



LANTERI CENTER FOR IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY
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Spring Silent Retreat
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Sacred Heart Jesuit Retreat House
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303-298-2498

What are the Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life?

Are you seeking an opportunity to grow closer to God and live a life of deeper purpose? Are you seeking something 'more' in your relationship with God? Developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola in the 16th century, the *Spiritual Exercises* focus on the life of Jesus as well as our God-given purpose in life; they help a person grow in spiritual discernment to make everyday decisions guided by the Holy Spirit. The goal is to help a person put God first in life, to know Him, love Him, serve Him, and follow His lead in daily actions.

This retreat in daily life is not a course, nor is it a Bible study. A person commits to a daily prayer period of 45-60 minutes and meets with a spiritual director once a week for 8-9 months. The daily commitment consists of imaginative prayer on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and journaling about what is happening in prayer and in life. The spiritual director will guide the person on a unique journey of discovering God's love and his call. For more information, call us at 303-298-1498.



LANTERI CENTER NEWSLETTER

A ministry of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary



Advent 2023

Dear Friends,

I glorify God for all the good that has come from the Lanteri Center and its graduates over the last 20 years. October 4th of this coming year will mark our 20th Anniversary. I thank my predecessors, Fr. Ernest Sherstone, Fr. Gregory Cleveland, and Fr. John Paul Klein for developing and guiding the Lanteri Center with great wisdom and dedication. I am so grateful for our staff, benefactors, and volunteers, without whom our ministry would not be able to touch so many hearts. We have grown from a fledgling “start-up” into an internationally renowned institution.

As I begin my time as Director here, I would like to introduce myself and share something of my vision for the future of the Lanteri Center. I was born into a devout Catholic family in Traverse City, Michigan. I felt the call to be a priest even as a little boy, and I always had a special love for the Virgin Mary. The summer before eighth grade, my family started attending Mass at the local Carmelite Monastery. The chaplain at the time was a brilliant theologian and retreat master, Fr. James J. McQuade, a Jesuit. I began serving Mass for him daily, and the nuns offered me a job doing maintenance at the monastery. Thus, my spiritual roots are deeply Marian, Ignatian, and Carmelite.

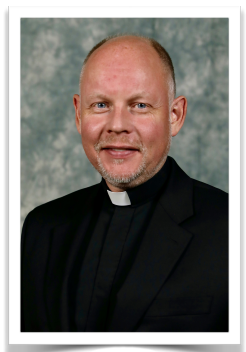
Among those who came to the monastery to make Ignatian retreats were Oblates of the Virgin Mary, including the newly ordained Fr. Andrew Huhtanen (now of Holy Ghost Church). After High School I entered the Oblate Seminary in Boston and was ordained in 1996. As the first Oblate in Denver in 2001, I helped lay the groundwork for the Lanteri Center and served here until 2006. I was the Oblate Formator and novice master in Boston from 2006-2011. In 2012, I returned to Denver as the Director of Spiritual Formation at St. John Vianney Theological Seminary. I have been the writer/editor of MagnifiKid! since 2003.

I have great hopes for the Lanteri Center in the coming years. First, I want to take good care of our staff, spiritual directors, and students. Please let me know what you need to flourish in your ministry. Second, I look forward to the Center collaborating more directly with Fr. Timothy Gallagher, who has done so much to promote Venerable Lanteri and Ignatian Spirituality. Third, I am working with some other Oblates to create a new step-by-step “Lanterian” handbook for directing the Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life (the 19th Annotation). As Fr. Lanteri said, “The Spiritual Exercises are the most efficacious means for making a person a saint, a great saint, and quickly.”

As we enter into Advent, I invite you to ponder the gift of spiritual direction. Spiritual direction, like the season of Advent, helps us to welcome Jesus anew. Be assured of my prayers for you during this holy season. I hope to meet many of you in person in the coming year. Blessed Advent!

Sincerely yours in Jesus and Mary,

Father Daniel Barron, OMV
Director



Hope after miscarriage

By Laura O'Brien

When I was near the end of my first trimester, I learned that my boy, Zeke, had died in my womb. It was the fifth time that I had lost a baby in miscarriage. The loss of Zeke was intensely painful to endure, and yet God allowed this suffering. When I gave birth to Zeke, I held his tiny, lifeless body in my palm. For a brief moment my agony lessened and was replaced with wonder at Zeke's ten perfect fingers and toes. My moment of awe was short-lived. In the days that followed, I was consumed by the most intense grief I have ever experienced. In that darkness, I raged at God and doubted His goodness. Mother Mary comforted me greatly in those days. Whenever I turned to her, she had Zeke in her arms.

As the dark clouds gradually lifted, I could see other blessings offered to me. Zeke brought me to greater growth in spiritual maturity. I had begged God to let Zeke live, and God said no. Now, instead of asking God for specifics, I present my desire to God and hold it loosely in my palm, rather than clinging tightly to what I want. In this way, I have become more like the reed that St. Ignatius speaks of, straight and ready to bend in any direction that God wills. The loss of Zeke also brought me a burning desire to live my life well so that I can get to Heaven and be with him. Whenever I feel myself growing complacent, I turn to Mary and Zeke and ask them to light the fire of desire in me again. Mary still holds Zeke for me, and the two of them continue to bless me from Heaven.

I have come to deeply believe that God only allows suffering when He can bring good from it. While difficult to comprehend amid deep sorrow, God's love and mercy truly is wrapped up in everything. The loss of a baby in the womb causes profound suffering, and it brings unique graces to a mother's life. In this way, two things are true: our hearts can ache for our children to be with us, and we can see good brought about by their short lives. When we intentionally keep our heart soft in the midst of suffering instead of letting bitterness take root, we receive the grace that is offered. This is not to say that it is easy work, and there is no way to avoid the powerful emotions that follow a miscarriage. God knows and expects this, and He will see us through it.

Zeke's love for me and mine for him transformed my life. May all grieving mothers experience this transforming love and the comfort of a good God.



In loving memory of Rose, Joseph, Hannah, Emily, and Zeke Edward O'Brien, and all the babies lost to miscarriage. You will not be forgotten.

Hope through Tears

By Cathy Hubka

God, who cannot die, took on our mortal flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary to give us eternal life. A very uneven exchange when you think about it, born out of the desire to be one with us and accomplish what we could not accomplish for ourselves. The Love of God is beyond our understanding, truly. We have been given an unimaginable hope, a hope that transcends all our fears and sorrows.

This past summer I buried, Ruth, my beloved twin sister. I have buried many loved ones, but nothing prepared me for this kind of grief. My twin started life in the womb with me. It is the closest thing to losing a spouse or a child. She was my “other half.” My memories do not consist of “me” but rather, “we”. We shared a crib, took our first steps, had our own baby language. It was never my birthday, but our birthday. I didn’t start school, we started school. We went through all the stages of life together: the awkward stages, the seeking of our own individuality, the stages of falling in love, getting married, etc. It is a loss that transcends a missing; it is the rupture of a felt sense of belonging to another in an intimate, particular way.



Ruth Larenas

May 10, 1961 - July 31, 2023

What can we do when loss pierces our heart? Where can we turn when grief overwhelms us, threatens the very moment, blinds us in sheer pain? We are incarnational. We long for the person’s voice, touch, presence in this world. That longing never goes away. We are not meant to push that aside nor spiritualize away these deep desires. However, we can’t allow grief to veil our eyes by becoming all that we see. Christ took upon Himself our greatest fears: the loss of heaven and the death of our bodies. In the depths of our souls, Christ cuts through the sinews, tangles, confusion, and pain of grief. He is our sure Foundation, for He has promised us something greater than our sorrow. If we have the hope that we will be reunited with those whom we love, from Whom does this hope spring? We are not the source of such faith and hope; it has been revealed and placed into our hearts by God Himself. This is what we hold on to as Christians. This is His place in the dark recesses of grief and the unknown of death. It is Christ Who weeps with us and says, in Isaiah 41: “For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, ‘fear not, I will help you.’” And help us you do, Lord. We commend all the departed into Your Merciful Love. We look forward to the day when your mercy brings us into eternal beatitude with all those in heaven.