

MONTSERRAT

SESSION 2: WHAT COULD GOD DO WITH MY LIFE?

Welcome to the second day of this retreat experience! Today we will explore what God could do with your life.

The students will have a time of prayer at the end of the video. After the prayer, they will jump right into the next activity:

ACTIVITY: WHAT IF...

The purpose of this activity is to give the retreatants a period of discernment of their futures and challenge them with the teaching of Ignatian indifference, which states that we should only desire that which brings us closer to God and should therefore have no preference for wealth over poverty, health over sickness, long life over a short one, etc. Our one choice should always be that which brings us closer to God.

To begin the activity, please instruct the retreatants to close their eyes and imagine their ideal future. It could be the kind of person they want to become or what they will do with their lives. The future could be as soon as the college they want to attend in a couple of years or as distant as the kind of loving grandparent they hope to be. After they sit for some moments to visualize their future, please pose several “what if” questions, which may cause the retreatants to adjust their ideal future. Give them 15-30 seconds between each question so they may reflect on the questions.

- What if your income level was not important to you?
- What if you could live anywhere in the world?
- What if you were not required to achieve the future your parents planned for you?
- What if first world luxuries and comfort levels did not matter to you?
- What if your ability to maintain current friendships did not influence your decision?
- What if you had all the time in the world to make this dream a reality?
- What if maintaining your image was not important to you?
- What if having power and control over yourself and others were not a factor in your image?
- What if it didn't matter to you what other people thought of your ideal future?

After giving them time to reflect, give them 10 minutes or so to complete the “side 1” activity. After they have finished, give them about 5 minutes or so to complete “side 2”.

SIDE 1

On this side, draw an image of their ideal future. You can also make a collage of words that describe your ideal future, or any other illustration of what your ideal future will look like. When you are finished, turn to side 2.

SIDE 2

On this side, write down or illustrate the ideas or things that could get in the way of you achieving your ideal future. When you are finished, wait for further instructions.

Ask for volunteers to share with the group what their ideal futures look like and what things may keep them from achieving them.

After a few share about their futures, begin a discussion on the idea of Ignatian indifference. Some key points are:

“Often, we think about freedom as freedom from interference from others, but St. Ignatius understood freedom ... as being detached enough from things, people, or experiences to be able either to take them up or to leave them aside...”

What does freedom mean to you? What do you think it means to be detached from things or people or experiences?

Ignatian indifference is “the capacity to let go of what doesn’t help me to love God or love others—while staying engaged with what does. Indifference does not mean not caring. One can be indifferent and yet be deeply passionate. Nothing and no one belongs to us. Every beloved person and every good creation belongs to God, including me.”

What do you think people need to let go of to help them love God or others better? What is something you think you might need to let go of to help you love God or others better?

God gifted us with food, nature, people, and so much more. He gave us these gifts for us to enjoy. When we allow those gifts to stop us from following God’s desires for us, they tend to bring us suffering, not joy. When we enjoy those gifts without being attached to them, we are free!

Jesus wants us to trust God and to allow God’s desires for us to unfold in our lives.

Matthew 6:25-27 – “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”

(For more information, please visit <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-indifference/>)

After the activity, please have the retreatants answer the following questions:

REFLECTION QUESTIONS AFTER THE ACTIVITY

1. What does Freedom of Detachment and Indifference mean in your life?
2. What things/people/ideas in your life do you think are holding you back from loving God and others?
3. To realize your ideal future, what things/people/ideas might you need to detach yourself from?
4. When you look into your future, what do you see yourself doing? What values/goals will you live by?
5. Has your image of your future changed based on this concept of indifference and your experience of this retreat so far?

OPTIONAL - Play the song "Control" by Tenth Avenue North at the end of the session or as they answer the questions quietly.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFfztu8-bBQ>

