

Ignatian Marriage Preparation Retreat

What is the Ignatian Marriage Preparation Retreat?

- A retreat to prepare engaged couples for life-long sacramental marriage *founded on an adaptation of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.*
- An opportunity for couples, who have the Creighton experience in common, come together to extend their foundation in Ignatian spirituality into their current relationship and life as a married couple.
- An experience created by a team of Jesuit priests and married couples formed in Ignatian spirituality to meet the practical and spiritual needs of engaged couples.
- An encounter based in parish life as promulgated by Pope Francis as the new and most effective method to form engaged couples in sacramental marriage as stated in *Amoris Laetitia* (Rome, 2015).



The inaugural retreat was offered on April 6th 2019 by a team of 4 Jesuit priests, five married couples and Kathy Martin, M.A. as retreat director. Future retreat dates are: September 13-14, 2019, February 28-29, 2020 and April 24-25, 2020.

This *Ignatian Retreat* carries out preferences A and C of the Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus, 2019-2029:
A. To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment.
C. To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future.



How is this retreat "All Things Ignatian?"

The retreat is based on an adaptation of the *Spiritual Exercises* created by a collaborative effort by Jesuit priests and married lay couples.

Engaged couples pray and discuss how the foundation of their married life (the vows) are related to the foundation of the *Spiritual Exercises* (the *First Principle and Foundation*).

Tools of discernment using consolation and desolation are interspersed throughout the retreat experience.

Cura Personalis- Creighton couples receive an experience specifically designed to fit their needs as committed students and/or working professionals educated in the Jesuit and Catholic perspective.

Reflection- Engaged couples are given time and space to reflect privately and as a couple on God's presence in their life, their love, and their marriage.

Unity of mind and heart- Specific and practical skills such as communication techniques are taught in union with inspirational topics such as covenant, sacrament and vocation.



Zoe Reed BS'19 and Jakob Dovgan BS'19 and student in the Creighton School of Medicine, as they discuss on the retreat in April. They plan to marry at St. John's in May 2020.

Comments by couples:

"I really enjoyed how the vows and the Principle and Foundation were put together for reflection. The Principle and Foundation text was new to me and it gave me a new perspective on marriage and life."

"Our married couple group leaders were welcoming, honest, open, and loving—truly a gift of God's light. Our entire table was deep, open, inspiring, reflective, encouraging and a joy."

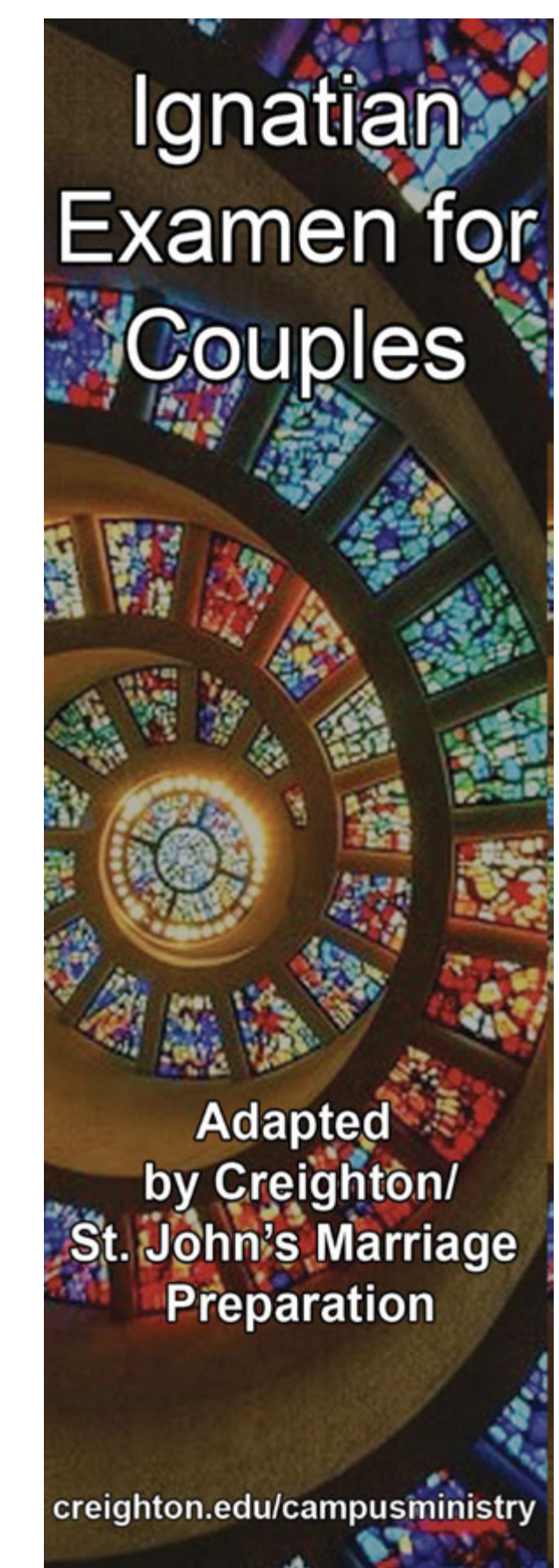
"I loved meeting other couples and hearing their faith journeys."

"I really benefitted from the opportunity to think about a way to pray together and the insights from the importance of forgiveness."

"There are awesome couples here who have great insights and ideas to share about praying together as a couple."



The Examen Prayer was adapted for couples to use on this retreat!



Ignatian Examen for Couples

Want to be a great fiancé, spouse, friend, person? Those who reflect regularly are more thoughtful and less reactive; able to see themselves, others and the will of God more clearly.

- 1) Settle yourself into a posture of openness and notice your breathing. Become aware of the presence of God and open your heart and mind in a compassionate attitude toward yourself. Ask for God's presence and light as you reflect and pray.
- 2) Through a lens of gratitude, review the events of your day. Consider what gifts you have been given by God and others, particularly your spouse.
- 3) Where did you struggle or suffer? Were you aware of what was going on inside you (fear, judgments, discouragement, selfishness, etc.). What impact did those struggles have on you and/or your spouse? Did you become more or less loving?
- 4) Communicate with God as you consider if you drew closer to, or further away from God through the experiences of today. How have you lived out your marriage vows and promise to love today?
- 5) Share your heartfelt desires for tomorrow with God; ask God for the help you need.

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