to say: "Stop. Jesus is Risen." And this is not a fantasy. The Resurrection of Christ is not a celebration with many flowers. This is beautiful, but this is not it. It is something more. It is the mystery of the discarded stone which becomes the foundation of our existence. Christ is Risen. This is what it means.

In this throwaway culture where what is not needed is just used and disposed of, where what is not needed is thrown away, that stone—Jesus the source of life—, is discarded. And with faith in the Risen Christ, we too, pebbles on this earth of pain, tragedy, acquire meaning amid so many calamities. The sense to look beyond, the sense to say: "Look, there is no wall; there is a horizon, there is life, there is joy, there is the cross with this ambivalence. Look ahead, do not close within yourself. You pebble, acquire meaning in life because you are a pebble near that rock, that stone which the evil of sin discarded." What does the Church tell us today before so many tragedies? Simply this: the discarded stone is not really discarded. The pebbles which believe and stick to that stone are not discarded. They have meaning and it is with this sentiment that the Church repeats from the bottom of her heart: "Christ is Risen."

Let us think for a while, each of us, think about the daily problems, the illnesses we have been through or of one that a relative has; let us think about wars, human tragedies, and with simplicity, with a humble voice, without flowers, alone, before God, before us, let us say, "I do not know how this is, but I am certain that Christ is Risen and I have put a wager on it." Brothers and sisters, this is what I wanted to say to you. Go home today repeating in your hearts: "Christ is Risen."

The Resurrection in Matthew's Gospel
Matthew 28:1-20

The women at the empty tomb (28:1-10)
The Commissioning of the Disciples (28:16-20)

The Resurrection/Ascension in Luke's Gospel
Luke 24:1-53

The women and Peter at the empty tomb (24:1-12)
The disciples on the road to Emmaus (24:13-35)
The appearance to the disciples in Jerusalem (24:36-49)
The Ascension (24:50-53)

The Resurrection/Ascension in Mark's Gospel
Mark 16:1-20

The women at the empty tomb (16:1-8)
The appearance to Mary Magdalene (16:9-11)
The appearance to two disciples on the road (16:12-13)
The Commissioning of the Eleven (16:14-18)
The Ascension (16:19-20)

The Resurrection in John's Gospel
John 20:1-21:25

The empty tomb (20:1-10)
The appearance to Mary Magdalene (20:11-18)
The appearance to the disciples (20:19-23)
The appearance to Thomas (20:24-29)
The appearance to the seven disciples the Sea of Tiberias (21:1-14)
Jesus and Peter (21:15-23)

I Will Rise
(Chris Tomlin, Matt Maher)

There's a peace I've come to know
 Though my heart and flesh may fail
 There's an anchor for my soul
 I can say "It is well"

Jesus has overcome
 And the grave is overwhelmed
 The victory is won
 He is risen from the dead

And I will rise when He calls my name
 No more sorrow, no more pain
 I will rise on eagle's wings
 Before my God fall on my knees
 And rise
 I will rise

There's a day that's drawing near
 When this darkness breaks to light
 And the shadows disappear
 And my faith shall be my eyes

Jesus has overcome
 And the grave is overwhelmed
 The victory is won
 He is risen from the dead

And I will rise when He calls my name
 No more sorrow, no more pain
 I will rise on eagle's wings
 Before my God fall on my knees
 And rise
 I will rise

And I hear the voice of many angels sing,
 "Worthy is the Lamb"
 And I hear the cry of every longing heart,
 "Worthy is the Lamb"

And I hear the voice of many angels sing,
 "Worthy is the Lamb"
 And I hear the cry of every longing heart,
 "Worthy is the Lamb"

I will rise when He calls my name
 No more sorrow, no more pain
 I will rise on eagle's wings
 Before my God fall on my knees
 And rise
 I will rise
 I will rise

Remarks on the *Contemplatio Ad Amorem*

(from Hearts On Fire, Michael Harter, SJ)

Ignatius saves his best for the end. He guides us through what he calls a *contemplatio ad amorem* – an immersion in the reality of a loving God. He invites us to review all we have pondered about how God loves us, and to imprint indelibly upon our hearts the truth that God labors through every aspect of creation to love us into life.

In the end, we can only stand in awe in the presence of our God Who loves us. We pray that, as we have come to some small understanding of the way God loves us, we may strive to love God and to manifest that love in the way we relate to our friends and neighbors.

Ephesians 3:14-21

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to accomplish far more than all we ask or imagine, by the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

TAKE AND RECEIVE

Translation by David Fleming, SJ (Draw Me into Your Friendship)

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,

My memory, my understanding, and my entire will;

All that I have and call my own.

You have given it all to me.

To You, Lord, I return it.

Everything is Yours;

Do with it what You will.

Give me only Your love and Your grace.

That is enough for me.

Find Me At The Feet Of Jesus

Christy Nockels

Lord, here I am
 You have all of me
 Take the world
 You are all I need
 Find me, find me at the feet of Jesus
 Savior, find me with my heart bowed down
 Find me on my knees
 Find me close to Thee
 Find me at the feet of Jesus
 Lord, I belong to You
 You have my heart
 My only hope is You
 And everything You are
 So find me, find me at the feet of Jesus
 And, Savior, find me with my heart bowed down
 Find me on my knees
 Find me close to Thee
 Find me at the feet of Jesus

Find me, find me at the feet of Jesus
 And, Savior, find me with my heart bowed down
 Find me on my knees
 Find me close to Thee
 Find me at the feet of Jesus
 Find me on my knees
 Find me close to Thee
 Find me at the feet of Jesus

I can almost hear those angels singing Holy, Holy
 I can almost touch the heavens in their Glory, Glory
 I can almost hear those angels singing Holy, Holy
 I can almost touch the heavens in their Glory, Glory
 I can almost hear those angels singing Holy, Holy
 I can almost touch the heavens in their Glory, Glory

2

I address God spontaneously about the things, people, and moments I am most grateful for. I say, "Thank you, God, for . . ." and just let my mind drift from one gift to the next, without consciously steering my thoughts one way or another. I take note of what I find my heart and soul are saying to God at this moment.

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Next, I talk to God about the things, people, and moments about which I feel bad. I say, "Forgive me, God, for . . ." and just let myself go. I listen carefully to what I find my heart and soul are saying to God at this moment.

4

Finally, I address God about the future things, future people, and future moments for which I will need God's help. Thinking about the coming day, I pray, "God, help me with . . ." and just let myself go.



I close by praying the Our Father.



*Go forth to find Our God everywhere,
And give Him Praise, Reverence, and Service*