



The Same Journey

Earlier this month, I had the privilege of facilitating a retreat at the Jesuit Retreat House outside of New Orleans. Early Sunday morning, as we waited for Mass to begin, I talked with George (not his real name). George was in recovery from his addiction to alcohol and lived in a transitional housing program.



Tom Drexler,
Executive Director

At one point, he shakes his head and says, “you know, Tom, I think this is the way God intended us to live, with the sense of peace I now have and always recognizing that God is so very present in my everyday life.”

At that moment, as we shared a cup of coffee and were looking at rows of ancient Oak trees, I couldn't agree with him more. Though we come from very different backgrounds and have taken very different paths, George and I were on the same journey. Both of us longing to live in God's peace, the peace Jesus promised us: “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you (JN 14:27).” George was in a recovery program for the fifth time. He not only desired God's peace, he needed God's peace.

We were recognizing just how alive God is in the everyday stuff of our lives. It is easy when you're on the banks of the Mississippi River gazing at the Spanish moss hanging from those old Oaks, to agree with Gerard Manley Hopkins; “The world is charged with the grandeur of God.” The challenge comes, as both George and I admitted, when you leave the beauty and serenity of those retreat grounds.

Yet, as you know so very well if you've ever been on an Ignatian retreat, the grace and consolation experienced during that retreat, renews hope, enlivens the journey, and reminds one that God is present in not just the beauty of life but also the trouble.

Because of your support, George is now keenly aware of this and can continue on the journey of transformation.

You remain in our prayers.

God in Action

By Carrie Nickerson

Out of the late Middle Ages, at the darkest time of the year (February), the tradition of celebrating *purification* emerged. As I think about that development in human history, it seems ironic that our Pittsburgh team picked that same time of year to initiate ISP – February, a time of darkness, dreariness, and difficult weather. And yet, there we were, gathered together, being *made pure* – wanting to be free from the many distractions in our lives and more responsive to God's invitation to remember our original goodness. All of us were a little nervous and curious, but we let that go to become an authentic community of compassion.

One of our new retreat team members said, “I think that my most memorable moment was when one of the women, speaking in response to the *lectio* on the paralytic said, ‘Yes, it is enough to be forgiven. That is enough for me.’ It seemed like such a powerful testimony and I understood the text in a whole new way... The woman who spoke seemed so free when she said it. I think it was so symbolic of the kind of experience that many have - a real opening up to what God has for them - a receiving of the grace God desires for each of us.”



Pittsburgh recently held their first ISP Women's retreat.

The same team member went on to say, “I'm not sure what I expected but I do know that the nervousness I felt changed into a sense of blessing we are given when folks gather in God's grace and open themselves up to trust and to possibility. I was surprised by the kind of transformation that can occur . The experience spoke to me of how the folks most of society says are worthless are the ones to whom God is offering such hope and encouragement. If you want to see God in action, go on a retreat!” (continued pg 3)

National Gathering

“It’s easily one of the best weekends out of the entire year.” Every year, ISP convenes our retreat teams from across the country (18 of our 19 cities made it!) to reflect on the previous year and make plans for the next. Fr. Bill Creed, SJ was the keynote presenter and offered a meaningful reflection on how we had personally connected with the ministry of ISP this past year. It was so hopeful to hear stories of transformation and courage. I was again reminded of how lucky ISP is to have such talented and dedicated volunteers.

This year we had a special task: crafting our next strategic plan. Our current five year plan is set to expire this year and dialoguing with the national teams to discern where ISP should head in the next five years was an important process. We were overwhelmed at the enthusiasm from the teams as they shared excellent ideas and suggestions for where and how ISP should grow.



Jordan Skarr | Associate Director



This year’s gathering featured a presentation from the Houston Team.

“One of the best things about the National Gathering,” a coordinator told me, “is the chance to really see just how big ISP is and to take back really good ideas.” As our network continues to grow, we remain committed to providing strong formation for our volunteer team members so they can continue to be present and most prepared to meet our retreatants on their journey within the retreat and after.

Fr. Bill Creed, SJ receives Distinguished Alumni Award

This past Lent, ISP had the opportunity to share our work with the St. Ignatius College Prep (SICP) community in Chicago. Throughout Lent, members of the National Office staff spoke to students about

homelessness, addiction and how they might become involved with ISP.

The series culminated on Holy Thursday, when Wayne Richard was the guest speaker for the school-wide assembly. It’s not



Wayne Richard and Bill Creed, SJ pose with student panelists at SICP.

an easy thing to hold a gym full of students at rapt attention, but Wayne excelled. His talk included stories from his life, his connection to ISP, and the spiritual roots of his years of service. We only wish we had a video! Some student panelists (above) got the chance to ask Wayne some questions.

After Fr. Bill Creed, SJ, an alum of SICP and founder of ISP, presided at the school’s prayer service, Fr. Michael Caruso, SJ, President of SICP, presented him with a Distinguished Alumni Award in recognition of his commitment to bringing the Spiritual Exercises to those at the margins. We are quite grateful for the collaboration and pass along our sincerest congratulations to the presenters!

Ignatian Spirituality Project Staff

THOMAS DREXLER
Executive Director

JORDAN SKARR
Associate Director

Wayne Richard
Retreat Formation
Consultant

Patricia Crowley, OSB
Coordinator Chicago
Women’s Team

Timothy McCabe, S.J.
Coordinator Chicago
Men’s Team
Development Associate

(Continued from page 1)

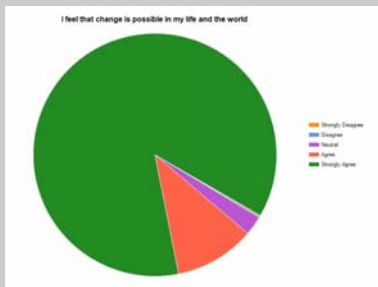
Another new team member observed, “The ISP retreat was a blessing for those who gathered. When we first gathered we were strangers to each other. Prayer, shared silence and conversation gave us common ground and connected us in spirit. This was a rich and graced experience” – and I would add, one to which we all hope to return in the coming year!



In April the Omaha team held their first women’s retreat. Our network is growing!

Did you know?

Almost 90% of our retreatants “strongly agree” that change is possible in their life and the world after an ISP Retreat.



**RETREAT SCHEDULE
JANUARY 2011-JUNE 2011**

January

8	Boston	Women	9-10	Cleveland	Women
8-9	Chicago	Women	9-10	Cleveland	Men
8	Cleveland	Women	9-10	Houston	Men
8	Denver	Men	9-10	Omaha	Women
8	St. Louis	Men	15-17	Boston	Men
18-19	Atlanta	Women	16	Chicago	Women
22-23	Chicago	Men	16-17	Denver	Women
24-26	Washington DC	Men	16-17	Milwaukee	Men
			16-17	Minneapolis	Women
			26-27	Atlanta	Women

February

4-6	Cleveland	Women
12	Washington DC	Men
15-16	Atlanta	Women
19-20	Chicago	Men
25-27	Boston	Men
26-27	Baltimore	Women
26	Chicago	Women
26-27	Cincinnati	Women
26	Houston	Co/Ed
26-27	Pittsburgh	Women

May

30-1	Chicago	Men
7-8	Baltimore	Men
7	Milwaukee	Men
7	St. Louis	Women
10-11	New Orleans	Women
10-11	New Orleans	Men
13-15	Boston	Women
14	Cleveland	Women
14	Denver	Women
16-18	Washington DC	Women
18	Morristown	Men
21	Chicago	Men
21-22	Chicago	Women
21-22	San Francisco	Women
22	Omaha	Women
25	Atlanta	Women
28-29	Akron	Men
28-29	Omaha	Men

March

1-2	Washington DC	Women
5-6	Cincinnati	Men
12	Cleveland	Women
18-20	Houston	Women
22-23	Morristown	Men
26	Chicago	Men
26-27	Chicago	Women
28-30	Washington DC	Men
29	Atlanta	Women

April

1-2	Dayton	Women
2	Cincinnati	Women
2-3	St. Louis	Women
2-3	San Francisco	Men
3	Pittsburgh	Women
7	Washington	Women

June

4-5	Chicago	Women
4-5	Minneapolis	Men
4-5	St. Louis	Men
11	Houston	Co/Ed
16-17	Atlanta	Men
25-26	Chicago	Men

**Ignatian Spirituality Project
Board of Directors**

WILLIAM E. CREED SJ, CHAIR

- Kat Beaulieu
- Paul Coelho, SJ
- Thomas Drexler
- Daniel Flaherty, SJ
- Jenéne Francis
- Steven Hagnell
- Frank Hogan
- Glover Johnson
- Ernest Lausier
- Ann Rotermund
- John Schaff
- Edward Shurna

WE'RE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

ISP is Running for Hope

By Tim McCabe, SJ

In the first of its kind, ISP held a Run for Hope in Chicago. Early in the morning on Holy Saturday, seventeen ISP runners raced along the lakeshore. "It was a great day and a lot of fun," said Jordan Skarr, Associate Director of ISP. The runners had the option of running either a 5K or 10K and collectively the group raised \$4,575.

Signaling their ongoing commitment to issues of homelessness, 10 of the 17 runners were faculty from St. Ignatius College Prep, where the school ministry office spearheaded a year-long school-wide program examining causes and conditions of homelessness.

Even Executive Director, Tom Drexler, got into the fun. "The day could not have been better. The weather cooperated and the route down the lakeshore path was absolutely beautiful. We hope to make this an annual event," Drexler said.

100% of the donations will go directly to help cover the costs for retreatants throughout the country who find themselves homeless.



We've Moved!

To accommodate for future growth and deepen our connection with other Jesuit ministries, we've moved! We're excited to share a space with St. Procopius Parish, a vibrant Jesuit parish. Please note our new address and phone number.

**1641 South Allport
Chicago, IL 60608
312-226-9184**

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
CHICAGO, IL
PERMIT NO. 2373

Ignatian Spirituality Project
Spiritual Retreats Ending Homelessness.
1641 South Allport Chicago, IL 60608

