

November 2017 – #2

Retreat in Daily Life — Week 1

Week of November 19th:



THEME:

We are accomplices in solidarity with a wounded humanity and I need to be aware of the evil at work in the world..

GRACE:

Lord, help me to know that you care, and that you are present in every situation of suffering and evil.

SCRIPTURE:

Gen. 3, 1-24.

Gen.11, 1-9.

Exod.32, 1-14.

Neh. 1, 9-37.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Colloquy: “I place myself before Jesus Christ Our Lord present before me on the cross. I talk to him about how he creates because he loves and then he is born one like us out of love, so emptying himself as to pass from eternal life to death here in time, even death on a cross. By his response of love for God his Father, he dies for my sins. I look to myself and ask – just letting the questions penetrate my being:

—In the past what response have I made to Christ?

—How do I respond to Christ now?

—What response should I make to Christ?

As I look upon Jesus as he hangs upon the Cross, I ponder whatever God may bring to my attention. I close with an Our Father. [#53] *David Fleming SJ, Draw me into your friendship*

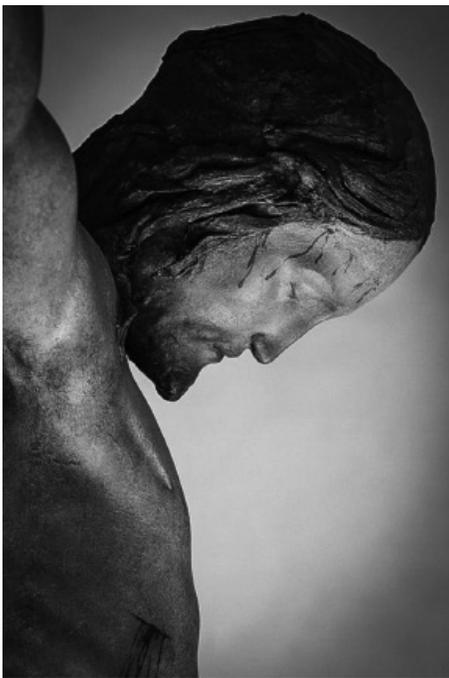
JM TRADITION:

“We look with anguish on the violence and lack of peace in our world, the abuse of the earth and her resources, all the signs of the breakdown of right relationships with God, with others, with creation and with ourselves. The need to heal this brokenness impels us to work for the restoration of the harmony and mutual care that we know to be God’s own desire for the world.” GC 36, on 3rd Priority

CONTEMPORARY:

“Whenever we pray or think about our sins or our sinfulness, Ignatius wants us to do it in the presence of the cross. He wants us to see Christ Our Lord on the Cross and ask ourselves how the Creator has become human. How has the Creator come from eternal life to die for my sins? [Exx. #53] The cross is a symbol of what the Most Holy Trinity is about. For Ignatius, God created the world by pouring all that is divine into every creature. Redemption is the Kenosis or self-emptying of the Son. It is through the outpouring of the Spirit that we are sanctified. In the presence of the cross we are invited to live through this self-emptying process. We are invited to be rid of our self-love, self-will and self-interest and allow ourselves to be filled with the Divine presence and energy.

Paul Couthino SJ, “Sin and the Cross” – *An Ignatian Pathway*



Retreat in Daily Life ~ Week 1

Week of November 26th:

THEME:

To look with the eyes of faith on the reality of evil and sin, to look at them with the eyes and heart of God.

GRACE:

Lord, grant me an awareness of the reality of my sinfulness, my complicity in social sin that I may taste your pardon which leads me to build a more just society.

SCRIPTURE:

Gen. 4, 1-16.
Lk.16, 19-31.

2 Sam.11, 1-27.
Rom.1, 16-32.

2 Sam.12, 1-15.



SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

The setting; I see myself as a sinner – bound, helpless, alienated before a loving God and all the love-gifts of creation. Without the detail of an examination of conscience, I let pass before my mind all my sins and sinful tendencies which permeate my life from my youth up to the present moment. Perhaps I may find it helpful to consider first the places where I have lived, then the different people who have been a part of my life and finally the various jobs and responsibilities I've had.[#56]

David Fleming SJ, *Draw me into your Friendship*

JM TRADITION:

“We seek ways to defend human life in all its stages: to denounce violence, to promote human rights especially the dignity and empowerment of women, to promote a culture of peace and pardon.” AC 96

CONTEMPORARY 1:



“Sin for Ignatius is forgetting who we are and thus losing our personal freedom. He confronts us with the insanity of our sinfulness which causes us to break away from an ever-loving and generous God. Ignatius wants us to focus on the goodness of our relationship with the Divine and all that it means to us. This relationship helps us discover more and more that we are God’s children. Everything that God has is given to us not just as our privilege but as a right. [...]When we turn away from this relationship with God, we find ourselves like the prodigal son among the swine and the squalor that is their home. We forget who we are and the

goal and purpose of our lives and of life itself. We live in psychological bondage. Ignatius wants the memory of the goodness and love of God to evoke in our hearts an intense abhorrence and disgust for our sinfulness. Then we will never go back to life apart from God.” Paul Couthino SJ., “Psychology of Sin,” *An Ignatian Pathway*

CONTEMPORARY 2:

Pope Francis pauses after laying a wreath of flowers in the Hall of Remembrance at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, 26/05/2014

Adam, who are you? I no longer recognize you. Who are you, O man? What have you become? Of what horror have you been capable? What made you fall to such depths? Certainly it is not the dust of the earth from which you were made. The dust of the earth is something good, the work of my hands. Certainly it is not the breath of life which I breathed into you. That breath comes from me, and it is something good (cf. Gen 2:7).



No, this abyss is not merely the work of your own hands, your own heart... Who corrupted you? Who disfigured you? Who led you to presume that you are the master of good and evil? Who convinced you that you were god? Not

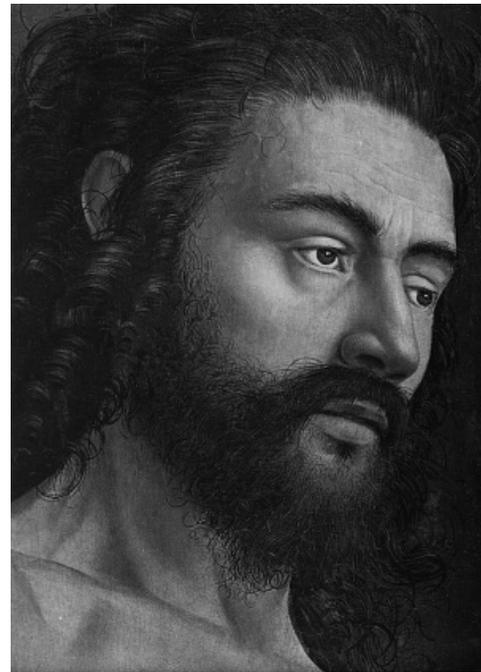
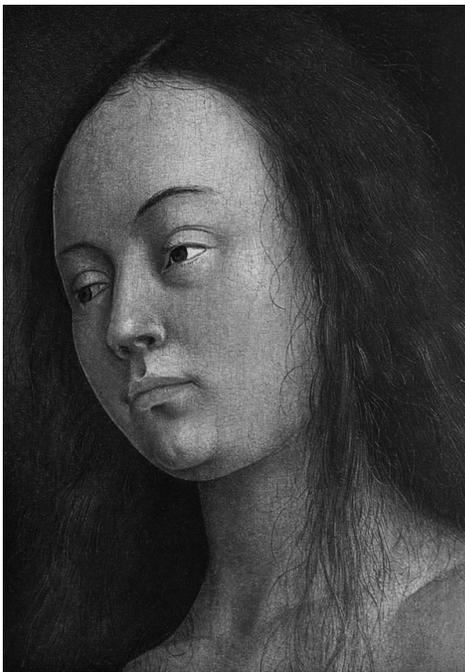
only did you torture and kill your brothers and sisters, but you sacrificed them to yourself, because you made yourself a god. Today, in this place, we hear once more the voice of God: “Adam, where are you?”

From the ground there rises up a soft cry: “Have mercy on us, O Lord!” To you, O Lord our God, belongs righteousness; but to us confusion of face and shame (cf. Bar 1:15). A great evil has befallen us, such as never happened under the heavens (cf. Bar 2:2). Now, Lord, hear our prayer, hear our plea, save us in your mercy. Save us from this horror.

Almighty Lord, a soul in anguish cries out to you. Hear, Lord, and have mercy! We have sinned against you. You reign forever (cf. Bar 3:1-2). Remember us in your mercy. Grant us the grace to be ashamed of what we men have done, to be ashamed of this massive idolatry, of having despised and destroyed our own flesh which you formed from the earth, to which you gave life with your own breath of life. Never again, Lord, never again!

Adam, where are you? Here we are, Lord, shamed by what man, created in your own image and likeness, was capable of doing. Remember us in your mercy.

Remember us in your mercy!



Adam & Eve: detail from the Ghent Altarpiece by Hubert and Jan Van Eyck, 15th Century, Belgium

Retreat in Daily Life ~ Week 1

Week of December 3rd:

THEME:

We are sinners but also fragile people, often wounded, not reconciled with ourselves and we need to be healed in order to act with greater freedom.

GRACE:

Lord, I ask for an awareness of my personal sins that I may experience how you come to save me from my deepest sins and wounds. I am your child. Help me to praise the marvels of your love.

SCRIPTURE:

Isaiah 4, 3-6. Is. 30, 19-21. Mk. 2, 1-12.
Mk. 5, 1-20. Mk.5, 21-26. Mk. 5, 25-34.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

I put myself before God and look at the contrast: God the source of life, and I, a cause of death; God the source of love, and I with all my petty jealousies and hatreds; God from whom all good gifts come, and I, with my selfish attempts to win favor, buy attention, be well thought of, and so on.

[#59] David Fleming SJ, *Draw me into your Friendship*



JM TRADITION:

With the ardent desire to accomplish always and in all things the will of the Father, [Jesus] became obedient unto death, even death on a cross; and makes us free that we may seek God in all things and all things in God. Book of Formation, #6

Of her own strength Claudine was unable to forgive. She forgave from her powerlessness, her fragility. In order to heal her own wound, she needed to explore it, to seek in it the light and support that



would give meaning to the experience. Gradually she learned to listen to ‘the groanings of the spirit’ in the depths of her being.

She learned to welcome the emptiness, the dark night, so that a new and purified image of God might be revealed in and through her.

Claudine opened herself up to love by acknowledging



her poverty, her vulnerability, her fragility, her ‘terror.’ She opened her being to this new reality, to the grace of God revealed anew in her; to the invitation to let God’s love in her embrace even her enemies.” Charism and Spirituality Commission, Document 1, *The Evolution of the Charism Through the Lens of the Spiritual Exercises*

CONTEMPORARY

“Some people continue to defend trickle-down theories which assume that economic growth, encouraged by a free market will inevitably succeed in bringing about greater justice and inclusiveness in the world.[...] Almost without being aware of it, we end up by being incapable of feeling compassion at the outcry of the poor, weeping for other people’s pain and feeling a need to help them as though this were someone else’s responsibility and not our own.” [#54] Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*



Retreat in Daily Life ~ Week 1

Week of December 10th:

THEME:

An awareness of the merciful God who suffers with us, who is shattered by our suffering and our sinful human condition, and who came to take our misery to his heart

GRACE:

Lord, I ask for the grace to taste deeply the strength of the merciful love of the Lord, which leads me to conversion and strengthens my fidelity.

SCRIPTURE:

Isaiah 54, 1-10.

Lk. 15, 1-7,

Lk. 15, 11-32.

Mt. 18, 12-14.

Is. 48, 17-19.

Hosea 11: 1- 4, 8-9

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

How can I respond to a God so good to me and surrounding me with the goodness of holy men and women and all the wonderful gifts of creation? All I can do is give thanks, wondering at God's forgiving love which continues to give me life up to this moment. By responding to God's merciful grace, I want to amend. [#61]

David Fleming SJ, *Draw me into your Friendship*



JM TRADITION:

Father ... with boundless love you created the human family, and made them your bride, radiant with your own likeness. When your bride, deceived by the evil one, broke faith with you, you did not abandon her. With everlasting love you renewed the covenant you had made with Adam and Eve.

Adapted from Solemn Blessing during the Rite of Religious Profession

CONTEMPORARY 1:

“I invite all Christians everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them. [...] The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realize that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms. Now is the time to say to Jesus: “Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord. Take me back once more into your redeeming embrace.”

Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, #3



CONTEMPORARY 2:

“He (the elder brother in the parable) is a caricature of all that is joyless and petty and self-serving about all of us. The joke of it is that his father loves him and has always loved him and will always love him only the elder brother never noticed it because it was never love he was looking for but only his due. The fatted calf, the best Scotch, the hoedown could all have been his too, anytime he asked for them except that he never thought to ask for them because he was too busy trying cheerlessly and religiously to *earn* them.” F. Buechner, *Telling the Truth*

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR THE FIRST WEEK

For the week of 19th November: From *An Ignatian Prayer Adventure*

This week, we begin what Ignatius calls the First Week of his Exercises. By “week,” Ignatius does not mean seven calendar days, but a particular movement or phase of the retreat. Most broadly, the First Week focuses on our experience of sin—personally, communally, and globally. Sin can be described in many ways: as a breakdown of a relationship with God and others; as a failure to love God, others, and self; as a turning away from God. Sin is an inescapable reality of the human condition; we abuse the freedom God gives us and make choices that hurt God, others, and ourselves. God does not punish us for our sins; instead, we suffer the natural consequences that flow from our sinful choices and the sinful choices of others. In the meditations this week, we look closely at sin and how it plays out in every human heart. Our aim is not to become mired in guilt, self-hate, or despair. Instead, we ask for a healthy sense of shame and confusion when confronting the reality of sin. Knowing how good God is to us, how and why do we still choose to sin, still choose to respond so meagerly to God’s generosity?

Even as we recognize these hard realities, we remember that God loves us unconditionally and wants to free us from anything that blocks our growing into the people God calls us to be. We don’t get very far just by counting our sins and trying to overcome them by sheer force of will. Instead, we need to keep our eyes fixed on God’s ever-present mercy, which is the ultimate source of our lasting liberation from sin.

The Sin of Adam and Eve Biblical scholarship has long held that the story of Adam and Eve in the book of Genesis is not history but a theological reflection by the people of Israel on the reality of good and evil. This story speaks a timeless truth known to all humanity: human beings, like the angels, enjoy the gift of freedom, yet we sometimes choose to abuse that freedom by trying to put ourselves at the center of creation and displacing God. This is the essence of original sin...

The first chapter of Genesis tells us that human beings were created in the image and likeness of God and that God called our creation very good. The temptation of Adam and Eve is to disbelieve that good news and refuse to accept our innate goodness and the goodness of others. Instead, they think that they must do something else to become like God or become valuable in God’s eyes. Consider all the evil effects that flow from not accepting the inherent goodness and dignity of each person. “An Ignatian Prayer Adventure” – [www.ignatianprayeradventure.com /Ignatian prayer](http://www.ignatianprayeradventure.com/Ignatian_prayer)

For the week of 26th November: From *Under the Cross of Christ* by Andrij Hlabse, SJ –

A post by Andrij M. Hlabse, SJ, who was in Brazil for MAGIS and World Youth Day 2013.

In the past week I have joined the MAGIS experience group “SP04,” which is shorthand for our destination city, São Paulo, group four. With youth from the delegations of France and Belgium, Bolivia, the

United States, and Brazil itself, we embarked on an immersion of art and culture. Our work at a local day-care center—under the guidance of Vânia, a fine arts teacher from Colégio São Francisco Xavier, where we were staying—involved mornings of art projects with needy children and adolescents and afternoon trips to museums to learn about Brazilian culture and history. (These trips served the children as much as us pilgrims, because these children have little opportunity for this kind of enrichment.) These activities plus daily morning prayer and evening reflection made up the regular rhythm of our “experience.”

Today I would like to tell you about a special event that stood out to me during the course of our time in São Paulo. São Paulo was founded by the Society of Jesus, and the site of the founding is a Jesuit church. The city began from this center and spread outward into what today is the largest city in all South America. I visited the site of this founding for a special Mass along with the rest of the MAGIS pilgrims who were working in São Paulo. On the exterior wall of the church is a plaque commemorating the founding of São Paulo, and in loose translation its beginning read, “Here, under the Cross of Christ, was born the city dedicated to the Apostle Paul...”

What especially struck me was the phrase, “under the Cross of Christ.” What a daring and wonderful phrase! I found it both deeply consoling and provocative. What does it mean to say that a whole city, or anything for that matter, is truly founded “under the Cross of Christ”? My reflection led me personally to the following considerations.

First, that to be under the cross of Christ implies a total conviction and commitment to the truths of our faith. After all, it was on account of revealing these truths that Jesus himself died upon the cross. To be under the cross with Jesus is for me to stand with him in an absolutely unconditional way. But how different anything founded with an absolute conviction in these truths turns out to be! Any city, family, nation, or vocation that springs from the truth of the Gospel must possess a radically different quality than anything founded on the world’s standards—a total fidelity to God and to love of every neighbor.

But this commitment often leads to contradiction and suffering, which was the second portion of my personal reflection. Inevitably this kind of commitment calls me “to the end,” that is to the very final efforts and moments of my life, as it did Jesus. To be under the cross of Christ includes an unlimited willingness to serve God and neighbor, not just in rhetoric, but in truth. Perhaps not coincidentally, “under the banner of the cross” is also the phrase St. Ignatius himself used in describing the Society of Jesus in the foundational document of its charism, the Formula of the Institute.

Finally, I thought, what are we called to found under the cross of Christ today? Many examples came surging to mind: families, schools, societies, classrooms, relationships, jobs, and more. This phrase and its implications touch upon every follower of Christ. In my own case this week, it has involved founding relationships with Brazilian children, with an international host of pilgrims, and with local volunteers. It has also caused a desire to deepen the foundation of my personal vocation, one day to be a priest in the Society of Jesus, “under the Cross of Christ.”

For these reasons I spent much of that Mass feeling inspired to serve Christ and the Church in a deeper way, and at the same time more profoundly aware of my need for his grace to make this possible.

**For the week of 10th December:
From *Pope Francis' Message of Mercy* –**

In The Church of Mercy by Pope Francis, readers get a first-hand look at the pope's vision of the good news of Christian hope and mercy.

I am always struck when I reread the parable of the merciful father; it impresses me because it always gives me great hope. Think of that younger son who was in the father's house, who was loved; and yet he wants his part of the inheritance. He goes off, spends everything, hits rock bottom, where he could not be more distant from the father. Yet when he is at his lowest, he misses the warmth of the father's house and he goes back. And the father? Had he forgotten the son? No, never. He is there, he sees the son from afar; he was waiting for him every hour of every day. The son was always in his father's heart, even though he had left him, even though he had squandered his whole inheritance, his freedom.

The father, with patience, love, hope, and mercy had never for a second stopped thinking about him, and as soon as he sees him still far off, he runs out to meet him and embraces him with tenderness, the tenderness of God, without a word of reproach: his son has returned! And that is the joy of the father. In that embrace for his son is all this joy: he has returned!

God is always waiting for us; he never grows tired. Jesus shows us this merciful patience of God so that we can regain confidence, hope—always! A great German theologian, Romano Guardini, said that God responds to our weakness by his patience, and this is the reason for our confidence, our hope (see *Glaubenserkenntnis* [Würzburg, 1949], p. 28). It is like a dialogue between our weakness and the patience of God; it is a dialogue that, if we have it, will grant us hope. I would like to emphasize one other thing: God's patience has to call forth in us the courage to return to him, however many mistakes and sins there may be in our life. Jesus tells Thomas to put his hand in the wounds of his hands and his feet and in his side. We too can enter the wounds of Jesus; we can actually touch him. This happens every time we receive the sacraments with faith. St. Bernard, in a fine homily, said: "Through the wounds of Jesus I can suck honey from the rock and oil from the flinty rock (see Deut. 32:13), I can taste and see the goodness of the Lord" (On the Song of Songs 61:4). It is there, in the wounds of Jesus, that we are truly secure; there we encounter the boundless love of his heart. Thomas understood this. St. Bernard goes on to ask: But what can I count on? My own merits? No. "My merit is God's mercy. I am by no means lacking merits as long as he is rich in mercy. If the mercies of the Lord are manifold, I too will abound in merits" (61:5). This is important: the courage to trust in Jesus' mercy, to trust in his patience, to seek refuge always in the wounds of his love. St. Bernard even stated, "So what if my conscience gnaws at me for my many sins? 'Where sin has abounded, there grace has abounded all the more' (Rom. 5:20)" (61:5).

Maybe someone among us here is thinking, My sin is so great, I am as far from God as the younger son in the parable; my unbelief is like that of Thomas. I don't have the courage to go back, to believe that God can welcome me and that he is waiting for me, of all people. But God is indeed waiting for you; he asks of you only the courage to go to him. How many times in my pastoral ministry have I heard it said, "Father, I have many sins"? And I have always pleaded, "Don't be afraid, go to him, he is waiting for you,

he will take care of everything.”

We hear many offers from the world around us; but let us take up God’s offer instead: his is a caress of love. For God, we are not numbers, we are important; indeed we are the most important thing to him. Even if we are sinners, we are what is closest to his heart.

From *Brian McDermott, SJ, Individual Discernment*

Ignatius wrote his guidelines for Christians who are desirous of growing in their relationship with God through friendship with Jesus and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The process of discernment helps the individual pay close attention to the evidence God is giving the person who has actively sought help from God in their decision-making.

Seeking God’s will in a particular situation is not a question of trying to determine what one thing God wants me to do, what one thing fits into a pre-established plan of God. God’s relationship with us is a mystery, but it helps us to choose a way of thinking about God’s will that allows room for both God’s freedom and our freedom. After all, that’s how God creates us, to be free partners in collaborating with the Divine as God strives to bring about the fullness of God’s reign. (God’s reign is the world as God desires it to be.) I like to think of God as the master jazz musician who creatively makes use of whatever good choices we make so that those choices contribute to the realization of God’s project in the world, the bringing about of that reign.

The two basic conditions for authentic discernment are (1) the deep desire to seek God’s will because it is God’s will and (2) Ignatian “indifference,” or freedom from bias regarding the alternatives being considered, so that we are open to learning what God’s will is. We are always seeking which one among several morally good alternatives will contribute to the “greater glory of God,” that is, will contribute more to the whole-making of creation (myself included) in union with God. There are some limits to this whole process of Christian decision-making. (Here I am drawing on the great work of Fr. Jules Toner, S.J.)

1. Persons discerning God’s will may discern only how God wants them to use their own freedom. Ordinarily, I cannot discern how God wants someone else to use their freedom. For example, I can discern that God wants me to propose marriage to another person, but I cannot discern that God wants me to marry that person. Another freedom is most definitely in play here!
2. I am always discerning how God wants me to use my freedom in the here and now.
3. Given #2, future events neither confirm nor deny the rightness of a discerned decision. I may get sick tomorrow and not be able to continue to implement the decision made today. That just means that I need to do some more discerning in the new “here and now.”
4. Another corollary of the above is that there is not an ounce of prediction in discernment. I don’t learn about the shape of the future, even of the immediate future, from a well executed discernment process.
5. I can discern only about something that I have a right to discern. For example, I may not discern to do something sinful (to state the obvious) nor may I discern something that does not fit my state of life.

Ignatius offers three situations of Christian decision-making, each characterized by a different kind of evidence from God. I believe that these are three “pure” cases, which are very helpful for our learning. But in real life, many people make decisions, even very good ones, in a more complex, zigzag fashion. In the first situation there is actually no need for discernment, at least at the very moment when the person is in this situation.

There are three elements to the situation. First, the person finds him- or herself spontaneously drawn to a particular course of action. Second, at the same time the person has the cognitive sense that choosing this course of action is of God. And third, the person finds that at the moment he or she is not able to doubt either the first or second aspects of the process. This eminently clear situation happens more often than we tend to think. (That doesn’t mean that the following day some questions might not arise: for example, what exactly was given me yesterday? Does the course of action fit what Christian faith tells me? Does the course of action fit my vocation and who I am as a person?)

Let me give a brief example. Anne is in a relationship that is bothering her greatly. She feels that something is terribly askew; she is in danger of losing connection with her true self. The spontaneous impulse arises in her to break off the relationship. Deep down she senses that this is in attunement with her true self (a way of saying that it is “of God”). She senses a deep conviction about the rightness of this move while at the same time she is very afraid that the consequence of this choice might be that she will be alone the rest of her life. Still, over time, she makes the choice to end the relationship, trusting in God.

The second situation involves the discerner making use of feelings of spiritual consolation and spiritual desolation. Spiritual consolation is a light or joyful feeling that is simultaneously experienced as encouraging deeper trust in God; spiritual desolation is a heavy or depressive feeling that is simultaneously experienced as discouraging one from trusting God or encouraging one to believe that God doesn’t really care. Ignatius further wants the discerner to determine whether the spiritual consolation is deceptive or authentic, that is, over time does it lead to God and the things of God or in the opposite direction.

As another example, for a couple of weeks David finds himself drawn a number of times to make a weekend silent retreat. He notices that each time the spontaneous impulse emerges out of authentic spiritual consolation. The impulse and the feeling are connected, with the latter acting like a root or matrix whence the impulse arises. This connection gives David reason to think that the impulse is of God. But then for a stretch of time he experiences himself a couple of times as drawn to spend the weekend with his aging father. Once again the spontaneous impulse is accompanied by authentic spiritual consolation. Because this situation confuses him, he brings the two experiences to someone experienced in spiritual guidance. It becomes clear that the spiritual consolation accompanying the impulse to visit his father is considerably stronger than the earlier consolation. His guide suggests that this can be evidence that visiting his father would be more to God’s glory.

In the third situation, the person is relatively calm and, as in the other situations, deeply desirous of doing God’s will. Not having intuitive certitude or spiritual feelings, the individual uses his or her reason, weighing pros and cons and considering possible consequences of the various courses of action. The person asks the Holy Spirit to guide the reasoning process to lead to what God desires for the person.

The process is completed when the person senses that the questions that needed answering were indeed answered by the Spirit guided reasoning process.

Jane, a young professor of social ethics at a Jesuit college, needs to make a decision about how to spend her sabbatical semester. Over time it becomes clear to her that she could spend the whole time writing several articles and trying to get them published. But she also recognizes that she might profitably spend a few weeks volunteering at a nearby L'Arche, a faith community whose core members are people with intellectual disabilities. She prays earnestly for the Holy Spirit's guidance while carefully weighing the pros and cons of the alternatives.

She asks for Ignatian "indifference" as well, so as to be open to God's desire about the alternatives. Over time the most convincing reason for the second alternative is that it would provide an opportunity for her to be exposed to people on the margins, the kind of folks she teaches about all the time. She concludes her discernment process with the tentative decision to combine time at L'Arche with time devoted to writing. She offers her decision to God and asks for confirmation, if God is willing to give it. After some days she hears within herself the words: "Become friends with poor people!" She accepts this as confirmation because of the deep place within her from which the interior words emerged.

All three times are valid, each in its own right. Ignatius says that if time allows, we, like Jane, can ask God for confirmation, either by God's giving us a different kind of evidence or a repetition of the evidence that helped us earlier. Ignatian discernment of God's will is a process of partnering with God in one of the most important dimensions of human living: decision-making. By participating in this process we are seeking to discover how we can best contribute to God's project in the world, the transformation of all things into the new creation God is laboring to bring about.

Photos courtesy of www.Unsplash.com — p. 3: Keem Ibarra; p. 4: Bryan Minear; p. 6: Alex Hockett; p. 8: Una Kao.