

A MINISTRY IN THE DIOCESE OF LANSING



Institute for Spiritual Direction

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THOUGHTS FROM FR. DAVID



When I was in my 20's Judy Collins released the album, "Whales and Nightingales." One song in particular, "Nightingale" has stayed with me, stirring what St Ignatius would call my "holy imagination." The verses that continue to echo in my ear,

*"Jacob's heart bent with fear like a bow with death for its arrow.
Then he called out to God for help and climbed to the top of a hill.
Wind swept the sunlight through the wheat fields
In the orchard the nightingale sang*

*While the plums that she broke with her brown beak
Tomorrow would turn in to song.
Then she flew up through the rain with the sun silver bright on her feathers.
Jacob, bent with his frowns and sighs, walked back down the hill.
God doesn't answer me and He never will."*

With the COVID pandemic these past months, I have listened to the heart wrenching lament of many people that tell of losing sight of their faith and purpose. Their heavenly Father seems a distant memory. Reflecting on this beautiful song, I reach out spiritually to those in need, and gently lift their chin to the "Son-light." Lifting eyes to the orchard, and the wind-swept fields, sight is once again regained, as it was for the blind man in Jesus' Gospel. God does always answer us. And he always will.

St. Paul in chapter 17 of the Acts of the Apostles reminds us:

*He made from one the whole human race to dwell on the entire surface of the earth, and he fixed the ordered seasons and the boundaries of their regions, so that people might seek God, even perhaps grope for him and find him, though indeed he is not far from any one of us. For **'In him we live and move and have our being.'***

Sister and Brother Directors, I pray that you might give inspiration of the transcendent beauty all around us to those with hearts bent with fear. May they then encounter Christ through your touch, and may they breathe deeply a new resurrection that promises the gift of life.

WHAT'S IN YOUR CROCKPOT?



Tasty ingredients for your spiritual stew

I was out with some Catholic friends, talking about a current "hot button" issue in the Church. I came on pretty strong with my opinion, but I walked away troubled. Upon reflection, I saw I had gone too far in support of the law, and too far away from mercy.

At the ISD, we are led to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, so in turn we can do the same for our directees. His heart is one of healing, forgiveness, love and mercy. As Spiritual Directors we are called to reflect His merciful heart in all situations.

Anne Burr, class of 2019

IN OUR PARISHES

Most of our parishes are just getting back to full swing after several months of isolation while practicing coronavirus 'stay safe at home' directives. As things start to return to normal, let's try to reach out to those who are still struggling. Many people are experiencing fears about things that once seemed stable but now seem to be out of control. Ask God how you can serve in these unfamiliar times. Who needs encouragement? Who needs to refocus their faith on Jesus instead of being swayed by all the unrest in our society? Who is afraid for their own health? Who needs the words of hope that you can bring? Who is especially lonely after weeks of isolation? Let's focus on how we can meet one another's needs and support God's work among us.

WHAT'S NEW AT THE INSTITUTE

Plus our upcoming events!

A Little Social Distancing and A Lot of Grace

After three months of quarantine we are looking forward to resuming our normal programs for the fall. We are ideally situated for social distancing because we have two buildings we can use and can combine the resources of the two to be sure we have plenty of space for every event. We look forward to seeing you soon. We have missed seeing you!

Eight Day Ignatian Retreat

The Ignatian Retreat is one of our signature summer events. This year it will take place from July 12 to the 18th. There is still time to join us if you would like. Not only is this a great retreat, but it is the jumping off point for many people interested in the Spiritual Direction Program. If you are considering this program, contact Fr. David Rosenberg at drosenberg@stfrancis.ws for more information.

New Classes Beginning

The new fall program for spiritual direction training begins Tuesday, September 15. If you have questions about possibly joining the program, contact Fr. David Rosenberg for more information.

An Invitation For All Past Cohort Members—Come Welcome Our 5th Cohort Members

Set aside Thursday, August 20 to meet with ISD alumni and welcome our incoming cohort. The day will begin at noon in the Retreat House with a meeting for the ISD Alumni. Then at 4:30 p.m., Mass will be celebrated and followed by a potluck to welcome our fifth cohort. More information will follow, but for now set aside the date and we will look forward to celebrating together.

Support and Growth Opportunities for our ISD Graduates

Did you know that ISD offers an opportunity to meet with other graduates of the program for support and ongoing growth? We are currently meeting the second Monday of the month at 5PM via Zoom. Join us for study, prayer, discussion and support as we continue to grow in our ministry of spiritual direction. Our next meeting will be September 14. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Theis at nat95@aol.com.



For more information on the Institute for Spiritual Direction, on how to become a spiritual director, or how to find a spiritual director, please visit www.isdmichigan.org, or email Fr. David Rosenberg at drosenberg@isdmichigan.org.

SAINTLY INSPIRATION

ST. PAUL



In these days of change and uncertainty we look to St. Paul who reminds us of the promise of hope.

“More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.”

Romans 5: 3-5

ONE LAST THING

WWW.THECATHOLICTHING.ORG

With the fire hose media on 24/7 and the politicians and pundits twisting and turning in the wind, what are your resources for grounding yourself? And how do you interpret it all through the lens of the Church?

If you’re not familiar with the Catholic site “The Catholic Thing”, a web site of prominent Catholic writers (clergy, authors, saints, professors), you should be. Register for a free daily email feed at thecatholicthing.org. Or just drop by for some perspective on a particular topic.

Joan Plumley, Class of 2020