Dear Friends,

I trust that everyone is well and that you are using all of the protocols necessary to keep you and yours Corona Virus free. Here are some thoughts for the last week’s readings and a look ahed to the coming week. Today, Monday March 16th, should be Exercise 17 Calming the Storm (page 68).

Find below a quick reminder of the material that Ryan so brilliantly gave to us a few weeks ago. The first ten days of exercises were a part of “week 1” of the Spiritual Exercises and now we are in “week 2”.

***What Are the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius?***

*The Spiritual Exercises grew out of Ignatius Loyola’s personal experience as a man seeking to grow in union with God and to discern God’s will. He kept a journal as he gained spiritual insight and deepened his spiritual experience. He added to these notes as he directed other people and discovered what “worked.” Eventually Ignatius gathered these prayers, meditations, reflections, and directions into a carefully designed framework of a retreat, which he called “spiritual exercises.”*

*Ignatius wrote that the Exercises: “have as their purpose the conquest of self and the regulation of one’s life in such a way that no decision is made under the influence of any inordinate attachment.”*

***Second week:***

*The meditations and prayers of the second week teach us how to follow Christ as his disciples. We reflect on Scripture passages: Christ’s birth and baptism, his sermon on the mount, his ministry of healing and teaching, his raising Lazarus from the dead.****We are brought to decisions to change our lives to do Christ’s work in the world and to love him more intimately.***

**For your further Prayer:**

**The Examen:**

One practice that all Jesuits do is called The Examination of Consciousness. This “examen” helps free from disordered attachments to that we might follow Christ more intimately. As we work our way through the “second week” of the Spiritual exercises, let’s commit to giving the Examen a try. This prayer- lasting between five and ten minutes is a great way to go over your day and bring the light of the Gospel into every aspect of existence. Attached to this email find a popular way of doing the examen.

**Notes on the first part of our Lenten Retreat:**

**Week 1:**

For the first ten days of our retreat we’ve looked at God’s amazing love for each of us but also had to confront our own tendency and ability to sin. Jesus has come to free us from our sin and we marvel at that as we being to look at Jesus’ public ministry.

**Week 2:**

Now we are moving into a space where we get to hang out with Jesus and watch what he does. It’s a privilege to see him and watch him interact with all of the biblical characters we’ve heard so much about. In your mind’s eye recall a few things… what does Jesus look like to you? What does his voice sound like? Most importantly, how does Jesus act when he’s around sinners like you and me? How does he treat the religious leaders of his day and what does that say to us his followers? **How does Jesus interact with the poor and the outcasts?**

That’s enough for now. I’ll write more next week. Call or write with any questions!

Blessings,

Fr. Patrick