

It's Nothing Personal

Taking Him Personally

The entire point of the spiritual life is to grow in love. One of the ways that we grow in love is to realize our part in the story. Another way we grow in love is to get into the story and watch Jesus, listen to Jesus, and interact with Jesus. Catholics call this Holy Spirit-inspired imaginative prayer “Ignatian Prayer”. And it has the potential to change your life forever.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever heard someone telling your story without knowing that it was you they were talking about? (This could have been more negative...like gossip. Or it could be positive...like sharing a cool story that they simply didn't realize was about you.) If you haven't, do you know anyone who has?
2. Archbishop Sheen's reflection on the crucifix is a powerful one. Can you think of other ways a person's story is “written” upon the body of Christ on the Cross? Please describe.
3. The test of whether mental prayer is good is whether this or that grows, strengthens, or fosters love. Are you aware of any times you have done a kind of mental prayer that didn't seem fruitful (in increasing love) at first, but then became so? Vice versa? Discuss.
4. Have you ever practiced Ignatian Prayer? What was it like? If it was difficult for you, what were some of the obstacles that you found? If it was a good experience, can you describe some of the fruits from it or why it was a good experience? Discuss.
5. When it comes to Ignatian Prayer, are there some scenes/events from the Gospels that you have found easier to pray with than others? (Note from fathermike: I've always found it more difficult to pray with the Passion than any other scene. I think that it is because I keep feeling pressure to “feel” something. I can engage much more easily in almost every other Gospel scene. It is what it is...). =)

God in Real Life

1. This week, asking the Holy Spirit to help you, engage the Gospel stories (your stories!) with your imagination. Read a passage in which Jesus is interacting with others, and then close your eyes and imagine the scene. If you like, add your senses to your prayer.

To the Heart

“Could you not watch with me one hour?” ~Matthew 26:40