

IGNIS



Newsletter of the Ignatian Spirituality Institute

Volume 7, Number 2

November 30, 2009

On Sunday, August 30, 2009, the Ignatian Spirituality Institute celebrated an important milestone: our fifth annual certification ceremony. This year's 15 newly certified spiritual directors are now part of the ISI's 57 graduates who are doing wonderful things in Northeast Ohio and beyond. In this issue of *Ignis* we celebrate the achievements of the class of 2009. Congratulations!



Newly certified members of the fifth class of the Ignatian Spirituality Institute display their certificates after the ceremony. Front, from left: Cheryl Manos, Elise Leitzel, Kathleen Smith, Becki Haller, Kathy Haag, Dorothy Rieman. Back: Carl Toomey, Micky Wolf, Eric Muller-Girard, Elaine Fechko, Agnes Strada, Robin Craig, Jean Sullivan, Marcia Lewan. Not pictured: Maureen Haggerty.

Letter from the Director

In this issue:

- ◆ Letter From the Director
- ◆ Opening Retreat at JRH
- ◆ Certification Ceremony
- ◆ Celebrating our Graduates
- ◆ Spotlight on the Newly Certified Spiritual Directors



“I will be with you, and will bless you; for to you and all your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will fulfill the oaths that I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, and will give to your offspring all these lands; and all the nations of the earth shall gain blessings for themselves through your offspring because Abraham obeyed my voice” (Genesis 26:3b-5).

At this year’s certification ceremony, Father Howard Gray, SJ began his address to the graduates with these words, recalling the fact that the promise God made to Abraham and Sarah so long ago continues to be made to us today. This promise includes three symbols: **stars, land and desert**, and Father went on to explicate what those symbols imply for this graduating class.

Indeed, when this fifth class began their journey through the ISI, they came counting on the promise that God would be with them, and that through God’s grace they would become a blessing to others. The promise of the **“offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven”** began for our graduates as a distant hope, **a dream**, that through their ISI training they might help others. After their practicum, some of those far-off “stars” now have distinct faces. I calculate that these fifteen interns certified today have met with approximately 150 people for spiritual direction during the course of their internship. And their future progeny will, I know, continue to develop.

The land promised to them, too, has been fulfilled in part. Grounded in their relationship to God, our ISI grads know they have a secure place, a home, from which to accompany others on their journey. As I have done so many years before, I have delighted to see these interns grow in confidence in their ministry, a confidence firmly rooted in God’s faithfulness, which enables them to provide spiritual counsel to others. As Father Gray articulated it, “All the skills you have learned and all the techniques you have acquired in the ISI process lead not just to professional performance, but to encounter with the words and acts of God.” Like Sarah and Abraham, they have become friends of God, capable of leading others to their spiritual home.

But to journey from **the dream, the promise, to the land**, Abraham and Sarah needed to traverse **the desert**. And so it has been for our graduates. There have been arid spots along the way. People have endured personal challenges and hardships. As a group we encountered some dark days, because of our human frailty. The symbol of the desert is an important one in Christian spirituality. In our journey from continual hope in God’s promises to the fulfillment of arriving at the land, our home, there will be other desert days. But this experience of the ISI has taught us confidence that God’s support will never cease.

In Father Gray’s words: Abraham and Sarah’s “story of **stars, land, and desert** constitutes a paradigm of the life of the Spirit, moving from dream and inspiration to the fulfillment God promises but through the challenges of the desert experiences. This is not a single journey. Rather it is a way of life, which will be repeated again and again. For the Ignatian pilgrimage is just one more instance of the wider and older Christian pilgrimage that began in the ancestry that identifies Jesus as Jew and as a man of faith. We know and love the Incarnation of the Son of God only within this historical and spiritual context.”

The theme of journey has been a constant one since the ISI began in 2003. I am delighted that Father Gray has continued the story. We have now added the journey of Abraham and Sarah, our ancestors in faith, to those of Jesus and Ignatius, and to those of each class. In the pages which follow here, you will meet these fifteen wonderful graduates of the fifth class of the ISI who have completed one phase of this adventure. Rejoice with me and them!

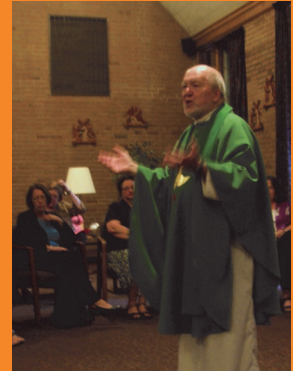
Peace and all good things,

Joan



The ISI welcomed its class of 2011 with an opening retreat weekend at the Jesuit Retreat House in Parma. The 14 members of the incoming class had the opportunity to spend some time with the ISI classes of 2009 and 2010 and mark the beginning of their two-year journey through the ISI.

On Sunday morning Fr. Jim Lewis, SJ, director of the Spirituality Program for Adults (SPA) at St. Ignatius High School, presided over the final liturgy. At the end of the liturgy, all present raised their hands in blessing over those about to be certified, commissioning them to go forth in service to others as spiritual directors.



The Certification Ceremony



The opening prayer was offered by Sr. Mary Ann Flannery, Director of the Jesuit Retreat House in Parma.



The evening's address, "Stars, Promised Land, and the Desert: the Vocation of the People of God Today" was given by Fr. Howard Gray, SJ, formerly of JCU, and now serving as Special Assistant to the President at Georgetown University.

Rita Carfagna, a graduate of the ISI's charter class, offered this final blessing:



Let us pray.

Oh, loving and generous God, we are here before you today celebrating the call to serve you in the ministry of spiritual direction. We are overwhelmed with a renewed awareness of your countless gifts to us throughout our lives, but especially over these past two years, and our hearts are overflowing with gratitude. We never cease to be amazed by your never-ending gifts of love. We don't expect them, we know we don't deserve them, but then, there you go again. Your generosity knows no bounds. You are an open, beating heart, loving us into existence and dancing before us with that same love, inviting us to notice and love you back. Oh, God, how you surprise us with yourself, through so many gifts of love over and over again! We ask you, Lord, how can we grow in heartfelt knowledge of your goodness when such knowledge seems beyond us? How can we be open enough to receive the love that you pour into our hearts?

We sit here today with a burning desire to know you, to love you in return, and to serve you. You have called us to serve you in the ministry of spiritual direction, to serve you by being lovingly present to others as you are always lovingly present to us, to serve you by listening to others in their journey with you, as you never tire of listening to us. But we are humbled by this call, Lord. Who are we to be your instruments? Who are we that you should love us so much and trust us so much with this work? We so want to respond, Lord. We want to give you all that we are, even though we have questions and concerns and sometimes a little doubt. But your Holy Spirit reminds us that through your grace, your continued gift of yourself, you can and will answer these concerns and make our serving you in this ministry possible. Inspired by this knowledge, Lord, we are ready, filled with zeal to go forth and witness to your love and goodness through the ministry of spiritual direction.

We ask that you grant these graduates the gift of your grace, as well as all of us present today. Bless these spiritual directors, Lord, and strengthen them for their new ministry. Our hearts are already filled with confidence and gratitude because we know you will - you, O loving one, cannot help yourself. It is who you are.

We ask this of you, our loving God, through your Son, Jesus Christ, who is the manifestation of your love and who shows us how to love as we pray together with St. Ignatius his prayer of self-offering:

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding and my entire will –
all that I have and call my own.
You have given it all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.
Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace.
That is enough for me.

Amen.



[The following is the transcript of Joan's remarks given at the distribution of certificates during the certification ceremony.]

This class of 2009 is a group of very special people. More than has been true of other classes in the past, many members of this class have struggled through serious illnesses, job losses, and the death of close family members. Through it all they have been supportive of one another as they persevered to achieve this certification, out of a strong sense of call to and love for the ministry of spiritual direction. I have watched all of them grow in confidence in their call, particularly through the second year of the program. It gives me great pleasure now to present certificates of completion to the members of the ISI class of 2009.

First, a word about my presentations. Class members were asked to submit brief summaries of what they appreciated about each other. I used those summaries to compose a brief description of each one. While the first few words of each description may well apply to virtually everyone in the class, hopefully the picture should become more specific as I proceed. I have also picked out a scripture passage that I think suits each one, together with an appropriate photograph I took on one of my recent retreats at Eastern Point Retreat House in Gloucester, MA. I apologize for any inside jokes that might make sense only to members of the class.

Words describing this intern:

outgoing,
intelligent,
thoughtful,
kind,
warm-hearted,
sincere,
caring,
insightful,
joyful,
loving.



Your classmates describe you as being good with words and always able to see good in a situation. They see you as a highly motivated and dedicated seeker with great desires and aspirations. You greatly enjoy learning, and are genuinely interested in the opinions and experiences of others. They are impressed by the intuition you bring to the analysis of human situations. They appreciate both your sharp intellect and your *joie de vivre*. Sometimes staccato in words, but steady in purpose, you are always ready to share love (whether tough love or the softer kind). They admire your professionalism, your people skills, and especially how you are ready to shower all of us with affirmation, **Micky Wolf**.

For you a word from Paul's letter to the Philippians: *"This is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight."*

Words describing this intern: delightful, creative, honest, open, practical, compassionate, insightful, sincere.

Your classmates consider the metaphors you use to describe things as "outside the box," and they often provided a needed levity to an otherwise serious discussion. They find you to be confident and comfortable with yourself, well established in your faith and beliefs, yet open to consider the opinions of others. They appreciate your candor in being able to say what you think, and if it is occasionally necessary to clean up a bit of a mess as a result, you are more than willing to do your part. Mostly your classmates admire how seriously you take your pastoral ministry, **Elaine Fechko**, and the sharing you do as a result of your parish experiences.

May you continue to live in a joyful spirit, taking to heart these words from Psalm 98: *"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises. . . . Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it."*



Your classmates find you fun to be with. They appreciate how well you articulate the very genuine joy you find in the ministry of spiritual direction. One said you were a true spiritual director before classes even started. Spiritual direction comes naturally to you. They also appreciate how you are able to laugh at yourself and find humor even in trying situations. They find you to be a font of resources and good ideas. They think you helped unify the class by understanding how sensitive and passionate we all are about what we believe – our love story. Above all, many commented upon your broad and ecumenical view of the church and other Christians. Your devotion, as a Lutheran, to Mary, **Cheryl Manos**, has been inspiring to many, enabling some of us to look with new eyes at that most “Catholic” devotion.



Words describing this

intern:

caring,
positive,
joyful,
honest,
open,
sincere,
realistic, funny,
well-read,
creative, wise,
accepting, kind,
compassionate.

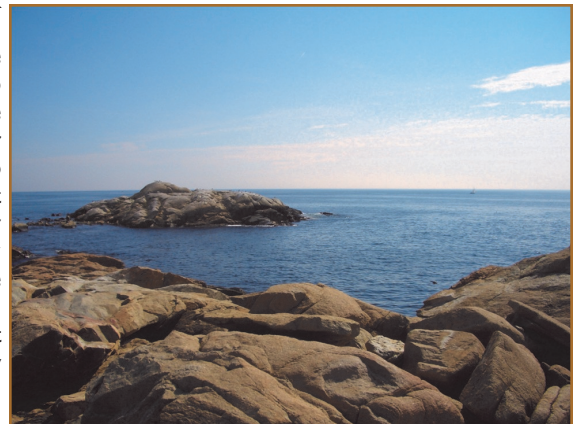
Appropriately, your word is from Mary’s Magnificat: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

Words describing this intern:

intelligent,
courageous,
inquisitive,
funny, honest,
tenacious,
resilient,
bold,
spontaneous.

Your classmates appreciate how you were never afraid to ask the questions most didn’t even know they had, until you asked them! One called you a “critical thinker who cuts to the chase.” Another likened you to a sponge, desirous to soak up any and all knowledge. They appreciate the unique perspectives you brought to class discussions, based on your many and varied life experiences. You were always able to notice and articulate the themes of class discussions in a most positive way. This past year was a hard one for you. Your classmates want to thank you for the honesty and vulnerability with which you allowed them to share your trouble and to be supportive of you as far as you were able. Besides all this, **Robin Craig**, we are incredibly proud of your making it through Greek, Hebrew, and the rest of your seminary training.

As a woman of strong faith, may you take courage from these words of Jesus from Matthew 7:24-25: “Anyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like the wise person who built a house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.”



Words describing this intern:

creative,
thoughtful,
compassionate,
gentle,
sensitive,
wise,
honest,
open,
sincere.

Your classmates see you as a detail-oriented thinker, who brought new insights to our discussions through your faith-filled perceptiveness. They find you uniquely well-rounded, multi-talented, and gifted for the ministry of spiritual direction. As one person put it, you are “a unique combination of analytical mind and creative spirit.” Your compassion and care for your directees, and your desire to give them the best direction possible, came through in class discussion. They find you to be a whole-hearted seeker, finding comfort in the fact that you are a work in progress, as all of us are. Your classmates are impressed by your comfort and enjoyment in being the house husband and hands-on father, **Eric Muller-Girard**, and the fact that your ego is not bruised by this. They see you as a true gentleman unafraid to champion feminism. One said your ability to capture in art the joy of Peter seeing the Risen Christ is an image she will hold in her heart. And not one, but two, people commented on your “great hair!”

So that you may remember to invite Jesus into your home in the midst of all those household chores, I give you these words from Luke as a reminder: “Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today!”

Words describing this intern:
 happy,
 generous,
 gentle, wise,
 sensitive, quiet,
 honest,
 compassionate,
 thoughtful,
 caring.



Your classmates appreciate your unique way of combining both depth and humor – a humor that is described as both quiet and delightful. They find you to be a person of deep faith who lives out what you believe. You articulate truth with resonating clarity. One called you a “quietly strong person with a lot of compassion for others.” They find your life to be a generous expression of living out the call to work for justice with a generous and humble heart. They liked the “having been there, done that” perspective from which you were able to participate in class discussions. Your variety of life experiences and careers is nothing short of amazing: nurse, army person, missionary to El Salvador, parish pastoral minister, and now Associate Director of the diocese’s Pastoral Ministry office. **Kathy Haag**, we have been greatly enriched by your participation in our class.

Your word is from Isaiah 30:15: *“For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.”*

Your classmates see you as someone it would be helpful to have around in a crisis. They like how your dry sense of humor keeps things on an even keel around you. You are also able to “tell it like it is” in a good way. They see you as a truth-seeker, one able to listen attentively to others with a caring heart. You are eager to uplift and encourage others in their walk with Christ. You are blessed with a mature certainty of God’s accepting benevolence. You seem able to understand others’ pain and to touch them with healing hands and words. Your classmates think your compassion probably emerges from your many years of nursing experience. They are also impressed by your true devotion to your many grandchildren, **Kathy Smith**, and hope that you will be able to be with all of them soon in California.

Words describing this intern:
 compassionate,
 friendly, caring,
 capable,
 grounded,
 honest, real,
 practical,
 hardworking,
 savvy.



Because of your deep faith in God, I think this word from Psalm 100 suits you well: *“For the Lord is good; God’s steadfast love endures forever, and God’s faithfulness to all generations.”*

Words describing this intern: carefree, casual, thoughtful, gentle, honest, sensitive, reflective, caring, a bit mysterious, always interesting.



Your classmates see you as a life-long learner with the ability to find what is good and beautiful in all people and circumstances. They find you to be a good listener and critical thinker, one who follows your heart. They see you as living and communicating the evocative questions in every conversation. You are a Spirit-filled person and tireless seeker, born to be a spiritual director. Not afraid to chance anything, you color outside the lines on purpose. Your classmates especially appreciate your consciousness of and care for the value of creation and your place in it. They appreciate how you have grown in your openness to new ideas, while always taking the time to ponder the fullness of what is being presented. And you fed us, literally, **Elise Leitzel** – we remember the time you brought a huge pot of soup to class.

Your word is one suitable for the free spirit that you are – from Psalm 104: *“Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, you are very great. . . . You ride on the wings of the wind, you make the winds your messengers.”*

Your classmates appreciate how you are not afraid to express your opinions, along with your ability to laugh at yourself. They like the delightful ways in which you mix humor and wisdom. Your ability to keep your sense of humor in trying situations is rare and wonderful. A gentle soul, true lover of Christ, desirous of leading others to Christ, you practice the loving peace and merciful friendship of a true disciple. We admire your prayerful perseverance which has helped you get through very challenging circumstances. Most of us will never forget how you confessed in class that you told your directee to stop praying! Finally, **Becki Haller**, one classmate wonders if your constant cheer has anything to do with the candy bars you keep squirreled away in your briefcase.



Words describing this intern:
relaxed,
friendly, joyful,
warm,
nurturing,
compassionate,
honest, real,
cheerful,
positive,
forthright, witty,
thoughtful, kind.

Your word is from Psalm 27: "One thing I asked of the Lord: . . . to behold the beauty of the Lord."

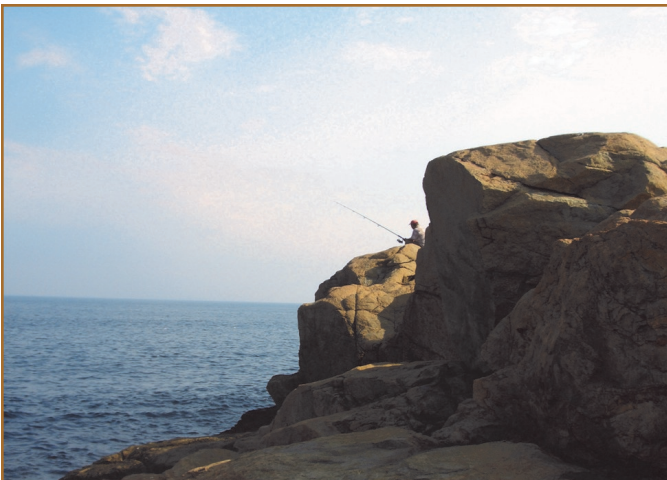
Words describing this intern:
quiet, warm,
comforting,
tender, wise,
caring,
compassionate,
hospitable.

Your classmates describe you as "still waters running deep." You are a good listener, both to God and to people. You are eager to learn and full of energy. They appreciate how the genuine joy you take in the ministry of spiritual direction spills out when you talk about it, and they rejoice with you for your growth in confidence over the two years of the program. One mentioned the twinkle in your eye, and your ear for what is spoken without words. You seem to be intuitively aware of those around you with a generous measure of warmth and a hospitable spirit. They especially appreciate how you often spoke of your love and dedication to your family. One called you the "epitome of 'mother hen' in the soft and loving sense." And now we are all relieved to rejoice with you, **Agnes Strada**, in the return of your son Rob from the Army.



For you I have Jesus's word from John 7:37-38: "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me. . . . Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water."

Words describing this intern: quiet, open, reflective, sincere, patient, insightful, compassionate, loyal, authentic, practical.



Your classmates appreciate how you were always open-minded, willing to entertain any and all possibilities, but would offer your own thoughts only after careful consideration. They find in you a quiet depth and strength that serves you well in times of adversity. They see in you an amazing coincidence of strength and gentleness, open and accepting of whatever life sends you. They appreciated how humble and honest you were in class when describing your experiences in giving spiritual direction. One said you seem willing to jump into the water even if you are not sure where – or if – you will find a towel when you emerge on the other shore. Motivated by sincere reverence, you quietly follow and serve, according to your calling. They admire greatly your dedication to your ministry as deacon in your church community, **Carl Toomey**, and how patiently you have been dealing with your job loss.

So your word is one extolling patience – from Romans 8: "In hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."



Words describing this intern: warm, organized, outgoing, friendly, caring, analytical, searching, fun-loving, welcoming, easygoing, inquisitive, courageous.

Your classmates are impressed by your bravery in being absolutely honest with them, and by your wise and insightful comments. One said, "If something doesn't feel right, you will venture out of the boat to understand more clearly, and whole-heartedly participate in sorting out the situation." They see you as a born leader, one willing both to work but also to take time to smell the roses. Almost everyone commented on your organizational abilities. They find you to be truly gifted with insight into human experience, and a true source of comfort to those around you. It's not for nothing that you were named the class's "pastor." Most of all, **Jean Sullivan**, your classmates see you as a "party waiting to happen," always ready with a pot of soup or a tray of dessert. They love your fun-loving spirit, and your readiness to dance through all of life.

For you, I say, quoting Psalm 66: "Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth, sing the glory of God's name; Give to God glorious praise!"



Words describing this intern: quiet, friendly, compassionate, open-minded, generous, diligent, faithful, sensitive, caring, practical, persevering.

Your classmates find you quiet, but surprisingly strong and capable, much tougher than you at first appear. You know how and when to offer compassion, and you allow yourself to become vulnerable in that offer of compassion. They appreciate you as a faithful friend who embraces the positive in life and truly celebrates every season of your life with ease. You were often quiet in class, but when you spoke you had everyone's attention. You are able to articulate your experiences of prayer and life with amazing clarity and sensitivity. Your classmates find you to be a gentle giver of unconditional love and joy, a true peacemaker. They

appreciated your nursing stories, **Marcia Lewan**, and rejoiced with you in the advent of your little grandchild.

Your word is from Matthew: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Words describing this intern: open, generous, energetic, creative, interesting, offbeat, funny, devoted, approachable, tireless, joyful.



Your classmates appreciate your openness to new ideas and willingness to learn. They describe you as a true disciple of Christ, serving your church community faithfully and well. Your willingness to help others and live out a Christ-like life is inspiring to them. You experience life to its fullest. One commented that you "would be the one with the matches or flashlight in a power failure, or the first one with a hot cup of coffee and a listening heart if life is falling apart." Another called you a "rock star"! As the oldest member of our class, **Dottie Rieman**, you have been inspirational as one always open to growth and genuinely young at heart. You are a beautiful example of how not only to survive, but flourish in the later years. Your spirit is ageless, your energy beyond women half your age.

For you a word from the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

Your classmates see you as a brilliant seeker who speaks with passion and tenacity. They appreciate your eagerness for learning. Always delving deeper, you use your brilliant mind to voice deep questions and then to apply those to real life. No

Words describing this intern:
enthusiastic,
gentle,
kind,
intelligent,
inquisitive,
adventurous,
insightful.

text is too thick, no author or precept is too complex for you to delve into with gusto. Your classmates were impressed with how well you faced your bout with serious illness, and not only came back to class, but came back with assignments all caught up! We will never forget the lessons in canine behavior modification we learned from you, **Maureen Haggerty**, when you brought your mother's dog to class.



Because of your love for the new universe story, I thought it appropriate to give you these words from Genesis: "Then God said, 'Let there be light.' And there was light. And God saw that the light was good."

Spotlight on the Newly Certified Spiritual Directors



Robin Craig

accompanied one woman through the 19th Annotation Retreat and directed individuals from Case, St. Dominic's, and John Carroll. She also co-led a Lenten women's retreat weekend at the Jesuit Retreat House. She met with one person for ongoing monthly direction. Robin comments on her practicum: "I am deeply appreciative of my supervisor's thoughtful assistance as she learned to listen to a variety of spiritual narratives. I am also grateful for having had the opportunity to learn and grow as a spiritual director during a personally challenging year, and I hope that my directees learned as much about the life of prayer in the Spirit as I have."

Elaine Fechko fulfilled her practicum mainly through individual spiritual direction, accompanying one woman through the 19th Annotation Retreat and learning to adapt the exercises to meet the needs of her directees' individual personalities and life stages. She also worked as part of a team doing an eight-week parish retreat. She particularly enjoyed meetings with her supervisor to discuss her verbatim. "My directees all learned a lot and became closer to God and more aware of God in their lives," she says, noting that she had "a few surprises that assured me that God was using our conversations for good. It affirmed for me that the Holy Spirit is present and acting despite our humanness."



Kathy Haag focused her practicum on individual spiritual direction, accompanying one woman through the 19th Annotation Retreat, another through a Busy Person's Retreat, and a female JCU student through an eight-week retreat. She also saw one man for ongoing spiritual direction. Her directees were at very different life stages and faced various challenges, which allowed Kathy to develop her ability to shape her direction to meet the directee's individual needs. "Prayer kept me honest in recognizing the grace of God during the sessions," she says. Kathy feels her practicum year helped her to grow toward her own spiritual goals, but is happy to admit she is "still a work in progress."



Maureen Haggerty accompanied two individuals through the 19th Annotation Retreat with the SPA program at St. Ignatius High School for her practicum. In addition she led a small group of retreatants through an eight-week parish Ignatian retreat at St. Ladislav Church. She found her experience directing individuals to be “extremely meaningful,” and says, “the growth in my own spiritual life and deepening faith far surpassed my expectations when setting my practicum goals for myself. I was immensely surprised at how humbly liberating spiritual directing is for me.”

Becki Haller offered spiritual direction to five individuals whom she saw monthly at Loyola Retreat House. Two of her directees went on to make the 19th Annotation Retreat. In the second half of her practicum year she partnered with Micky Wolf to offer an eight-week group parish retreat to 24 people at St. Paul’s in North Canton. “It is always a humbling experience and a privilege,” she says, “to hear how the scripture passages we reflect on touch everyone so differently.” During the Lenten season and the spring of 2009, Becki co-directed two weekend retreats with ISI alumnus Pat Cleary-Burns. Becki says of her practicum, “this was truly a grace-filled time in my life!”



Elise Leitzel directed two individuals through the 19th Annotation Retreat. She also accompanied one CWRU student through the Busy Student Retreat. In addition, Elise was a team member for the Week of Directed Prayer at St. Dominic, directing one elderly woman for five consecutive days. Elise says her practicum contributed to her time of transition and adjustment after a move to Ohio from another state. “My first and foremost resource is myself,” she says, “and this self must be in community.” Elise believes that “merely being curious about and interested in someone’s experiences – in a trusted and safe environment – results in the person’s learning increasingly to trust their inner life.”

Marcia Lewan worked with two individuals for her practicum year, directing one in the 19th Annotation Retreat and providing ongoing monthly direction for the other. She also participated in the Busy Student Retreat for CWRU, CIM and CIA students and St. Dominic’s Retreat for Busy People. She made a presentation at the JRH Gay and Lesbian (Emmaus) Retreat and participated in other aspects of the retreat. “I look back on this year of Practicum with gratefulness and wonder for all I have learned and experienced as a spiritual director intern,” she says. “When I set out writing my goals last year, I don’t think I imagined how this would be part of my goals or growth: that I would continually receive confirmation of my call.”



Cheryl Manos dedicated her practicum year to individual spiritual direction, companionship for four female directees, three of them on a weekly basis. Cheryl notes that her confidence increased as she gained experience. “As the year moved on,” she says, “it was easier for me to discern God’s movement within the session and tailor any additional materials as needed. I look forward to continued growth through more reading, revisiting materials from the past two years, and exploring a variety of ways to apply the Spiritual Exercises to my community of believers. In addition, I would like to cultivate more relationships in other denominations.”

Eric Muller-Girard directed a man and a woman through the 19th Annotation Retreat. He companionshiped one woman in a five-day Busy Person’s Retreat, and continued to meet with her and another woman for ongoing direction, each one to two times per month. His directees varied in ages from 40 to over 90. One thing that surprised him in working with someone in very old age was that “we have more in common than I might have ever imagined.” He learned to adapt the exercises to meet the needs of people with different backgrounds, personalities and prayer styles.





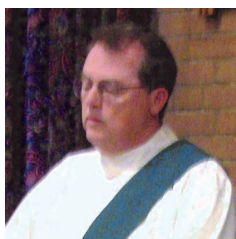
Dorothy Rieman accompanied a retired female school teacher through the 19th Annotation Retreat. Dorothy also met with one woman for an eight-week retreat, saw three directees at a retreat at the Jesuit Retreat House, and provided ongoing direction for three other individuals. She used skills learned in the ISI to develop a reconciliation and healing service at her own church and helped plan and execute two retreats using Ignatian material.

Kathy Smith's practicum was devoted to individual direction. She worked with five John Carroll students during their eight-week Ignatian retreats, accompanied one woman part of the way through the 19th Annotation Retreat, and directed one individual in the Busy Person's Retreat at St. Dominic's. Kathy felt the verbatims, post reflection writings and supervision helped her gain "an incredible amount of knowledge, insight and awe at what God can do during these sessions."



Agnes Strada spent her practicum doing individual direction, accompanying two people through the 19th Annotation Retreat as part of the SPA program at St. Ignatius High School. She also provided individual direction to two female members of the Genesee Lay Contemplative Community, of which she is a member. She learned to allow fuller and deeper disclosure on the part of her directee by "saying less rather than more and giving less instruction and more affirmation of the process of God's continuing communications."

Jean Sullivan accompanied two women through the 19th Annotation Retreat. She also was a small group director for three people who made an eight-week retreat. Jean found the process of supervision to be "very gentle and affirming, which helped me face my doubts about being able to be a spiritual director." She plans to continue with supervision to "track areas of strength and grow in my ability to unfold directees' experiences through the use of evocative questioning."



Carl Toomey directed two people through the 19th Annotation Retreat and one person through the Busy Person's Retreat at St. Dominic's. He found the most satisfying part of the practicum to be the great consolation he received personally from the things his directees shared in the process of becoming closer to God. "I have become closer to God while they have been drawn to God," he says. "Through my improved ability to identify with their pain and experience their joy,

I have come to a better understanding as to what good listening is all about."

Micky Wolf accompanied one woman through the 19th Annotation Retreat, and directed 11 individuals one or two times per month. She also directed an eight-week parish retreat with Becki Haller that was attended by 26 individuals. Micky says she believes she has "experienced significant growth in my wherewithal to more accurately and authentically feel and discern movements, especially within myself." Although she believes her awareness of God's presence was already well grounded before she began the ISI program, she now senses "a new, more profound wonder in savoring this presence."



IGNIS is published on an as-needed basis by:

Ignatian Spirituality Institute

John Carroll University
20700 North Park Boulevard
University Heights, OH 44118

Joan M. Nuth, Ph.D.
Director
216-397-1678
jnuth@jcu.edu

Andrea McGovern
Secretary
216-397-1599
amcgovern@jcu.edu
Visit our website:
www.jcu.edu/isi



Photographs in this issue courtesy of
Andrew Johnson,
Joan Nuth and Dave Schrader