

LAY LEADERSHIP UPDATE

April 2016

VOL VI NO 9



A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Finding God and loving God in ourselves, in all circumstances, and all people is the fruit of our life in Christ. (See Reflection by Liz Sweeney, SSJ on p. 2 - Deepening our Awareness ... Something to Ponder). Empowered by the Risen Christ, we continue our participation in Christ's ministry through these various programs:

Praying with St. Ignatius Parish Retreat. The participants at **St. Christopher Parish, Rocky River** completed this 8-week adaptation of the *Spiritual Exercises* on March 6th. The retreat continues at **Our Lady Help of Christians Parish, Lodi Worship Site** and will conclude on April 13th. 12 lay leaders have offered leadership to the 68 engaged retreatants.

Nurturing the Call. The new 5-part pilot program for retreat leaders of the *Praying with St. Ignatius* and the *Encountering Christ* retreats at Jesuit Retreat House and St. Ignatius High School continues on April 7th and 21st. Organized by **Martha Campbell** and **Janet Lehane**, this month's sessions will be led by **Joan Carney** and **Debbie Dacone**.

Food for the Journey. 19 participants gathered on March 19th to continue this 4-part series, "Accidental Theologians ... A Continuing Exploration." Based on *An Interrupted Life: The Diaries and Letters of Etty Hillesum*, the sessions explore the "theology of hope" found in the writings of this victim of the Jewish holocaust.

The Pilgrim Way of Ignatius Loyola. During this past Lenten season, 85 people from **St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Parma** participated in this four-part introduction to the *Spiritual Exercises*. The program concluded on March 1st with **Rev. Robin Craig's** witness to the effects of the *Spiritual Exercises* in her Life.

CALLED AND SENT SPIRITUAL FORMATION PROGRAM Module Update

Two of the six modules of the Called and Sent Spiritual Formation Program were completed during this past Lenten season. They are: **The Christian at Work in the World: Finding God in Daily Work** at **St. Dominic Parish, Shaker Heights** (30 participants) and **Living Prayer** at **Forest Hill Presbyterian Church, Cleveland Heights** (33 participants). A third module, **Embracing the Mystery**, continues at **Regina Health Center, Richfield** (26 participants) and will conclude with a day-long retreat on May 3rd.



The Christian at Work in the World: Finding God in Daily Work. Co-Leaders Claudette Matero (left) and Sharon Bramante (right) chat with guest speaker Rich Jerdonek during a session break at St. Dominic Church, Shaker Heights

COMING IN MAY ...

IGNATIAN CURRENTS PROGRAM
with **Constance FitzGerald, OCD**
and **Brian McDermott, SJ**
Come and Bring a Friend!

**CHRIST CONSCIOUSNESS: CARMELITE AND IGNATIAN
SPIRITUALITIES IN DIALOGUE**

Friday, May 6, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
through Saturday, May 7, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Followed by Optional Eucharistic Liturgy at 4:30p.m.

Growth in human consciousness is the leading edge of evolution as we know it. Growth in Christ consciousness, for Christians, is the leading edge of the evolution of human consciousness. We will be mindful of the distinction between states and stages of consciousness. Within this broad context we will address topics such as: • Jesus Christ as the pioneer of evolution • Teresa and Ignatius as exemplary pioneers of Christ consciousness • The dynamics of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius as providing the foundations of Christ consciousness • St. Teresa's Prayer of Recollection as help in deepening one's intimate relationship with Christ • Teresa's and Ignatius' Christic and Trinitarian Consciousness The program will include lecture, time for quiet reflection and dialogue with the facilitators.

See registration details on p. 2 of this newsletter.



DEEPENING OUR AWARENESS - SOMETHING TO PONDER

ENGAGING IN DEEPENING PRAYER

Adapted from a Reflection* by Liz Sweeney, SSJ

Over the years, as prayer becomes simpler, grace moves us from a protective, defensive ego-centered sense of self to a sense of identity rooted and grounded in LOVE, in God. As we sit in contemplation and as we engage life's daily challenges contemplatively, our mystic capacity to find God and love God in ourselves, in all circumstances, and all people deepens. We are gradually, yet surely, led into a self-emptied, and fully conscious presence that is both embodied and spacious, opening into Love, into "I am," into Christ.

This higher consciousness, the transpersonal self, lives with and in a deep sense of communion with God and with every [person.] Because such consciousness is not defined through roles, comparisons, and distinctions from others, but is experienced as a transcendent energy center, it can live inside others, flow into them, abide in them, share its essence with them. With such consciousness, we begin to live what Jesus knew when he invited his followers, "Abide in me, as I abide in you." (Jn. 15:4) And this luminous Self (known classically as the presence of God's grace within us) is the root of our capacity for creative love that flows out freely to all without exception, knows no boundaries, and has no enemies. The practice of uniting with it and radiating it to others makes possible our realizing our oneness with all. Gradually, as dwelling in this part of the Self becomes more stable in us, we are transformed into vessels of healing presence, of engaged justice and compassion, able to love without reserve.

While this kind of transformation is an invitation for each of us individually, it will be facilitated by and have greater impact on us and on the world if we embrace the practice of contemplation as communal bodies, ... "Where two or three [or more] are gathered," Christ is truly present in our midst. (Mt. 18:20) In groups, fields of communion can be created in which deeper states of consciousness arise that open us individually and communally to the Infinite presence of Spirit and Love. [T]his in-breaking of the Divine happens often and readily. Our work is to expect it, be alert for it, and especially to take time to dwell in those moments when we are touched by something More.

*Adapted from "The Evolutionary Task Now: To Raise the Powers of Love Upward," pp. 3-7. *LCWR Occasional Papers: Living in Communion*, Winter 2016.

DEEPENING LIFE IN GOD ...

As we sit in contemplation and as we engage life's daily challenges contemplatively, our capacity to find God and love God in ourselves, in all circumstances, and all people deepens.

- Liz Sweeney, SSJ

IGNATIAN CURRENTS ... SOME DETAILS

CHRIST CONSCIOUSNESS: CARMELITE AND IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITIES IN DIALOGUE

Presented by Constance FitzGerald, OCD
and Brian McDermott, SJ

OPEN TO ALL - SPACE IS LIMITED

Friday, May 6th

7:00 - 9:00 p.m. (Coffee at 6:30 p.m.)

Saturday, May 7th

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (Coffee at 8:30 a.m.)

Followed by optional Liturgy of the Eucharist at 4:30 p.m.

Program Options

Commuter: \$80.00

Overnight: \$120.00

Note that registration is for both Friday and Saturday.

To Register: Contact Barbara Leggett at

jrhcleve@att.net OR (440) 884-9300 OR register online:

www.jrh-cleveland.org

COMING SOON ... HELP SPREAD THE WORD

What Do You Seek? An Ignatian Approach for Parental Loss of Older Children

April 6th from 7 - 9 P.M.

Facilitated by Rev. Robin Craig

This evening retreat is designed to help parents who have lost teen-aged or adult children explore possibilities for prayer in the Ignatian tradition of imaginative, Scripture-based prayer.

Cost: \$20 - Register on-line: www.jrh-cleveland.org

"Woman You Are Set Free":

A Retreat Rooted in the Exercises of St. Ignatius for Women Hurting After Abortion

Facilitated by Debbie Dacone and Rev. Matt Roche, SJ

Cost: \$175 - Same Retreat at 2 locations and times:

Loyola Retreat House (700 Killinger Rd, Clinton OH 44216)
Friday evening July 15 - Sunday afternoon July 17, 2016

To register: lovolaretrete@aol.com or (330-896-2315)

Jesuit Retreat House (5629 State Road, Parma OH 44134)
Friday evening August 12 - Sunday afternoon August 14

To register: www.jrh-cleveland.org or (440-884-9300X310)

For further information, contact Debbie Dacone at

preachnghealingwords@gmail.com

Lay Leadership Programs - Martha Campbell, Director

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