



The Ignatian Way I

Week 5

Give your life – Loving service

In preparation for this session, listen to the [Week 5 podcast](#) and read the article from [Thomas Ryan, *Four Steps to Spiritual Freedom*, pp.238-245.](#)

Further material for reflection

The Seed Cracked Open

*It used to be
That when I would wake in the morning
I could with confidence say,
“What am ‘I’ going to
Do?”*

*That was before the seed
Cracked open.*

Now Hafiz is certain:

*There are two of us housed
In this body,
Doing the shopping together in the market and
Tickling each other
While fixing the evening’s food.*

*Now when I awake
All the internal instruments play the same music:*

*“God, what love-mischief can ‘We’ do
For the world
Today?”*

By Hafiz, Translated by Daniel Ladinsky

This form of Sufi poetry includes the name of the poet in the poem. The intent is that we can substitute our names and enter the poem for ourselves.

As we near the end of this course, we invite you to look back over the past few weeks and consider:

- 1) Where have there been moments of insight, attraction and deepening of your faith, hope and love?
- 2) Have there been any moments of alarm, defensiveness or withdrawal as to where God may be leading you?
- 3) What invitation do you sense, if any, from God as you go forward from here?

Suggested exercises from this week's article

In this week's article, Thomas Ryan presents the Examen prayer as a 'freedom tool' – a way of discovering where God is already at work in our daily lives and where he may be drawing us. His version of the Examen has 4 stages:

- 1) Settle into prayer and seek to bring yourself into God's presence
- 2) Ask for light, wisdom and humility in this time of prayer
- 3) Look back over your daily experience through Jesus's eyes, looking for moments of light and life, and for any moments of sorrow and regret
- 4) Request God's help for tomorrow

Try praying the Examen in this way (which need take no more than 10-15 minutes) at least once before we meet next week.

If you have time, you may also want to try Ryan's suggestion (on pp.243-244) to discover your 'predominant desire':

- 1) Think of 3 or 4 things that you think are important for your spiritual growth
- 2) Write them down.
- 3) Imagine you are with Jesus, talking through this list.
- 4) Ask him if the first item on your list is the most important one.
- 5) Listen for his response.
- 6) Do the same with the other items on your list.
- 7) Reflect upon your list in light of this exercise.