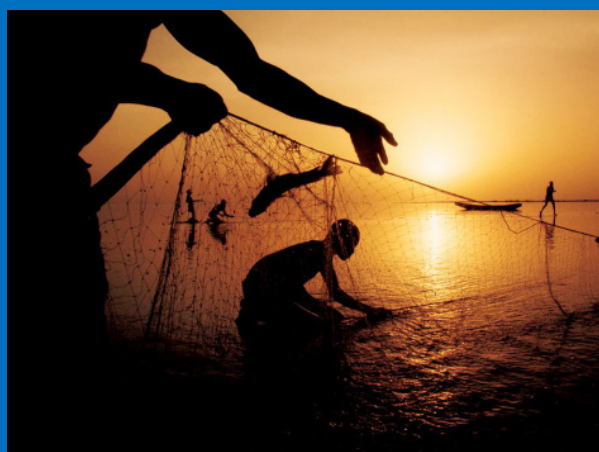


RETREAT IN DAILY LIFE T O G E T H E R



2—The Second Week

Society of the Holy Child Jesus, 2021

Some Food for Thought

as you consider re-visiting or beginning the Second Week

In this packet you will find:

- Overview & orientation notes for calendar weeks 1-5 of the SECOND WEEK, pp.3-4
- Resources for praying calendar weeks 1-5, pp. 5-19
- Overview & orientation notes for calendar weeks 6-10 of the SECOND WEEK, pp. 23-37
- Resources for praying calendar weeks 6-10, pp.5-19
- Bibliography & Media Links, pp. 38-41



In the First Week, “the focus has been on us and our needs. We wanted to know in a heartfelt way that God is where we are, with us in our

brokenness, our sinfulness, our desperate need.” In the Second Week, however, “we now want to be where Jesus is; we want to know him and his values and his mission, and we want to be part of that mission.”

William Barry, SJ, *Letting God Come Close*, p. 78.

These calendar weeks are truly prime time for giving ourselves to the focus and heart of the Second Week: **Jesus, the Christ.**

We are invited to ask unceasingly for the Week’s grace in words familiar to us from the 1970s musical *Godspell*, which are rooted in the prayer of the 13th Century English bishop, Richard of Chichester: “may I know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, and follow thee more nearly, day by day.”



In the packet for the *Preparation Days*, the timeline recommends ten calendar weeks for the Second Week, so it would be good to think through how to pace yourself during this time-span which includes deep contemplation of the life of Jesus from his birth through his hidden life, baptism and active ministry, as well as several distinctly Ignatian exercises designed to help us deepen our commitment to the disciple’s life. These invite us to weigh the personal cost of discipleship, and be realistic about the obstacles we face within and outside of ourselves.

Given the breadth and depth of the Second Week, some find it helpful to take a restful pause, perhaps for a week or so. The best time for that is between the fifth and sixth calendar weeks. There is, however, an organic flow from one part of the Second Week to the other, so some prefer not to pause.

As a whole this Week is about knowing, loving, and following Christ more clearly, dearly, nearly.

Retreat in Daily Life Together

Overview and Orientation Notes for the Second Week

Adapted from: *The Spiritual Exercises Reclaimed* by Katherine Dyckman, Mary Garvin, Elizabeth Liebert, (D/G/E); *The Ignatian Adventure* by Kevin O'Brien, SJ (O'B), pp. 141-142; *A Retreat by All Means* by E. Strub

How does one enter into the Second Week?



The Ignatian contemplations in the Second Week focus attention on the mysteries of Christ ..., moving the seeker from self-preoccupation to the mystery of God who shares in our humanity. The Gospel contemplations proceed from Jesus' birth to his death, linking the mysteries of the Life of Christ with the mystery of God's presence in one's own life.

At the beginning of the Second Week, prayer focuses around hearing God's call and listening attentively and lovingly to God's revelation of Love incarnate, Jesus. Imagining the Trinity's perspective of a sinful yet loved world leading God to "dwell with us" situates the Second Week within the mystery of the incarnation. Traveling the road from Nazareth to Bethlehem engages one with the reality of Jesus' birth and the vulnerability of God who chooses to enter human history. The seeker accompanies Jesus as he journeys through "cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God" (Luke 8:1).

Entering the Gospel scenes imaginatively brings one into contact with Jesus in Nazareth, by the Sea of Galilee or in Jerusalem. One imagines his actions, his words and how he touches people's lives. Contemplative awareness allows one to really see people, listen to their voices, share in their experiences and respond in faith to the myriad ways of God-with-us. Consciousness of one's life before God gives a momentary glimpse into the mystery of God at unexpected times: walking, working, eating, resting. Paradoxically, distractions and busy thoughts may also provide insight.

Certain meditations and contemplations strategically placed throughout the Second Week help in refining our ability to make freer choices in following Christ. The exercises directed toward this process include, first, the *Call of the King*, which considers discipleship and invites the seeker to cast her lot with Jesus. Yet life includes struggle and, sooner or later, all must answer the questions raised next by the meditation on the *Two Standards*: Whose side are you on? And how do you know this? The *Three Classes of Person* and *Three Ways of Being Humble* offer nuances to this invitation to discipleship.

The grace of the Second Week, a deepening relationship with Jesus, offers new ways of knowing, loving and following. What may have begun as an individual "Jesus and me" piety can develop into an intimate relationship of love overflowing into service; the Second Week is about words and actions. The first question, Who do you say that I am? Leads to the next, Where do you stand and with whom will you walk? Both questions require a response. D/G/E, pp. 182-183



About Meditations . . .

Ignatius is holistic in his approach to prayer — body/mind/senses/emotions — all are to be exercised. Sometimes we are asked specifically to “meditate,” as in the meditations on the *Two Standards*, *Three Classes* and *Three Ways*. This is an explicit invitation to engage our minds — to consider, mull over, think through — and this does not exclude all the other ways by which we go deeper into prayer.

...and Contemplations

In the Ignatian tradition, praying with the imagination is called contemplation. In the Exercises, it is a very active way of praying that engages the mind and heart and stirs up thoughts and emotions. (Note that in other spiritual traditions, contemplation has quite a different meaning: it refers to a way of praying that frees the mind of all thoughts and images.)

Ignatian Contemplation is suited especially for the Gospels. We accompany Jesus through his life by imagining scenes from the Gospel stories. Let the events of Jesus’ life be present to you right now. Visualize the event, pay attention to the details: sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and feelings of the event. Lose yourself in the story; at some point, place yourself in the scene.

Contemplating a Gospel scene is not simply remembering it or going back in time. Through the act of contemplation, the Holy Spirit makes present a mystery of Jesus’ life in a way that is meaningful for you now. Use your imagination to dig deeper into the story so that God may communicate with you in a personal, evocative way. Above all, pray as you are able; don’t try to force it. Rest assured that God will speak to you, whether through your memory, understanding, intellect, emotions, or imagination. O’B, p. 141-142

More on Discernment of Spirits

At this point of the retreat, the good spirit and the evil spirit work in typical ways. God wants us to continue growing in faith, hope, and love. God desires that we come to know and love the Son more intimately. God kindles in us great hopes and a zeal to serve God and others. Conversely, the evil spirit . . . the “enemy of our human nature,” wants to discourage us and get us off course. Sometimes the evil spirit’s tactics are obvious: causing extreme doubt, confusion, anxiety, and temptation. As we grow in the spiritual life, the enemy must adjust its tactics and become more subtle, even using experiences of spiritual consolation for evil ends or suggesting thoughts that seem good and holy but actually lead us away from the praise, love and service of God. O’B pp. 145-146



Where are you being led?

Always, it is important to keep reflecting on where you are being led in your prayer, to watch the progress of a movement and remain alert to its direction over a prayer period, a day, several days, and longer periods of time. Also, take note of what material attracts your interest and invites you to go deeper. Grace awaits you there. Ask hard questions of desolation, but stay with what yields consolation. Go back to it again and again because it is where you find God. Finally, with Ignatius, with Cornelia, plead, beg, never stop asking for the grace of this week — “an intimate knowledge of our Lord, who has become human for me, that I may love him more and follow him more closely.” (SE 104) Strub, p. 116

Who do you say that I am?
Where do you stand, and
with whom do you walk?

Retreat in Daily Life Together ~

Second Week (1)

THEME:

God's vision of our world; God's joy in responding with love

GRACE:

I ask for a deeply felt knowledge of God's dream for the world, for awe and wonder at the mystery of the Incarnation.

SCRIPTURE:

John 1:1-5, 14-18

Luke 1:26-38

Matthew 1:18-25

Luke 1:39-56

Philippians 2:5-11

Make a Repetition of a text you have prayed.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

I try to enter into the vision of God, in God's triune life, looking upon our world: men and women aimless, despairing, hateful and killing, men and women sick and dying, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the happy and the sad, some being born and some being laid to rest. The leap of divine joy: God knows that the time has come when the mystery of the salvific plan, hidden from the beginning of the world, will become manifest.

This is the context of the Annunciation scene ... I try to stay with the eyes of God, and look upon the young girl Mary, as she is greeted by Gabriel.

I notice how our triune God works — so simply and quietly, so patiently. A world goes on, apparently oblivious to the new creation which has begun. (SE 106-108), Fleming, *Draw Me Into Your Friendship*


SHCJ TRADITION:

The Second Week celebrates, above all, the fact of the incarnation. From Bethlehem on, God enters human history in Jesus. The material universe, sacred because of creation, becomes twice-holy because from it are drawn together the elements which constitute the body of Christ.... Cornelia brings to her contemplation of God-made-human a unique appreciation of the physicality and temporality of the mystery. As a mother who gave birth five times, who watched her children grow and mature, who fed and clothed them, who saw the impact of culture and place on their characters, who doctored their illnesses, watched two of them die and saw them into the earth, she was grounded in reality, "the reality of the incarnation." Strub, *A Retreat by All Means*



PERSPECTIVES & ECHOES:

THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF CREATION IS FOR THE INCARNATION, God's sharing of life and love in a unique and definitive way. God becoming human is not an afterthought, an event to make up for original sin and human sinfulness. Incarnation is God's first thought, the original design for all creation. The purpose of Jesus' life is the fulfillment of God's eternal longing to become human Such a view can dramatically change our image of God, our celebration of Christmas, our day-by-day prayer. Kenneth Overberg, SJ, "Why God Wanted to Become Human"

 **LISTEN TO:** *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* by Johann Sebastian Bach, performed by Yo-Yo Ma — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdrozBhqWzM>


Jesu, joy of all desiring,

 **LISTEN TO:** *Ode to Joy* by Ludwig van Beethoven, performed by a Flash Mob, Sabadell, Spain, 2012 — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbJcQYVtZMo>
Joyful, joyful, we adore thee!



Dolphins share in the leap of divine joy

IN BECOMING FLESH THE WORD OF GOD BECOMES UNITED NOT ONLY WITH THE HUMAN SPECIES but with all living creatures and with "the cosmic dust of which they are composed." The incarnation is a cosmic event. Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ, "Deep Incarnation"

 **LISTEN TO:** The natural soundscapes recorded by acoustic ecologist Gordon Hampton, who says, "I like to say that silence is the think-tank of the soul. Listening is something different. Listening means taking all sounds in with equal value, so instead of listening for a sound I simply listen to the place." — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fp-8UEtpffQ>

THE CATHOLIC TRADITION AT ITS MOST AUTHENTIC is radically fleshy, affirmative of the body and opposed to any false spiritualizing that would deny the body. Christmas is about the body, about the identification of Christ with our bodies — "sacrifices and offering you did not desire but a body you prepared for me." We have been consecrated by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ. His unwed pregnant mother takes her body to that of her pregnant elderly cousin Elizabeth — the mother of the savior goes to serve. For us there is an experience of incarnation that is God's will for the world — let us be aware of this grace, be thankful for it. Let us remember that Christ came not only to take a body but to make a body, the church. Andrew Ciferri, O.Praem, Homily for Christmas Eve 2006



Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till he appeared, and the soul felt its worth.
O Holy Night

Hail, Mary, full of grace!



GOD'S REVELATIONS ARE ALWAYS POINTED, CONCRETE, and specific Divine Revelation is not something you measure or critique. It is not an ideology but a Presence you intuit and meet! It is more Someone than something. All of this is called the "mystery of incarnation"—enfleshment or embodiment if you prefer—and for Christians it reaches its fullness in the incarnation of God in one ordinary-looking man named Jesus. God materialized in human form, so we could fall in love with a real person, which is the only way we fall in love at all We first get the truth in one specific ordinary place and moment (like the one man Jesus), and then we universalize from that to the universal truth (the cosmic Christ). Richard Rohr, OFM, "We Know Through Concretes More Than by Universal Theories"

Real blood was shed at this delivery, by a poor woman of peasant society far from home, laboring in childbirth for the first time. And it was holy. Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ

Blessed are you among women

THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS IS AN OLD, OLD STORY — TOLD AND RETOLD angels ... worshipping oxen, exotic travellers ... picturesque shepherds, Mary and Joseph standing meekly by the manger while a star rests over them and the swaddled child The whole tableau is a bit like an icon through which we may glimpse deeper and deeper levels of meaning, each of its elements signifying in a deceptively simple way the intersection of God's reality with human experience. Through **Mary**, we glimpse the necessity of undefended availability to God; through **Joseph**, the power of responding to what reality actually is (as opposed to what we think it is or should be); through the presence in the stable of **foreigners and shepherds**, we are taught that the truth of God cannot be confined to one system or one people, and more often than not is made visible to those who seem least likely. The **star** symbolises the cosmic significance of this birth and the **oxen** (imagined in the tradition) suggest its implications for the more than human world the **child Jesus**, around whom all these elements are constellated, signifying **a radical subversion of our understanding of divinity — a God for us, God with us, God as one of us — and a radically different way of being human: vulnerable, open, receiving his life as gift for others.** Sarah Bachelard, "No room for Christ at Christmas"



What quotation, music, or image might you have chosen to include in Perspectives & Echoes?

Retreat in Daily Life Together ~

Second Week (2)

THEME:

God has entered into our history, becoming one of us, and sharing our lot; God is present in my life, saving me, loving me.

GRACE:

I ask to know Jesus more intimately,
love him more intensely, and follow him more closely.

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 2:1-7	Luke 2:21-38
Luke 2:8-18	Isaiah 9:1-7
Luke 2:19-21	Matthew: 13-23
Matthew 2:1-12	1 John 1:1-5
Repetitions	



image on tabernacle door in the cave of Ignatius, Manresa, Spain

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

place yourself in the gospel scene . . .

Colloquy: As I find myself immersed in the setting of this mystery of the Incarnation, I may want just to stay with Mary or with the eternal Word, who has now become human — for me. Sometimes I may want to speak out my joy, my thanks, my wonder, or my praise to the three Divine Persons. According to the light of God's grace given to me, I beg that I might come to know Jesus as a pattern for my own living and so be able to draw close to him. (SE109), Fleming

According to the different aspects which I may focus upon at any one time within the prayer period, I respond accordingly, for example, to Mary, Joseph, Jesus, God the father. Perhaps there is little more to say because this style of contemplation is often more a "being with" experience than a word-response. [In making a repetition] it is always important not just to repeat the gospel incident, but to return to those parts or points of focus where I have experienced understanding, insight, confusion, consolation or desolation. (SE) 117, 118, Fleming

SHCJ TRADITION:



From the living wells of His perfect humility, His divine charity, and His absolute obedience, we are to receive the Spirit of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus SHCJ Foundation Texts 2

PERSPECTIVES & ECHOES:

[IN ISAIAH] WE ARE ASKED TO BELIEVE THAT A CHILD BORN FOR US over 2,000 years ago — a child named “God with us” — is grounds for trust, is light in this darkness, offers a way for us to follow. It seems utterly, absurdly, laughably inadequate to the situation. And yet, how else do we expect God to show up? The question for us — for me — this Christmas is whether I dare keep faith with this promised presence, this almost unbearable vulnerability. In the midst of disaster, am I willing to keep listening for a wisdom beyond my own; to remain receptive to a love that transforms even in and through death? Can I “take heart” and refuse to despair? Sarah Bachelard, “A virgin shall conceive and bear a son: Keeping faith this Christmas,” 2019



How else do we expect God to show up?

WE THINK WE ARE HUMAN BECAUSE WE BEHAVE AS HUMANS (though how often so deplorably). But we know, when we are honest with ourselves, that we are but struggling wayfarers whose true selves will appear only when brought finally before the blinding light of God—when we are fully one with the risen Christ. Could Jesus have become human without sharing, though faultlessly, that journey? Is not the deepest blessing of Christmas not that he was born as the infant child of Mary but rather that he was born to become fully human, and with the promise that we too might be so? Leo J. O'Donovan, SJ, “Becoming Human” in AMERICA – December 22-29-, 2014

Thou art the light, the bright and morning star
in whom we ever live and move and are



In 2019, the number of international migrants reached 272 million; 33 million of them were children. Above: Rohingya children from Myanmar

Thou art the key to treasures new and old,
that turns the toil of every day to gold.
Thou, Alpha, Omega, first and last,
in whose eternal love our lives are passed

CHRISTMAS MEANS:

He has come.

He has made the night clear.
He has made the night of our darkness,
the night of our lack of understanding,
the cruel night
of our fears
and our hopelessness
into Christmas, the holy night.

In the Word made flesh,
God has sent his last Word,
his most profound Word,
his most beautiful Word
into the world.

And that Word means:

I love you,
world and humanity.
Light the candles!
They have more right here than darkness.
Karl Rahner, SJ

O Holy Child!

Where shall I look for Enlightenment?

Here.

When will it happen?

It is happening right now.

Then why don't I experience it?

Because you do not look.

What should I look for?

Nothing. Just look.

At what?

Anything your eyes alight upon.

Must I look in a special kind of way?

No. the ordinary way will do.

But don't I always look the ordinary way?

No.

Whyever not?

Because to look you must be here. You're mostly somewhere else. Anthony deMello

"WE ARE GUILTY OF MANY ERRORS AND MANY faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot. Right now is the time her bones are being formed, his blood is being made, and her senses are being developed. To them we cannot answer 'Tomorrow,' their name is 'Today.'" Gabriela Mistral

We heard it with our own ears,
saw it with our own eyes,
verified it with our own hands.

The Word of Life appeared right before
our eyes; we saw it happen! 1John 1:1

IGNATIUS INVITES US TO DEEPEN OUR PRAYER. We become less active: more about being than doing less thinking ... less imagining become more still savoring the graces and resting in the presence of God. You may quietly review with Jesus your prayer over several days, or rest in one particular scene or conversation that meant something to you in your prayer. We let the story of Jesus become a part of us....we let the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feelings of our contemplations wash over us, and we allow whatever insights, images, desires, or emotions that remain to take root in us. O'Brien, p.140



LISTEN TO: "Unto Us a Child Is Born" from Handel's *Messiah*, performed by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir; Spanish captions.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQWOP2YbQLg>

Our life is hid with Christ in God

Colossians 3:3 / Constitutions 4



What quotation, music, or image might you have chosen to include in Perspectives & Echoes?

Retreat in Daily Life Together —

Second Week (3)



THEME:

Imagine the hidden life of Jesus, those years of boyhood and young adulthood in Nazareth mentioned only briefly in the Gospels.

GRACE:

I ask to know Jesus more intimately, love him more intensely, and follow him more closely.

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 2:39-40 — contemplate Jesus' boyhood and growing up until the age of twelve

Luke 2:41-50 — accompany Jesus on his journey to the temple and his experience there

Luke 2:51-52 — live with Jesus during some portions of his teenage years and young adulthood

Psalms 42 — contemplate Jesus as a young man, praying this psalm ("as the deer longs...")

Matthew 3:13 — spend time with Jesus as he prepares to leave home and head for the Jordan River to begin his public ministry

Repetition

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

We ask the Spirit to show us what Jesus was like growing up. Accompany him as a friend, relative, or neighbor in Nazareth. Though fully divine, Jesus is also fully human (like us in all things but sin, our tradition teaches). Notice, then, how Jesus grows into his humanity. It doesn't matter whether or not the details you supply are historically accurate. We are not reconstructing history. With the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we are coming to know Jesus more intimately...

(SE 134) as explained by O'Brien, p. 147

SHCJ TRADITION:

The humble, hidden life of Jesus is the well-spring of the spirit of the Society, the source of its ardor and joy. (Constitutions 3) Cornelia always emphasized the dynamic aspect of Jesus' infancy and youth. The Child was destined to grow, programmed to grow up, and we with him, to full human and spiritual maturity. Strub, letter



PERSPECTIVES & ECHOES:

FOR CORNELIA, THE INCARNATE LIFE OF JESUS WAS GIVEN TO US AS PERFECT EXEMPLAR of a human life lived in total response to the Spirit. This depth of meaning in the Incarnation gives further significance to her “Spirit of the Holy Child Jesus” making it a spirit of dynamic growth, the growth inherent in “becoming a child again,” in being, in fact, “reborn” in the “new kingdom” inaugurated by the Incarnation.... The theme of growth in the likeness of Christ through the power of his Spirit ... is one of the most dynamic aspects of Cornelia’s teachings throughout her writings.... Caritas McCarthy, SHCJ, “The Child As Key”



A contemporary Jewish family celebrates the Sabbath



Eight stages of development — Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development —
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYCBdZL-](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYCBdZL-CDBQ)

[CDBQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYCBdZL-CDBQ)

“... growing as he grew ...”

AT EVERY STAGE, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT LEARNING.
 At later stages of the life cycle, we are learning to deal with the new circumstances of an aging body and changing social setting, and drawing on a lifetime of experiences for helpful precedents.

Mary C. Bateson, *Composing a Further Life*, Prologue



LISTEN TO: “Mary, Did You Know?”
 performed by Kathy Mattea — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6I597YUXw1E>



LISTEN TO: *Once in Royal David’s City*
 — King’s College Cambridge, 2015 —
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TT3cfXd3Shk>
 — words to last verse to the right ⇨

AND SO I THINK IT IS WITH YOU;
 your ideas mature gradually — let them grow,
 let them shape themselves, without undue haste.

Don’t try to force them on,
 as though you could be today what time
 (that is to say, grace and circumstances
 acting on your own good will)
 will make of you tomorrow.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ

**Jesus grew in
 wisdom, age & grace**

“A MOTHER’S WISH”

On this doorstep I stand
 year after year
 and watch you leaving
 and think: may you not
 skin your knees. May you
 not catch your fingers
 in car doors. May
 your hearts not break.
 May tide and weather
 wait for your coming
 and may you grow strong
 to break
 all webs of my weaving.

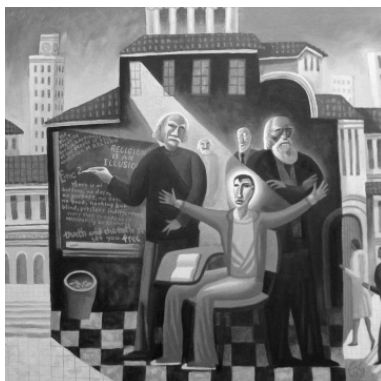
Evangeline Paterson

For He is our childhood’s pattern, / Day by day like
 us He grew, / He was little, weak, and helpless, /
 Tears and smiles like us He knew, /
 And He cares when we are sad,
 And He shares when we are glad.

PERSPECTIVES & ECHOES:

CENTRAL TO CHRISTIAN FAITH IS THE EXPERIENCE THAT IN DEALING WITH OUR BROTHER JESUS of Nazareth, we are dealing at the same time with a person who embodies the God who is Love in the flesh.... “and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn 1: 14). [Flesh] ... in John signifies what is material, perishable, simply and poignantly transient, in a word, finite, the very opposite of what is divine. All emphasis ... is on the entry of the Word of God into the vulnerable realm of earthy existence. “Deep Incarnation”

... *Annunciation ... Visitation ... Nativity ... Presentation ... Finding in the Temple ... Growing up in Nazareth ...*




... practicing the truth in love, we will
in all things grow up into Christ,
who is the head, from whom the whole
body grows, fitted and held together
through every supporting ligament.

As each one does its part,
the body builds itself up in love.

Ephesians 4: 14-16



 **LISTEN TO:** “Day by Day” from *Godspell*, performed by the Broadway revival troupe in the recording of their cast album for this musical based on Matthew’s gospel — https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JW_RpWbnJXQ

A Gentle Reminder —

At this point in the retreat it would be good to look again at the Notes in the previous packets, specifically **pp. 5-6 & 19 of the PREPARATION DAYS**, and **pp. 4-5 of the FIRST WEEK**. This is a good moment to make any adjustments you may need to make, so that you can re-focus and re-commit to this prayer journey in daily life together.

What quotation, music, or image might you have chosen to include in Perspectives & Echoes?

Retreat in Daily Life Together ~

Second Week (4)

THEME:

The call of Christ

GRACE:

I ask Jesus that I might not be deaf to his call in my life, but ready and willing to do what he asks me.

SCRIPTURE:

Contemplate the call of a worldly leader and the call of Christ

Matt. 4:18-25

Matthew 3:13-17

Isaiah 42:1-9

Luke 5:1-11

Hebrews 3:7-14

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

(SE 91-98) Adapted from Fleming



In the first part, let me put myself into a mythical situation — the kind of story-truth of which fairy tales are made —

Listen!

Vocation does not come from willfulness.
It comes from listening to my life.

I imagine a human leader, selected and raised up by God our Lord; everyone of good will, whatever their age, is drawn to be in the presence of such a leader, to listen and to follow. (You might bring to mind a person of our own time who fights against injustice, or labors for the oppressed and marginalized. Reflect on anyone who inspires you and summons your zeal to make the world better.) The challenge of this leader rings out: *"I want to overcome ... all the evils which beset humankind. Whoever wishes to join me in this must be content with the same food, drink, clothing — all that comes with following me. So too, whoever is with me in labor and loneliness will likewise have a part with me in the final victory."*

Who would not wish to respond to such a call?

Then, I consider Jesus Christ and his call: **"It is my will to win over the whole world, to overcome evil with good, to turn hatred aside with love, to conquer all the forces of death — whatever obstacles there are that block the sharing of life between God and humankind. Whoever wishes to join me in this mission must be willing to labor with me, and so by following me in struggle and suffering may share with me in glory."** Those who are of great heart and are set on fire with zeal to follow Jesus, will not only offer themselves entirely, but will act against anything which would make their response less total."

They would want to express themselves in words such as these:

**“Eternal Lord and King of all creation, humbly I come before you.
Knowing the support of Mary, your mother, and all your saints,
I am moved by your grace to offer myself to you and to your work.
I deeply desire to be with you in accepting all wrongs and all
rejections and all poverty, both actual and spiritual — and I
deliberately choose this, if it is for your greater service and praise.
If you, my Lord and King, would so call and choose me,
Then take and receive me into such a way of life.”**

SHCJ TRADITION:

I will have no reserves with my God. Cornelia Connelly
**Love of Christ leads us to give him our hearts and lives as he gave his,
without reserve and without recall.** Constitutions 19

PERSPECTIVES & ECHOES

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR: “I have a dream that one day ... the sons of former slaves ... and slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.” The most visible spokesperson and leader of the American civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968.

MALALA YOUSAFZAI: “So let us wage a glorious struggle against illiteracy, poverty and terrorism.... One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world.” At 15, in Pakistan, she was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman opposed to her campaign for the education of girls. She survived to continue her campaign, and was honored with the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014.

GRETA THUNBERG: “I also have a dream: that governments, political parties and corporations grasp the urgency of the climate and ecological crisis and come together despite their differences and take the measures required to safeguard the conditions for a dignified life for everybody on earth.” At age 15, she began to spend her school days outside the Swedish Parliament, holding a sign saying, “School Strike for Climate. Soon students all around the world joined her in their home communities.

MOHATMA GANDHI: “I dream of an ideal village where there will be “perfect sanitation.” Having seen the disease and malnourishment caused by poor sanitation, which threatened the lives of millions of Indians, he worked to improve the living conditions of his people, using nonviolent resistance to lead the successful campaign for India’s independence from British rule. His commitment inspired movements for civil rights and freedom across the world, until his assassination in 1948.



WE PRAY WITH ANOTHER KEY EXERCISE IN IGNATIUS' SCHOOL OF PRAYER: the Call of Christ, our King. The kingdom (or reign) of God is a central symbol in the biblical tradition with many layers of meaning. Most basically, it expresses God's dream for the world.... Jesus spoke of the kingdom of God and revealed most completely God's dream for the world in how he lived, taught, healed, and served others. Note the grace we ask for this week: we ask not to be deaf to Christ's call in our life and to be willing to do what Christ asks of us.... to be open enough to hear the call and to get excited about Christ's engaging vision for us and the world. (SE91), Adapted from O'Brien, p. 153

James Janknegt, *The Wall Project Mural*



AND SOMETIMES IT'S THIS FEELING THAT YOU have been tracked down, as Dr. King would say.... You have been caught up. You have been led. You have been not necessarily forced, but something caught up with you and said, "John Lewis, you too can do something, you too can make a contribution, you too can get in the way, but if you're going to do it, do it full and with love, peace, nonviolence, and that element of faith." Find a way to create the beloved community, the beloved world, a world of peace, a world where we recognize the dignity of all humankind. Never become bitter, or hostile; never hate. Live in peace. We're one, one people, one love. John Lewis, *On Being* interview, July 23, 2020

LISTEN TO: "The Summons," *Songs from Iona Community*, The Cathedral Singers, conducted by John Bell — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qer1dou6-xg>

What quotation, music, or image might you have chosen to include in Perspectives & Echoes?

TOUCH THE WORD

a mural arts project that shows Jesus in modern clothing, touching people on the street, under the bright lights of the city. There are ten scenes from the Scripture where Jesus is healing illnesses, with a flash of light on the mural every place he touches someone. **See it in color**

— <https://www.bcartfarm.com/mural4.html>



LISTEN TO: "Baba Yetu," "Our Father" in Swahili, composed by Christopher Tin and performed by the Stellenbosch University Choir — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCa8RxaOPW8>

THE HEART OF SCRIPTURE IS NOT A GREEN earth or ending racism (although these contribute toward a new earth) but a new creation, a new humankind, where the bonds of love define the interdependent goodness of life, where God is all in all... Ilia Delio, "Social Justice without Cosmic Theology Is Blind"

THE REIGN OF GOD IS A RICH JEWISH SYMBOL that points to God's coming rule, when the divine will is done on earth as it is in heaven. And what is that will? Nothing less than the reconciling and flourishing of all creatures, which we call salvation. Not only is sin forgiven. But physical health is restored. Recall how his healing practices placed people's bodily suffering at the center of concern, and how he used his own warm touch and even spittle to convey health. And recall how he fed people! "Deep Incarnation"

Retreat in Daily Life Together ~

Second Week (5)

THEME:

Contemplation of Jesus, whose choices and actions reveal the heart of God.

GRACE:

I ask to know Jesus more intimately, love him more intensely, and follow him more closely.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 4:1-11

Luke 4:14-30

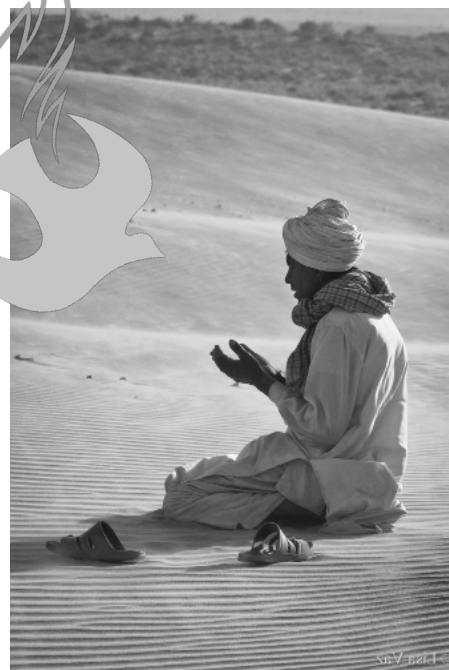
Mark 1:29-39

Repetition

Mark 2:1-12

John 4:5-42

1 Corinthians 1: 4-9

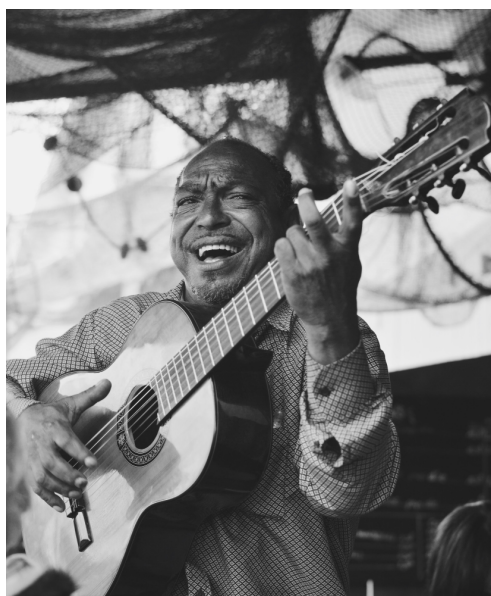


... led by the Spirit into the wilderness

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me

Quite often I find that I want to return to a particular aspect of a gospel mystery... In making such a repetition, it is always important not just to repeat the gospel incident but to return to those parts or points of focus where I have experienced understanding, insight, confusion, consolation, or desolation. Since entering into the setting of such a repetition is frequently easily done, the emphasis more and more is placed on my own affective response, which is expressed in the colloquy. (SE118) Fleming



SHCJ TRADITION:

Whether restoring a medieval ruin, painting a life-sized triptych or creating a system of education, Cornelia was at home in God's world, in collusion with whatever was of beauty, truth or goodness. She also dedicated her energies to helping people, children and adults, to expand and grow into their potentialities. This was her characteristic mode of expressing active hope in the fullness of life made possible by the incarnation. Strub

For this is our mission: to help others to believe that God lives and acts in them and in our world, and to rejoice in the divine presence Whatever our ministry, we try with perseverance to help others grow strong in faith and lead fully human lives. Fidelity to those ideals requires 'an almost unlimited elasticity and simplicity of spirit among us.' Constitutions 4, 6

PERSPECTIVES & ECHOES

BUT ON THE REALLY CRUCIAL DECISIONS OF LIFE

... it is not just the pro-and-con-listing part of me or the coin-tossing and advice-seeking parts that are involved. It is all of me, heart, mind, will and when the moment comes and I find myself moving out for good and all, one way or another, there is a kind of relentless spontaneity about it, a kind of terrific sense of conviction, so that if you are Matthew in the tax office, you lay down your slide rule and your pencil, do not even finish the form that you happened to be working on at the moment, but just push back your chair and start heading for the door without even bothering to pick up your coat And then you step out of there forever without once looking back over your shoulder, and start following the way you have chosen: not that way over there or that way right here, but this way. Of all the ten million and one ways in the world, you choose this way. Or maybe it chooses you — to put it a better way. Or you choose each other, your way and you.

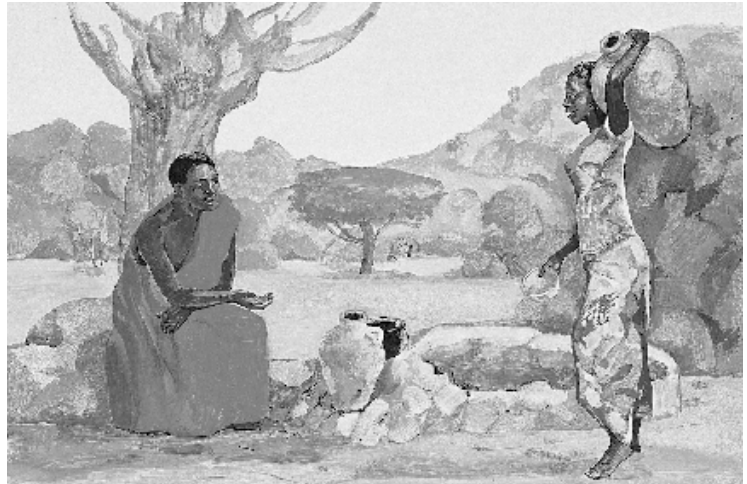
Frederick Buechner, *Listening to Your Life*



ENTERING OUR LATER DECADES CALLS US TO LOOK MORE DEEPLY and more truthfully than we perhaps ever have at what we are doing with these lives of ours. We are face to face with our last chance to experience our lives more fully and more freely, to experience it so much more able to love and give and forgive. Kathleen D. Singh, *The Grace in Aging*

Right: "The Healing of Peter's Mother-in-law" by Rembrandt ⇒

DISCIPLESHIP OF JESUS IS ABOUT SO LETTING him into our lives that we too grow in the grace to love instead of hate or turn away, that we too grow in freedom from the compulsion to defend ourselves or retaliate. We know the life and healing that flows when we let this happen, when we let go our frightened grip. Bachelard, "No Room for Christ at the Inn," 2018




ENCOUNTERING ANOTHER HUMAN BEING is as close to God as I may ever get — in the eye-to-eye thing, the person-to-person thing — which is where God's Beloved has promised to show up. Paradoxically, the point is not to see him. The point is to see the person standing right in front of me, who has no substitute, who can never be replaced, whose heart holds things for which there is no language, whose life is an unsolved mystery. Barbara Brown Taylor, *An Altar in the World*





Jesus serves the family meal — Dominican Republic

 **LISTEN TO:**
 “Room at
 the Table”
 by Carrie New-
 comer—
[https://www.
 youtube.com/
 watch?v=92OM5b](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92OM5b)


LISTEN TO: “Jesus
 le Christ,” Taizé—
 “Jesus, your light
 is shining with-
 in us”— [https://
 www.youtube.com/
 watch?v=DEhEzyM-
 Hejs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEhEzyM-Hejs)

***The Journey*—Mary Oliver**

One day you finally knew
 what you had to do, and began,
 though the voices around you
 kept shouting their bad advice –
 though the whole house
 began to tremble and you felt the
 old tug at your ankles.
 “Mend my life!”
 each voice cried.

But you didn’t stop.

You knew what you had to do,
 though the wind pried
 with its stiff fingers
 at the very foundations,
 though their melancholy
 was terrible

But little by little,

as you left their voices behind,
 the stars began to burn
 through the sheets of clouds,
 and there was a new voice
 which you slowly
 recognized as your own,
 that kept you company
 as you strode deeper and deeper
 into the world,
 determined to do
 the only thing you could do –
 determined to save
 the only life you could save.

Let us sing the new world in, this is how it all begins,
 there is room at the table for EVERYONE!
 There’s enough if we share, come on, pull up a chair,
 there is room at the table for EVERYONE!

AS FAR AS THE LIVING GOD IS CONCERNED, LIBERATING,
 healing, and inclusive love is the meaning of it all. This is
 what Jesus stands for. Clearly this ... applies to everyone
 who suffers from the frustrations and finitude of mortal life. In a
 special way it applies to marginalized human beings, suffering from
 entrenched poverty and violence, for whom God intends liberation
 and healing. But theology cannot stop there it becomes clear that
 fullness of life for all, not just for one species (*homo sapiens*) but for
 all, including poor human beings and all living creatures, is God’s
 original and ultimate intent earth and all its creatures are also
 encompassed by divine love. Adapted from Johnson, “Deep Incarnation”

**You will know your vocation
 by the joy that it brings you.
 You will know. You will know when it’s right.**

Dorothy Day

THE OLDER I GET, THE MORE I MEET PEOPLE, the more convinced I
 am that we must only work on ourselves, to grow in grace. The only
 thing we can do about people is to love them. Dorothy Day

What quotation, music, or image might you have chosen to include in Perspectives & Echoes?