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Ignatius of Loyola

This course introduces people to the richness of the spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatius lived from 1491 to 1556, and he was a pioneer in proposing ways for the individual to attain spiritual freedom.

His reflection upon his relationship with God and documentation of his understanding has transmitted to us great wisdom in The Art of Spiritual Direction and the discernment of spirits in our life. This wisdom takes clear and compelling form in his Spiritual Exercises.

The Course

The aim of this course (often known as the Ignatian Spirituality Course- ISC) is to form participants in The Art of Spiritual Direction and in giving the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola in their various forms.

It is an ecumenical Christian course and is open to people of goodwill from all traditions. The course is led by an experienced staff of lay people, religious and clergy, and runs for one day a week (11am till 4pm) over three years.



First Year

The First Year meets on Tuesdays throughout the year. This Year is a “first taste” of many topics - we invite participants to do their own research and will recommend further reading. Much of the work is experiential and some people find the pace of this year gentler than other courses: this is deliberate, to inspire and enable participants to weave the course material in with their own journey over the year. To aid this process participants are asked to keep a reflective log through the year which is shared with their group tutor. There are also six written assignments over the course of the year.

This Year can be taken independently as a foundational course in Ignatian Spirituality and spiritual direction. The following modules are included in the programme:

- Ignatius and the Exercises
- The Art of Spiritual Direction
- Ignatian Spirituality in Context
- Exploring our own Spirituality
- Foundational Issues in Theology and Psychology

Second Year

The Second Year meets on Wednesdays throughout the year. The pace quickens as participants deepen their knowledge of the text and develop their understanding of the skills involved in spiritual direction. It is often the year too when participants discern their personal vocation at a deeper level.

The mornings are spent on an in-depth analysis of the theory and application of the text of the Spiritual Exercises and there are weekly reading assignments. There is also a theoretical written assignment where participants are invited to select a particular part of the Exercises to study within the context of its overall dynamic.

The afternoons are spent practising spiritual direction skills in small and large groups. Four written assignments are required asking for personal reflection on these sessions.

Course modules include:

Theory and application of the Exercises-

- The First week and the Kingdom
- The Second week and the Key Meditations
- The Modes of Discernment
- The Third and Fourth week and the Contemplatio

The practice of Spiritual Direction-

- Building the content
- God at work in me and the other
- Sexuality and Spirituality

Recommended reading is offered throughout.

Third Year

The Third Year meets on Thursdays throughout the year. Participants are helped to develop further their skills in spiritual direction, especially the competence needed to be able to give the Spiritual Exercises and their Adaptations. Study is mainly experiential. It focuses on the participant's work as a spiritual director in group work, through case studies, personal and peer appraisal, seminars and supervision.

Course modules include:

- Theory and Practice of Spiritual Direction - Guiding the Spiritual Exercises
- Personal Vocation
- Effective use of Supervision
- Discernment of God's Will
- Specialised issues in Spiritual Direction: Dreams and Images; Depression, Desolation & the Dark Night; Sexuality; Body-centered Spiritual Practice; Bereavement & Loss; Soteriology & Ecclesiology

Assignments in the Third Year include:

- A spiritual and psychological autobiography
- The presentation of an in-depth case study of a directee for supervision
- An essay on discernment

Course Requirements

Interviews

Participants are accepted onto the course following an initial interview; these are usually held in July and September. Occasionally, people with relevant background and experience may be admitted onto the Second Year.

Expectations

Participants are expected to:

- Meet regularly with an Ignatian-trained spiritual director
- Be committed to attending all sessions. If two or more sessions are missed in a term you will be expected to repeat the whole term. There will be an administrative fee for repeating a term
- Work with your own experience within this ministry in the group
- Complete assignments and recommended reading
- Make an Ignatian-based, individually guided retreat, normally of 6-8 days duration, by the start of the Second Year

- Make the full Spiritual Exercises in one of their adaptations, normally completed by the end of the Third Year
- We recommend that you gain an experience of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and/or the Enneagram Personality Inventory during the First Year

Assignments & Appraisals

There are regular assignments and appraisals throughout the duration of the course. Entry to subsequent Years is through completion of the previous Year's requirements and an end-of-year appraisal. Movement from one Year to the next is not automatic; this will be assessed and discussed with you by a member of staff.

Certification

A Certificate of Completion is presented at the end of the Third Year for those who have completed all the course requirements.

Applications

Please complete the application form enclosed with this booklet. Deadline for receipt of paperwork is 2 weeks before start of term. The Letter of Reference should be completed by someone who knows you well (preferably your spiritual director). Return both forms together or separately -an interview is not offered until both are received. Applications should be accompanied by £50 deposit, which will be deducted from fees payable on acceptance. £25 is refundable if a place is not offered or taken up.

Cost

This is subject to annual review, please contact the Administrator for the current cost or check the website. Some sources of grant funding exist to assist with the cost of fees: please contact the Administrator for details. Some financial assistance may also be available from a small bursary fund for those who need it, but will only be awarded provided you can show that all other sources of funding have been exhausted.

Venue:

The London Centre for Spirituality,
Lombard Street,
London. EC3V 9EA

Contact:

The ISC Administrator,
The Church of St. Edmund the King & Martyr,
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