

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES OF ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA



Loyola University's Office of Mission Integration is happy to offer the Baltimore community the opportunity to pray the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius beginning in the Fall of 2021.

Background

Throughout much of the world, the Jesuits are best known for their colleges, universities, and high schools. But in a time when many are searching for greater meaning, another aspect of Jesuit life is attracting wide interest. And that is the unique spirituality introduced nearly 500 years ago by St. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits.

Ignatius was a Spanish soldier and aristocrat who discerned his calling after suffering nearly fatal wounds on the battlefield. He established the Society of Jesus in 1540, instructing the early Jesuits to go out and "find God in all things." That is the signature spirituality of the Jesuits

Ignatian spirituality is grounded in the conviction that God is active in our world. As the great Jesuit paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin wrote: "God is not remote from us. He is at the point of my pen, my pick, my paintbrush, my needle — and my heart and my thoughts." The spiritual path laid out by Ignatius is a way of discerning God's presence in our lives. And doing something about it.

The Jesuits have a handbook for this search. It is *The Spiritual Exercises*, composed by the saint before he was even a priest. Often described as Ignatius' greatest gift to the world, these exercises unfold a dynamic process of prayer, meditation, and self-awareness. The basic thrust is to make us more attentive to God's activity in our world, more responsive to what God is calling us to do.

Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life

Our approach will be one that Ignatius himself proposed for busy people – a way to make a prayerful and potentially transformative retreat in everyday life.

Over the course of nine months of daily prayer with Scripture, journaling, regular conversation with a spiritual director, one can experience the same graced movements and discoveries that a privileged few get to make in 30 days of secluded silence. (Yes, that would include the Jesuits!)

This particular Ignatian retreat is a rigorous experience that requires the dedication of time and discipline over the course of 9 months.

Those who do embark on this retreat will need to commit to the following:

- One uninterrupted hour of daily prayer and journaling
- Weekly, hour-long meetings with your spiritual guide
- **Orientation Session (Tuesday September 28, 2021, 7-9 pm)**
- Optional large group gatherings for Advent, Lent and Easter seasons

The long retreat is undeniably a commitment of time and resolve – one that may or may not be right for everyone or perhaps not right at this time. It is something of a spiritual marathon. Fortunately Ignatius offers many other practical tools for spiritual growth that we can all enjoy.

For more information or to speak to a member of the retreat team, contact:

LUMspiritualexercises@gmail.com

Informational Session:

If you'd like to learn more about the Spiritual Exercises and Ignatian spirituality – and how you might experience it, please join us for a Zoom conference:

Tuesday, June 22, 2021

7:00 - 8:30 pm

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Thursday, September 9, 2021

7:00 - 8:30 pm

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