

RETREAT IN DAILY LIFE TOGETHER



A Mini-Retreat

Society of the Holy Child Jesus — October, 2021

Retreat in Daily Life Together a mini-retreat to refresh & renew



In Asian cultures, the mandala is basically a representation of the universe, a consecrated area that serves as a receptacle for the gods and a collection point of universal forces. The belief is that by entering the mandala and proceeding towards its center, you are guided through the cosmic process of transforming the universe from one of suffering into one of joy and happiness.

'pray for a new, enriched perspective'

A key element in making the Spiritual Exercises is the reflection after each period of prayer. The same is true for the whole experience, especially at a little distance from it when we can pray for the grace of a new, enriched perspective. Thinking about how we felt about any experience, maybe writing about it, then redrafting, re-thinking and rewording helps us to revisit it in a very meaningful way.

'listen again to our own depth'

Having listened to the Word of God in and through words, pictures, music, nature or whatever, Ignatius proposes that we listen again to our own depth.

What happened to and in me during and after the retreat?

What were the inner movements?

What were the patterns of my consolations (joy, peace, confidence ...) and desolations (trouble, distrust, fear ...)?

How has God touched me in my deepest affectivity?

How is God still present in all that happens within and around me?

The usual quotation from the Spiritual Exercises about such reflection is this one:

After finishing the exercise, I will, during the space of a quarter of an hour, seated or walking leisurely, consider how it went with me in the contemplation or meditation; and if badly, I will look for the cause from which it proceeds, and having so seen it, will be sorry, in order to correct myself in future; and if well, I will give thanks to God our Lord and will act in like manner another time [77].

'possible ways to reflect'

What follows here are possible ways to reflect on the whole experience of making the Retreat in Daily Life Together. **OR** is such an important word throughout the Exercises. Ignatius invites us to find the ways of praying and reflecting on praying that open us to God, adapting the method **OR** time **OR** place.

Gathering the fragments, recognising the patterns, becoming a detective of graces received, seeking the treasures are all possible descriptions for this mini-retreat — which may take place over a few hours and/or days, individually and/or with your retreat companions. The important thing is to relax into this exercise and let God prompt, guide and nourish you.



When the people had eaten their fill, he said to his disciples, "Gather the leftovers so nothing is wasted." They went to work and filled twelve large baskets with leftovers from the five barley loaves. John 6:12-13

Possible starters **OR**
a combination of these:

- + re-read your journal slowly and notice again what seems to recur ...
- + allow memories to come back to you in an *ad hoc* way ...
- + draw on these verses from scripture or other ones meaningful to you
- + write the story of the retreat as a kind of blog, limiting the number of words to maybe 500. What kind of story has it been? An adventure? A mystery? A roller coaster?
- + describe the experience in a letter to God or Cornelia or Ignatius or ...
- + write a poem or several ...
- + create a mandala or collage, using words and images



"God's kingdom is like a treasure hidden in a field for years and then accidentally found by a trespasser. The finder is ecstatic — what a find! — and proceeds to sell everything he owns to raise money and buy that field. Matthew 13:44-46

LISTEN: "I Found the Treasure" in *Walking the Sacred Path*, by Dan Schutte; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrQVuMnYiK0>

PERSPECTIVES AND ECHOES

WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP DO I THINK I HAVE WITH GOD, OR GOD WITH ME?

Is my God male or female, mother or father, friend or lover, companion or master, protector or challenger, ruler or servant, critical judge or dancing partner?

What would happen if I come too close to God? from *Christian Meditation: Experiencing the Presence of God*, James Finley

I do not understand the mystery of grace — only that it meets us where we are and does not leave us where it found us. Anne Lamott, TED talk

Contemplation is movement, perhaps a spiral going deeper and deeper into experience and meaning ... is recollection of all that has been, searching in memory for forgotten graces. Ivy Bishop, actor



LITTLE GLANCES AND REPETITIVE PRAYERS CAN BE LOVING, SWEET, AND deep, but it is in practicing direct relationship with God that we encounter the grits and guts of love. Here are the breadth and depth of personal joy and pain, consolation and desolation, reassurance and fear, communion and alienation. The possibilities for practice are endless. Create the habit of pausing... breathing for stillness... allowing this to happen... using your imagination... giving permission for this possibility... Finley (cont'd)



LISTEN: *Appalachian Spring*, Copland; directed by Alondra de la Parra, Frankfurt Radio Symphony; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfdwgXSdcMw>



LISTEN: "Panis Angelicus" by César Franck, sung by Patricia Janečková; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdKAHp9m1QQ>

THE CHURCH COMES TOGETHER IN THE EUCHARIST to discover once again what it really is and to be renewed in that discovery. And it discovers again and again — day by day and century by century — that what it is, is something very simple. It is the assembly of people contemporary with Jesus Christ: people made alive in their communion with him. Day by day and century by century, the Church is tempted to believe that it is something a great deal more complicated. It loves to run away from the simplicity of that encounter with Christ. And yet there at the heart of everything is that fundamental fact than which nothing is deeper and nothing is truer: we are those made alive in communion with Jesus. And we express it in the supreme simplicity of a physical action. We eat the bread of life and we take into our bodies the very being of that 'friend of friends' who is Jesus Christ.

Rowan Williams, in celebration of the Mary Ward 400 Jubilee, January 23, 2010

"BEGINNERS" — Denise Levertov

... But we have only begun
To love the earth.
We have only begun
To imagine the fullness of life.
How could we tire of hope?
— so much is in bud.
How can desire fail?
— we have only begun
to imagine justice and mercy,
only begun to envision
how it might be
to live as siblings with
 beast and flower,
not as oppressors.
Surely our river
cannot already be hastening
into the sea of nonbeing?
Surely it cannot
drag, in the silt,
all that is innocent?
Not yet, not yet —
there is too much broken
that must be mended,
too much hurt we have done
 to each other
that cannot yet be forgiven.
We have only begun to know
the power that is in us if
 we would join
our solitudes in the communion
 of struggle.
So much is unfolding that must
complete its gesture,
so much is in bud.

LISTEN: "Rhapsody of Rest," Sara
Thomsen; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4HRXiNEF-w4&list=PL-1b0I3-nREwt-GHi8McyMcBgRW-M_-9Pnu&index=8



[M_-9Pnu&index=8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4HRXiNEF-w4&list=PL-1b0I3-nREwt-GHi8McyMcBgRW-M_-9Pnu&index=8)

WE LIVE IN AN ERA OF UNRAVELING:

wars, financial breakdown, gun violence, unemployment, mass migration, racial discrimination, gender inequality, poverty rising, and the poisoning of our ecosystems.... If your spirits aren't being challenged, undone, or unraveled, then you are not paying attention.... We can never know whether our efforts make any difference, but we must **act as if**, to continue to make the choice out of love each time, to let cynicism shrivel, even as the world continues to crumble all around us. The heart sees how it is all connected.... It can be hard to remember that there is goodness in the world, that love is the foundational impulse. But together, we must let ourselves unravel, feel the breaking down of everything, stay present, lament, and then imagine. We must **act as if**, gathered in our little tribes of kindness, showing love to our corner of the world. We must become outposts of generosity.... Let the heart be nourished first and see what happens.

Christine Valters Paintner



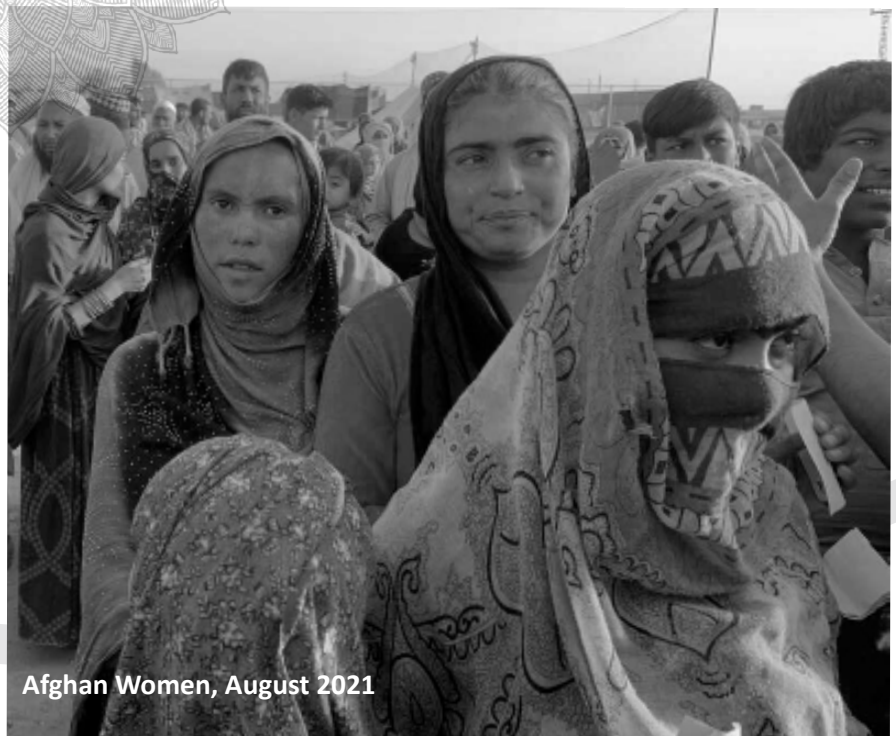
LISTEN: "The Deer's Cry," Arvo Pärt; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ir3htl3UIBk>

"Christ with me, before me,
behind me, in me, beneath me,
above me, on my right,
on my left...

in the heart of everyone who
thinks of me, in the mouth of
everyone who speaks of me, in
the eye that sees me, in the ear
that hears me, Christ with me"

**"And the day came when the risk
to remain tight in a bud
was more painful
than the risk it took to blossom."**

Anaïs Nin



Afghan Women, August 2021

**"NOW, DO YOU WANT TO KNOW A SECRET?
Making new; that's what's going on in the
world; that's what's happening. The Holy
City is not future perfect. It's present tense
.... Now the Holy City is descending. Now
God is making things new. Right now God is
wiping tears and easing pain and overcoming
the power of death in the world. Now! ...
it's happening now in the midst of our worn,
torn, broken world. And with the eyes of
faith, you can see it happening."** David Buttrick

Earthquake in Haiti, August 2021



Hurricane Ida, New Orleans, September 2021



Haitians at the US-Mexico border, September 2021



Kidnapped student in Nigeria, August 2021



LISTEN: "Namaste," A Sound Meditation by Ben Iobst; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGxxolQC6fc>

"... by entering the mandala and proceeding towards its center, you are guided through the cosmic process of transforming the universe from one of suffering into one of joy and happiness." As you contemplate these images of recent events, consider:

I am touched by _____ I want _____ I pray _____



📺 “Dreams of Kirina” by Senegalese singer, Baaba Maal performing for the *Playing for Change Foundation* which is building a new music school in the Village of Kirina, Mali. Kirina is a village of musicians, some of whom can trace their musical ancestry back over 75 generations! In this very special episode West African music legend Baaba Maal and friends perform for the village elders in honor of the new music school, École de Musique de Kirina. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IxItKLvYCWE>

“LET YOUR GOD LOVE YOU”

Be silent, Be still. Alone. Empty. Before your God. Say nothing. Ask nothing. Be silent. Be still. Let your God Look upon you. That is all. God knows. And understands. God loves you with an enormous love. Wanting only to Look upon you with Love. Quiet. Still. Be. Let your God — Love you. *There Was No Path So I Trod One*, by Edwina Gateley

Sources of Inspiration

Books, articles, poems . . .

Scripture: *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language*, by Eugene Peterson.

David Buttrick, “Making New,” in *Imaging the Word*, Volume 1. United Church Press, 1994.

James Finley. *Christian Meditation: Experiencing the Presence of God*. HarperOne, 2009.

Edwina Gateley. *There Was No Path So I Trod One*. Source Books, 1996.

Anne Lamott. “12 Truths I learned from Life and Writing,” TED talk, April 2017

Denise Levertov. “Beginners,” on various websites: <https://www.poetry-chaikhana.com/blog/2010/10/18/denise-levertov-beginners/>

Rowan Williams. Address celebrating the Mary Ward 400 Jubilee. January 23, 2010. Online: https://www.congregatiojesu.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Dr_Rowan_Williams.pdf

Media links . . .

“I Found the Treasure,” from *Companion Music for Walking the Sacred Path: Spiritual Exercises for Today*, by Dan Schutte; 2009; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrQVuMnYiK0>

Appalachian Spring, by Aaron Copland; the Frankfurt Radio Symphony conducted by Alondra de la Parra, 2020; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfdwgXSdcMw>

“*Panis Angelicus*” by César Franck, sung by Patricia Janečková; performed at the 4th Festival Concert / Sacred Music, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdKAHp9m1Q0>

“*Rhapsody of Rest*,” by Sara Thomsen, from the album *Like a Seed*, 2019; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4HRXiNEfw4&list=PL-1b0l3-nREwtGHi8M-cyMcBgRWM_-9Pnu&index=7

“*The Deer’s Cry*” for viola and piano, by Arvo Pärt; performed by VOCES8; text from St. Patrick’s breastplate; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lr3htl3UIBk&list=RDlr3htl3UIBk&start_radio=1

“*Namaste*,” A Sound Meditation performed by Ben Iobst on Tibetan singing bowls; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGxxolQC6fc>

“Dreams of Kirina,”

by Baaba Maal and Kirina villagers; performed for the *Playing for Change Foundation* in support of building a new music school for the village, 2010; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IxItKLvYCWE>

