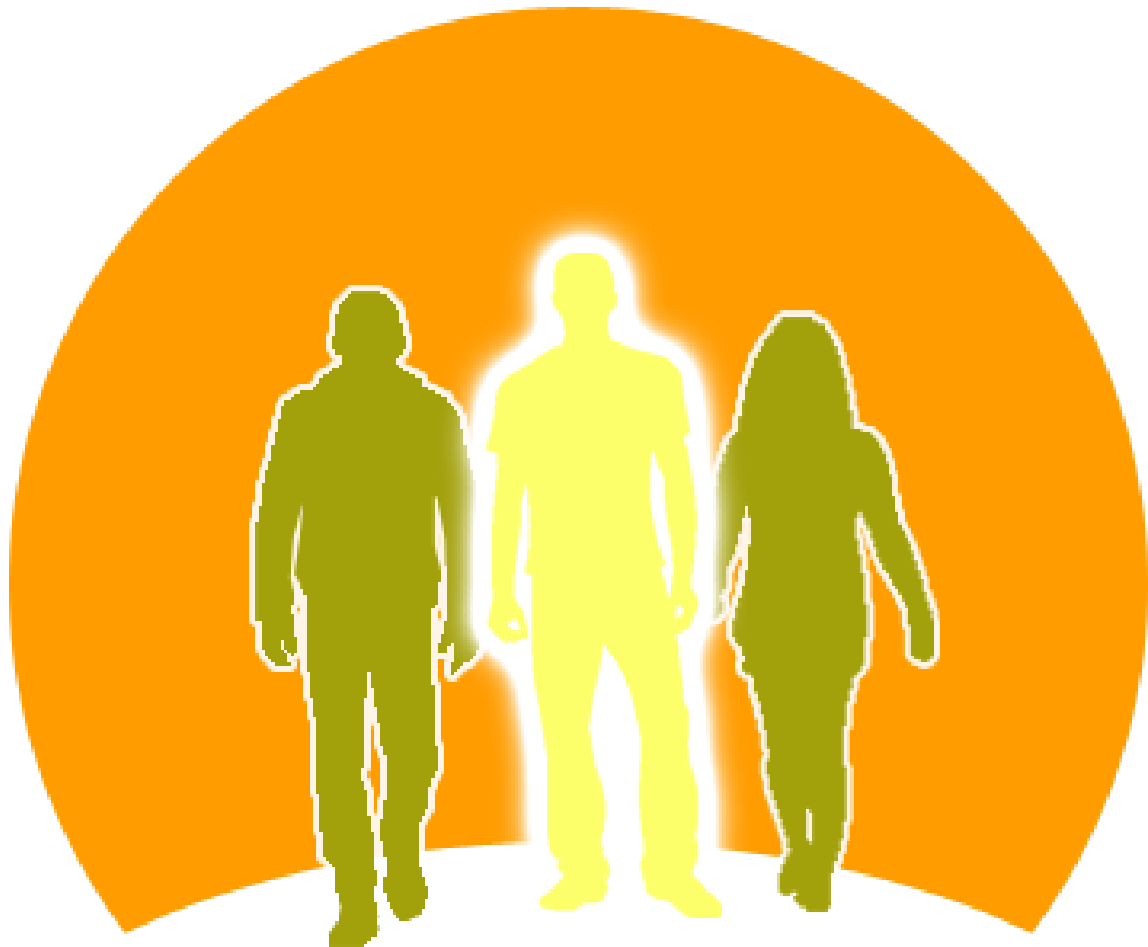

Emmaus Retreat Manual



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Draft 2:1/7/11

Emmaus Retreat Manual

**** This is a draft document and open to all manner of changes as wisdom is applied. ****

This retreat is for 14-18 year olds. The aim is to strengthen and deepen the participant's faith as they build their friendships together. Together as a group we want to establish a set of values that we can live together and work together to help build a truly pro-life Catholic youth culture. This retreat is one step in this process.

This retreat program is open for development. This retreat will be led by Robert and Julie Zaar, Natina Giacco, and Joe Moore. All other leaders will operate as trainee leaders. After the retreat the leaders, will offer official Emmaus team membership to those who have demonstrated leadership abilities and desire to be part of the team. The team will be called together to run future Emmaus retreats.

As part of establishing a Catholic pro-life culture, Emmaus retreats while under the spiritual guidance of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, offer to be a meeting point of various groups in the area and as a support to those groups.

The vision is for young people to experience the love of Christ, and to live that out fully in their lives in the richness of Catholic life.

This retreat manual and all resources are creative commons by attribution licence which means anyone can copy, modify and even sell this resource. All photos and other resources included are licenced that way to give maximum flexibility and to allow young people to take up the challenge and run their own retreats as they are so led.

This particular retreat is at St. Mary's Seminary Mulgrave on July 6 and 7th 2011.

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Retreat Plan

Wednesday

8am Leader's meeting at St. Mary's
9am Initial get together large group chat. Mingle time
9:15am Large group intro to the retreat. Song and games
9:30am Initial meditation: The Emmaus Story
9:45am Session 1: Road of life intro and quiet time.
10:45 am morning tea
11 am Session 2: God's Love
12:15 pm Lunch (group photo taken at lunchtime)
1:15pm Session 3: Relationships, Theology of the Body part 1
2:30pm Session 4: Theology of the Body Part 2
4pm Recreation time.
5pm Eucharist
6pm Dinner
7:30pm Praise time. God's Mercy: the sacrament of reconciliation: the Five steps of the examen.
9pm Free time
10pm Finish

Thursday

9am Start Mingling, chats.
9:15 am Session 5: Prayer: self gift to God
10:45am break
11am Session 6: Cultivation Spirituality
12:15pm Lunch
1:15pm Affirmations
1:45pm Open forum: Where to from here
3pm Finish

Basic pattern of each session will be 1 hour to 1 hour 15 minutes. The proportions for division between the four parts of each session depend on what the session is.

- A) Song and/or a game 5-10 minutes
- B) Input: presentation of the session.
- C) reflection time/ activity time
- D) small group discussion



GENERAL POINTS

LEADER'S MEETING: This is a chance for the team to be established and go over any details and last minute adjustments.

GAMES: A variety of games should be used for the retreat. There are many suitable games available on <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/> Also a game could be used to put people into groups for the retreat.

Music. Each session can start with a song and or a game. There are five songs selected for the retreat. At the start of a session we could use the chance to learn the song. One song can be the 'signature' song of the retreat which is used more often than the others.

thanks: Forever Chris Tomlin (E) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6umWkVwpfBk> or Blessed by your name (G)

asking: Your Grace is Enough Matt Maher <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9yrlYk-Bao>

reflect: Mighty to Save (Hillsong) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iB-yX5p0p4I>

pardon: Give us clean hands Mark Schultz <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PNwc5uzpkMU>

Amendment: Father will you come Christian Paschall <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRGLN85Vli4>

Food: We will be catering for ourselves. Special diets are covered by the registration form. We can always pop out and buy something extra if need be. Meals needed are Lunch and Dinner on Day 1 and lunch on Day 2. Snacks and break food should also be provided. There already is tea, coffee and Milo at the Seminary. We have full and exclusive use of the kitchen and can store our food in the walk in fridge and the freezer. We can drop off food the night before. Small groups will be organised to organise food and clean up during the retreat.

Small Groups: Small groups are a very important part of the retreat. My own experience has been of the worth of mixed groups, but for this camp we should try to have the groups age specific, ie 14 and 15, and 17, and 18 age groups. Post school leaders will be aligned with an adult leader. There should be about 6 in each group, but not more than 8 and not less than 4. Small groups have a code of what is said in the group stays in the group, but group leaders will mention that duty of care by the leaders means that information that warrants actions needing to be taken by leaders about information shared will be taken. This kind of information will be passed on to the overall leader and the appropriate actions taken. The overall leader will keep up with how things are going in each group and if any pastoral issues need further action.



Initial Reflection: The Emmaus Story

This is the key scripture for the whole retreat and is to provide a backdrop for the retreat.

SESSION SETUP: Ideally we should have an icon and a candle set up in the centre of the room with a nice cloth around them. The passage is in the retreat booklet and allows retreat members to follow the reading and have space to write down their thoughts. This session can be run by one of the youth leaders.

RUNNING THE SESSION: We presume everyone is already welcomed. This is the first session.

- 1) The session can start with a song.
- 2) Introduce the prayer and have people become comfortable and listen and imagine the story taking place.
- 3) The candle should be lit. The reading read slowly with emphasis. Participants can follow this in their book.
- 4) There are questions in the participant's book to help them reflect upon the passage and start to think about where Jesus is in their life.
- 5) After about 5 minutes there is a time for people to share some of their answers. The leader can draw out some of the points suggested below.
- 6) The session should finish with prayers and petitions for the retreat. One way to do this is to hand the candle around for each person to share a prayer.

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles[a] from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him.

He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?"

"What things?" he asked.

"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus."



He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

The main points to cover are:

- 1) We are on a journey with Jesus
- 2) The Word of God, the Bible can life up our hearts.
- 3) We most see Jesus in the Eucharist
- 4) We don't even recognise Jesus in others at times.
- 5) Jesus works in mysterious ways
- 6) Even when we think things are bad, God can turn them around
- 7) Jesus is a bit of a practical joker
- 8) God does have a sense of humor
- 9) We should go out and share the good news with others
- 10) Where are you at on your journey?



Session 1: Road of life

This session is about reflecting on our life journey so far and sharing it with our small group.

MATERIALS: Butchers paper, pens, textas, Music player, nice background music. The pictures can be part of a powerpoint to get people thinking about the kind of road they are on at various parts of their life.

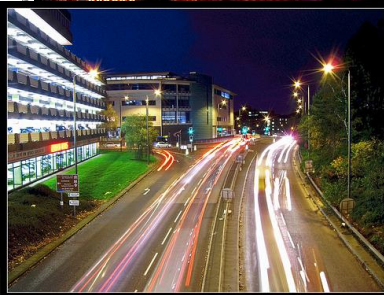
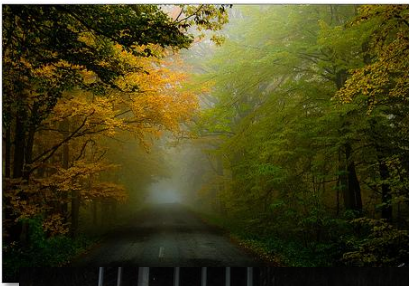
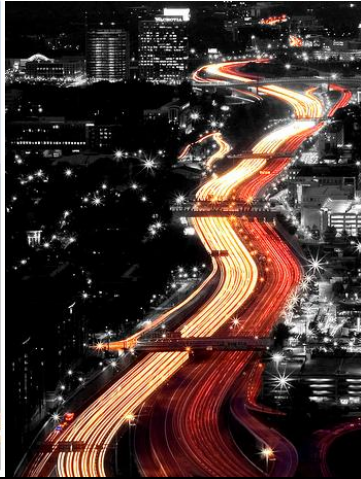
SESSION SETUP: A powerpoint can be used with the various images of roads automatically changing as a backdrop. The leader needs to have completed their own road of life and be prepared to share it with the group. This should be a young leader. A typical road of life is included in this guide. The road of life will be completed on butcher's paper and using crayons, textas etc. Nice background music should be used during this session. Also small groups need to be worked out by this session as the small groups will start after the roads are drawn. Important points as part of the road of life includes highs and lows, achievements, challenges and where is God along the way.

RUNNING THE SESSION:

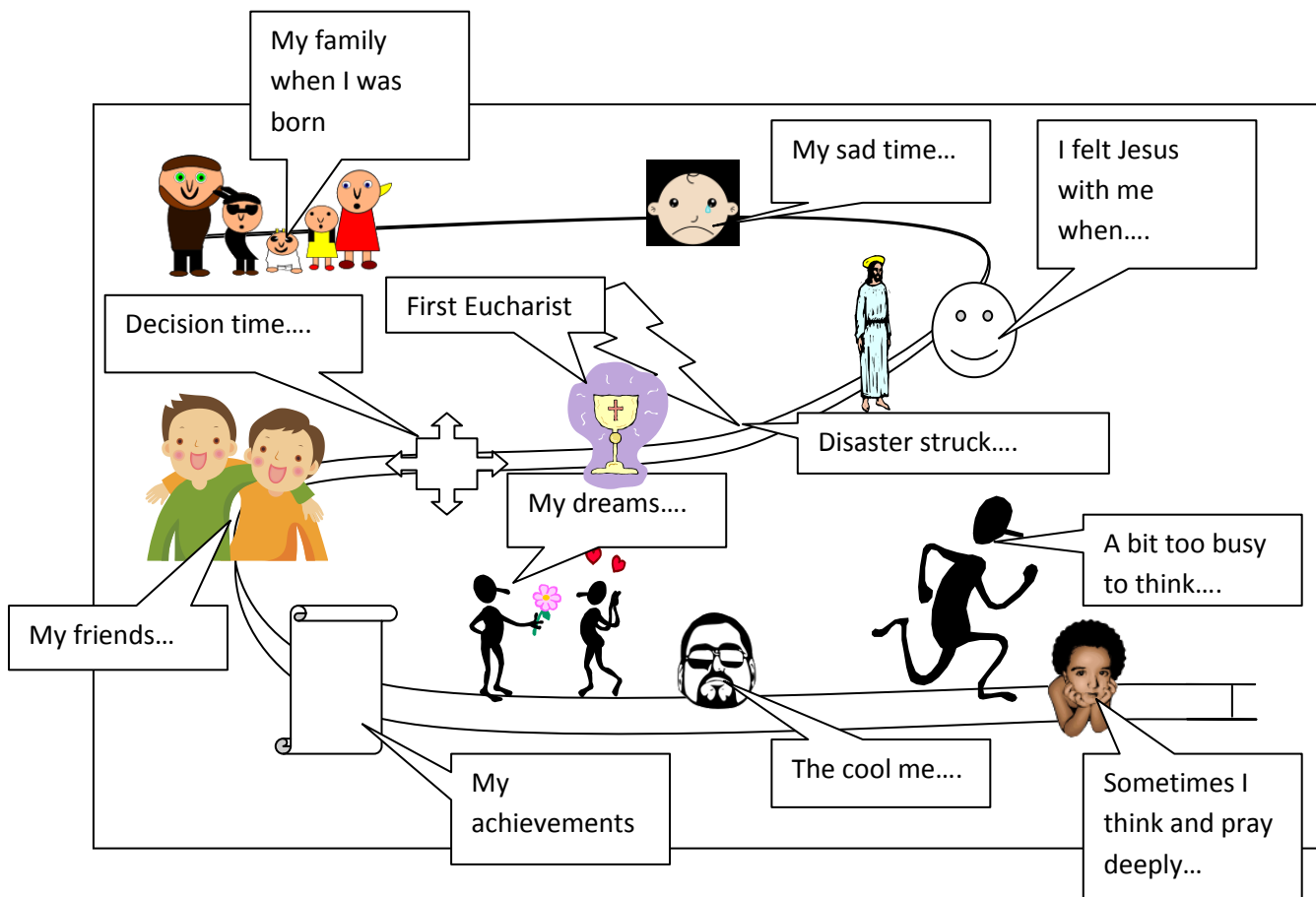
- 1) Start with a game and get everyone moving and active.
- 2) Youth leader introduces the session and that small groups will form as part of the session. The leader talks about confidentiality and duty of care issues. The groups will stay the same throughout the retreat, though some can only make Wednesday.
- 3) Youth leader shows and explains about their own road of life.
- 4) Young people then have time to create their own road of life while nice background music is played.
- 5) Small groups form and move off to their areas. Each small group has its own candle and starts with a prayer. Each person is given a chance to share about their road of life and be affirmed about who they are. It should not become a counselling session, but an appreciation of the person and who they are. Finish each small group session with a prayer and holding hands.



Road of Life



The leader will introduce the session and present their own road of life. Below are some ideas to get you started. Things you can include are, your family, sad times, happy times, decision times, friends, achievements, disasters, times you felt God near, busy times, quiet times, cool times, or anything you want to share about yourself, your relationships and God in your life.



Session 2: God's Love

This session includes a personal sharing about God's love and the difference God can make in our lives. It should also include something about God's awesomeness and make use of some scriptures. It is really up to the leader for this session to share about God and His goodness.

MATERIALS: Just background music

SESSION SETUP: This can be lead by a youth leader or adult leader. The leader needs to have prepared their sharing and may like to bring a prop, eg a special picture.

RUNNING THE SESSION:

- 1) Start with a song.
- 2) The leader introduces the session and shares about their experience of God's love.
- 3) Participants have a chance to reflect upon God's love in their lives. If good weather, they can go out to find a place (outside, in the chapel or remain in the room) where they can reflect and write. They have 15 minutes to do this. A bell (if we have one) will be rung to bring the participants back and they should go straight to their small group location.
- 4) Small groups follow the same routine (ie light candle, pray, etc.). Each person gets a chance to share about their relationship with God. Leaders should affirm where each person is at.

For the reflection time, there should be some scriptures available to choose from. The quiet reflection time could be one of seeking to better know God, writing a letter to God, thanking God for the good things he has given us, asking God for some guidance. Where is God in your life?

You are mine, I have called you by name

He was not in the fire...

You are my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased

What can separate us from the love of God?....

To have seen me is to have seen the Father

I am the way, the truth and the life...

I am the good shepherd

I am the vine you are the branches

Abide in me, as I abide in you and you will bear much fruit.

If the Lord does not build the house, in vain does its builders labour.

I have calved you on the palm of my hand

Even if a mother forgets her child, I will never forget you.



It is not that we have loved God, but that God first loved us.

God is love.

These three remain, faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love.

Ps 4, 103,95

God called out, "Where are you?" (Gen 3:9)



Session 3: Theology of the Body Part 1

This is a more serious session broken up into two parts. The first part lays the foundation for the second. There is small group time to reflect and appropriate the content of each part.

MATERIALS: Whiteboard, whiteboard markers. Powerpoint.

SESSION SETUP: An adult leader will present this session.

RUNNING THE SESSION:

- 1) Start with a game
- 2) Start talk with a short prayer.
- 3) Cover the following points. This may change as participants ask questions.
 - a. God is pure gift, which is Love
 - b. The Trinity is the perfect, infinite and unconditional love between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
 - c. God reveals that love through the Body.
 - d. Jesus, true God and true man reveals that love to us, particularly on the Cross. Jesus is the image of the invisible God
 - e. Jesus continues to reveal that love to us through the Eucharist, which is his body.
 - f. The more we give, the more we get. (The measure you measure out will be measured to you.)
 - g. How do we love? How much are we rooted in God's love?
 - h. Friendship is Trinitarian. I discover who I am through my giving. I am affirmed through friendship, which is something more than just a transaction, It is rooted in true love. I grow as my friendship deepens. I am more myself in that friendship.
 - i. Friendships are meant to be eternal.
 - j. Mercy is the basis of true friendship if it is to be unconditional.
- 4) Small groups then reflect on the following points
 - a. On my experience of Friendship with others and friendship with God.
 - b. How have I grown in who I am through my relationships with others?
 - c. What is my experience of Eucharist?



Session 4: Theology of the Body Part 2

This second part builds on the foundation layed and seeks to establish the postive values upon which a pro-life youth culture should be built. It seeks for the participants to agree to and desire to live out those values. There is a powerful potential in this session for the boys and girls to realise the richness they can have in their true friendships with each other and collectively as a group. To have freedom, friendship and make the world a better place. There is small group time to reflect and appropriate the content of each part.

MATERIALS: Whiteboard, whiteboard markers. Powerpoint.

SESSION SETUP: An adult leader will present this session.

RUNNING THE SESSION:

- 1) Start with a song
- 2) Start talk with a short prayer.
- 3) Cover the following points. This may change as participants ask questions.
 - a. Adam and Eve in the garden before the fall. Perfect love. Perfect relationship. They saw each other and saw God within each other. They were naked without shame. There was no sin. Have the young people try to imagine how good that was.
 - b. Our bodies speak a language.
 - c. Adam's body was made for Eve and visa versa.
 - d. This mutual self-gift is Trinitarian and meant to be unconditional
 - e. This gift of self can only be fully given once. Since it involves my past, present and future.
 - f. Adam and Eve sinned. Story of what happened.
 - i. Satan sold them something they already had, they were already like God.
 - ii. God was going to share everything with them anyway.
 - iii. The Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil, is really to designate something as good or evil, which God alone does, because things either are in reality good or evil. This can't change by our wishes, to do so is sheer fantasy. There is absolute truth, which is Jesus and our job is to discover that truth and live by it, since it will set us free. This is the source of relativism.
 - iv. Their look was now of lust and so they needed to cover up to get their minds off it.
 - v. God came later, in the evening after allowing them to get use to their new state of affairs. He walks and they hid. The first game of hid and seek.
 - vi. God calls them as he calls us, "Where are you?"
 - vii. They come out and tell God what happened, the beginning of redemption.
 - viii. God pronounces judgement, but makes clothes for them out of animal skins.
 - ix. It is like you borrow your Dad's car and smash it. He comes and you hide. He calls and you come out. You need to pay for the car you smashed (fair enough), but he gives you a bike to get around on. God allows us to make up for our sins.
 - g. This state of sin is not God's perfect plan for us. He wants us to relate to each other with love. To be friends, to get to truly know each other.
 - h. The story of the look of Bishop which led to a protitutes conversion who ended up a saint. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."



- i. “The problem of pornography is not that it shows too much, but that it shows too little.” Pope John Paul II. That is because you don’t see the person only a 2D image. You can’t have a relationship with a bit of paper. The counterfeit culture of death suggests you can. We have the opportunity to have real friendships between men and women to really get to know and love each other. To journey together and help each other out. To accept each other as we are. Out of those many relationships of friendship might blossom a special relationship that goes further, but for now it is a time to enjoy life and build relationships of respect and friendship.
 - j. My hunch is with women that they feel they have to be beautiful through so many products and ‘looks’ because they don’t want to be left alone and miss out. But through many good friendships this won’t happen. There is nothing to fear. Together we can build a culture of life and love.
 - k. My hunch for the boys is that they feel they have to prove their manhood. But each and everyone is already a man. Don’t be sold something you already have. You already are a man and are accepted as you are.
 - l. Together we can establish a culture of life.
 - m. Go over the Trinitarian image. Infinite unconditional love between the Father and Son generates the Holy Spirit.
 - n. Explain now the married image of unconditional love between husband and wife can generate a child, hence marriage is a sacrament.
 - o. What happens when one spouse says I want all of you except your fertility? Is that unconditional love? (There is some love, but it is not unconditional love, and therefore not true love)
 - p. What happens if a child is conceived? Do they want it? (no this leads to abortion)
 - q. God and the Church wants each person to have and experience unconditional love from conception to natural death. Marriage is part of that plan and lived rightly it is an experience of unconditional love. Through God’s grace and prayer love is maintained and strengthened. The numbers of divorce from marriages when the spouses live this is very low. There is so much happiness and hope to be had.
 - r. We offer you to say yes to God’s love, to unconditional love and to live this. To say no to contraception, pornography and sex before marriage. Together in Christ we can live this. God can give us the grace to live this out.
- 4) Questions will be taken right through the talk.
 - 5) Small groups to follow. In small groups there is the chance to talk about this and possibly make a commitment to live this out as part of the closing prayer of the small group.



Eucharist:

Need a powerpoint, Music, Readers, etc. One of the small groups can organise this.

Evening Session:

The focus of the Evening session is prayer and Music. It is a chance to really praise God together as a group. The theme for the evening is the Examen of Conscience and there will be reconciliation available from 8pm to 9:30pm. We are hoping for two priests to be present. Hopefully the content covered earlier will give some impetus for the participants to go to confession. It will be a time to spend with Jesus and to enter into His love. To restore relationship with him and make a fresh start.

The examen will be explained at the start. The importance of reconciliation will be given. There can be a small talk about the experience of reconciliation by a youth or adult leader.

MATERIALS: Room setup for reconciliation. Two candles, one for each priest so the group in the chapel knows a priest is free. Set up for adoration. Emmaus icon in the centre. Maybe some nice clothes. Band and music. Background music for songs not fully rehearsed.

SESSION PREPARATION: There needs to be a MC for the night that leads the night. Various sharings can comprise the night, eg on reconciliation.

Here are the original steps of the daily examen from Ignatius's spiritual exercises of 1584

METHOD FOR MAKING THE GENERAL EXAMEN

It contains in it five Points.

First Point. The first Point is to give thanks to God our Lord for the benefits received.

Second Point. The second, to ask grace to know our sins and cast them out.

Third Point. The third, to ask account of our soul from the hour that we rose up to the present Examen, hour by hour, or period by period: and first as to thoughts, and then as to words, and then as to acts, in the same order as was mentioned in the Particular Examen.

Fourth Point. The fourth, to ask pardon of God our Lord for the faults.

Fifth Point. The fifth, to purpose amendment with His grace.

There is a guide to the examen attached as an appendix and will be included in the participants booklet.

RUNNING THE SESSION: Session starts at 7:30pm. Not all songs need to be live.

- 1) Start with explaining the evening. Introduce the examen.
- 2) Start with the first song. Thanks to God. After the song have people call out all the good things in their life. (or have them write them down in their journal.)
- 3) Second song on asking for God's grace. Lead the group in really asking for these graces that we need.



- 4) Third song to reflect upon our lives. This will lead into adoration. And some quiet time. Priests should be available by now and people can go out for reconciliation. Young people can journal and reflect upon their lives. To go through their whole past and seek and experience God's forgiveness. This can go for about half an hour.
- 5) Fourth song: asking forgiveness. This may lead into a divine mercy chaplet. Followed by some silence and reflection on God's mercy.
- 6) Five song: changing our lives. How can we change our lives. What will I do differently? Young people can journal.
- 7) Blessed sacrament reposed. Final song, song of thanks again.

Evening Free time:

We can use the Billiard room to chill out. Some might like to just chat in the dinning area. Participants to be picked up at 10pm. Some can clean up.



DAY 2: THURSDAY

Session 5: Prayer: self gift to God

This is basically a deeper guide to prayer session.

MATERIALS: All that is necessary will be in there booklets. This session will be run in the chapel. Adoration will be part of this session.

RUNNING THE SESSION:

- 1) Start with a song
- 2) Introduce the session. Explain about prayer. Maybe have a leader share about the importance of prayer.
- 3) Workshop prayer. Expose the blessed sacrament. Allow people to pray.
- 4) Small groups. Talk about prayer in our lives.

These are the kinds of points that will be covered.

Deep prayer is not just about learning about God, talking to God, but about encountering God, deep in your soul. This is the real aim of prayer. It is the difference of giving yourself, rather than just giving things. It is about receiving God, not just things from God. The following a guide to deep prayer. BTW, another name for deep prayer is contemplation.

Stage 1. Actively seeking God (meditation). You have to put work in to encounter God. There are many different ways to actively seek God. One is by reading the daily passage from Mark's gospel, over and over again, slowly, thoughtfully. As you meditate upon it and think about it, you start to think about God. As you think about God, you may start to appreciate His goodness, love, kindness, etc. This may lead to the next stage.

Stage 2. Awareness of God's presence. Have you ever had

Psalm 134

When I call, answer me, O God of justice;

From anguish you released me, have mercy and hear me!

O men, how long will your hearts be closed,

Will you love what is futile and seek what is false?

It is the Lord who grants favours to those whom he loves;

The Lord hears me whenever I call him.

Fear him; do not sin; ponder on your bed and be still.

Make justice your sacrifice and trust in the Lord.

"What can bring us happiness?" many say.

Let the light of your face shine on us, O Lord.

You have put into my heart a greater joy



the experience of feeling as if someone is looking at you, then turning and seeing the person looking at you? Some do. This is a bit like that inner awareness of God's presence, except, God always looks with eyes of love.

Stage 3. Surrender (Contemplation). Once you are aware of God's presence, you can surrender yourself to that presence. It is just a matter of giving yourself to God and enjoying the deepening embrace of His love. St. Teresa of Avila calls this the prayer of quiet.

Session 6: Cultivation Spirituality

This session is about deciding what I will do to grow in God's love. Cultivation spirituality will be introduced.

MATERIALS: All that is necessary will be in there booklets. This session will be run in the chapel. Adoration will be part of this session.

SESSION SETUP: Appendix B has the full version of Cultivation Spirituality. This will be simplified for the session.

RUNNING THE SESSION:

- 1) Start with a game.
- 2) Introduce the session. Explain about cultivation spirituality. Maybe have a leader share about their experience of growing in holiness.
- 3) The Divine office will be on offer for those wishing to take it up. Also Youcats will be available (youth Catechism which is being launched at WYD Madrid) for the young people to take up learning more about their faith.
- 4) Private time for people to reflect on how they could grow in God's love. They could go off for 15 minutes to reflect on this.
- 5) Small groups. Through discussions, the group should share about how they are going to grow in God's love and make a commitment to this in the group. Finish with a prayer.

Affirmations

MATERIALS: Letter writing paper and envelopes. Each group will do this as a group. Each envelope will have the names of each member of the group.

RUNNING THE SESSION:

- 1) Start with a song
- 2) Introduce the session. Each member of the small group will write a letter of appreciation to each other member of that small group. We might have envelopes for Fr. Fini and any other priests that have helped. Also envelopes for those that only came on Wednesday. Give examples of letters written.



- 3) Reflective music plays while letters are being written.
- 4) Once finished, envelopes are sealed, and should be read at home that night. If someone has finished they can go off for a cuppa.

Open forum: Where to from here?

This is a whole group session where discussion is about what we can do from here as a group. Talk about being part of a group. Taking on projects together through the MAYO website or other means. Being part of the Emmaus team? Finish with a final prayer.

Materials: candle and icon.

RUNNING THE SESSION:

- 1) This session is about letting people share their ideas for building a culture of life together, eg magazine?
- 2) Session finishes with passing around a candle and thanking God for something from the retreat.
- 3) The candle is blown out, thus ends the retreat.



APPENDIX A: GUIDE TO THE DAILY EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Here are the original steps of the daily examen from Ignatius's spiritual exercises of 1584

METHOD FOR MAKING THE GENERAL EXAMEN

It contains in it five Points.

First Point. The first Point is to give thanks to God our Lord for the benefits received.

Second Point. The second, to ask grace to know our sins and cast them out.

Third Point. The third, to ask account of our soul from the hour that we rose up to the present Examen, hour by hour, or period by period: and first as to thoughts, and then as to words, and then as to acts, in the same order as was mentioned in the Particular Examen.

Fourth Point. The fourth, to ask pardon of God our Lord for the faults.

Fifth Point. The fifth, to purpose amendment with His grace.

The examen is "a daily intensive exercise of discernment in one's life." (Fr. Achenbrenner) It is at the heart of the spiritual exercises and ample time should be given to reflection. A personal time just to think things over is a good start, but this can be helped by journaling or talking with a spiritual director or trusted other to help work things out. The examen is meant to be a personal exercise shared with God. It should become an attitude of heart. Already we would have made use of each of the steps of the examen on their own, but the examen is a complete package. It is important when starting to give sufficient time to enter into each step and make each step one's own. Each step can take time to really understand and participate in. For some it takes years. There are obviously various levels of experience.

To begin with take time with each step. It is not a matter of breadth, but depth. It is not a matter of finishing all the steps. It is important to really enter each step and with limited time, just do what you can. The examen is a work of grace, and it can take time for it to be transformed from our work to become a work of God in us. Where is God active in my life? Where is he leading?

THE FIRST STEP – GRATITUDE

This step can lead to great joy. It is the step of realization that all is gift from God, and through giving thanks to God for the many gifts we receive and have, our hearts can be freed. Think of the specific gifts over the last day. Think about how God has blessed you. Allow yourself to thank God for things you don't normally thank him for. It is worth persevering until a deep thankfulness is gained for what has happened. Even thank God for the bad things, for God can even bring good out of them.

God is gift itself and he never tires of giving us gifts. He wants to give us gifts more than we want them.

THE SECOND STEP: PETITION

"Lord, what do you want to show me about this day?" This is a humble prayer asking God for the grace to make the examen fruitful. We are asking God for the gift of understanding that leads to new freedom. We



pray for deeper insight in God's workings and any resistance that hinders God's action. This step should not be a cursory petition, but a deep prayer of the heart begging God for his light to bear upon our soul. It is particularly important in times of desolation to petition the Lord for guidance.

STEP THREE: REVIEW

The review should be systematic, ie hour by hour or period of time to period of time.

Review the emotional setting (mood), emotions, thoughts, words and acts.

Then for each set of experiences reflect upon the beginning, middle and end. Usually a particular event (whether, mood, emotion, thought, word or action) takes your attention. Explore what this leads to and from where did it come. As you explore this series of events you may become aware that what initially appeared as a good thing, turned out quite bad. Once the full revelation of the series has occurred, then after any needed forgiveness, it is possible in the final step to devise a way to not fall for the same trick that led you astray.

It is in this third step that we apply the rules for spiritual discernment (see the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius) and see if any movement is positive or negative.

Inspirations, opportunities or temptations, hinderances.

How did I respond?

Was there a particular cycle?

How did the mood start/change?

Was there a trigger?

Why was I feeling like that?

What did it lead to?

Is it related to something/someone?

There are so many different possibilities, that really the first is to gain an awareness of what is happening. Then the reason for its beginning, development and what it leads to.

An example may be helpful. The mood is desolation, and I am being tempted to despair, I feel like taking a break from my duty, but I am aware of it, so I resist and try to continue my work asking for God's help. I may decide to pray a chaplet and this helps give me the strength to keep going and gradually I find the desolation dissipates.

FOURTH STEP: FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is the natural complement to the review step. We would not be able to bear the weight of seeing our sin and frailty if not for the knowledge and experience of a loving God. God loves us and forgives us. It is in this step that we receive that forgiveness and know all is well. But first it must be asked for, and hence the need for this step. While a "I confess ..." prayer can be used, it is important that this not be a routine, but an actual encounter with God's loving mercy. To experience God actually forgiving and renewing me in His love, personally, now is the aim of this step. This step should be a step of joy. This step should be an open and honest step.

FIFTH STEP: RENEWAL

All the previous steps (the past) lead to this step which looks to the future. This step is to "to purpose amendment with His grace". The issues of the past, present us with opportunities for growth. There are



several key questions, “What area do I need to work on the most?” “How could I have acted better in that situation?” “Do I need to make an adjustment to my priorities?” “What do I need to do to improve the situation?” The previous steps if entered into fully, provide ample insights as to what to work on. With the help of the Holy Spirit creative responses can be illuminated. Some will be small initiatives, others larger. It is better to hold onto and be consistent with small things, that to attempt larger projects. “Inch by inch is a cinch, yard by yard is too hard”. Be faithful in the small things, and God will lead you to greater. The response should normally be small, eg the decision to call someone.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Initially the examen should be practiced mechanically, one step after the other to become familiar with the steps and to gradually find a home in each step as well as the natural process from one step to the next. If however you feel led to a particular step, or to spend more time with one step than another, you should yield to the Spirit. You should also be aware of your own inclinations, which may need to be resisted, eg you feel angry and upset and so you want to review your feelings, step three, but you should resist and first thank God, which may dispel some of the anger, and by asking for God’s help you may shed light on the situation rather than review how you are right and the other person is wrong, to be able to see your own sin which should be in step three ready for seeking forgiveness from God in step four. If in doubt go through each step mechanically. As you become more attuned, you will be able to perceive the guidance of the Holy Spirit and recognize his ways more clearly, so it becomes more spiritual and guided.

The examen can be prayed anywhere which is conducive to reflection.

The examen should be prayed daily and ideally at a routine time and place to aid reflection and focus on the examen itself.

It is good to use a journal as an aid, so all the reflection is exposed and writing aids reflection and perspective.

The examen is complemented with a daily prayer routine which should deepen as the examen deepens.

Structure aids freedom. If you just sit and let yourself reflect or just ‘pray’ that way, it might not be as fruitful as focusing on each step and engaging with it actively. This will increase an ability to listen to the Spirit and instill the habit of each step so it becomes natural. This will lead to a natural habit of being open to the Spirit throughout the day.

BEGINNING THE EXAMEN

It is important to spend a little time at the start to let go of the day and the emotions of the day, thoughts, and events, so as to rise up a little with God’s grace above the day. This way you are able to see over the day with a greater vantage point. This way you may see things that you might have missed if you rushed into the examen. It also provides the opportunity to short circuit any current movements that might need to be resisted.

ENDING THE EXAMEN

The classic ending is the colloquy which is a heart-to-heart conversation with Jesus. Whatever the experience of the examen, this is like walking back down from the experience with Jesus and allows for some directed chat-chat to prepare for ‘re-entry’ into the world. It can take many forms and include some



intimate formula of surrender, or prayer. It is during this time that a key point from the examen is chosen to be taken on board for application or guidance in the person's life after the examen.

THE EXAMEN AND JOURNALLING

It is best to begin the examen by writing a response to some points of the examen. Both a diary and a journal can be used at the same time. The thankfulness could be a poem in the journal, or a note in a diary to thank someone for the help they gave as a way to express thanks to God. The petition could be a special prayer used to ask for the grace needed. Or a journal prayer created to help the person. The review could be a deep journal reflective piece, or a symbolic diagram of a situation. It could be a review of the things to do in a diary, or a reflection of the events in a diary to aid reflection on the day. The forgiveness could be a particular prayer used, or particular points in a diary of sins that need to be confessed later. The renewal could be a set of things to be done which are written straight into a diary so they won't be forgotten. The key point from the colloquy could be written as a diary point so it can be seen and remembered time and time again throughout the day. Both the journal and diary are useful and should be used during the reflection. You will find the necessary balance between free mental reflection and more structured written reflection over time.

RECOMMENDATION

The Jesuit tradition suggests two 15 minute examens per day for the Jesuits and one 15 minute daily examen for non-religious. Initially when starting it will probably take longer to complete all the steps while you are getting use to it. Then it may settle down into a better routine. If you are practicing the examen as part of the MAYO Ignatian retreat, then the minimum recommendation is about 10 minutes three times a week. This can be either part of your prep time the night before or part of the actual meditation time.

CONCLUSION

Over time the examen will become an essential part of the daily routine where you encounter God. Due to busyness it may be undertaken every second day. A time when you are able to place life under God's microscope, but also see God's action there. These small movements and guidances of the Spirit over time will point in particular directions. One is towards love. Another is towards vocation. Since true vocation is where you will love most, by following the promptings of love, you will end up in your true vocation. The path will become clearer and clearer. Be aware that sometimes the fastest path is not a straight line. Sometimes what appears as impossible is God's will, because God wants to be God in your life. The strength of the examen comes from your longing for God. Do all you can to increase this longing for God.

FURTHER READING

Gallagher, Timothy. "The Examen Prayer" New York: Crossroad Books, 2006.



APPENDIX B: CULTIVATION SPIRITUALITY

INTRODUCTION

Cultivation spirituality is not a 'new' spirituality, but more of a spiritual growth method based upon the wisdom of the saints.

Cultivation spirituality is a practical spirituality that is based upon several principles having their source within the Catholic spiritual tradition.

SOURCE AND PRINCIPLES

1 – ACT – HABIT (VIRTUE) - CHARACTER

"Be men of sacrifice who act promptly and willingly." St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"They must strive to be saints." St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"To become what one is, is to become man with all that makes one **human**, it is to become a **Christian** capable of confessing God as Father, it is to become a **saint**, capable of sharing in the intimacy of the Trinity." attribute to St. Leo the Great, often repeated by St. Eugene.

"Human virtues acquired by education, by deliberate acts and by a perseverance ever-renewed in repeated efforts are purified and elevated by divine grace. With God's help, they forge character and give facility in the practice of the good. The virtuous man is happy to practice them." (CCC 1810)

"sow an thought, reap an act
sow an act, reap a habit,
sow a habit, reap a character,
sow a character, reap a destiny" anonymous, quoted in Life and Labor (1887) by Samuel Smiles

It is clear from these two quotes that to progress in virtue (good habits) we must establish them by repeated, persevering acts. Hence the basis for growth in the spiritual life is to focus our attention on developing particular habits, while maintaining our other good habits and resisting the bad ones.

Principle One: to focus on working on a particular good habit.

2 – PRAYER IS THE FIRST HABIT OF CHANGE

"We never cease praying for you" St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"We must be holy if we are to live the life of a saint." St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"Prayer is both a gift of grace and a determined response on our part. It always presupposes effort. The great figures of prayer of the Old Covenant before Christ, as well as the Mother of God, the saints, and he himself, all teach us this: prayer is a battle. Against whom? Against ourselves and against the wiles of the tempter who does all he can to turn man away from prayer, away from union with God. We pray as we live, because we live as we pray. If we do not want to act habitually



according to the Spirit of Christ, neither can we pray habitually in his name. The "spiritual battle" of the Christian's new life is inseparable from the battle of prayer." (CCC 2725)

"Prayer is a vital necessity. Proof from the contrary is no less convincing: if we do not allow the Spirit to lead us, we fall back into the slavery of sin. (cf. Gal 5:16-25.) How can the Holy Spirit be our life if our heart is far from him?

Nothing is equal to prayer; for what is impossible it makes possible, what is difficult, easy. . . . For it is impossible, utterly impossible, for the man who prays eagerly and invokes God ceaselessly ever to sin. (St. John Chrysostom, De Anna 4, 5: PG 54, 666.)

Those who pray are certainly saved; those who do not pray are certainly damned. (St. Alphonsus Liguori, Del gran Mezzo della preghiera.)"(CCC 2744)

From these Catechism quotes we can see that prayer is the source of strength in the spiritual life. It is the first habit that we must work on, if we are to gain the strength to be able to work on other habits. It is the habitual source of grace that powers the rest of our spiritual life. It is the source of water that allows all other virtues to grow.

Principle Two: Prayer is the first habit to work on.

3 – Jesus is always the focus of prayer

"It has already been said that the missionaries, in as much as the frailty of human nature permits, ought to imitate in everything the examples of our Lord Jesus Christ, first Institutor of the Society, and of the Apostles, our first fathers." E. de Mazenod - Rule of the Missionaries of Provence, Part 2, Chap. 1, para. 4, 1818 text.

"With so good a Friend [Jesus] and Captain ever present, Himself the first to suffer, everything can be borne. He helps, He strengthens, He never fails, He is the true Friend. I see clearly, and since then have always seen, that if we are to please God, and if He is to give us His great graces, everything must pass through the hands of His most Sacred Humanity, in whom His Majesty said that He is well pleased. I know this by repeated experience: our Lord has told it me. I have seen clearly that this is the door [8] by which we are to enter, if we would have His supreme Majesty reveal to us His great secrets. So, then, I would have your reverence seek no other way, even if you were arrived at the highest contemplation. This way is safe. Our Lord is He by whom all good things come to us; He will teach you. Consider His life; that is the best example. What more can we want than so good a Friend at our side, who will not forsake us when we are in trouble and distress, as they do who belong to this world! Blessed is he who truly loves Him, and who always has Him near him!" (St. Teresa of Avila, Autobiography, Chapter 22, 9, 10.)

This long beautiful quote from St. Teresa of Avila highlights that the spiritual life must always be focused on the humanity of Jesus. St. Teresa of Avila is one of 33 doctors of the Church. Her expertise is the spiritual life itself. St. Teresa clearly indicates that the path to the heights of prayer is through the humanity of Jesus. We learn about the life of Jesus through the gospels. Hence, we should always have the gospels as a source of prayer. Mark's gospel is the simplest and so we should start with meditating through the life of Jesus using Mark's gospel. As we get to know Jesus through the gospel and imitate him in our life, our friendship with Jesus grows.

Principle Three: The path to God is through the humanity of Jesus.

4 – STEP BY STEP



"Aim more at edifying than at being popular" St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"Always allow for what is human without being surprised or upset." St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"inch by inch is a cinch, yard by yard is hard" – anon

This quote highlights the need to work at the spiritual life step by step. We should try and not make too many changes at a time. We should work on improving a habit that is achievable and sustainable. Generally the recommendation is up to a 15 minute daily change or an hourly weekly change.

"Rome wasn't built in a day" – anon

Some training experts say it takes 6 weeks to establish a new habit. With various challenges in life, it is worth taking a bit longer for the habit to survive various challenges before deciding upon a new habit to establish. It is therefore recommended to work on a new habit for a quarter of a year. We should then review the success of developing the new habit. If the habit is sufficiently established, then a new habit can be focused on. If not, then continue to work on the habit until it is established.

Principle Four: achievable goals and take at least a quarter of a year to establish a new habit.

5- Examen of Consciousness, Discernment

"I must give preference to what God asks." St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"We must spare no effort to extend the Saviour's empire" St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"The unexamined life is not worth living." (Apology 38a) Socrates

"It is impossible to exaggerate the value of the examen of conscience in the spiritual life. It is the foundation of a life of prayer." – Fr Hardon[1]

Reflecting upon what is happening in our life is a daily practice for everyone. St. Ignatius has developed a method of reflection as a daily practice to grow in the spiritual life. It is important to develop a regular structured reflection on how we are going spiritually throughout the year. Taking the previous point about a quarterly cycle of habit formation, the recommendation is a quarterly cycle of structured life reflection, that is, a quarterly retreat. The other recommendation, is to establish a daily examen. But this requires a certain level of prayer already established in the spiritual life. Once a 10-15 minute daily prayer is established, then the examen should be introduced as a daily practice.

The examen is part of the habit of discernment. Discernment requires knowledge of the good and the practice of always referring to the good, to God and being guided by the Church and the Holy Spirit which are always in agreement. This is a fundamental aspect of our personal relationship with Jesus. To commit ourselves to the fullness of the truth to guide all our decisions, we should be faithful to the magisterium of the Catholic Church. As a way to ask for God's grace to walk this narrow path that leads to heaven, we should take the oath of fidelity to the magisterium.

Principle Five: Daily examen and quarterly retreats. Discernment as a way of life and take the oath of fidelity to the magisterium.



6 – LET THE SPIRIT LEAD

"Follow the direction that God seems to indicate" St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"Act always under the impulse of the Holy Spirit". St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act." (Psalm 37)

"Wait for the Lord to lead, then follow in his way." Divine Office. Office of readings

"Surrender to God, and he will do everything for you." – Divine Office. Office of readings

Prayer is firstly our effort to seek God. "Seek and you shall find" (Luke 11:9). As we deepen in prayer, we may start to experience God acting in our prayer time and giving us guidance and the experience of his gentle loving presence. We should give over to him in prayer. Allow him to lead us as we experience this deeper prayer, which is called contemplation. Through this unifying prayer, God works in deeper and more profound ways. Therefore we should always be open to the spirit leading us.

Principle Six: Surrender to the Spirit as properly discerned.

7 – PERSEVERANCE

"Let us never waver in trusting God completely" St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"Let everyone, therefore, pray daily for perseverance. " St. Eugene De Mazenod.

"Even though incorporated into the Church, one who does not however persevere in charity is not saved. He remains indeed in the bosom of the Church, but 'in body' not 'in heart.'" (CCC 837)

"The fifth: In time of desolation never to make a change; but to be firm and constant in the resolutions and determination in which one was the day preceding such desolation, or in the determination in which he was in the preceding consolation. Because, as in consolation it is rather the good spirit who guides and counsels us, so in desolation it is the bad, with whose counsels we cannot take a course to decide rightly.

The sixth: Although in desolation we ought not to change our first resolutions, it is very helpful intensely to change ourselves against the same desolation, as by insisting more on prayer, meditation, on much examination, and by giving ourselves more scope in some suitable way of doing penance.

The seventh: Let him who is in desolation consider how the Lord has left him in trial in his natural powers, in order to resist the different agitations and temptations of the enemy; since he can with the Divine help, which always remains to him, though he does not clearly perceive it: because the Lord has taken from him his great fervor, great love and intense grace, leaving him, however, grace enough for eternal salvation.

The eighth: Let him who is in desolation labor to be in patience, which is contrary to the vexations which come to him: and let him think that he will soon be consoled, employing against the desolation the devices, as is said in the sixth Rule." (St. Ignatius, The Spiritual Exercises, Guidelines for discernment)

Dryness will come in the spiritual life. During these boring, hard times, we must persevere in the



spiritual life and maintain our habits. St. Ignatius recommends to increase our spiritual practices during these dry times since these times are actually times of growth.

Principle Seven: Perseverance

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

The following suggestions are made.

Quarterly half to whole day retreats. This will be a time of spiritual deepening which reflects upon the last quarter, has some fresh spiritual input and then looks forward to making a resolution for the next quarter.

The following steps for prayer recommendations for each quarter. Unless someone has consolidated a particular level of prayer, then the next level should not be attempted. Therefore the minimum is 3 years, but it could be quite a bit longer. The process is always personalised.

1. First Year
 1. 5 minutes of prayer based upon Mark's gospel. Using a single passage each day.
 2. 10-15 minutes of prayer each day. Continuing through Mark's gospel, but now starting to work on the psalms using the suggested method. Only one psalm a week should be attempted.
 3. Night prayer. The inclusion of the examen is important.
 4. Extended evening prayer. This is evening prayer with an examination of conscience and a final hymn to Our Lady, particularly the Salve Regina.
2. Second year
 1. Continue the Extended evening prayer from now on. Start to have a time of quiet personal prayer, preferably in Adoration of 5-10 minutes or a short morning prayer.
 2. consolidate the personal prayer time to 15 minutes or add a short simple morning prayer.
 3. personal prayer time of 15 minutes and a short simple morning prayer.
 4. personal prayer time of 30 minutes.
3. Third year
 1. The third year entails using an Ignatian retreat spread through out the year. The 30 minutes of daily prayer is the basis for this retreat.



APPENDIX D: TASKS

Music:	Organise sheet music Bring instruments Play music
Food:	Buy food, cook food
Materials:	Participants books, butcher's paper, crayons, textas, game prizes, candles, icon, cloths,
Games:	Prizes
Initial Reflection: The Emmaus Story: Leader	Session leader:
Session 1: Road of Life	Youth leader: sample road of life
Session 2: God's Love	Youth leader: talk: Sharing:
Session 3: Theology of the Body Part 1	Adult leader:
Session 4: Theology of the Body Part 2	Adult leader:
Free time	Games leader:
Eucharist	Priest: Organiser Music Powerpoint
Evening Session	Music: MC Sharing about reconciliation
DAY 2: Session 5: Prayer, self-gift to God	Talk: Prayer sharing:
Session 6: Cultivation Spirituality	Talk: Growing in holiness sharing:
Affirmations	MC:
Openforum: Where to from here?	MC:



APPENDIX D: CREDITS

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