



Ignatian Spiritual LifeCenter

A Jesuit Urban Ministry

Space for contemplation, conversation, movement and action

Synodal Journey

- Structure for the coming meetings
- The plan for the three non-parish Jesuit works in San Francisco

ISLC at its Best

- Looking back on the Fall semester
- Events Spring 2022
- Explaining Spiritual director Hub

Religious Imagination during COVID

- What for the questions?
- What happens with the answers?
- Are you interested in the process?

Dates to remember:

01/20 Synodal dialogue Zoom
7:30 -9:00pm

01/27 ISLC Thursday event Zoom
6:30pm-8:00pm (CANCELED)

02/01 Spiritual Director Hub



“Angels Unknown”

In the summer, 2019, a new statue found its home in St. Peter’s square. Although nearly 20 feet long, with 12-foot high angel-wingtips stretching forth from the midst of the people crowded on the boat, the statue seems tiny and dark. The jewel that is St. Peter’s square, with its half-round colonnade architecture mostly build in the sixteenth century, is illuminated by night in its splendor. The one-hundred-forty magisterially decorated martyrs and saints on top of the colonnades are mirrored in the one-hundred-forty migrants, and in their distinct times and cultures. Mary and Joseph stand among them. Every immigrant culture finds an ancestor among them.

Visiting there this past December, I wondered whether this was part of



Looking back :

Our First Synodal Dialogue



The picture was taken from one of our small breakout groups.

A summary of the notes taken at the meeting will be available before the next meeting on our new Synodal part of the ISLC website.

Our Thursday events in Fall 2021

Prof Sophia Eun Park, SNJM speaking about grief and the ancestors,



including shamanic rituals.
- Prof. em. William O' Neil, SJ speaking about the spirituality raising from a life with the refugees at Kakuma camp in Kenia. *[Both talks will be on the new ISLC website]*



the synodal journey. The sculpture was made in response to a petition by Pope Francis who wanted to bring the refugee and migrant crisis into the heart of Saint Peter's square. It is the first permanent addition to the square since Vatican II. However, its very placement on the square seems to transmit more than an increased awareness of the searingly painful present situation of millions of migrating people around the globe. It also wants to shine a light on the past, the pain and hurt of the past that the Synodal preparatory document mentions.

St. Peter's square was built with money raised by offering or imposing indulgences on the faithful in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The great street connecting Rome's center with Saint Peter's square was built with the help of the fascist emperor, Benito Mussolini, displacing hundreds of families to the outskirts of the Roman City Center. Both atrocities throw dark shadows on the glamorous silent beauty.

The 'little' dark boat seems more than a sign. It seems part of a journey of memory, accepting the pain and the hurt that the Church itself has caused. At the same time Pope Francis also invites us to construct dreams, not denying the past but facing our memory. The synodal journey invites us to see in the other – in the one that goes with me to church, or the one I just happen to meet, in the one who migrated or was displaced, in the prisoner, the sick, the distant one – an *Angel Unknown*. Another angel dwells in the church with me, another angel in the communion of saints with me, building the dream.

This is my prayer for us all in 2022: may we discover, each day of our lives, an *Angel Unknown*. May we be able to support each other on a journey towards a future not our own, building it with those whom we love, enjoy, and embrace.

Peace and blessings, Julia

There is a contemplative short video of the statue online if you are interested:



It is with gratitude that we are looking back on the Fall semester and all that happened at the ISLC. The online regular prayer and faith sharing, some venturing with in person spiritual direction again, celebrating Marco Matute, the wonderful Advent retreat and Advent evening prayer, the joy of the Young Adult group in their diverse meetings and their Taizé prayer, the inspiring Thursday events and the beginning of the Synodal journey. With this gratitude let us look ahead and all that is waiting for us in Spring!

THURSDAY EVENTS AT ISLC

The Thursday events at ISLC are for anybody who is interested in deepening different aspects of their spiritual life. Over tea, wine, snacks and sweets we engage a speaker in talk and dialogue. The meetings are held outside when the weather permits under heat-lamps, masked and socially distanced. According to the SF mandate vaccination is required for attending in person.

Every fourth Thursday a Month

6:30pm - 8:00pm Hybrid format: in person at ISLC and online

**[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87854212304?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87854212304?pwd=RUVaNzdLRkRNREFpbURiMkRCZUhoUT09)
pwd=RUVaNzdLRkRNREFpbURiMkRCZUhoUT09**

Meeting ID: 878 5421 2304 Passcode: 752967

JANUARY 27TH, 2022 (Postponed to March 24th, 2022 because of townhall meeting)

FEBRUARY 24TH, 2022

PAMELA PRIME, author, retreat facilitator and spiritual director, Walnut creek, California.

“THE MYSTERY OF DIVINE SOPHIA:” What wisdom spirituality, what Sophia *gifts* us on our spiritual journey.

MARCH 24TH, 2022

KEVIN F. BURKE, SJ Vice-president of mission at Regis-University Denver, Colorado

“BEAUTY, EVER ANCIENT, EVER NEW:” The Poetry of Denise Levertov and The Vision of Pope Francis”

APRIL 28TH, 2022

SARA POSTLETHWAITE, VDMF co-director of spiritual ministries at Saint Agnes/ISLC

CELTIC SPIRITUALITY - Why Celtic Spirituality is so Central to our Faith, Without us Knowing.

Spiritual Director Hub

The first Tuesday every three months Spiritual Directors who have been in connection with the ISLC for many years and some who have become part of the Spiritual direction care at ISLC and don't know other Spiritual Directors at ISLC very well will have the opportunity to meet. We also will be able to dream and discuss spiritual ministries at ISLC and to plan for moments when sitting down with someone in a room is an invitation again and not a threat. May these times be soon!!!

A Spiritual Director will be invited to spark our conversation and to enable a community of people that have been trained in this ministry to grow together and to enjoy each other while being supportive of each other.

A personal letter will go out to the spiritual directors that are known to me. However, feel invited if you are a director trained in the Ignatian way of Spiritual direction and would like to be connected with the ISLC.

Dates :February 2, 2022. April 5, 2022. June 7, 2022. 6:30pm -8:00pm

As all in person events they are under the SF mandate, vaccination and mask required.

Religious Imagination during COVID Survey

The ISLC together with the University of San Francisco is involved in two major projects this winter and during the coming spring. One is oriented towards memory of the spiritual and religious imagination that these COVID times have brought forward, the other one oriented towards the future in the synodal journey together with the SI Prep. Both are tied together. The synodal journey will be discussed in the next section of the Newsletter.

In the Religious Imagination during COVID survey we are looking at the time during which COVID has impacted the world, to see how we discovered resilience and ways of healing in our spiritual practices walking through unknown pain and pressures. Please, click further down for the link to the research and in what way COVID has challenged and perhaps changed your own religious and spiritual imagination. As we receive more responses on this survey, we will be more aware of what is evolving into different ways of belonging and of imagination of the Christian Mystery in the parish and we also will be more able to respond to it. This is the link to the survey.

https://usfca.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a97xmGhcskCbJMG

Synodal Journey

The Plan: *It has been an amazing joy and full of beautiful surprising grace to work on this synodal journey together with the other Jesuit non-parish works in San Francisco: USF and SI Prep (San Quentin will also be part.) The synodal journey between us, includes the dialogues at ISCL, student-dialogues in classrooms, faculty dialogues at USF and SI, faculty lectures, inmates at San Quentin, parents at SI Prep, parents with adult children who left the church, local Jesuit volunteers and local JST graduate groups and a reading group about the Pope Francis book: Let us Dream. All these conversations will be summarized in a document and hand-delivered to the Vatican in June.*

The process of each session will be the same invitation, following the discerning attitude in which Pope Francis wrote this document. These are the steps:

1. Recall your experience
2. Re-read your experience slowly in greater depth: what wounds did they reveal, what joys, what insights?
3. Gather the fruit of the conversation: Where does the voice of the Holy Spirit resound? What is the Spirit asking of us? Do we register any consensus? What points are confirmations, what is the prospectus to change, the steps to be taken?

It is point #3 that we are gathering in the big group and as notes for the website.



I. THE JOURNEYING COMPANIONS

In the Church and in society, we are side by side on the same road. In your local Church, who are the ones “journeying together”? When we say: “our Church,” who is part of it? Who is asking us to journey together? Who are the road companions, including those outside the ecclesial perimeter? What persons or groups are left on the margins, expressly or in fact?

II. LISTENING

Listening is the first step, but it requires having an open mind and heart, without prejudices. To whom does our particular Church “need to listen to”? How are the Laity, especially young people and women, listened to? How do we integrate the contribution of Consecrated Men and Women? What space is there for the voice of minorities, the discarded, and the excluded? Do we identify prejudices and stereotypes that hinder our listening? How do we listen to the social and cultural context in which we live?

These orange questions are the topic for our dialogue on 01/20

III. SPEAKING OUT

All are invited to speak with courage and parrhesia, that is, integrating freedom, truth, and charity. How do we promote a free and authentic style of communication within the community and its organizations, without duplicity and opportunism? And in relation to the society of which we are a part? When and how do we manage to say what is important to us? How does the relationship with the media system (not only Catholic media) work? Who speaks on behalf of the Christian community, and how are they chosen?

IV. CELEBRATING

“Journeying together” is only possible if it is based on communal listening to the Word and the celebration of the Eucharist. How do prayer and liturgical celebration inspire and direct our “journeying together”? How do they inspire the most important decisions? How do we promote the active participation of all the Faithful in the liturgy and the exercise of the sanctifying function? What space is given to the exercise of the ministries of the reader and acolyte?

These purple questions are the topic for our dialogue on 02/17

VI. DIALOGUE IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

Dialogue is a path of perseverance that also includes silences and sufferings, but which is capable of gathering the experience of persons and peoples. What are the places and modes of dialogue within our particular Church? How are divergences of vision, the conflicts, the difficulties addressed? How do we promote collaboration with neighboring Dioceses, with and among religious communities in the area, with and among lay associations and movements, etc.? What experiences of dialogue and shared commitment do we have with believers of other religions and with non-believers? How does the Church dialogue with and learn from other sectors of society: the world of politics, economics, culture, civil society, the poor...?

VII. WITH THE OTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS

The dialogue between Christians of different confessions, united by one Baptism, has a special place in the synodal journey. What relations do we have with the brothers and sisters of other Christian denominations? What areas do they concern? What fruits have we drawn from this “journeying together”? What are the difficulties?

These sand-colored questions are the topic for our dialogue on 03/17

VIII. AUTHORITY AND PARTICIPATION

A synodal Church is a participatory and co-responsible Church. How do we identify the goals to be pursued, the way to achieve them, and the steps to be taken? How is authority exercised within our particular Church? What are the practices of teamwork and co-responsibility? How are lay ministries and the assumption of responsibility by the Faithful promoted? How do synodal bodies function at the level of the particular Church? Are they a fruitful experience?

IX. DISCERNING AND DECIDING

In a synodal style, decisions are made through discernment, based on a consensus that flows from the common obedience to the Spirit. By what procedures and methods do we discern together and make decisions? How can they be improved? How do we promote participation in decision-making within hierarchically structured communities? How do we articulate the consultative phase with the deliberative one, the process of *decision-making* with the moment of *decision-taking*? How and with what tools do we promote transparency and accountability?

X. FORMING OURSELVES IN SYNODALITY

The spirituality of journeying together is called to become an educational principle for the formation of the human person and of the Christian, of the families, and of the communities. How do we form people, especially those who hold roles of responsibility within the Christian community, to make them more capable of “journeying together,” listening to one another and engaging in dialogue? What formation do we offer for discernment and the exercise of authority? What tools help us to read the dynamics of the culture in which we are immersed and their impact on our style of Church?

These darkish green colored questions are the topics for our dialogue on 04/21

To participate in this dialogue you are asked to read the synodal preparatory document by Pope Francis in preparation for the conversation . <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2021-09/text-read-in-english.html>

New and old images of ISLC - warming heat-lamps outside - spacious inside ready to receive people for Small Events, Prayer, Spiritual direction, small Meetings and Eucharist.

(Following Sf mandate and CDC guidelines)

Do you have ideas or want to support? Please, email islc@saintagnessf.org

