

MONTH TWO / WEEK THREE

Weekly Theme: *Imagination, Discernment and Prayer*

Daily Theme: Learning What to Trust

MORNING EXERCISES

(About 30 minutes)

1. WISDOM FROM THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

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

When you have the courage to name and honor your deep desires, you can expect the dark to show up.

Jack Kennedy

2. QUESTIONS FOR DISCERNMENT

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

-What *is done to you* when you consider today's Wisdom from the Spiritual Exercises?

-Have you had a personal experience of the dark showing up as you began honoring a deep soulful desire? If so, how did that manifest?

-How might our personality traits try to sabotage what we deeply desire?

3. ENNEAGRAM INSIGHT

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

When we welcome and then quietly pray with our AVOIDANCE we may at first find ourselves exposed, ashamed, angry or frightened. Realize that these reactions are the result of our ego strategies to avoid or deny our AVOIDANCE which can be a barrier to an intimate life of prayer.

Eileen Heaton

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 once again to the Enneagram Chart of Styles (Document #1 on the Thirty Day website) notice the relationship between your AVOIDANCE and your IDEALIZATION* around which your personality formed. Notice how your life of prayer may be influenced by these two strong forces. Imagine (and experience) what it would be like for your prayer to flow from a deeper place—beneath these personality forces.

*IDEALIZATION is 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 then have become habit.

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: The spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the Predator. After forty days and nights without food, Jesus was hungry. The Predator tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread, to which he replied "Human beings cannot live on bread alone, but need every word God speaks." The second temptation was for Jesus to throw himself from the highest point of the temple and order angels to catch him. But he replied "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." Finally, the Predator offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in return for worshipping him. Jesus replied "Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!" Then the Predator left Jesus and angels came and ministered to him. ***Matthew 4:1-11***

POINTS FOR A COLLOQUY REFLECTION

- Place yourself in this story. Use your imagination to create a scene in the desert where you are present. Consider each of the persons involved (Jesus, the Predator (aka the Tempter or Satan), the Spirit which led him into the desert, the angels or yourself as an observer). Which one do you feel especially drawn to?
- How does this story come alive for you as you put yourself in the scene? Identify the feelings/thoughts/reactions you encounter through your active imagination.
- What kind of temptations attract you to abandon your true self? When have you resisted or succumbed to those temptations? Savor the experience.

LITERARY OPTION B

"The more you're here and the more you're alive, the more you realize you're a mortal human being and that you'll pass from this place. And will you actually turn up? Will you become a full citizen of vulnerability, loss and disappearance which you have no choice about?" *David Whyte, The conversational nature of reality*

POINTS FOR REFLECTION:

- In your imagination, take the words of this poem to heart in the form of a conversation with a beloved friend who has died. What do you hear in that conversation?

- How can facing your mortality with the support of another bring you clarity about life's priorities?
- How might the question, 'Will you actually turn up?' be a source of prayer for you? Savor the experience.

6. INTENTION FOR THE WEEK

- Make an intention to become aware today of darker voices that might arise because you are asking sacred questions.
- What is it like to welcome both the voices of light and darkness instead of pushing them away? Try to just notice and not judge.

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 for the remainder of the day:
- Continue just noticing (and welcoming, when possible) the whispers that show up about your deep desires and dark voices that might oppose them.

2. GRATITUDE

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

Ignatius encourages us to discern the voices that lead us to our deepest values. Welcome them all as your potential teachers.

- Breathe a prayer of gratitude for a few minutes. Inhale with the encouraging light that is always available to us. Exhale whatever would take you away from your truest beliefs. 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 TO REMEMBER

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.

WEEK FOUR THEME:

Discerning between the sounds of dissonance and consonance

WISDOM FROM IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY:

Always trust what is life giving and energizing.

ENNEAGRAM TEACHING:

I will be the last person to see the delusions of my character but the Genesis story reminds me that I am created in love so why would I want to stay hiding?