Meeting Christ in Prayer

Many years ago, I sat down for my first meeting with a new spiritual director, more specifically, my new Jesuit spiritual director. He asked me to describe my prayer, that is, to describe my relationship with God. I did my best to put this significant and special spiritual, sometimes abstract, set of feelings, responses, and reactions into words. I recall the reaction of my new Jesuit spiritual director: “Yes, but what about your relationship with Jesus?” he asked with surprise, yet determination. I was a bit taken aback, because his reaction was not quite affirming, and I admit that I didn’t quite know how to respond. During our next few conversations, I came to better understand something about the Jesuits and their style of prayer: it was conversation with God. More specifically, it was often conversation with the person of Jesus Christ.

My experience with this Jesuit spiritual director taught me to pray in a manner prescribed by Jesuit founder St. Ignatius of Loyola. St. Ignatius’ Spiritual Exercises are a series of instructions, guidelines and meditations for prayer: for speaking and listening to God, and for getting to know Jesus and his love for us. Prayer as a conversation was much more profound than I had realized it could be. It is about paying attention to changing emotions and feelings and becoming aware of the grace of God. This is listening to God; this is how we can hear God’s voice. As my prayer evolved, so did my relationship with God and my understanding of how God, in the person of Jesus, was active in my life.

When used in its full form, St. Ignatius’ Spiritual Exercises span a full thirty days, with several prayer periods a day. The retreat is often experienced in silence, and the one making the retreat speaks to no one other than a spiritual director once each day. However, the methods for prayer prescribed in the Spiritual Exercises provide a framework for a manner of prayer that can be used at any time, not only on a thirty-day retreat.

During the upcoming seasons of Lent and Easter, Old St. Joseph’s Ignatian Spirituality Committee will help to lead Meeting Christ in Prayer, a spiritual renewal program based on Ignatius’ Spiritual Exercises. Meeting Christ in Prayer invites us to encounter Jesus, to grow in understanding of him, and to know his love through our prayer. Furthermore, the program will seek to help us respond to Jesus’ love through our actions in daily life. In this way, Ignatian prayer is not simply devotional; it is contemplative in nature and can be a very practical tool to help us to live incarnationally and to discern God’s will in our lives. Meeting Christ in Prayer will help us to have conversations with God, to reflect on our words and actions, and even help us to make decisions based on God’s love.

—continued inside
Pre-Mass Reflection Group
Each Sunday, beginning at 5:30 PM and ending by 6:20 PM, all young adults are invited to reflect as a group on the readings that will be heard at the Sunday 6:30 PM Mass. We will meet in the Greaton Parlor and begin by reading the scripture of the day, followed by a short time of quiet prayer with an emphasis on imaginative prayer, and end with an opportunity for sharing and discussion. Please meet outside 321 Willings Alley and ring to be let in. Materials will be provided; all are welcome. If you have any questions or if you would like to sign up to facilitate, please contact Danielle at osjyac@gmail.com.
Meeting Christ in Prayer is an eight-week program where participants meet in small groups with a leader for 1.25 hours once a week. Participants are also asked to set aside 30 minutes every day for person prayer during the eight weeks.

We chose to begin the Meeting Christ in Prayer program during Lent because Lent is a time for spiritual renewal with deeper attention to prayer and self-reflection. The program is deeply rooted in the life of Christ, and the focus of each week will correspond to Lent, Passiontide, and Easter. The program begins the week of March 8, the Second Sunday of Lent, and ends the week of May 3, the Fourth Sunday of Easter. We will take a break from meetings during the week of Easter.

Whether you are new to the style of prayer in the Spiritual Exercises, whether you have made the full thirty-day retreat in the past, or you are anywhere in between, Meeting Christ in Prayer is suitable for you. Any relationship, and particularly our relationship with God, will grow and flourish by providing it with loving attention. Ignatian prayer offers us a framework for conversations with God at any time, in the context of a retreat or informally as daily reflection, or even in the midst of a busy day. Ignatian prayer helps us to know God’s love and better respond to God’s love in our lives.

We hope that you will consider taking part in this opportunity for spiritual renewal and an encounter with Jesus. Please direct questions to osjsspirituality@oldstjoseph.org. You may use the flyer found at oldstjoseph.org or in the literature racks in the entranceways to the church to sign up before February 16.

—Len Mancini
for the Ignatian Spirituality Committee

Front page image: Head of Christ by Frances and Richard Hook
Announcements

**Jazz Vespers at Christ Church**

Christ Church will celebrate Jazz Vespers on **Sunday, February 16 at 5:00 PM.** Christ Church’s choir will be joined by the choirs of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas and the Philadelphia Community Mass Choir and a jazz quartet. Christ Church is located on 2nd Street, a few steps north of Market Street. All are welcome to attend.

**Jesuits and Architecture**

Temple University’s Tyler School of Art and Architecture will host a talk on *Jesuits on the Saint Mary’s River: Architecture in the Context of a Global Christianity.* Susan Nalezyty, Georgetown University lecturer in art history, will speak on **Monday, February 17 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM** in first floor event space of the Charles Library at 13th and Norris Streets, Philadelphia. This presentation is free and open to the public.

**Covenant House of Pennsylvania**

Covenant House PA will host its first annual Women’s Leadership Mixer on **Thursday, February 27 from 5:30 to 8:30 PM.** Tickets to the event at Independence Live, 1919 Market Street, are free but limited. The cover charge for the evening is a gift of new undergarments for men or women. RSVP to Eventbrite.com/e/womens-leadership-mixertickets/90350991247.

**Faithful Politics at Cabrini University**

Cabrini University welcomes John Carr, founder and director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public life on **Wednesday, February 12 at 4:30 PM.** Carr’s talk, Faithful Politics, will kick off Cabrini’s spring lecture series on *Living Justice in the American Catholic Church.* For more information, contact Dr. Ray Ward at rew68@cabrini.edu. RSVPs are welcome but not required; please email Megan Norris at mln49@cabrini.edu.

**Retreats at the St. Raphaela Center**

The third annual Philadelphia Charis Ministries retreat, *Spirit@Work,* will be held at St. Raphaela Retreat Center in Haverford, PA from **Friday, March 6 to Sunday, March 8.** Retreatants will reflect on different career or relationship paths, seek the Holy Spirit’s presence in their lives, learn about Ignatian tools for decision-making, and grow in understanding of how to respond to God’s invitation. Registration is open at straphaelacenter.org. Contact ignatianyaretreats@straphaelacenter.org for more information.

The St. Raphaela Center will also host *The Enneagram: Ego and Transcendence* on **April 18–19.** For enneagram beginners and experts, alike, the retreat will draw on both personality psychology and Christian spirituality. It will be facilitated by Nicholas Collura MDiv. Register by calling 610-642-5715.
Announcements

Meeting Christ in Prayer
Sign-up for Meeting Christ in Prayer through February 16. Old St. Joseph’s Ignatian Spirituality Committee will lead this small-group faith-sharing program from the week of March 8 through May 3. Participants commit to spending twenty to thirty minutes in daily prayer, keeping a journal of thoughts and reflections during their prayer time and attending eight 1.25 hour long weekly small-group meetings for prayer, discussion and faith-sharing. Sign-up forms are available at oldstjoseph.org and in the literature racks in the church entrances. More information is available from osjspirituality@oldstjoseph.org.

So Many Ways to Pray:
A Lenten Family Activity
Please bring your family for an afternoon of activity and community on February 29 from 3:15–5:15 PM to explore the nuances of family prayer. Participants will create and take home a family prayer toolbox to aid prayer at home. All ages are welcome; please RSVP if possible to office@oldstjoseph.org with ages of children attending so we can plan accordingly. The activity will be facilitated by Carol Hanlon, a parishioner and a catechist whose experience includes the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a program begun in the 1950’s by Montessori educators Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi. The program will end in time for you to attend 5:30 Mass if you choose.

Creation and the Cross Today!
The first of three talks on Elizabeth A. Johnson’s Creation and the Cross will take place today at 1:15 PM in Barbelin Hall with OSJ parishioner and Saint Joseph’s University professor Gerard Jacobitz. Two additional sessions are scheduled for February 23 and March 1 at 1:15 PM. All are welcome!

Cook-Out Dinner Tonight!
All are invited to the monthly Cook-Out Dinner on Sunday, February 9 after the 6:30 PM Mass! This monthly meal is organized for the entire parish by members of the Young Adult Community. See you there!
If you can help at a future dinner, please contact Tom Nailor at thomas.nailor@gmail.com or at 203-940-2790.

Centering Prayer
All are welcome to an evening of centering prayer on Wednesday, February 19 from 6:30 to 8:30 PM in the Drexel Parlor of the parish offices. There will be a presentation with discussion on centering prayer, followed by evening prayer with a period of centering. For further information, contact Christine Szczepanowski at 267-250-3049 or prep@oldstjoseph.org.

Ash Wednesday
Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 26. Mass with distribution of ashes will be celebrated at Old St. Joseph’s at 12:05 PM and 7:00 PM. Relaxed parking will be available for both Masses.
INFORMATION

Pastor
Fr. Walter Modrys SJ (pastor@oldstjoseph.org)

Parochial Vicar
Fr. Frank Hannafey SJ (fhannafey@oldstjoseph.org)

In Residence
Br. Robert Carson SJ
Fr. Edward Dougherty SJ (dougherty@oldstjoseph.org)
Fr. Ed O’Donnell SJ (eodonnell@oldstjoseph.org)

Pastoral Associate
BJ Brown (bjbrown@oldstjoseph.org)

Business Manager
Eric German (germane@oldstjoseph.org)

Director of Music
Mark Bani (music@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Offices
(office@oldstjoseph.org)

Religious Education (PREP) Coordinator
Christine Szczepanowski (prep@oldstjoseph.org)

Faith, Food & Friends Director
Deborah Hluchan (faithandfriends@oldstjoseph.org)

Director of Hospital Ministry
Tom Volkert (hospitalEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Rectory Office Hours
Monday through Friday: 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM
Sunday: 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Mass Times
Monday through Saturday: 12:05 PM
Saturday Vigil Mass for Sunday: 5:30 PM
Sunday: 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 AM and 6:30 PM
Holy Days: 12:05 and 7:00 PM

Medical Emergency
In a medical emergency when the need for a priest is urgent, please call the rectory.

Hearing Enhancements
Old St. Joseph’s is equipped with an audio hearing loop. Switch on the T-coil function of your device to use the loop. Booklets with the Sunday readings are available in the rear of the church.

Registration
Registration forms are available in the rectory office during normal office hours, on the bookcases in the back of the church and online at www.oldstjoseph.org. They can be returned to the parish office by mail or in person.

Sacrament of Reconciliation
A priest is available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation Monday through Saturday from 11:30 AM–12:00 PM or by appointment.

Sacrament of Baptism
If you want to arrange a baptism, please contact Fr. Hannafey (fhannafey@oldstjoseph.org) at least two months before the desired date.

Eucharist for the Homebound
To arrange to receive Communion at home, please contact the parish offices.

The Sacrament of Anointing
The Sacrament of Anointing (the sacrament of the sick) is offered during the 12:05 PM Mass on the first Saturday of each month. Homebound or hospitalized persons wanting to receive the Sacrament of Anointing should call the parish office.

Sacrament of Matrimony
If you want to be married at Old St. Joseph’s, please visit our website, oldstjoseph.org and read the material under the heading Weddings. Please call the parish office at 215-923-1766 at least nine months before your desired wedding date.

Rite of Christian Initiation
If you are an adult wishing to be baptized, or to receive First Eucharist and Confirmation, or are a baptized non-Catholic seeking full communion with Catholic Church, please call the parish office or email rcia@oldstjoseph.org.

Mass of Christian Burial
To schedule a funeral or memorial Mass, ask your funeral director to call the parish office.

Parish Pastoral Council
(osjpc@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Finance Council
Paul Shay, chair

Historic Preservation Corporation Board
Fr. Walter Modrys SJ, president

Adult Education
Rita O’Brien and Jeanmarie Zippo
(adulted@oldstjoseph.org)

Eldership
Pat Nelson (eldership@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Life
Joe Casey (parishlife@oldstjoseph.org)

Ignatian Spirituality and Formation
Len Mancini (osjspirituality@oldstjoseph.org)

Women, Faith and Fellowship
Rana McNamara (wff@oldstjoseph.org)

Young Adult Community
(osjyac@gmail.com)

Altar Servers
Maria Ramirez (altarserver@oldstjoseph.org)

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
Bill Stewart (EM@oldstjoseph.org)

Hospital Ministry
Luanne Balestrucci (hospitalEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Homebound Ministry
Neal Hébert (homeEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Lectors
Lou Anne Bulik (lectors@oldstjoseph.org)

Ushers
Nikola Szigorich (ushers@oldstjoseph.org)

Children’s Liturgy of the Word
Peggy Connolly (clow@oldstjoseph.org)