

Praying, Growing in Prayer, & Inviting Others into Intimacy with God.



CLADD, November 15, 2018
Our lady's Immaculate Heart Church
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Sharing Communal Wisdom

If you brought an outline, a handout or can recall a prayer service or experience that you have led or took part in that was a “success,” meaning it seemed to connect, enliven, move, convict, uplift, or engage, please reference as you discuss the two questions below!

Why do you think people sometimes feel challenged, stuck or even bored in their prayer life? Within our ministries, how can we assist people that express this to us?

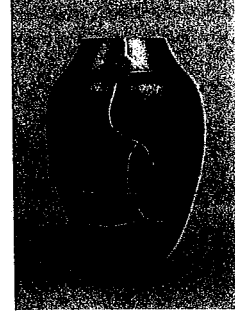
Do you have a “success” story of a group prayer experience you led or created? How could you tell it was successful? Recognizing and acknowledging that all time with God is good, why do some prayer experiences stand above and beyond others?

Notes from table share:

Notes from large group:

The Potter & the Clay, Jeremiah 18:3-6, Kinetic Prayer

In "Let Your Life Speak," Parker Palmer writes, "Making pottery...involves more than telling the clay what to become. The clay presses back on the potter's hands, telling her what it can and cannot do - if the potter fails to listen, the outcome will be both frail and ungainly..."



Faith sharing: What happened for you during this time of prayer? Did any new insights present themselves to you? What did you receive in this experience? What did you give?

As a leader: What elements or approaches do you think were helpful in this prayer experience?

Notes from Table Share:

Questions or comments to share with large group:

The Resurrection, John 20:11-18, Visio Divina

Visio Divina - Seeing the Word www.seeingtheword.org This process is flexible and can take anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour to a sessions over a number of days with any size of group. If you are using this process with a large group, invite participants to share personal reflections in small groups.

1. Listening: Listen for God's word or a passage that touches the heart. (Read the scripture out loud)
2. Meditating: Ruminates on the word. Allow the word or passage to dwell within you. Allow this pondering to invite you into dialogue with God and then, in the spirit of Pentecost, share the word with the Group. (After a few moments of reflection, share your word or phrase with the group. You may repeat these first two steps again if you wish).
3. Seeing: Return to God's word for the purpose of "hearing and seeing" Christ in the text. Fix your gaze on the illumination. Ask God to open the eyes of your heart to enable you to see that God wants you to see. Be open to images, thoughts, impressions, and feelings that come into your awareness. (After a moment of personal reflection, share with the group what you see in the image. Begin with observations and move into reflection. What does the image reveal to you about the scripture? What is being illuminated in your heart?)
4. Contemplating: Notice the transforming presence of God within you calling you. Surrender all that is stirring, even if only briefly, and rest in God's embrace. Allow it to transform you. Notice how your faith is being deepened and your way of live motivated.

Faith sharing: What word or phrase was meaningful, mysterious, provoking, uplifting? What did the illumination (the image) add to your time of prayer and understanding of the Word of God?

As a leader: Could you use visio divina within your ministry area? What benefits or challenges would it present?

Notes from Small Group Sharing:

Questions or comments to share with large group:

Quenching Thirst, John 4:1-42, Guided Colloquy

“A colloquy is an intimate conversation between you and God the Father, between you and Jesus, or between you and Mary or one of the saints. It often occurs at the end of a prayer period, but it can take place at any time. Let this conversation naturally develop in your prayer. In the colloquy, we speak and listen as the Spirit moves us: expressing ourselves, for example, as a friend speaks to a friend, or as a person speaks to one whom he or she has offended, or as a child speaks to a parent or mentor, or as a lover speaks to his or her beloved. Whatever the context, be “real,” speaking from the heart. As in any meaningful conversation, make sure to leave times of silence for listening.” - From “The Ignatian Adventure,” By Kevin O’Brien, SJ



Journaling space:

Comments or questions to share with large group:

For Further Reading & Exploration

“The Ignatian Adventure,” Kevin O’Brien, SJ

There is no better guide than St. Ignatius Loyola if one desires to discover how faith and everyday life can thrive together. In *The Ignatian Adventure*, Kevin O’Brien, SJ, follows St. Ignatius’s lead and offers today’s time-strapped individual a unique way of “making” the Spiritual Exercises in daily life.

“Time With Jesus,” Thomas F. Catucci

This book has twenty guided meditations for youth that present various meditations for different spiritual questions, struggles, or seasons. It also included four relaxation techniques to help participants enter into this time of reflection and contemplation.

“God Help Me: How to Grow in Prayer,” Jim Beckman

We may know people who ask or we ourselves may wonder - does prayer have anything at all to do with your life? You don't pray, at least not regularly, and you don't really know how. On the other hand, if God is who he says he is, and if he communicates with us through prayer, as Scripture and the saints and plenty of ordinary people say he does, then clearly you're missing out on something huge. Jim Beckman will not only introduce you to the wisdom and teaching of the Church regarding prayer, he will also provide tools that will help you achieve real intimacy with God.

“Way of the Disciple,” Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis

This book explores in depth six Gospel scenes so as to discover in these the essential elements of Christian discipleship. It describes the basic requirements for receiving the Word of God effectively in our hearts: namely, that we “become wet clay in God’s hands”, so that God can impress upon us any form he chooses. . What we normally call the “active apostolate” can never be an end in itself, but only the fruits of a life of prayer and adoration. These are what must be at the heart of a disciple’s life, which can never be swept up by mere activism.

“Time for God,” Jaques Philippe

In *Time for God*, author Jacques Philippe mainly concentrates on mental prayer: prayer that consists of facing God in solitude and silence for a time in order to enter into intimate, loving communion with him. Practicing this kind of prayer regularly is considered by all spiritual masters to be an indispensable path that gives access to genuine Christian life—a path to knowing and loving God that empowers us to respond to his call to holiness addressed to each individual.

“In the School of the Holy Spirit,” Jaques Philippe

In the School of the Holy Spirit will help you get to know the Sanctifier of your soul. It will lead you to be more attentive to the movements of the Holy Spirit in your life as you learn to love the third person of the Holy Trinity. Fr. Jacques Philippe explains the rewards of being attentive to the Holy Spirit and provides simple and concrete ways to grow in this inner sensitivity. In his clear and simple style, he

illustrates his points with many examples from modern life. In the School of the Holy Spirit is a valuable aid in your own spiritual journey.

“Searching for and Maintaining Peace,” Jaques Philippe

We live in a day and age characterized by an extraordinary amount of agitation and lack of peace. This tendency manifests itself in our spiritual as well as our secular life. In our search for God and holiness, in our service to our neighbor, a kind of restlessness and anxiety take the place of the confidence and peace which ought to be ours. What must we do to overcome the moments of fear and distress which assail us all too often in our lives? How can we learn to place all our confidence in God and abandon ourselves into his loving care? This is what is taught in this simple, yet profound little treatise on peace of heart. Taking concrete examples from our everyday life, the author invites us to respond in a Gospel fashion to the upsetting situations we must all confront. Since peace of heart is a pure gift of God, it is something we should seek, pursue and ask him for without cease. This book is here to help us in that pursuit.

“The Armchair Mystic,” Mark Thibodeaux, SJ

This user-friendly book blends theory and practice, gently and concretely taking the reader through the first steps of contemplative prayer. *Armchair Mystic* begins with the necessary details of time and place to pray, then presents the maturation of the prayer life in four stages: Talking at God, Talking to God, Listening to God, and Being with God. Each chapter begins with an Orientation and ends with a concluding summary. Step-by-step exercises throughout the book provide concrete examples of how to use the concepts discussed

“Reimagining the Examen,” An app by Mark Thibodeaux, SJ

This app is based on Thibodeaux’s book, *Reimagining the Ignatian Examen*, which offers 34 adaptable versions of the Examen. Loyola Press created the app to complement the book in February of this year. With soothing music and step-by-step guidance, users can choose from one of the themed Examens—picking the reflection that best fits their current state of being—or select the Examen of the day.

“The Bible,” God & Inspired Writers

Greatest love letter ever written.

<https://Seeingtheword.org> A resource for inviting others deeper into visio divina.

<https://ignatianspirituality.com> A website full of further resources to help grow personally in prayer as well as lead others.