

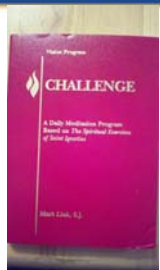


All Things Ignatian



Making Time for God in SPAHP: 5 Minute Ignatian Exercises

Jenny Tilleman and Ken Keefner



Background:

Approximately 15 years ago, Ken Keefner was interested in becoming more familiar with Ignatian Spirituality. At that time, Sister Carmen Gillick offered a program based on *Challenge: A Daily Meditation Program Based on the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius (Challenge Book)* by Mark Link, SJ. After Sister Gillick left the University, Ken obtained permission to use Sister Gillick's program with the students of the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions. Since its inception, we have cooperatively offered this program to SPAHP campus and distance students for at least 10 years.

Evolution:

Original Program Design

In the beginning, Ken offered the program to all students of the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions. Approximately 3-5 students would show interest per year. Ken had no financial support from the University at the time and the participants were responsible for purchasing the *Challenge book*. The group would meet once a week over the lunch hour.

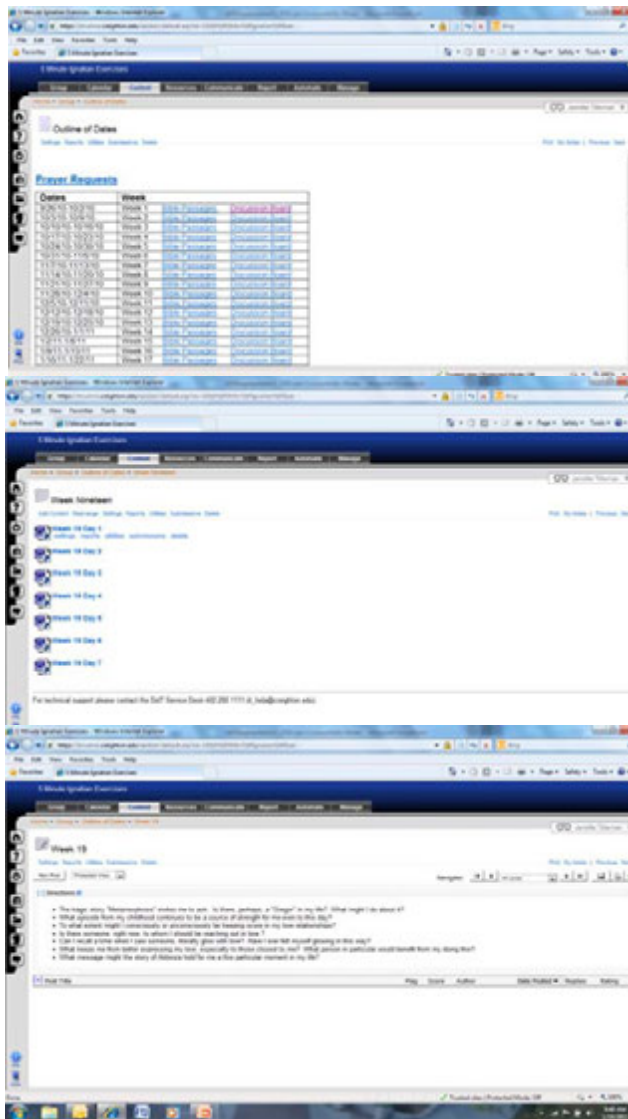
Cardoner Grant Support

In the Fall 2004, we petitioned the Cardoner Program (funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc Grant) to support the program by purchasing books for the participants and provide lunch for at least one meeting a semester. This is when the name, *"5 Minute Ignatian Exercises,"* became solidified.

At this point, we also felt it was important to include the distance pathway pharmacy students. We provided books to interested distance students during their orientation for pharmacy school. The meeting times were also changed to 2-3 times a semester. In 2008, we began using a BlueLine Community Group and BlueCafe to connect the distance students to the meeting being held with the campus students.

Current Program Design

This year, we had approximately 50 interested participants including students, staff, and faculty from SPAHP. We continue to use BlueLine and BlueCafe for communication. BlueLine contains an outline of the Challenge Book, the weekly Scripture Readings associated with the daily reflections, and discussion boards for weekly reflections (pictured). We schedule 2 meetings a semester with lunch provided to the participants on campus which decreases the time burden to participants and increases involvement.



Participants Responsibilities:

Participants are asked to:

- Read the Daily Reflection provided in the *Challenge Book* and optional Scripture readings
- Spend at least 10 minutes in prayer daily
- Post a reflection in the discussion board if they are comfortable sharing what was learned during the week
- Attend the group meetings twice a semester

Group Meeting Format:

- 50 minute meeting
- Lunch is served to on-campus students
- Participants from the distance programs log into BlueCafe
- Meeting called to order with the "Call to Prayer" suggested in the *Challenge Book*
- Participants are given time to share reflections from their prayer
- At the conclusion of the reflection time, participants are invited to offer prayers of petition
- Meeting closes with the "Call to Mission" suggested in the *Challenge Book*

Lessons Learned and Reflections:

There is a definite need or want for spiritual development and nurturing in our School. Through the offering of this program, it is apparent that the Spiritual Exercises can be adapted to assist most spiritual/faith traditions. Participants have many demands on their time and find this method of additional prayer and reflection beneficial.

Personally, this program has allowed me to grow spiritually and connect on a personal level with students and colleagues. I find that I am very humbled by the willingness of people to share where they see God working in their lives. ~JAT

Had it not been for this simple program, and its simple encouragement to grow in God, my interest in pursuing a greater understanding of Ignatian spirituality may never have been realized. Although we have used this same "Challenge" book each year, I am astounded at times at how the meaning of the readings are affected by where I am in my life. ~KRK