

## **Part 1: Friends in God**

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## **Part 1: *Friends in God***

### **1/ Summer Review**

- Purpose: to review the summer break to see how God has been present on the journey
- Exercise: Summer Review
- Action: pray, “What do you hope to get out of CLC this year?”

### **2/ My Hopes and God’s Desires**

- Purpose: to know our hopes, goals, and commitments for the year
- Exercise: CLC Covenant with God; Meeting topics
- Action: prayer center, prayer partners

### **3/ Pilgrims on the Journey**

- Purpose: to discuss the importance of sharing our spiritual Autobiography
- Exercise: Ignatius—the Pilgrim
- Action: work on Spiritual Autobiography, prayer partner

### **4/ Sharing My Faith Journey 1**

- Purpose: to share my faith journey and graced history
- Exercise: My Spiritual Autobiography
- Action: to pray for the person who shared his or her story

### **5/ Sharing My Faith Journey 2**

- Purpose: to share my faith journey and graced history
- Exercise: My Spiritual Autobiography
- Action: to pray for the person who shared his or her story

### **6/ Beloved from the Beginning**

- Purpose: to grow in greater awareness of how God **creates** and loves me
- Exercise: *Lectio Divina* (Ps 139)
- Action: to experience a moment of God’s love each day

### **7/ Sharing My Faith Journey 3**

- Purpose: to share my faith journey and graced history
- Exercise: My Spiritual Autobiography
- Action: to pray for the person who shared his or her story

### **8/ Sharing My Faith Journey 4**

- Purpose: to share my faith journey and graced history
- Exercise: My Spiritual Autobiography
- Action: to pray for the person who shared his or her story

### **9/ Favored by God**

- Purpose: to deepen our sense of being God’s **beloved** from our very creation
- Exercise: Ignatian contemplation, “My baptism”
- Action: to repeat the meditation

### **10/ Dreaming with God**

- Purpose: to see and feel what God sees and feels about the world
- Exercise: Imaginative Prayer
- Action: the whole group goes to Sunday Mass together to give God thanks

# #1 Summer Review



## Scripture

When the LORD saw him coming over to look at it more closely, God called out to him from the bush, "Moses! Moses!" He answered, "Here I am." God said, "Come no nearer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your fathers, . . . .I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their cry . . . .Come, now! I will send you to Pharaoh to lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." (Exodus 3:4-10)

*Matt 18:18-20*

*"Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them"*

*Matt 11:28-31*

*"Come to me all you who are weary."*

## Introduction & Welcome (1")

Introduce yourself and welcome the group. If you have new members, welcome them and briefly go through introductions. Then, explain the purpose of the meeting: to review summer.

## I. Opening Prayer (5")

*Grace: to become more attentive to how God has been present in my life during the summer*

Use the grace and the suggested scripture above to create your own prayer, or use the one below. After reading the scripture, say . . . . "Lord, we thank You for gathering us here. We believe You are here with us, for You promised to be present wherever two or three are gathered in Your name. We ask You to open our hearts to Your love and blessings. Help us to reflect upon our breaks and to find you in places we have been. Just as you told Moses to remove the sandals from his feet, for the place where he stands is holy ground, so help us to recognize that the places we have been were holy. Amen.

## II. Check-In (5")

Invite members to share some of the high and low points of the week. This check-in is meant to ease the group into reconnecting and reflecting on their life experiences and they should be brief.

- What were some of your high and low points of the week?

## III. Focus Exercise (40")


Materials Needed: CLC supply box (CLC journal booklets, papers, pens, etc.). All handouts are in the CLC journal booklets. If you do not have them, come to the CLC office.

 **Introduction:** If using a song to set the tone, invite members to listen to the words of a song, such as Jones' "The Places You find Love." Ask members to pay attention to the

words they hear. After the song, invite them to reflect on significant events, people, or places where they have found love.

#### Exercises: Summer Review

Invite members to pray with: “Summer Review.” The questions can be found in their CLC journal booklets on page... and also in your binder towards the end of this meeting. Give members 5-7 minutes to pray. Play some instrumental music if helpful.

 **Sharing:** invite members to share what they wrote during the prayer period. Use the Summer Review questions given as a guide for your group sharing and conversation.


#### Listening Deeper

*Suggested Questions to deepen awareness of inner movements and further conversation*


- What has struck you as you have been listening to others share? Do you notice any patterns or commonalities?
- How have you been feeling throughout the meeting? Comfortable? Anxious? Curious?
- Is there anything you would like to share after listening to another person share?


### IV. Moving Forward (5”)

 **Wrap Up:** thank members for their openness and participation.

 **Action:** the heart of CLC spirituality is to grow in faith. Every week, we suggest one concrete action for group members to pray about or act on. For this week, notice where you tend to experience God on campus. Go back to the place and pray for the graces you need for this year. Here are two suggested questions to pray with:

- (1) What do you want to get out of CLC this year?
- (2) Ask God, “What do you hope for me this year?”

 **Housekeeping:** discuss or confirm meeting day, time, location, etc.

 **Announcements:** topic for next meeting and upcoming CLC events

### V. Closing Prayer (5”):

Pray for each other.

## Summer Review

### Presence of God:

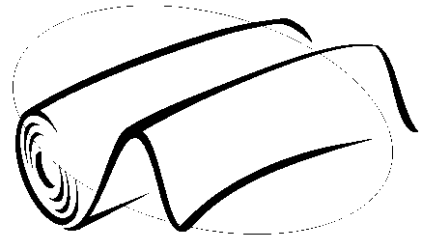
- Take a moment to recall God's presence
- Grace to pray for: to see how God has loved me during the summer

### Suggested questions to pray and share

1. What were some of your high and low points of the summer?
2. What do you think God is saying to you through these high and low points?
3. What changes, if any, have you noticed in your relationships with family, friends, significant others, and your faith community?
4. How have you practiced your faith during the summer (attending Sunday mass, worship, etc.)? Did you find it to be challenging?
5. How do you feel about coming back to school? To CLC?



## #2 My Desires, God's Hopes



### Scripture

The next day John was there again with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God." The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means teacher), "Where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come, and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day. It was about four in the afternoon. (Jn 1:35-39)

Jer 31:31-34    "...this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel....I will write my law on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

### Introduction & Welcome (1")

Welcome the group. If you have new members, welcome them and briefly go through introductions.

### I. Opening Prayer (5")

*Grace: to get in touch with our desires and goals for the year and make a covenant with God.*

Use the grace or the suggested scripture above to create your own prayer or use the one below: After reading the scripture, say..... *"Lord, we thank you for gathering us here tonight. We ask you to help us get in touch with our hopes and desires for the year. We also ask for the grace of being open to make a covenant with you. Just as you have promised to be the God of Israel and Judah and take care of them, please continue to be our God. Help us to continue choosing you as our God for we belong to you as your people. Amen."*

Note: ask for a volunteer to lead opening and closing prayers for the next meeting


### II. Check-In (5")

Invite members to share some of the high and low points of the week. This check-in is meant to ease the group into reconnecting and reflecting on their experience and it should be **brief**.

- What were some of your high and low points of the week?


### III. Focus Exercise (40")

Materials Needed: CLC Examen bookmarks, CLC supply box (CLC journal booklets, papers, pens, etc.). All handouts are in the CLC Journal booklets. If you do not have them, come to the CLC office.

 **Introduction:** Tonight we are going to talk about our desires, goals, and commitments for the year and then discuss the meeting topics.

### **Exercise 1: My Covenant with God (20')**

1. Open your journal booklet on page....., "My Covenant with God." Encourage members to pray and write down the answers. Give them about 7 minutes or so to pray. Play some instrumental music during prayer.
2. If helpful, explain the word, "Covenant." The Hebrew word *berith*, covenant, occurs over 280 times in the Old Testament. (The English word covenant means "a coming together.") Covenants can include treaties, alliances, agreements, compacts, pledges, mutual agreements, promises, and undertakings on behalf of another. Covenants in the Bible can be agreements between two individuals, between a king or leader and his people; or between God and individuals, or God and groups of individuals.
3. Put a CLC Covenant cloth or a large sheet of paper in the middle of the circle. (Note: the large sheet of paper can be found in your supply box)

 **Sharing:** Encourage everyone to share their prayers

1. My hopes and commitments: After each person shared, have each member write his or her commitment in the back of the Awareness Examen bookmark. (note: if for some reason they don't have Examen bookmarks, you either give or encourage them to make one). Invite members to put the bookmark on their prayer centers at home, which you will discuss more about later.

2. Our hopes and commitments. Say, "In a few minutes, we are going to make a covenant with God. Before we do that, we need to come up with 2 or 3 common hopes and commitments that our group wants to commit to each other and with God."
  - Ask, "Do you hear any **common hopes and commitments** from what we've shared?" Allow time to discuss. Here are a few suggestions for the group to consider: attend weekly meetings, pray with Awareness Examen daily, do group service once per quarter, attend CLC events regularly, etc. Choose two or three common hopes and commitments.
  - Write or draw images that capture the **group's hopes** or graces to pray for in the center and the **group's commitments** around the CLC Covenant cloth. Feel free to decorate it. Once this is done, tell members that we are going to display it in our prayer center each meeting as a way to remind ourselves.

### **Exercise 2: Meeting Topics for the year (10')**

1. Members' input: Allow times to discuss the meeting topics. Encourage members to keep in mind their hopes of the year and the graces we pray for.
  - Which meeting topics would be helpful for us to receive the graces we pray for?
2. Formation team's input: Share with members our formation team's research studies from the past few years. The results show that in Phase 3 members want to be challenged more and want to have a stronger sense of belonging in CLC. They want to have more opportunities to

explore the questions of **faith and vocation**. They also want to know how to discern and choose activities and people that help them grow fully and get closer to God.

Thus, the team designs the meetings in Phase 3 with the members' desires in mind. They highly recommend the group to follow the suggested meetings and spiritual movements. The main focus of this year is **Discernment**—discerning Relationship, Faith, and Vocation. If helpful, you can refer them to see the “**Meeting Topics**” **under the Table of Contents** on the first page of their journal booklets or just mention them out loud.

(Note: feel free to adjust meeting topics within the themes according to your group's needs)


#### **Listening Deeper**

*Suggested Questions to deepen awareness of inner movements and further conversation*


- What has struck you as you have been listening to others share? Do you notice any patterns or commonalities?
- How have you been feeling throughout the meeting? Comfortable? Anxious? Curious?
- Is there anything you would like to share after listening to another person share?

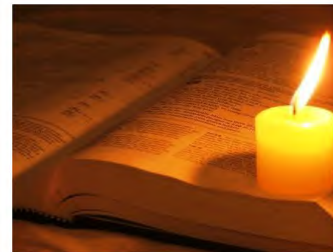
### **IV. Moving Forward (5’)**

 **Wrap Up:** thank members for their openness and participation.

 **Action:** the heart of CLC spirituality is to grow in faith. Every week, we suggest one concrete action for group members to pray about or act on.

1. Prayer Center: encourage members to create a prayer center in their rooms and put their commitment bookmarks on it as a reminder of their own covenant with God. Choose one habit to work on until they receive the grace they pray for.  
(Note: if helpful, explain that a prayer center is a “sacred space” to remind ourselves of the presence of God. It could be simply as a candle and a cloth, a sacred image, a Bible, a crucifix, etc.)
2. Prayer Partner: pray for each other during the week and get together once for cp time. If helpful, explain cp (*Cura Personalis—care for the whole person*)

 **Announce:** Topic for next meeting and upcoming CLC events.



### **V. Closing Prayer (5’)**

✚ Encourage members to pray for each other's hopes for the year by praying for the person to his or her left. Member A prays for member B, who will then pray for C and so on.

(Coordinator should begin first) *I would like to pray in thanksgiving for .....*

## *My Covenant with God*

### **Presence of God:**

- Take a moment to recall God's presence
- Grace to pray for: to get in touch with my desires, goals, and commitments for the year

### **Suggested questions to pray and share:**

#### 1/ Your desires and goals for the year

- What do you want to get out of CLC this year? Name one or two graces you would like to receive by the end of this year.
  
- In what concrete ways or actions are you going to commit yourself to live out your desires? Any specific habits? (see the suggestion of CLC habits on the next page)

#### 2/ Your hopes for our group

- What are your hopes for our CLC group this school year? Name one or two graces you would like our group to receive by the end of this year?
  
- In what concrete ways or actions are you going to commit yourself to our group?

3/ Our commitments: In what concrete ways do you think our group should commit to each other and God? Name one or two specific actions (e.g., attend weekly meeting, pray with Ignatian Examen daily, and serve community 20 hours per year, attend CLC events, etc.)

4/ God's hopes: Imagine God is sitting in front of you. Ask God, "Do you have any hopes for me? For my CLC group?"

## CLC Habits: living out the CLC way of life

Choices → Actions → Habits → Character → Vocation → Mission →

*Communion with God*

*How might God invite me to adopt & cultivate 1 or 2 suggested habits below?*

### 1/ Build stronger community:

- attend all of my CLC group meetings
- be more vulnerable, honest, and real
- care and support one another with a love that
- empowers – helps one another discover and develop our unique gifts
- transforms – helps one another change positively
- participate in campus-wide CLC events at least once a month (BBQ, Bowling, Agape, Latte, etc.)
- ask someone to serve as your accountability partner to encourage you to be
- faithful with a habit you're working on
- attentive and disciplined in an area of struggle or of growth

### 2/ Grow in my journey of faith:

- pray regularly: daily Awareness Examen, quiet reflection, journaling, pray with the graces and prayer materials from CLC meetings, and other ways of praying such as Taize, eXALT, etc.
- read the Bible or spiritual readings (10' everyday)
- participate in Sunday Worship or Mass every Sunday
- go to Confession during Advent and Lent
- attend a spiritual retreat as a retreatant once a year
- see a spiritual director
- get enough sleep and exercise regularly

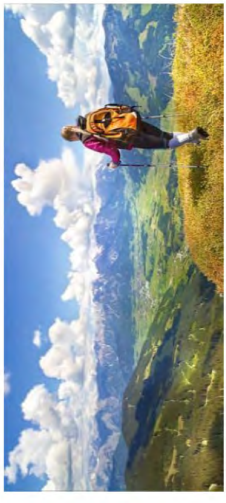
### 3/ Become a person with and for others

- serve the poor and marginalized regularly
- reach out to the lonely and forgotten in CLC and beyond
- raise greater awareness of justice issues locally, nationally, and globally
- keep up with my studies as a way to develop my gifts for furthering God's kingdom of peace and justice
- live simply so others simply live

Daily habit: Actualize our greatest yet unused power--be the difference that makes the difference in a person's life/day!!!

*What kind of person do I want to become?  
Who I am is God's gift to me  
Who I become is my gift to God*

## #3 Pilgrims on the Journey



### Scripture

I will lead the blind on a way they do not know; by paths they do not know I will guide them. I will turn darkness into light before them, and make crooked ways straight. These are my promises: I made them, I will not forsake them. (Isaiah 42:16)

*Jer 31:3*  
*Psalms 139*

*I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.”*  
*Oh God, you have probed me, you know me....You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb.*

**Note:** *This meeting is adapted from <http://www.youmgadulitlc.org/caminos/>*

### Introduction & Welcome (1”)

Purpose: to discuss the importance of sharing our Spiritual Autobiography

### I. Opening Prayer (5”)

*Grace: to recognize our shared journey as pilgrims “on the way.”*

Use the grace and the suggested scripture above to create your own prayer, or use CLC Opening and Closing prayer, which can be found in Appendixes section.

Note: ask for a volunteer to lead opening and closing prayers for the next meeting.

### II. Check-In (5”)

Invite members to share some of the high and low points of the week. This check-in is meant to ease the group into reconnecting and reflecting on their life experiences and they should be **brief**.

- What were some of your high and low points of the week?

### III. Focus Exercise (40”)

Materials Needed: CLC supply box (CLC journal booklets, papers, pens, etc.). All handouts are in the CLC journal booklets. If you do not have them, come to the CLC office.

✚ **Introduction:** tonight we’re going to discuss the importance of sharing our Spiritual Autobiography and the process. (Note: If you have many returning members, mention that you are aware of what they have done in Phase 1—sharing their faith journey. The spiritual autobiography is much more in depth and lengthier).

- Listening Deeper** ✚
- Suggested Questions to deepen awareness of inner movements and further conversation*
- What has struck you as you have been listening to others share? Do you notice any patterns or commonalities?
  - How have you been feeling throughout the meeting? Comfortable? Anxious? Curious?
  - Is there anything you would like to share after listening to another person share?

- Sharing:** ✚ invite members to share and discuss the following suggested questions
- What stands out to you upon watching or hearing Ignatius' story?
  - Are there parts of your own journey that find resonance with that of Ignatius? Describe. What arises for you in regards to the idea of "journey" or "pilgrimage"?
  - As you look upon the sharing of your own spiritual autobiography, what excites or frightens you?

You have 2 options. Choose one: either read the story or watch the video and discuss it

Option #1: read the story, "Ignatius—the Pilgrim"  
 Option #2: watch video, "Olive." It's an animated story of St. Ignatius  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSVOPtq30Xw>

### ✚ Exercise: The Spiritual Autobiography of St. Ignatius

- (2) **The process:** we will have **2 persons** share in each meeting over the course of this quarter.
- What to share? Go over the handout, "Sharing our Spiritual Autobiography"
  - Have members sign up, including group leaders. (Note: See the table of contents to know which weeks the group has meetings on sharing autobiography. Perhaps, group leaders should sign up first in modeling the process)
- (1) **Why Spiritual Autobiography?** Explain the following points in your own words.
- First, it helps to **build community** of friends in God. Each of us has a unique faith journey and grace history. By sharing our journey, it helps us get to know each other on a deeper level. It also cultivates greater trust, vulnerability, and honesty within the community.
  - Second, it helps us become **more aware** of our experiences of God. Who is God for us? How does God work in our lives? How does God love and care for us since birth up to now? Are we growing in our relationship with God?
  - Third, it helps us cultivate a more **discerning heart** to pay more attention to how God is moving in our lives and how our personal vocations are unfolding.
- Note: check in with members to see whether they "buy in" about the rationale of why we share our spiritual autobiography before explaining the process.

#### IV. Moving Forward (5")

✚ **Wrap Up:** thank members for their openness and participation. Discuss group service project this quarter.

✚ **Action:**

- (1) switch prayer partners
- (2) work on your Spiritual Autobiography

✚ **Announcements:** topic for next meeting and upcoming CLC events

#### V. Closing Prayer (5"):

Pray for each other or use the CLC Closing Prayer



## **Sharing our Spiritual Autobiography guidelines**

### **A.M.D.G.**

**Purpose:** to recall your experiences of God since your birth up to now. Focus on 3-5 significant “religious” experiences.

**Process:** Please prepare to share around **15-20 minutes** about your spiritual history up to now, either verbally and/or with aids such as written outlines, pictures, diagrams, or a slideshow. You are invited to begin the sharing with a **song** that illustrates your spiritual journey, if you think it would be helpful. Or, you might choose to use the song for a concluding prayer instead.

**Presence of God:** Find a quiet space or a favorite prayerful place where you might have some uninterrupted time. Imagine God gazing upon you with tenderness. Allow yourself to rest in God’s very presence. Begin with asking God for the gift of **seeing your life** as it is, through God’s eyes and “heart.”

#### ***Suggested Questions to pray and share:***

There are no adequate criteria to describe one’s spiritual journey. Hence there are no “right” or “wrong” ways. The following questions can serve as starting points in preparing your sharing. You need not cover all the questions. Rather, focus on the ones most relevant to you. Be open to what these might be. Imagine you’re writing a book or making a movie of your life.

1. What title would you give?
2. How many chapters or episodes are there?
3. What has been your religious upbringing (during childhood, young adulthood, etc...)? What have been your experiences of church, retreats, ministry, outreach to the poor, justice work, etc.? You might want to focus on several significant spiritual or religious experiences.
4. Who has been influential in your faith life and how?
5. How do you imagine God/Jesus? Has it changed at various times in your life? How?
6. What are your favorite Scriptures passages and/or prayers? What are some of your habits in living the spiritual life? How do you pray?
7. Do you notice any reoccurring threads or patterns in your life? If you were to choose a motif or image that describes your spiritual journey up to now, what will it be? (e.g. a road, hike, hanging bridge, river, plane trip, etc.)
8. What are your unique gifts and talents? Looking at your life thus far, what makes you truly alive and happy? In the words of Pedro Arrupe SJ, what consistently “gets you out of bed in the morning” or “what breaks your heart?”
9. What do you hope to happen in the next chapter of your faith journey?

## **The Life of St. Ignatius** *Adapted from Mark Link, S.J.*

### **Ignatius: Saint or Sinner?**

We often see or hear about this great figure in the Church as a saint or a great man. We do not usually first think or hear about his addictions and struggle to find God. This short article attempts to describe his journey to find himself and his purpose in life and how God helped him to do so. Hopefully, his story can help inspire you to walk your own path to do the same.

### **Early Life**

Ignatius was born in Spain in 1491, a year before the discovery of America. He was the youngest of 13 children and was known as Inigo. His parents died before he was sixteen, at which point he went to live with a family friend. There, he was frequently at court and became addicted to gambling, dueling, and women. Eventually, he became a Spanish soldier. During a battle against the French, a cannonball wounded one of his legs and broke the other. He returned home to heal from his injury.

### **Dreamer**

During the long months of his recuperation, Ignatius asked for romance novels and chivalry books to pass time, but there were none available. His home had only a copy of the life of Christ and a collection of saints' lives. Desperately, he began to read them. The more he read, the more he daydreamed to be like them, which made him feel peaceful and satisfied. At the same time, he continued daydreaming about winning a noble lady's heart in court, which left him restless and unsatisfied. This experience was not only the beginning of his conversion but also the beginning of his "discernment of spirits," a prayerful decision-making process that he began to develop.

### **Seeker**

After regaining his health, Ignatius decided to go on a journey for his spiritual growth and explore his dream. He left Loyola and went to Montserrat, where he spent three days writing down all his sins and went to confession. He knelt praying all night in vigil, left his sword and knife at the altar to symbolize giving up his old life, gave away his fine clothes to a poor man, and dressed himself in rough clothes with sandals and a staff. At daybreak, he continued his journey towards Barcelona but stopped along the River Cardoner at a town called Manresa. There he spent the next ten months.

### **Prayer**

Ignatius' first months at Manresa were filled with profound spiritual consolation, a sense of peace and God's love for him. He volunteered to help the sick in a hospital, begged for food, and slept wherever he could. Each day Ignatius spent seven hours in prayer and read his favorite book, *The Imitation of Christ*. Whenever he experienced consolation and gained some insights about God, he wrote it down in his spiritual journal.

## **Tortured Soul**

After months of consolation, Ignatius began to experience desolation. He felt that God was totally absent from his life. The whole idea of conversion and the desire to turn his life over to God seemed impossible. Ignatius tried to pray and fast more in order to regain the joy and consolation that he once had experienced. But, it was all in vain! He was on the brink of desperation and suicide. Fortunately, he did not give in to this dark period. Slowly, he again began to experience the comfort of grace.

## **Mystic**

When peace returned to his tortured soul, Ignatius had some mystical experiences. When the church bells rang, he felt like his soul soared skyward like an eagle. Everyday objects and experiences became images and symbols of God's presence for him. On one occasion, he clearly saw how Jesus Christ was present in the Eucharist. Once during prayer, he had a powerful vision of the humanity of Christ. These experiences strengthened his faith so much that he said that if there were no Bible, he would still be convinced of God's existence and love for him.

## **Transformed Person**

One September afternoon, while he was walking along the Cardoner River, Ignatius had an extremely enlightening experience that forever impacted him. The experience helped him to understand many things, spiritually as well as intellectually, about God and life. Later, he mentioned that all the enlightenments of his life combined "would not, in his judgment, be as great as what he experienced on that occasion."

## **Spiritual Guide**

Ignatius was overwhelmed by his enlightenment at Cardoner. He saw clearly how the risen Jesus and his kingdom were truly real and active among us. He also saw how we all struggle to experience God in our lives and to fight the battle between good and evil in the world. Thus, he wanted to share his own experiences of God and ways we can "find God in all things." This is one of the central characteristics of Ignatian spirituality. It is especially evident in his prayer of the Awareness Examen. He also wrote a book which helps others discover their personal vocations called "The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius." It is upon these exercises that CLC is based.

## **University of Paris**

After many years of helping others to experience God, Ignatius discovered that he needed to further his education to better serve others. During his studies, he continued helping others to find God and discern their vocations in life. He found a small group of friends in his dorm, including Francis Xavier, Peter Faber and James Lainez. They helped one another to discover their calling and purpose in life. They eventually founded a community called the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1540. By the time of Ignatius' death in 1556, thirty-five Jesuit colleges had been established in Europe. SCU is now one among twenty-eight Jesuit universities in the U.S. and one of ninety Jesuit colleges world-wide.

## #4 Sharing My Faith Journey 1



### Scripture

*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my daughter...Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them. (Hosea 11:1-4)*

*Isaiah 43:1 But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, Jacob, and formed you, Israel. Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine.*

*Note: this meeting is adapted from <http://www.youngadultclc.org/caminos/>*

### Introduction & Welcome (1")

#### I. Opening Prayer (5")

*Grace: to recognize God's loving presence in our lives through the various experiences and people that have shaped us on our spiritual journeys.*

Use the grace and the suggested scripture above to create your own prayer, or use CLC Opening and Closing prayer, which can be found in Appendixes section.

- Pray for the person who is to share his/her spiritual autobiography.

Note: ask for a volunteer to lead opening and closing prayers for the next meeting.


#### II. Check-In (5")

Invite members to share some of the high and low points of the week. This check-in is meant to ease the group into reconnecting and reflecting on their life experiences and they should be **brief**.


- What were some of your high and low points of the week?

#### III. Focus Exercise (40")

Materials Needed: CLC supply box (CLC journal booklets, papers, pens, etc.). All handouts are in the CLC journal booklets. If you do not have them, come to the CLC office.

 **Introduction:** remind members about the process

- (1) Length: 15-20 minutes. After each person shared, feel free to comment or ask questions for clarification or further conversation. The purpose is to help the person deepen his/her own experiences.
- (2) Confidentiality: remind members that the sharing one's faith journey is sacred and challenging. What is shared stays in this room.

 **Sharing:** invite members to share

*After a member of the group has shared his or her spiritual biography, invite the members into a few moments of silence. Invite them to reflect upon the following questions:*

- What struck you about the community member's sharing? What is remaining with you?
- Are there areas where you are left with further questions or clarifications?
- Are there particular themes or patterns that you noticed that may be helpful to share?
- Are there any comments or questions that you could offer that might help deepen a community member's reflection?

 **Listening Deeper**

*Suggested Questions to deepen awareness of inner movements and further conversation*

- What has struck you as you have been listening to others share? Do you notice any patterns or commonalities?
- How have you been feeling throughout the meeting? Comfortable? Anxious? Curious?
- Is there anything you would like to share after listening to another person share?

#### **IV. Moving Forward (5")**

**Wrap Up:** thank members for their openness and participation.

**Action:**

- (1) Pray with Awareness Examen: pray for the persons who shared their stories and listen for how their stories may resonate with yours.
- (2) switch prayers partners

**Announcements:** topic for next meeting and upcoming CLC events

#### **V. Closing Prayer (5"):**

Different rituals may be helpful at the conclusion of each of the meetings where Spiritual Autobiographies are shared. Options include:

- A laying on of hands and offering gratitude for the person who shared.
- Invite members to each share a word that reflects how they are feeling or what remains with them after this meeting.
- Have a larger piece of paper that each member can add a symbol that represents their journey after they have shared. After everyone in the group has shared, reflect on the collective nature of the symbols and identify commonalities and shared themes.
- Decide on another creative option as a group that will affirm each person's story.

## #5 Sharing My Faith Journey 2



### Scripture

*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my daughter...Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them. (Hosea 11:1-4)*

*Isaiah 43:1 But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, Jacob, and formed you, Israel. Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine.*

*Note: this meeting is adapted from <http://www.youngadultclc.org/caminos/>*

### Introduction & Welcome (1")

#### I. Opening Prayer (5")

*Grace: to recognize God's loving presence in our lives through the various experiences and people that have shaped us on our spiritual journeys.*

Use the grace and the suggested scripture above to create your own prayer, or use CLC Opening and Closing prayer, which can be found in Appendixes section.

- Pray for the person who is to share his/her spiritual autobiography.

Note: ask for a volunteer to lead opening and closing prayers for the next meeting.


#### II. Check-In (5")

Invite members to share some of the high and low points of the week. This check-in is meant to ease the group into reconnecting and reflecting on their life experiences and they should be **brief**.

- What were some of your high and low points of the week?

#### III. Focus Exercise (40")

Materials Needed: CLC supply box (CLC journal booklets, papers, pens, etc.). All handouts are in the CLC journal booklets. If you do not have them, come to the CLC office.

 **Introduction:** remind members about the process

- (1) Length: 15-20 minutes. After each person shared, feel free to comment or ask questions for clarification or further conversation. The purpose is to help the person deepen his/her own experiences.
- (2) Confidentiality: remind members that the sharing one's faith journey is sacred and challenging. What is shared stays in this room.



- A laying on of hands and offering gratitude for the person who shared.
- Invite members to each share a word that reflects how they are feeling or what remains with them after this meeting.
- Have a larger piece of paper that each member can add a symbol that represents their journey after they have shared. After everyone in the group has shared, reflect on the collective nature of the symbols and identify commonalities and shared themes.
- Decide on another creative option as a group that will affirm each person's story.

Different rituals may be helpful at the conclusion of each of the meetings where Spiritual Autobiographies are shared. Options include:

## V. Closing Prayer (5’):

**Announcements:** topic for next meeting and upcoming CLC events

- (1) Pray with Awareness Examen: pray for the persons who shared their stories and listen for how their stories may resonate with yours.
- (2) switch prayer partners

**Action:**

**Wrap Up:** thank members for their openness and participation.

## IV. Moving Forward (5’)

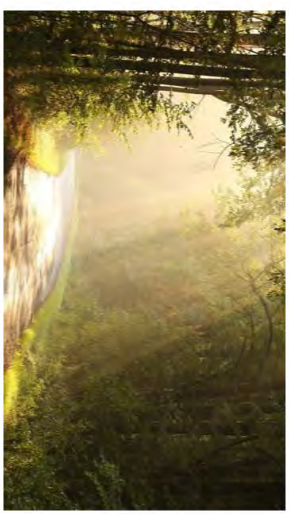
**Listening Deeper**

- Suggested Questions to deepen awareness of inner movements and further conversation*
- What has struck you as you have been listening to others share? Do you notice any patterns or commonalities?
  - How have you been feeling throughout the meeting? Comfortable? Anxious? Curious?
  - Is there anything you would like to share after listening to another person share?

- What struck you about the community member's sharing? What is remaining with you?
- Are there areas where you are left with further questions or clarifications?
- Are there particular themes or patterns that you noticed that may be helpful to share?
- Are there any comments or questions that you could offer that might help deepen a community member's reflection?

**Sharing:** invite members to share  
 After a member of the group has shared his or her spiritual biography, invite the members into a few moments of silence. Invite them to reflect upon the following questions:

# #6 Beloved from the beginning



## Scripture

O Lord, you have probed me, you know me: you know when I sit and stand; you understand my thoughts from afar. My travels and my rest you mark; with all my ways you are familiar. Even before a word is on my tongue, LORD, you know it all. Behind and before you encircle me and rest your hand upon me. Such knowledge is beyond me, far too lofty for me to reach. (Psalm 139:1-6)

*“I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.” Jeremiah 31:3*

*“But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, Jacob, and formed you, Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine.” Isaiah 43:1*

*Note: this meeting is adapted from <http://www.youngadultclc.org/caminos/>*

## Introduction & Welcome (1”)

### I. Opening Prayer (5”)

*Grace: for the openness to hear in the Scripture the depth of God’s love and care for us.*

Use the grace and the suggested scripture above to create your own prayer, or use CLC Opening and Closing prayer, which can be found in Appendixes section.

Note: ask for a volunteer to lead opening and closing prayers for the next meeting.

### II. Check-In (5”)

- When was the last time you said, “I love you?”

### III. Focus Exercise (40”)

Materials Needed: CLC supply box (CLC journal booklets, papers, pens, etc.).

✚ **Introduction:** We have all heard many times that “God loves you.” In fact, it may be the first thing we are taught about God. It’s certainly not a new concept, but sometimes knowing something is true still doesn’t give us the heartfelt understanding of how profound God’s love is and what it truly means for our lives. The hope for this meeting is to grow in *sentir*, which means to feel or to experience in Spanish. Ignatius often uses this word to pray for grace of heartfelt experience of God’s presence and love.

✚ Tonight, we are going to pray with **Psalms 139**. We will use *Lectio Divina* to do so. It means sacred reading. We’re going to read the psalm 3 times.

- (1) After the first time, there will be a moment of silence. (pause)
- (2) After the second time, I will invite you to voice out loud a word or phrase that strikes you. (pause)
- (3) After the third time, I will invite you to pray with the word, the phrase, or the image that strikes you and explain what it means to you. The best way to know this method is to experience it.

### Exercise: Psalm 139



*Note: Invite members to listen to what feelings or thoughts arise within them as they create space for God to speak to them through the Scripture. Then, read the psalm 3 times slowly and prayerfully.*

“O Lord, you have probed me, you know me:  
 You know when I sit and stand; you understand my thoughts from afar.  
 My travels and my rest you mark; with all my ways you are familiar.  
 Even before a word is on my tongue, LORD, you know it all.  
 Behind and before you encircle me and rest your hand upon me.  
 Such knowledge is beyond me, far too lofty for me to reach.

Where can I hide from your presence, where can I flee?  
 If I ascend to the heavens, you are there; if I lie down in Sheol, you are there too.  
 If I fly with the wings of dawn and alight beyond the sea,  
 Even there your hand will guide me, your right hand hold me fast.  
 If I say, “Surely darkness shall hide me, and night shall be my light” --  
 Darkness is not dark for you, and night shines as the day. Darkness and light are but one.

You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb.  
 I praise you, so wonderfully you made me; wonderful are your works!  
 My very self you knew; my bones were not hidden from you,  
 When I was being made in secret, fashioned as in the depths of the earth.  
 Your eyes foresaw my actions; in your book all are written down;  
 my days were shaped, before one came to be.

How precious to me are your designs, O God; how vast the sum of them!  
 Were I to count, they would outnumber the sands; to finish, I would need eternity...  
 Probe me, God, know my heart; try me, know my concerns.  
 See if my way is crooked, then lead me in the ancient paths.”

Psalm 139:1-18, 23-24

### **Sharing:**

- (1) After the first time, there will be a moment of silence. (pause)
- (2) After the second time, invite members to voice out loud a word or phrase that struck them. (pause)
- (3) After the third time, invite members to pray with the word, the phrase, or the image that struck them and explain what it means.

#### Suggested questions to pray with:

- What does the word or phrase mean for you personally?
- What is God saying to you personally?

Note: If helpful, invite them to jot down their answers on their journal booklets

### **Listening Deeper**

*Suggested Questions to deepen awareness of inner movements and further conversation*


- What has struck you as you have been listening to others share? Do you notice any patterns or commonalities?
- How have you been feeling throughout the meeting? Comfortable? Anxious? Curious?
- Is there anything you would like to share after listening to another person share?

## III. Moving Forward (5”)

 **Wrap Up:** thank members for their openness and participation.

### **Action:**

- (1) pray with Awareness Examen: pay attention to how you experience God’s presence and love during the day.
- (2) share with your prayer partner.

 **Announcements:** topic for next meeting and upcoming CLC events

## V. Closing Prayer (5”):

Pray for each other or use the CLC Closing Prayer. You might end the prayer with the song “Beloved” by Tenth Avenue North <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qivmOIHSj2Q>



## #7 Sharing My Faith Journey 3



### Scripture

*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my daughter...Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them. (Hosea 11:1-4)*

*Isaiah 43:1 But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, Jacob, and formed you, Israel. Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine.*

*Note: this meeting is adapted from <http://www.youngadultclc.org/caminos/>*

### Introduction & Welcome (1")

#### I. Opening Prayer (5")

*Grace: to recognize God's loving presence in our lives through the various experiences and people that have shaped us on our spiritual journeys.*

Use the grace and the suggested scripture above to create your own prayer, or use CLC Opening and Closing prayer, which can be found in Appendixes section.

- Pray for the person who is to share his/her spiritual autobiography.

Note: ask for a volunteer to lead opening and closing prayers for the next meeting.


#### II. Check-In (5")

Invite members to share some of the high and low points of the week. This check-in is meant to ease the group into reconnecting and reflecting on their life experiences and they should be **brief**.

- What were some of your high and low points of the week?

#### III. Focus Exercise (40")

Materials Needed: CLC supply box (CLC journal booklets, papers, pens, etc.). All handouts are in the CLC journal booklets. If you do not have them, come to the CLC office.

 **Introduction:** remind members about the process

- (1) Length: 15-20 minutes. After each person shared, feel free to comment or ask questions for clarification or further conversation. The purpose is to help the person deepen his/her own experiences.
- (2) Confidentiality: remind members that the sharing one's faith journey is sacred and challenging. What is shared stays in this room.

**✚ Sharing:** invite members to share

*After a member of the group has shared his or her spiritual biography, invite the members into a few moments of silence. Invite them to reflect upon the following questions:*

- What struck you about the community member's sharing? What is remaining with you?
- Are there areas where you are left with further questions or clarifications?
- Are there particular themes or patterns that you noticed that may be helpful to share?
- Are there any comments or questions that you could offer that might help deepen a community member's reflection?

**✚ Listening Deeper**

*Suggested Questions to deepen awareness of inner movements and further conversation*

- What has struck you as you have been listening to others share? Do you notice any patterns or commonalities?
- How have you been feeling throughout the meeting? Comfortable? Anxious? Curious?
- Is there anything you would like to share after listening to another person share?

#### IV. Moving Forward (5")

**✚ Wrap Up:** thank members for their openness and participation.

**✚ Action:**

- (1) Pray with Awareness Examen: for the persons who shared their stories and listen for how their stories may resonate with yours
- (2) switch prayers partners

**✚ Announcements:** topic for next meeting and upcoming CLC events

#### V. Closing Prayer (5"):

Different rituals may be helpful at the conclusion of each of the meetings where Spiritual Autobiographies are shared. Options include:

- A laying on of hands and offering gratitude for the person who shared.
- Invite members to each share a word that reflects how they are feeling or what remains with them after this meeting.
- Have a larger piece of paper that each member can add a symbol that represents their journey after they have shared. After everyone in the group has shared, reflect on the collective nature of the symbols and identify commonalities and shared themes.
- Decide on another creative option as a group that will affirm each person's story.



## #8 Sharing My Faith Journey 4



### Scripture

*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my daughter...Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them. (Hosea 11:1-4)*

*Isaiah 43:1 But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, Jacob, and formed you, Israel. Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine.*

*Note: this meeting is adapted from <http://www.youngadultclc.org/caminos/>*

### Introduction & Welcome (1")

#### I. Opening Prayer (5")

*Grace: to recognize God's loving presence in our lives through the various experiences and people that have shaped us on our spiritual journeys.*

Use the grace and the suggested scripture above to create your own prayer, or use CLC Opening and Closing prayer, which can be found in Appendixes section.

- Pray for the person who is to share his/her spiritual autobiography.

Note: ask for a volunteer to lead opening and closing prayers for the next meeting.

#### II. Check-In (5")

Invite members to share some of the high and low points of the week. This check-in is meant to ease the group into reconnecting and reflecting on their life experiences and they should be **brief**.

- What were some of your high and low points of the week?

#### III. Focus Exercise (40")

Materials Needed: CLC supply box (CLC journal booklets, papers, pens, etc.). All handouts are in the CLC journal booklets. If you do not have them, come to the CLC office.

✚ **Introduction:** remind members about the process

- (1) Length: 15-20 minutes. After each person shared, feel free to comment or ask questions for clarification or further conversation. The purpose is to help the person deepen his/her own experiences.
- (2) Confidentiality: remind members that the sharing one's faith journey is sacred and challenging. What is shared stays in this room.

**✚ Sharing:** invite members to share

*After a member of the group has shared his or her spiritual biography, invite the members into a few moments of silence. Invite them to reflect upon the following questions:*

- What struck you about the community member's sharing? What is remaining with you?
- Are there areas where you are left with further questions or clarifications?
- Are there particular themes or patterns that you noticed that may be helpful to share?
- Are there any comments or questions that you could offer that might help deepen a community member's reflection?

**✚ Listening Deeper**

*Suggested Questions to deepen awareness of inner movements and further conversation*

- What has struck you as you have been listening to others share? Do you notice any patterns or commonalities?
- How have you been feeling throughout the meeting? Comfortable? Anxious? Curious?
- Is there anything you would like to share after listening to another person share?

#### IV. Moving Forward (5")

**✚ Wrap Up:** thank members for their openness and participation.

**✚ Action:**

- (1) Pray with Awareness Examen: pray for the persons who shared their stories and listen for how their stories may resonate with yours
- (2) switch prayers partners

**✚ Announcements:** topic for next meeting and upcoming CLC events

#### V. Closing Prayer (5"):

Different rituals may be helpful at the conclusion of each of the meetings where Spiritual Autobiographies are shared. Options include:

- A laying on of hands and offering gratitude for the person who shared.
- Invite members to each share a word that reflects how they are feeling or what remains with them after this meeting.
- Have a larger piece of paper that each member can add a symbol that represents their journey after they have shared. After everyone in the group has shared, reflect on the collective nature of the symbols and identify commonalities and shared themes.
- Decide on another creative option as a group that will affirm each person's story.



## #9 Favored by God



### Scripture

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?” Jesus said to him in reply, “Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he allowed him. After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove [and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, “**You** are my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. (Mt 3:13-17)

*Note: this meeting is adapted from <http://www.youngadultclc.org/caminos/>*

### Introduction & Welcome (1”)

#### I. Opening Prayer (5”)

*Grace: to deepen our sense of being God’s beloved from our very creation as Jesus came to know in his baptism*

Use the grace and the suggested scripture above to create your own prayer, or use CLC Opening and Closing prayer, which can be found in Appendixes section.

Note: ask for a volunteer to lead opening and closing prayers for the next meeting.

#### II. Check-In (5”)

#### III. Focus Exercise (40”)

Materials Needed: CLC supply box (CLC journal booklets, papers, pens, etc.). All handouts are in the CLC journal booklets. If you do not have them, come to the CLC office.

- ✚ **Introduction:** tonight we are going to use Ignatian Contemplation to experience God’s calling each of us, “You’re my beloved.” If helpful, briefly explain Ignatian Contemplation. It is allowing the Spirit of God to guide our imagination and senses to experience what is going on with the event as if we are there physically.
- **Preparation:** I invite you to find a comfortable position in your chair, with both feet on the ground and palms resting open on your lap. This posture indicates a rootedness on the holy ground below us and receptivity to God’s abundant gifts surrounding us. I invite you to take a couple of deep breathes, slowly, inhale, and exhale. With each exhale, allow your body to fall more deeply into your chair allowing any tension to be released

with each breath. Keep breathing and recognize the rising and falling of your body. Notice God's very life present in the filling of your lungs with life and energizing your body in stillness.

- **I will read** the following passage a couple times through. Listen to the words and take note of any images that emerge.

*(Then, read the following passage two times through):*

“Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?” Jesus said to him in reply, “Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he allowed him. After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove [and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, “**You** are my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

- *(The contemplation should be about 10 minutes. Be present to the Spirit moving and do not feel rushed. Try to not move forward if you sense yourself moving forward from fear of further silence. Allow your inner sense of the spirit to be the one guiding the contemplation. Trust your inner voice of truth.)*
- **Allow yourself to enter the scene.** Tap into your five senses in your presence at the Jordan as you notice your place in the scene. Notice the crowds around the Jordan River. What else are you seeing? the people, animals, movement, nature (pause for 1 minute) What are you hearing? perhaps the sounds of the water, the wind, children playing, birds chirping... (pause for 1 minute) What are you touching? ... grass, rocks, the hand of another ... (pause for 1 minute) What does the air feel like, cold or warm? What are the colors that surround you in nature or within the people's garments? (pause for 1 minute) What smells permeate your nose? Notice all these elements and be present to them. (pause for 1 minute)
- **Now notice who you are in the scene** and where your proximity is in relation to all the action. What influences or factors shape your proximity? What draws you in or keeps you at a distance? *(pause for 2-3 minutes)*
- **Now, imagine Jesus seeking you** out personally. He chooses to baptize you. What stirs within you upon this request? What are you feeling? *(pause for 2-3 minutes)* As he draws the water and pours it over you, he proclaims “You are my Beloved child, (insert each group member's name in this space), with whom I am well pleased.” Upon feeling the water rush over you, and the sun beating down upon you, what do you feel? How are you consoled or challenged? Pay attention to what stirs within you. *(pause for 2-3 minutes)*
- **As you spend time with Jesus-** what do you say to Him? What does he say back to you? What kind of dialogue emerges? *(pause for 2-3 minutes)*

- **As you continue your time with Him**, what do you do? Take notice of how you are uniquely present to one another. (*pause for 3-4 minutes*)
- **Now, it is time for you to leave**, how do you depart from Jesus, from the others gathered? What stirs within you upon your departure? (*pause for 2-3 minutes*)
- **Now, take time speak with God** about this experience. Tell God what is remaining with you and **listen**.
- **In gratitude, we thank God** for this time and we pray for deepened listening to how we are called to know ourselves as the Beloved. When you are ready, please open your eyes and become aware of your presence in this room and gathering.

✚ **Sharing:** invite members to share their prayer experience

*Suggested questions to discuss*

1. How would you describe your experience during prayer? Easy? Distracted? Challenged? Surprised? Consoled? What was helpful? Not helpful?
2. What struck you the most?
3. How was your conversation with Jesus? Describe.
4. What is remaining within you? What images, words, or themes are present?
5. As always, if the meditation did not speak to group members, create and allow the space for anything else that is stirring within their hearts at this time to be shared.

✚ **Listening Deeper**

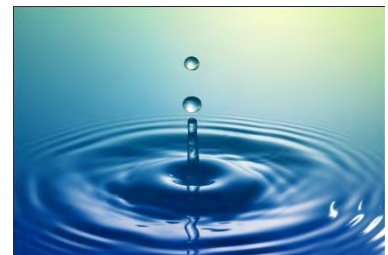
*Suggested Questions to deepen awareness of inner movements and further conversation*

- What has struck you as you have been listening to others share? Do you notice any patterns or commonalities?
- How have you been feeling throughout the meeting? Comfortable? Anxious? Curious?
- Is there anything you would like to share after listening to another person share?

**IV. Moving Forward (5”)**

✚ **Action:**

- (1) Pray with Awareness Examen: focus on Jesus’ voice, “You’re my beloved.”
- (2) Share with your prayer partner



✚ **Announcements:** topic for next meeting and upcoming CLC events

**V. Closing Prayer (5”):**

Pray for each other or use the CLC Closing Prayer

# #10 Dreaming with God



## Scripture

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be.... The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. (Jn 1:1-3, 9-13)

Lk 1:26-38 ....Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word....

*Note: this meeting is adapted from "Becoming one of us" <http://www.youngadultclc.org/caminos/>*

## Introduction & Welcome (1")

### I. Opening Prayer (5")

*Grace: to see and feel what God sees and feels about the world.*

Use the grace and the suggested scripture above to create your own prayer, or use the CLC Opening and Closing prayer, which can be found in Appendixes section.

Note: ask for a volunteer to lead opening and closing prayers for the next meeting.

### II. Check-In (5")

Ask people to share how they are feeling right now as they come into this meeting.

### III. Focus Exercise (40")

Materials Needed: CLC supply box (CLC journal booklets, papers, pens, etc.).

✚ **Introduction:** tonight we are going to use Ignatian Contemplation to see and feel what God sees and feels about the world. If helpful, briefly explain Ignatian Contemplation. It means to allow the Spirit of God to guide our imagination and senses to experience what is going on with the event as if we are there physically.

✚ **Preparation:** I invite you to find a comfortable position in your chair, with both feet on the ground and palms resting open on your lap. This posture indicates a rootedness on the holy ground below us and receptivity to God's abundant gifts surrounding us. I invite you to take a couple of deep breathes, slowly, inhale, and exhale. With each exhale, allow your body to fall more deeply into your chair allowing any tension to be released with each breath. Keep

breathing and recognize the rising and falling of your body. Notice God's very life present in the filling of your lungs with life and energizing your body in stillness.

- Picture yourself **looking at the world**, as if you're in space. Look at the colors, the clouds, and the outline of the continents. Look at how the light from the sun illuminates the rim of the sphere, and how the lights on the earth turn on as small beacons as the twilight creeps into the sunlight. (*Allow 30 seconds silence.*)
- Begin to "zoom in" on **one of the continents**. In your imagination, look at the people there as though you are hovering above the ground. What do the people look like? What does their housing look like? What are they doing? What are they wearing? Are there children there? Explore this scene with your imagination, and notice their faces. Can you tell how they're feeling? (*Allow one minute of silence.*)
- Continue around the globe, noticing the people everywhere you look. Envision the terrain. See the ways that the environment is impacted the people in all places. (*Allow time for silence.*)
- Now, find yourself looking down at **the city where you live**. What do you see there? Try to see people in all walks of life. Children playing, people at a hospital, grieving, giving birth, people getting married, getting divorced, taking exams, getting laid off, getting hired, people incarcerated, people rich, people poor, people homeless, people depressed, people suffering from violence, people inflicting violence, people praying. Go where your imagination takes you, and be open to being moved by the experiences of those you are seeing. (*Allow one minute of silence.*)
- Now look at **the people right near where you live**. Maybe a neighbor, family member, people on a college campus. Maybe it's a Friday night. What are they doing? How do people interact? What are they seeking? (*Allow for silence.*)
- Now, look in on **the room where you are right now**, with the people you are sitting alongside. Hold in your heart the different struggles and joys you each have brought with you. (*Allow for silence.*)
- Spend a little longer with this image, or any of the images that have struck you. Imagine yourself returning to a compelling image that seems to be reaching out to you. (*Allow for silence.*)
- Now, as you continue to look at this scene in the world, imagine that the **Holy Trinity is there** with you. God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are there with you. Maybe just over your shoulder where you can't see them, or right in front of you. They are seeing all the things that you are seeing. What do they think? Feel? Imagine the conversation in these three persons as they decide that one of them will enter into this world and become part of it. Why do they make that decision? What moves them? (*Allow for silence.*)
- Now, look back down on the world, at Nazareth in another time. Zoom in on a humble home with a **young woman**. Watch as she is invited into the Divine plan to conceive God. Watch as the angel appears and notice how Mary responds. Watch as she considers the invitation. Does

she pause or respond right away? Does she seem anxious? Hopeful? Bold? At peace? (*Allow for silence.*)

- Now, collect everything that you have seen in your imagination and sit with it. If there is something that seems to be speaking to you in a special way, explore it a little more deeply and listen for what God may be revealing to you. (*Allow for silence.*)
- Finally, in your heart, try to have a **conversation directly with God** about what you saw and how you felt. If you have questions, ask them of God. If you are struck by something, talk it over with God. Listen for God's response. (*Allow for silence.*)
- Draw the time of guided contemplation gently to a close and **conclude** with a very brief prayer of gratitude.

✚ **Sharing:** invite members to share

*Suggested questions to share*

1. How do you feel throughout the meditation? Distracted? Surprised? Insightful?
2. What did you see in the world, city, or our group during the meditation?
3. How was your conversation with God?
4. Anything else?

✚ **Listening Deeper**

*Suggested Questions to deepen awareness of inner movements and further conversation*

- What has struck you as you have been listening to others share? Do you notice any patterns or commonalities?
- How have you been feeling throughout the meeting? Comfortable? Anxious? Curious?
- Is there anything you would like to share after listening to others share?

#### IV. Moving Forward (5")

✚ **Wrap Up:** thank members for their openness and participation. Discuss how the group continues to live out the graces that they have received during Christmas break.

✚ **Action:** the whole group goes to Sunday Mass/Worship to give God thanks for the graces that they received or have lunch together.

✚ **Announcements:** topic for next meeting and upcoming CLC events. Agree on a group meeting time and location for next quarter.

#### V. Closing Prayer (5"):

Pray for each other or use the CLC Closing Prayer

