

# MANRESA LINK

## A Life Review with the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius

Written by Nuala Graham, Manresa Link member and presented at the Manresa Link bi-annual meeting, March 2021.

For more information, or if you would like to be accompanied on this three week retreat, please contact Nuala Graham: [nualabawn@gmail.com](mailto:nualabawn@gmail.com)

### Course Content:

- Week One: intimacy with the Father
- Week Two: Friendship with Jesus
- Week Three: Living in the spirit of truth and love

### Structure (similar to a Retreat in Daily Life):

1. An opening meeting for introductions and explanation.
2. Weekly meeting, one to one, with a prayer companion, though some people may wish to do this review alone.
3. The person accompanying the retreatant offers a gentle, relaxed, contemplative attentiveness, discerning the movement of the Spirit through this encounter.
4. A closing meeting to share and reflect.

## The Spiritual Exercises

“The Spiritual Exercises were designed to enable the retreatants to discover for themselves the loving invitation of God who calls each one to collaborate in the salvation of all peoples (p.vii. They were given to enable the retreatants to read what was written not in the text of the Exercises, but in their own heart (p.viii).” (*The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, Translated by Michael Ivens, SJ, 2004, Gracewing, Herefordshire, UK. From the Introduction by Gerard W. Hughes, SJ.)

St. Ignatius was aware that many people want and need spiritual help. He helped most people by inviting them to own, to take personal possession of, to claim as theirs, the fundamental truths of Revelation. He taught people to respect their own consciences while respecting the Word of God and the teaching of the Church (p.266 – 257). (J.A.Tetlow SJ, 1999 *Choosing Christ In The World*. Institute of Jesuit Sources. Saint Louis).

# THE FIRST PRINCIPLE AND FOUNDATION

From Gerard W. Hughes, "God of Surprises",

## Chapter 5

Before the world was made  
we were chosen  
to live in love in God's presence  
by praising, reverencing and serving him in and through his creation.

As everything on the face of the earth exists to help us do this, we must appreciate and make use of everything that helps and rid ourselves of anything that is destructive to our living in love in his presence. Therefore, we must be so poised {detached/indifferent} that we do not cling to any created thing as though it were our ultimate good, but remain open to the possibility that love may demand of us,

poverty rather than riches,  
sickness rather than health.  
dishonour rather than honour  
a short life rather than a long one,  
because God alone is our security, refuge and strength.

We can be so detached from any created thing only if we have a stronger attachment; therefore, our one dominating desire and fundamental choice must be to live in love in his presence.

### Week one: Intimacy with the Father

#### Spiritual Exercise 23 First principle and Foundation

To be reflected on each day of week one:

<b>The Word of God</b>	<b>Life Stages – Childhood</b>
Spend ten to fifteen minutes each day meditating on the scripture. Let it gently overflow into the life stage you are reflecting on.	
<b>Day One</b> Psalm 8	Thanksgiving
<b>Day Two</b> Isaiah 49: 1	Birth

<p>The Lord called me before I was born, while I was still in my mother’s womb he named me.</p> <p><b>Day Three</b> Isaiah 49: 6 See, I have inscribed you on the palm of my hand.</p> <p><b>Day Four</b> Isaiah 62: 4 For the Lord delights in you.</p> <p><b>Day Five</b> Exodus 3: 5 The place on which you are standing is holy ground.</p> <p><b>Day Six</b> Isaiah 43: 4 You are precious in my sight and honoured, and I love you.</p> <p><b>Day Seven</b> Jeremiah 1: 9 Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth and the Lord said to me, “Now I have put my words in your mouth.”</p>	<p>Dependency</p> <p>Attachment</p> <p>Intimacy / Separation</p> <p>Health / Illness</p> <p>Childhood aspirations</p>
---	---

**Week two: Friendship with Jesus**

**Spiritual Exercise 41 Daily Examen: One should say nothing to defame another or to spread gossip.**

**Spiritual Exercise 230 Love ought to find its expression in deeds rather than in words.**

**To be reflected on each day of week two:**

<p><b>The word of God</b> Spend ten to fifteen minutes each day meditating on the scripture. Let it gently overflow into the life stages you are reflecting on.</p> <p><b>Day One</b> John 15: 15 But I have called you friends.</p>	<p><b>Life Stages – Youth</b></p> <p>Independence</p>
--	---

<p><b>Day Two</b> John 15: 9 As the Father has loved me so have I loved you.</p>	Expanding horizons
<p><b>Day Three</b> Matthew 5: 8 Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.</p>	Sexuality / Spirituality
<p><b>Day Four</b> Hebrews 1: 3 He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being.</p>	Life choices
<p><b>Day Five</b> John 15: 16 You did not choose me but I chose you.</p>	Self-definition
<p><b>Day Six</b> John 15: 15 I am the vine, you are the branches.</p>	Opportunities
<p><b>Day Seven</b> Mark 15: 5 Go into all the world and proclaim the good news.</p>	Obstacles

**Week three: Living in the spirit of truth and love**

**Spiritual Exercise 315 Discernment: The ultimate purpose of discernment is to open the self to be led and guided by the Holy Spirit and to reject any influence that is contrary whatever the source. (p.35 J.TurnerSJA Commentary on the Rules for Discernment of Spirits)**

**To be reflected on each day of week three:**

<p><b>The Word of God</b> Spend ten to fifteen minutes each day meditating on the scripture. Let it gently overflow into the life stages you are reflecting on.</p>	<b>Life Stages – Maturity</b>
<p><b>Day One</b> 1 Samuel 3: 9 Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.</p>	Fulfilment / Disappointments

<p><b>Day Two</b> Haggai 2: 5 My Spirit abides among you, do not fear.</p>	<p>Changes / continuity</p>
<p><b>Day Three:</b> Isaiah 30: 5 In quietness and trust shall be your strength.</p>	<p>Reviewing the past</p>
<p><b>Day Four</b> Isaiah 42: 3 A bruised reed he will not break and a dim burning wick he will not quench.</p>	<p>Making peace with the unsaid and finished</p>
<p><b>Day Five</b> Isaiah 40: 31 But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles.</p>	<p>Facing the unknown</p>
<p><b>Day Six</b> Revelation 21: 5 See, I am making all things new.</p>	<p>Attending to the whispers of truth and love</p>
<p><b>Day Seven</b> Isaiah 52: 7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those messengers who announce peace.</p>	<p>Peace – with work to do (G M Hopkins)</p>