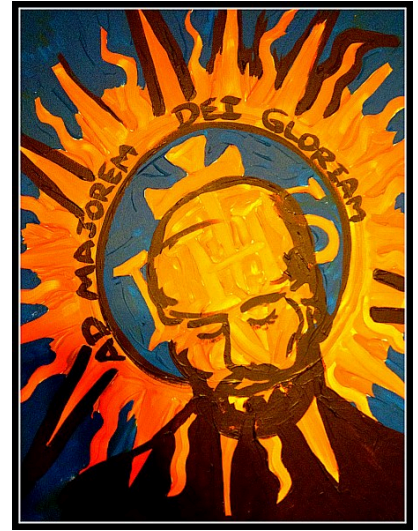


# An 8 Week Adaptation of The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola

*"Give me only your love and your grace.  
With this I am rich enough,  
and I have no more to ask."  
- St. Ignatius*



## As you start the second half of the journey...

It's a good time to stop and consider the journey so far. **How has it been?** Take a few moments to do an *examen* for the last four weeks of prayer and reading...

- *What have your predominant feelings been while reading and praying?*
- *What are the recurring themes that you have found supportive and encouraging?*
- *What are the nagging questions that have surfaced for you while reading and praying?*
- *What have you learned about yourself in keeping a schedule and expectation of daily prayer and reading?*
- *What are some things you hope God will do in you in the coming weeks?*
- *Have you heard God saying something consistently to you?*

## Continuing the journey with prayer.

### Soul of Christ or *Anima Christi*

*"Soul of Christ, fill me.  
Body of Christ, be my Bread of Life.  
Blood of Christ, fill my Cup of Salvation.  
Living Water of Christ, overflow from me to others.  
Sacrifice of Christ, be my strength and example.  
Good Jesus, hear me when I pray.  
Let your wounds teach me service and wisdom.  
Never leave me or let me stray from you.  
Please use me to light up the darkness.  
Let me know you eternally, now and after death.  
Embrace me one day, face to face.  
Welcome me with all who have looked for you.  
My goal will be forever to love and thank you.  
Amen."*

Now that you have praying, reading and doing some journaling for many weeks, it's time to grow with your own words. Take this great ancient prayer, the *Anima Christi*, and **re-write it**. Put it in your own words.

You are as full of the Spirit and beloved of God as the anonymous saint who first penned this prayer, and as St. Ignatius himself who teaches us. Let your spirit give voice and word to a similar prayer, or make a prayer completely from scratch. Write it in a day, or craft it over the next four weeks, but let yourself shape and inhabit some special words of prayer as we move forward!

## Week Five

### The Ministry and Passion of Christ

# Jesus Invites Us Along

As we dig deeper into the ministry of Jesus we cannot miss the invitational nature of his calling those around him to join in ministry with him. He came to inhabit flesh and creation with a purpose. Over the next few weeks we will be reading and praying our way through some special passages that will highlight the invitation of Christ and the *missional* purpose of Christ. We will also begin to hear the call in a clearer sense and understand our shared purpose with Christ

### Weekly Prayer Intention:

*"Christ and Lord, the One who calls,  
May my will and strength be given to your purpose. Amen."*

### After each reading reflect on words and characters involved.

- † How does the passage make you feel?
- † What theme or idea seems to speak to you most clearly?
- † Do you feel a response to God in your heart from the reading?
- † Are there words, a phrase, or a single word that really grabs you?
- † Is there a character in the passage with whom you especially can relate?

### The week's readings...

- **Monday:** Matthew 4:18-25 Jesus begins his ministry of healing and calling.
- **Tuesday:** Matthew 5:1-12 What does Jesus call us to in these verses?
- **Wednesday:** Matthew 5:13-16 Which resonates most with you, *salt or light*? Why?
- **Thursday:** Mark 2:13-17 Why do you think Jesus so often seems to be hanging around with the *wrong* kinds of people?
- **Friday:** Choose any passage or reflection from above, or take a few minutes to review your journaling from the previous days this week. What are some special things from the week that stand out to you? How has the week felt to you?

### 5 Steps of a Daily Examen:

- † Be grateful for the day.
- † Do I feel good about the way I spent this day, and why or why not?
- † How can I make tomorrow even better?
- † In what ways would I like to see God move in my life tomorrow?
- † In what ways might I more fully give myself to God tomorrow?

## Week Six

### The Ministry and Passion of Christ

# Jesus Has a Mission

Christ made many purpose statements during his ministry. A good additional exercise for this week is *making your own personal statement of purpose*. St. Ignatius called this our *first principle and foundation*. His own first principle and foundation is a bit lengthy, but the opening lines have been often paraphrased this way: ***“The goal of our life is to live with God forever. God, who loves us, gave us life. Our own response of love allows God's life to flow into us without limit.”*** What would you say is your purpose and intention in life, your guiding foundational belief and hope?

### Weekly Prayer Intention:

*“Christ and Lord, the Daily God With Us,  
Help me be a soul with mission and intention in this world. Amen.”*

### After each reading reflect on words and characters involved.

- † How does the passage make you feel?
- † What theme or idea seems to speak to you most clearly?
- † Do you feel a response to God in your heart from the reading?
- † Are there words, a phrase, or a single word that really grabs you?
- † Is there a character in the passage with whom you especially can relate?

### The week's readings...

- **Monday:** Luke 4:16-22 Jesus uses scripture to illustrate his mission.
- **Tuesday:** Mark 1:29-39 Jesus uses prayer to avoid being side-tracked & overwhelmed.
- **Wednesday:** Matthew 9:35-38 Jesus teaches a prayer to the *Lord of the Harvest*.
- **Thursday:** John 4:27-42 What sustains Jesus in his daily ministry?
- **Friday:** Today, consider reading **John 4:1-42** to get a better perspective on the verses from yesterday and the statement of Jesus on what sustains him, or choose any passage or reflection from above. What are some special things from the week that stand out to you? How has the week felt to you?

### 5 Steps of a Daily Examen:

- † Be grateful for the day.
- † Do I feel good about the way I spent this day, and why or why not?
- † How can I make tomorrow even better?
- † In what ways would I like to see God move in my life tomorrow?
- † In what ways might I more fully give myself to God tomorrow?

## Week Seven

### The Ministry and Passion of Christ

# Jesus Suffers for His Mission

Jesus is committed to his purpose and ministry and he is willing to suffer for it. He will be made fun of, threatened and eventually betrayed to his death for his mission. While we don't walk the same daily path as Jesus or come under the kind of opposition he faced, we still may have a price to pay in following. What will it be and will we pay it?

### Weekly Prayer Intention:

*"Christ and Lord, our Sacrificing God,  
Teach me to serve without counting the cost. Amen."*

### After each reading reflect on words and characters involved.

- † How does the passage make you feel?
- † What theme or idea seems to speak to you most clearly?
- † Do you feel a response to God in your heart from the reading?
- † Are there words, a phrase, or a single word that really grabs you?
- † Is there a character in the passage with whom you especially can relate?

### The week's readings...

- **Monday:** Luke 4:1-15 What are the personal temptations Jesus must face before beginning his ministry, and how might they relate to us?
- **Tuesday:** Luke 4:16-30 Jesus faces immediate opposition to his public ministry.
- **Wednesday:** Matthew 6:9-13 Think about the prayer, *"Your will be done."*
- **Thursday:** Mark 8:31-9:1 Jesus knows of his coming death, but maintains his course of ministry and teaching. What does the conversation he has with Peter teach us?
- **Friday:** Choose any passage or reflection from above, or take a few minutes to review your journaling from the previous days this week. What are some special things from the week that stand out to you? How has the week felt to you?

### 5 Steps of a Daily Examen:

- † Be grateful for the day.
- † Do I feel good about the way I spent this day, and why or why not?
- † How can I make tomorrow even better?
- † In what ways would I like to see God move in my life tomorrow?
- † In what ways might I more fully give myself to God tomorrow?

# Week Eight

## The Ministry and Passion of Christ

# Jesus Dies for His Mission

The judgment, torture and murder of Jesus is called his **Passion**. The Greek word *paschein* was followed by the Latin word *passio*, both of which simply meant *suffering*, and ultimately led to our English word **passion**. The word passion was originally only used theologically to refer to the specific suffering of Christ, but eventually it came to be used in reference to all stronger emotions. What Jesus experienced was indeed a *passion*, full of meaning and power. It sometimes seems too brutal and too much, but he chose his path to teach and liberate us from fear and death.

### Weekly Prayer Intention:

*“Christ and Lord, our Suffering King,  
May I love you more for your pains,  
And learn from your wounds. Amen.”*

### After each reading reflect on words and characters involved.

- † How does the passage make you feel?
- † What theme or idea seems to speak to you most clearly?
- † Do you feel a response to God in your heart from the reading?
- † Are there words, a phrase, or a single word that really grabs you?
- † Is there a character in the passage with whom you especially can relate?

### The week's readings...

- **Monday:** John 11:1-27 Readings for today and tomorrow are lengthy, but important.
- **Tuesday:** John 11:28-57 Why do you think some could witness his miracles and believe in him while others see the same thing and plot to kill him?
- **Wednesday:** John 18:1-11 *Betrayal*.
- **Thursday:** John 19:16-30 *Death*.
- **Friday:** John 20:1-18 *Life*. It's difficult to read the suffering and not read the resurrection, so we've included today's text of life. Romans 6:1-11 is a great follow-up to this!

### 5 Steps of a Daily Examen:

- † Be grateful for the day.
- † Do I feel good about the way I spent this day, and why or why not?
- † How can I make tomorrow even better?
- † In what ways would I like to see God move in my life tomorrow?
- † In what ways might I more fully give myself to God tomorrow?

# OK, but what now?

It's always a bit frightening to try and condense the fullness of the Spiritual Exercises into a small experience like this, so we don't even try to capture everything... *this has been a small bit*, a taste, a small portion of the full Exercises, and of life. It's been a great eight weeks, but life goes on, right? In the coming days you can do certain things to keep the growth and joy of the experience going that you've had with scripture and with prayer.

**Keep praying.** Make a place and time in your life when you can stop and pray. Use some written prayers or prayer books when you need them for inspiration. You might find a good resource at a local bookstore or choose an online prayer help. Our **Church in Bethesda** website, [www.churchinbethesda.org](http://www.churchinbethesda.org), has several online options on the **Resource** page. That's where you can also find our **Weekly Grace**, a weekly resource for shaping prayers and readings.

St. Ignatius highly recommended that the *Daily Examen* be practiced, daily. It's a good habit and keeps us reflecting day to day.

## 5 Steps of a Daily Examen:

- † Be grateful for the day.
- † Do I feel good about the way I spent this day, and why or why not?
- † How can I make tomorrow even better?
- † In what ways would I like to see God move in my life tomorrow?
- † In what ways might I more fully give myself to God tomorrow?

The questions we've been using to engage passages can continue to be used as you read more from the scriptures. You may also refine them a bit and make your own set of questions to help you with digging deeper.

## After each reading reflect on words and characters involved.

- † How does the passage make you feel?
- † What theme or idea seems to speak to you most clearly?
- † Do you feel a response to God in your heart from the reading?
- † Are there words, a phrase, or a single word that really grabs you?
- † Is there a character in the passage with whom you especially can relate?

**Keep chatting with a spiritual friend, and be a spiritual friend!** Sometimes we hear God clearly, and sometimes we don't. Sometimes life can be a joyful journey in the sunlight, and then there are times struggling in the darkness and shadows. ***God goes with us.*** If the Exercises are meant to help us hear God, it's so that we never forget that God is there on the best and the worst days. Life's great constant element that gives us hope and peace is the love and grace with which God beholds us. *Live in that love and grace and revel in them!*

**With peace,** Todd