

A photograph of a grid of red candles placed on stone steps. The candles are arranged in a regular pattern, and several of them are lit, with their flames visible. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the candles in the foreground.

Session 6

Lord Jesus Christ, I
want to be with you
compassionately in
your suffering.

Guided Experience

Finding Vocabulary for Consolation and Desolation

(Adapted from the workshop on “Discernment for Boards of Directors” lead by Ed Quinnan, S.J. and Jim Conroy, S.J. and offered at the St. Louis Ignatian Spirituality Conference 2011)

- ❖ Close your eyes or find a focal point. Take a moment to check in to your inner experience.
- ❖ Identify an experience that you’ve had where you found yourself losing hope. Rather than faith, you felt doubt. Rather than love, you experienced an absence of love. Perhaps you had insight into selfishness or you experienced a movement where you felt unloved and unlovable.

As you center into that experience, is there a label, a descriptor, a word or words that you would use to describe this experience?

Jot down some words that describe this experience so that when you hear them again you’ll say to yourself...ah, yes, that experience.

- ❖ Share with another person your description of this experience.
- ❖ Now, think of an experience you’ve had in which you identified an increase of faith, hope...love. A time when you found confidence, energy, courage, zeal, perhaps a desire to help another. What name would you give that movement of spirit?
- ❖ Share with another person your description of this experience.
- ❖ Now, take 2-3 minutes to talk about what came up for you in the two categories. What are some other words that describe consolation...desolation?

Gospel Contemplation in the Spiritual Exercise Agony in the Garden (Mt. 26: 36-46)

Time before

1. *Whose presence?* I will be in the presence of God.
2. *What is my grace?* Lord Jesus Christ, I want to be with you in your suffering.
3. *What is my passage?* I will prepare Mt. 26:36-46
4. *How long will I pray?* I will pray for 20 minutes. In the Sp. Ex., it is normally an hour.

Time during

Contemplating the Passage: Mt. 26: 36-46

Then Jesus came with them to a small estate called Gethsemane: and he said to his disciples, “Stay here while I go over there to pray.” He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee with him. And sadness came over him, and great distress. Then he said to them, “My soul is sorrowful to the point of death. Wait here and keep awake with me.” And going on a little further he fell on his face and prayed. “My Father,” he said, “if it is possible, let this cup pass me by. Nevertheless, let it be as you, not I, would have it.” He came back to the disciples and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “So you had not the strength to keep awake with me one hour? You should be awake and praying not to be put to the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Again, a second time, he went away and prayed: “My Father,” he said, “if this cup cannot pass by without my drinking it, your will be done.” And he came back again and found them sleeping, their eyes were so heavy. Leaving them there, he went away again and prayed for the third time, repeating the same words. Then he came back to the disciples and said to them, “You can sleep on now and take your rest. Now the hour has come when the Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. “Get up! Let us go! My betrayer is close at hand.”

The time after is for the Review of Prayer. This is where discernment takes place. It is when one is ‘reading the signs’ that God brought up in the prayer time and trying to understand their deeper meaning. Take 5 minutes for this review. In the Sp. Ex., it is normally 15 minutes.

The discerning process has two steps:

- I. What are the signs God gave me during the prayer time?
 1. What did I like?
 2. What did I not like?
 3. What new insights did I have?

- II. What do these sign mean?
 1. What did I learn about the God, the Son, or the Spirit?

2. What did I learn about myself?
3. What did I learn about our present relationship?
4. What is my next step for growing in this relationship?

PRAYING WITH IGNATIUS-SAINT IGNATIUS HIGH SCHOOL

HOME PRAYER SELECTIONS

Week 6

PREPARE: Choose Place, Posture, Prayer Time, Prayer Passage, and become mindful of the Presence of God.

GRACE SOUGHT: Lord Jesus Christ, I want to be with you compassionately in your suffering.

Pray:

Luke 22:7-34 The Last Supper

Luke 22:39-46 Agony in the Garden

Luke 22:47-71 Passion I

Luke 23:1-49 Passion II

Repetition of Week

Holy Saturday (with Mary or Disciples)

Review of Prayer:

1. What did you like? What resonated with you?
2. What didn't you like? Where did you feel resistance?
3. Did you experience and spiritual insight? Delight?

1. What was revealed of God?
2. What was revealed of yourself?
3. What is being revealed of your relationship with God?