

Retreat in Daily Life ~ Week 2, Part 1, #1-4

Week of December 17th — #1

THEME:

God's vision of our world; God's response of love.

GRACE:

I ask for a deeply felt knowledge of God's dream for the world;
awe and wonder at the mystery of the Incarnation.

SCRIPTURE:

Jn. 1:1-5, 14-18

Matt. 1:18-25

Luke 1:26-38

Phil. 2:5-11

Luke 1:39-56

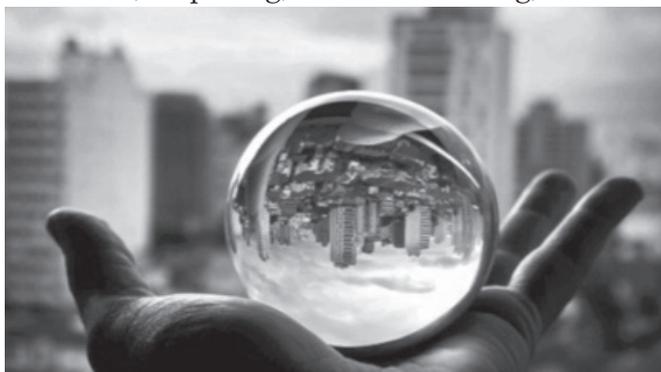
Make a Repetition of a text you have prayed.



Long lay the world in
sin and error pining;
Till he appeared and
the soul felt its worth.
(O Holy Night)

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

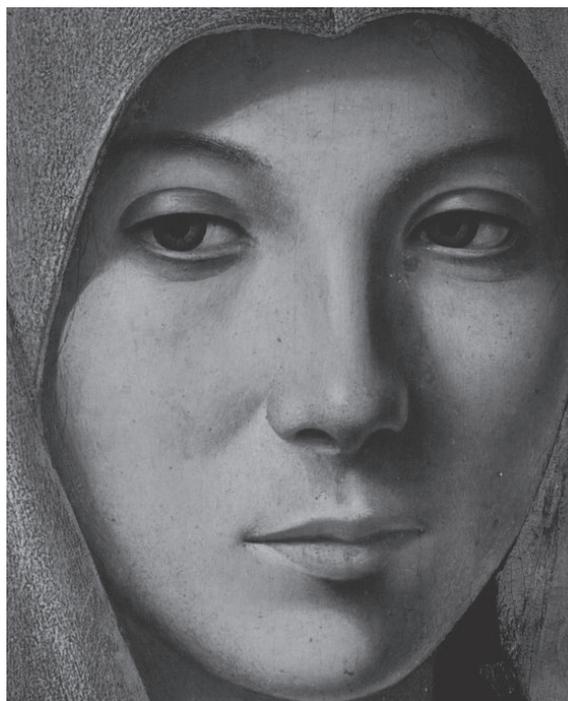
I try to enter into the vision of God, in God's triune life, looking upon our world: men and women aimless, despairing, hateful and killing, men and women sick and dying, the old and the young, the



rich and the poor, the happy and the sad, some being born and some being laid to rest. The leap

of divine joy: God knows that the time has come when the mystery of the salvific plan, hidden from the beginning of the world, will become manifest. Notice how our triune God works — so simply and quietly, so patiently. A world goes on, apparently oblivious to the new creation which has begun.

#s106-108, David Fleming, SJ, *Draw Me Into Your Friendship*



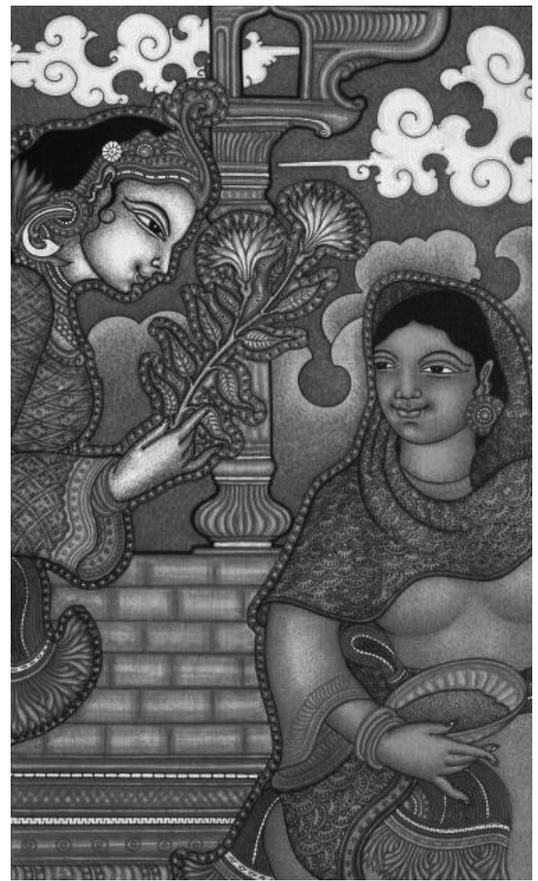
Annunciation, Messina

JM TRADITION:

The ultimate source of her enrichment, then, was the Lord who had revealed himself to her as One whose heart had so loved us, and has spared nothing. She saw Jesus in the misery of those around her, and she saw no way of responding except by allowing herself and her companions to be formed by the Spirit in the image of Christ's heart. Because it was enrichment for mission, her enrichment could only lead her into the mystery of that self-emptying through which Christ himself has brought redemption to all people. Claudine Thévenet, *A Spiritual Profile*, 38

CONTEMPORARY:

In the Second Week we find the heart of the Exercises



Annunciation, India



Visitation, McGrath

and their center of gravity. Here Ignatius schematizes his own assimilation to Christ through an affectively contemplative immersion in Jesus' human existence, especially his public ministry. Out of his growing sense of identification with and participation in Jesus-in-action through "interior knowledge" of him, Ignatius' life choices became more and more obvious. "The Word who is life, this is our subject" (1 Jn. 1:1). Ignatius' close reading of the Jesus of the gospel accounts began as we know at Loyola.

He was keen to fix on detail, not wanting to miss a word or a fact of his fascinating "subject." He studied how to penetrate this Word through all his powers of intellect, sense, and feeling and so retrace the learning experience of Jesus' first companions – watching, listening, asking questions, stumbling, misunderstanding – until intuition was given him from on high. Elizabeth Mary Strub, SHCJ, *A Retreat by All Means*, 92

... in the First Week, "the focus has been on us and our needs. We wanted to know in a heartfelt way that God is where we are, with us in our brokenness, our sinfulness, our desperate need." In the Second Week, however, "we now want to be where Jesus is; we want to know him and his values and his mission, and we want to be part of that mission." William Barry, SJ, cited by Kevin O'Brien

Retreat in Daily Life ~ Week 2

Week of December 24th — #2

THEME:

God has entered into our history, becoming one of us, and sharing our lot; God is present in my life, saving me, loving me.

GRACE:

I ask to know Jesus more intimately, to love him more intensely, and to follow him more closely.

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 2:1-7

Luke 2: 8-18

Matt. 2:1-12

Luke 2:19-21

John 1: 1-7

Make a Repetition of a text you have prayed.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Colloquy: As I find myself immersed in the setting of this mystery of the Incarnation, I may want

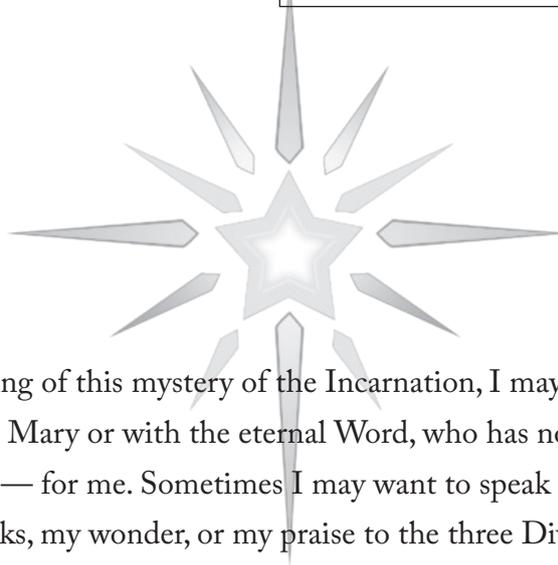
just to stay with Mary or with the eternal Word, who has now become human — for me. Sometimes I may want to speak out my joy, my thanks, my wonder, or my praise to the three Divine Persons. According to the light of God's grace given to me, I beg that I might come to know Jesus as a pattern for my own living and so be able to draw close to him. #109, David Fleming, *Draw Me Into Your Friendship*

JM TRADITION:

Our tradition relates mission to the task of giving life "from below," from a weak, fragile and even sinful reality, so as to enter into God's plan and desire to save and re-create. We encounter the Creator in the world; so we contemplate that world with a positive and trusting gaze that is joyful and free, offering praise and thanks in all things. Ignatian in style, our spirituality knows no distance between God's reign and our world. It is always about seeking God in the world, working to bring it to fullness, and finding God in all things and all things in God. International Commission of Charism and Spirituality, *Rediscovering our Spirituality*, 2



How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is giv'n;
So God imparts to human
hearts the blessings of his
heav'n; no ear may hear
his coming, but in this
world of sin, where meek
souls will receive him still,
the dear Christ enters in.
(O Little Town of Bethlehem)



Nativity from tabernacle door in the cave at Manresa, Spain



CONTEMPORARY:

Fr. Greg Boyle, SJ works with gang members in Los Angeles. In one of his books, he writes about a conversation with a former gang member and drug dealer whom he calls "Chuy." He says: I drive Chuy home and as we pull up in front of his East Side apartment he tells me that lately he's 'been having one-on-ones with...you know...God.' "I don't understand it," he says as he turns and looks at me. "The Dude shows up." I find this pretty charming and chuckle at first. Then I see that Chuy is as serious as can be. "I mean...why would he do that?" he asks, allowing his tears free passage. "After all the shit and bad I've done, WHY WOULD HE SHOW UP?" Gregory Boyle, SJ, *Barking to the Choir*, 32



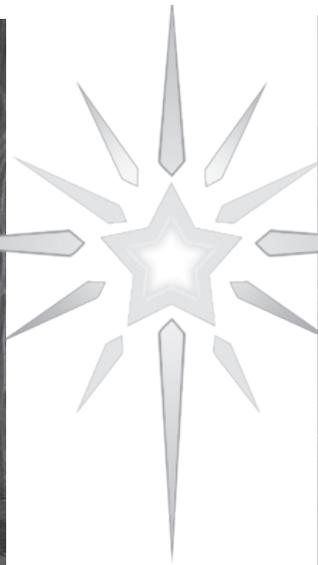
*Joy to the world, the Lord has come. Let earth receive her king,
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and heaven and
nature sing. (Joy to the World)*



Nativity, Kershisnick



Epiphany, McGrath



Refugees, Latimore

Retreat in Daily Life ~ Week 2

Week of December 31st — #3

THEME:

In times past, God spoke in fragmentary ways to our ancestors; now, God is speaking to us through the Son.

GRACE:

I ask to be drawn to Jesus, that my awareness of him may become deeper, my experience of his love more intense, my desire to follow him more compelling.



Presentation in the Temple, Kendall

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 2:21-38

Isaiah 9:1-7

Ps. 42 (contemplate Jesus as a young man, praying this psalm)

Luke 2:41-50

Matt. 2:13-23

Repetition of a text you have prayed.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

According to the different aspects which I may focus upon at any one time within the prayer period, I respond accord-



Holy Family __ Creation, Janknegt

ingly, for example, to Mary, Joseph, Jesus, God the father. Perhaps there is little more to say because this style of contemplation is often more a “being with” experience than a word-response. [In making a repetition] it is always important not just to repeat the gospel incident, but to return to those parts or points of focus where I have experienced understanding, insight, confusion, consolation or desolation. #s 117, 118, David Flaming, *Draw Me Into Your Friendship*

JM TRADITION:

Called to follow Christ as the one necessity and drawn by the irresistible power of his love, we respond freely by the total gift of ourselves to God, desiring to continue in the Church the mission of Christ – ‘consecrated and sent’—to reveal and communicate to all the love of the Father. Constitutions, 13

CONTEMPORARY:

But here’s another reason I’m drawn to the hidden life, ... In Nazareth Jesus’s life was most like our own. None of us is going to be preaching and performing miracles – at least not as Jesus did – but all of us live everyday lives, as Jesus did in Nazareth, being taught and cared for by our parents, loving and squabbling with our families, playing with our friends, learning what it means to be an adult, Was Jesus any less the Son of God when he was doing ordinary things? No. James Martin, SJ, *Jesus A Pilgrimage*, 74



For He is our childhood’s pattern;
Day by day, like us, He grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles, like us He knew;
And He cares when we are sad,
And he shares when we are glad.

Retreat in Daily Life — Week 2

Week of January 7th — #4

THEME:

The Call of Christ

GRACE:

I ask Jesus that I might not be deaf to his call in my life, but ready and willing to do what he asks me.

SCRIPTURE:

Matt. 4:18-25

42:1-9

Matt. 3:13-17

Luke 5:1-11

Isaiah

Hebrews 3:7-14

Repetition of a text you have prayed.

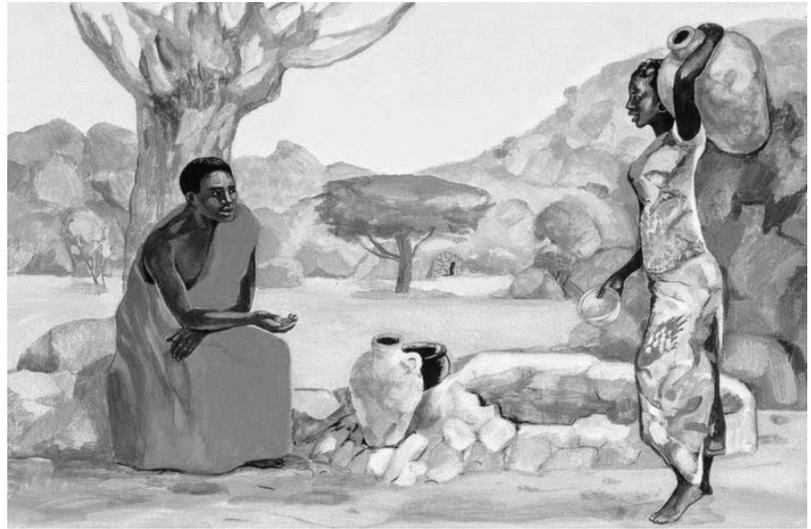
SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

In the first part, let me put myself into a mythical situation – the kind of story-truth of which fairy tales are made. I imagine a human leader, selected and raised up by God our Lord; everyone of good will, whatever their age, is drawn to be in the presence of such a leader, to listen and to follow. *(You might bring to mind a person of our own time who fights against injustice, or labors for the oppressed and marginalized. Reflect on anyone who inspires you and summons your zeal to make the world better.)*

The challenge of this leader rings out: “I want to overcome ... all the evils which beset humankind. Whoever wishes to join me in this must be content with the same food, drink, clothing – all that comes with following me. So too, whoever is with me in labor and loneliness will likewise have a part with me in the final victory.”

Who would not wish to respond to such a call?

Then, I consider Jesus Christ and his call: “It is my will to win over the whole world, to overcome evil with good, to turn hatred aside with love, to conquer all the forces of death – whatever obstacles there are that block the sharing of life between God and humankind. Whoever wishes to join me in this mission must be willing to labor with me, and so by following me in struggle and suffering may share with me in glory. Those who are of great heart and are set on fire with zeal to follow Jesus, will not only offer themselves entirely, but will act against anything which would make their response less total.” They would want to express themselves in words such as these:



Jesus & the Samaritan Woman, Jesus Mafá

"Eternal Lord and King of all creation, humbly I come before you.

**Knowing the support of Mary, your mother, and all your saints,
I am moved by your grace to offer myself to you and to your work.**

**I deeply desire to be with you in accepting all wrongs and all
rejections and all poverty, both actual and spiritual — and I
deliberately choose this, if it is for your greater service and praise.**

**If you, my Lord and King, would so call and choose me,
Then take and receive me into such a way of life."**

Adapted from David Fleming, Draw Me Into Your Friendship, #'s 91-98



JM TRADITION:

I expect to write to you, Reverend Mother, when we reach Bombay. We are warned that we may be compelled to stay there because of the heavy rains which will soon begin in India and continue without interruption, making the roads impassable. May God's holy will be done. Agra is for us the Promised Land. God seems to be holding us back as he did the people of Israel in the desert. Fiat! Fiat!

When will we have news of you? When it pleases God! I hope to have some news when I reach Agra, but when will that be? When it pleases God! However demanding His will may be, I submit to it, even though it costs. Nevertheless, Fiat, Fiat. In spite of all my troubles, God has given me the grace to have no regrets about leaving all I hold most dear in this world so as to respond to the sublime vocation to which He has been pleased to call me. All my Sisters share my sentiments. 8

Letter of M. St. Thérèse, en route to India, 1842, cited in *A Missionary Epic*, 23.

CONTEMPORARY:

But on the really crucial decisions of life – when it comes to decisions like these, it is not just the pro-and-con-listing part of me or the coin-tossing and advice-seeking parts that are involved. It is all of me, heart, mind, will and when the moment comes and I find myself moving out for good and all, one way or another, there is a kind of relentless spontaneity about it, a kind of terrific sense of conviction, so that if you are Matthew in the tax office, you lay down your slide rule and your pencil, do not even finish the form that you happened to be working on at the moment, but just push back your chair and start heading for the door without even bothering to pick up your coat And then you step out of there forever without once looking back over your shoulder, and start following the way you have chosen: not that way over there or that way right here, but this way. Of all the ten million and one ways in the world, you choose this way. Or maybe it chooses you – to put it a better way. Or you choose each other, your way and you. Frederick Buechner, *Listening to Your Life*, 255



O, Star of wonder, star of night
Star with royal beauty bright.
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.
(We Three Kings of Orient Are)