

## WEEK NINE/DAY FIVE

Weekly Theme: *Imagination in Prayer*

Daily Theme: Revisiting Colloquy at the End of the Day

Savor the growing awareness you are developing between the normal events of everyday life and your imagination in prayer. See how these might come together at the end of the day EXAMEN and journal about your insights.

Continue to week focus on Prayer in Imagination by including some aspect of your COLLOQUY reflection at the end of the day. You could do this by noting how/if your DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION experience showed up during the course of the day. Or, you could return to the same reading and note what how it speaks to you at the end of the day, in connection with your night time EXAMEN. You could also use the optional reading as a point of reflection.

## MORNING EXERCISES

(About 30 minutes)

### 1. WISDOM FROM THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

*Take a few moments to quiet your mind and welcome the following teaching.*

“Let those in desolation be encouraged towards patience. Though the vexations of the present circumstances feel contrary, this is a time to be reminded that a time of consolation will inevitably follow...”

Rule #7, The Spiritual Exercises

### 2. QUESTIONS FOR DISCERNMENT

*Consider journaling for today by noting ‘what arises in you’ as you consider any of these questions for discernment:*

- How/does this ‘rule’ for discernment in times of desolation confirm your experience?
- Who or what supported you in times of desolation so that you did not lose hope?
- In your experience, ‘do you trust in times of desolation that consolation will inevitably follow’?

### 3. ENNEAGRAM INSIGHT

*Simply observe how the following Enneagram insight complements today’s teachings.*

While sometimes it can feel devastating to lose our old habitual reactions during times of stress, what if this is how it’s meant to be? What if our ego-structure was meant to be scaffolding which at first allows us to develop a ‘self’? And what if we could use this structure to allow us to build a dwelling based on a more mature and solid foundation?

#### 4. ENNEAGRAM AWARENESS

*Spend a few minutes with today's Enneagram insights; consider making a journal entry which you could return to at the end of the day.*

Return to the description of your Enneatype in the Enneagram of Anti-Self Actions. (Document #5 on the 30 Day Retreat website). Then revisit the IDEALIZATION\* of your type on the Chart of Characteristics (Document #1). Reflect on how these traits, while once necessary as we formed our ego-self, now threaten to undermine and turn us away from our own soul. How could this awareness be a point of light and hope for you during a time of personal desolation?

\* IDEALIZATION = The over-estimation of the desirable qualities and the underestimation of the limitations of that desire. The personality tends to idealize those qualities that we have chosen and/or acquired and which then becomes habitual.

#### 5. DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION:

*Choose one of the following passages and one of its points for reflection as a way to enter into a period of prayerful intention. This is not so much a time for analysis but for reflection. Choose whatever form of devotional prayer or meditation you like to complement the passages. Always end your reflection time with a moment of gratitude and 'savoring.'*

##### SCRIPTURE OPTION A

*From the Gospel Tradition:*

As Jesus was led away to his death great crowds trailed along from behind and among them were many grief-stricken women. But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, don't weep for me but weep instead for yourselves and your children for if such things are done to me, a Living Tree, what will they do to you when the wood is dry?"

Two convicted criminals were also led out to be executed with him at a place called The Skull. All three were crucified with Jesus in the center. And Jesus said, "Father, forgive these people, for they do not know what they are doing."

*Luke 23:26-34*

##### POINTS FOR COLLOQUIUM REFLECTION

- Using your imagination, place yourself in this scene. Consider the many persons involved (Jesus, the women, the two criminals or you as an onlooker). Which character do you feel especially drawn to and why?
- Identify your reactions to Jesus' words to the weeping women. What might they mean to you? How/do Jesus' words of forgiveness speak to you... How/can you more personally relate to this statement 'they do not know what they are doing.'

- In such a tragic moment, can you sense any light in the darkness? What kind of consolation is emerging here... Savor the experience.

#### LITERARY OPTION B

*From a Speech on Being Released after 27 years in Prison*, by Nelson Mandela

"The hard times of life have taught me that we never lose; we either win or learn. The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling but in rising every time we fall... As I walked out the prison door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I know that if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison."

#### POINTS FOR REFLECTION:

- Invite your imagination into the experience of Nelson Mandela... either as himself, a prison guard or someone in the crowd of observers. Where does this kind of courage and resilience come from?
- Allow yourself to consider a time in your life when something truly grace-filled and life-giving resulted because of/in spite of your suffering.
- Savor your experience in a time of grateful meditation.

#### 6. INTENTION FOR THE DAY

- Make an intention to be especially alert today to the suffering or injustice around you... or perhaps within you. Try to just notice and not judge.
- When tempted to be reactive and judgmental, return to the mantra: "Father, forgive them. They do not know what they are doing."

### MID DAY EXERCISES

(5-10 minutes)

#### 1. MINI-EXAMEN: HOLY NOTICING

*Take a few quiet moments to remember your intention for the day*

- Is there an observation from the morning worth noting?
- Renew your intention to be alert to the many ways that life is unfair for the remainder of the day.
- Let your witness to injustice bring a small but necessary light of awareness.

#### 2. GRATITUDE

*Identify at least one experience so far today for which you are grateful*

Ignatius encourages us to not allow the voices of discouragement to be the last word during times of desolation.

-Breathe a prayer of gratitude for your ability to be sensitive to the suffering of others. Inhale the possibility of hope and exhale whatever desolation might cause you to be discouraged. Try this for about one minute.

## END-OF-THE-DAY EXERCISES

(About 20 minutes)

### 1. THE EXAMEN

*The daily Examen is the heart of the Spiritual Exercises. This is an opportunity to take a long, loving look back over your day where, 'We recognize the Beloved in the nitty gritty of life and we bring the nitty gritty back to the Beloved.' This exercise is an examination of consciousness (clear awareness) NOT an examination of conscience focused on faults and failings. By being faithful to this practice and journaling your insights, patterns will emerge over thirty days including awareness from your unconscious that would normally have been missed in everyday activity.*

-The EXAMEN should take about fifteen minutes. During this reflection time, you can use the following five R's to help guide your time:

**REQUEST** the presence of Spirit (however you imagine it) to lead you through the review of the day.

**RELISH** the moments that went well and gifts received today.

**REVIEW** (walk back through your day) using the suggested focus questions of today as your guide; these are expressed in the Intention of the Day of your Morning Exercises. What would it be like to 'talk to God about this'? Or you might choose the memory of a beloved friend.

#### FOCUS QUESTIONS FOR TODAY'S EXAMEN:

- Looking over the day (with God or someone beloved by my side) I return in my imagination to a moment in my day that may have been worrisome or uncertain. I let myself feel any emotions and notice whether I handled it gracefully or poorly.
- Looking over my day for a second time, I identify the most life-giving moment of the day. Again, I relive the experience and notice how it impacted my emotions.
- I give thanks for both experiences trusting that I was not alone and that their lessons may be of benefit now and in the future.

**REPENT** for any mistakes or failures by simply acknowledging them without drama or self-loathing. If you feel called to *at-one-ment* with another, the Beloved or yourself, note that desire for whenever an appropriate time arises.

**RESOLVE** with a concrete intention to live tomorrow consciously and freely.

## 2. DISCERNMENT JOURNAL

*Without a daily journal it would not be possible to track the sometimes subtle spiritual movements in every day experiences. Spend a few minutes making entries that reflect today's experiences and learnings. Here everything belongs, both the gifts and the challenges.*

## 3. POINTS FOR TOMORROW

*The Spiritual Exercises recommend that, before retiring, we consider the spiritual geography for the next day. As we settle into deeper rest we prepare our unconscious for the next day's exercises. This is not a time for study and analysis but a gentle pointer towards our next movement and direction.*

### WISDOM FROM IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY:

Let him who is in desolation never lose sight of what the heart still knows to be true...

### AN ENNEAGRAM NIGHT TIME REFLECTION

In the darkest of nights, we can discover where our perceptions about self and life have been deluded. At such moments we can be graced to see that working on ourselves is not a matter of getting someplace where our Creator will find us more acceptable but rather, a re-connection with the Original Goodness that was ours in the beginning.

### A PRAYER FOR NIGHTTIME SURRENDER

Into your hands I abandon my spirit  
Tonight I also make this my prayer.  
There is nothing more to be done today.  
And I trust that providence will return tomorrow  
As surely as the sun will rise. —Charles de Foucauld