

# **THE INCARNATION**

*Inspired in the book of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius paras 101-109*

## **Being Saviors with Christ the Savior**

### **Aims of this Recollection or Sessions.**

- *To have a deeper understanding of God's wonderful plan of our salvation.*
- *To understand that in God's wonderful plan, Jesus Christ, Our Lady and each one of us have a role to play or a vocation to fulfill.*
- *To help the participants to think about their vocation in God's plan.*
- *To grow in the love of Jesus who freely accepted his Father's will or vocation to be our Savior.*

### **Uses of These Notes**

- *An encounter with Christ – A recollection*
- *For a vocational event*
- *For catechism classes: on Christ, our redemption, our vocation*
- *For prayer services*
- *For sermons and talks*

### **Target Audience**

- *Christian audiences*
- *Specially youth*

### **Requirements**

- *New Testament for all.*
- *Writing material for all*
- *A good stock of picture magazines, photos and weeklies on world events and news*

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Introductory Preparatory Session**

- Greeting the participants
- Hymns and bhajans
- Opening prayer by the moderator

## **FIRST PART**

### **Active Contemplation, Meditation and Prayer**

#### **An Active Contemplation St. Ignatius' style.**

#### **Note for the moderator:**

- Prepare this part very carefully. The whole exercise depends on it.
- This method of active contemplation used by St. Ignatius is based on the power our imagination has to make present things not seen, to move our affections and even influence our wills..
- Use your imagination: act, dramatize, if need be impressive
- The presentation of the Incarnation as given by St. Ignatius is a contemplation in a three tier picture or scenario. In a triptych form. – *Cfr. Book of The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Nos: 102-109*

**Scenario one: A sinful World –**

**Scenario Two: A Trinity of love in heaven (God the Father, The son and the Holy Spirit)**

**Scenario Three: Nazareth . The Annunciation.**

#### **Scenario one. "THE WORLD" A FALLEN WORD** (Ro 1/18-32)

- ✓ Describe very vividly the hopeless situation of our world enveloped in sin: Wars... crimes... murders... oppression... hunger... sickness...injustices... robberies... broken homes... rapes... suicides...etc.
- ✓ People frantically looking for happiness where it cannot be found, e.g. in alcohol... drugs... sex...

- ✓ People running away from God... from their fellowmen... from themselves... creating their own fearful desert islands... such as atheism... loneliness... despair...
- ✓ People worshipping and sacrificing all they have and all they are to modern Molochs, the false gods fashioned after their own image, like success... money... pleasure... power... progress... scientism...
- ✓ You may comment on the text of Romans 1:18-25 & 28-32...
- ✓ You may also read some excerpts from the popular press depicting violence, terrorism, egotism, the bankruptcy of moral values and the depersonalization of human beings.

### **Spend time in Active Contemplation.**

## **Scenario Two, HEAVEN: GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION.**

### **God's reaction to the sin of the world.**

- ✓ When God saw the corruption of the world wrought by sin what was his reaction? Was he filled with burning rage, with righteous wrath? Did his eyes flash with hatred of a world that had let him down so cruelly?
- ✓ Not at all! He loved the world just the same! He loved mankind all the more for its very frailties! He forgave us all our misdeeds! He felt pity for us!
- ✓ But he went a step further! He decided, on the spot, in an excess of infinite compassion, to save us, to make us again his children. To take us back to himself!

### **And thus is how God went about it:**

*(Note for the moderator: Using your creative ingenuity conjure up an anthropologically tailored talk in heaven among the three persons of the Holy Trinity, on the human malaise and what to do about it. A sample is offered here. You may adopt it with such modifications as you may think it more suitable to your audience.)*

### **Father: Talking to the other two divine persons**

- ✓ Look at our world, a world we made, a world so wonderful, so full of goodness, truth and beauty!
- ✓ Look at men, men we made in our own image and likeness, for eternal bliss, what have they made of themselves and of the world!... Something too monstrous to behold, too horrible to contemplate...
- ✓ The world stinks with human wickedness, groans with violence, it rushes to its own destruction...
- ✓ No love... no hope.
- ✓ My heart is filled with unspeakable sorrow! Oh man, how have you fallen from your high estate!

### **Son & H. Spirit Talking to the Father**

- ✓ Yes, Father, it is so sad, so frustrating to see men in such a sorry state... to see them turn away from all that is good and true and beautiful, from their true selves and give themselves over to the power of evil...
- ✓ It is so hurting to see our own image imprinted in them thus sullied, disfigured, distorted.

### **Father:**

- ✓ In spite of it all, I cannot, I will not set at naught the work of my hands...I created men out of love. And now in love, I forgive them. They do not know what they do!
- ✓ However great their iniquities, greater still is my love.... I want to save them, to redeem them

### **Father: To the Son**

- ✓ Son, will you go down to this sinful world and save men? Are you willing, for their sake to be born a man, yes, like one of them in everything, except sin?
- ✓ Are you ready as a man, to suffer for them? Are you prepared even to die on a cross for them?...

### **Son:**

- ✓ Yes Father, I am willing and ready. It will hard, terribly hard, but I'll die for them if this is your will.
- ✓ I love them, too!...

### **Holy Spirit To the son**

- ✓ I'll fashion a human body for you... I'll help you become a man...
- ✓ I'll come also into the world and dwell in the hearts of men... I'll cleanse them of their sinfulness and make them holy. I love them also!

### **Father: To the Son**

- ✓ Go, then, my beloved Son, into the world! It is my will. Your task, your mission is to save all men..
- ✓ You shall be a suffering Savior, the crucified Lord!
- ✓ You will for ever a sign to all that in spite their sins, I still love them!

**Son: to *Father*.**

- ✓ Father, to carry out our loving plan of salvation, We need the cooperation of me and women I'll need a human mother to give me birth and a foster father to look after me and my mother.
- ✓ Later on we shall require the help of many others to carry on our work of salvation in the world - men and women - whose vocation will be to preaching the good news... forgiving sins... reconciling people... consoling... serving... giving hope and loving one and all

**Father**

- ✓ They will be our closest associates in our work of love. Sure, all through the ages to come, we shall keep calling many men and women to follow in your footsteps... We shall instill in their hearts an great desire to follow you, to be your apostles and disciples...
- ✓ Without words, in whispers, like the soft rustle of leaves, the Holy Spirit will call them to imitate you...

**Spend time in Active Contemplation.**

You may comment on the following Texts:

- John 3:16-17, "God so loved the world..."
- Eph 1:3-14, "God chose us in Christ even before the foundation of the world..."
- Luke 15:11-32, (Parable of the lost son).

**Scenario Three: NAZARET THE INCARNATION. "Annunciation to Our Lady"****Read and ponder on: Luke 1:26-38.**

- At the appointed time God worked his wonderful plan of salvation
- It all started at Nazareth Contemplate and ponder specially on the following points:
  - God's free choice of Mary to be his Mother.
  - We call the choice of God to any human being for any special purpose a "vocation" ".
  - Our Lady's vocation was to be the mother of Christ.
  - The angel "announced" to her the vocation God had chosen for her
  - She was free to accept or reject the call of God.
  - The angel waited for her answer.
  - Mary was left free to say "yes" or "no" to God.
  - Mary said "Yes
  - God "has chosen us" like Mary to be also his partners and co-operators in the wonderful work of saving the world.
  - He also leaves us free to say yes or no to Him. We may "accept or reject his call or vocation.
  - What will your answer be?

**Spend time in Active Contemplation.****SECOND PART****Group Activities****Preparation of the Activities**

Divide the participants into three small groups of 4 to 6 each.  
Each small group will have to prepare the activity suggested below.

**Groups I**

- Will prepare either a poster or a collage of a mural or a photo-exhibition describing the sad plight of a world steeped in sin.

- Supply the group 1 with posters, photos, magazines and illustrated weeklies, from which they can draw material for their work. [Photos etc. of wars, destruction, exploitation, misery, famine, etc.]

## **Groups 2**

- Will prepare a script for a “Radio Play” based on an imaginary Trinitarian-talk in heaven. Follow this procedure:
- Each member of the group will write one script in a conversational form.
- When all the members have finished writing their scripts, they will meet and read their scripts to the group.
- The group will select the script they like best.
- They will rehearse the reading of the script in a dialogue form.

## **Groups 3**

- Will prepare an act or a play let of the scene of the Annunciation at Nazareth. Follow this procedure:
- Each member of the group will write on script for the play let on the Annunciation.
- When all have finished their scripts, they will meet and read their scripts to the group.
- The group will select the script they like best.
- They will then rehearse the acting of the chosen script.

### **Presentation of the Activities**

- When all the groups are ready with their activities, they will meet for a general session.
- Each group will present its activity to the whole house.
- Each presentation will be followed by a short analysis, evaluation and discussion.

## **THIRD PART.**

### **Personal Reflection-writing**

The participants will reflect and if possible write on the following points:

- I. Why did the Son of God become man? Give as many reasons as possible.
- II. What do we call a “Vocation”?
- III. What was the vocation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God? Describe it.
- IV. What was the vocation of Our Lady? Describe it.
- V. Why did God want co-operators from among us men to carry on his great work of salvation? Give as many reasons as possible.
- VI. Whom does God call for his work of salvation? Why?
- VII. Are those called compelled to follow the call of God?
- VIII. What might be the consequences of following or not following it?
- IX. What are the necessary dispositions to follow one’s vocation? List them. Give reasons for your answer.
- X. Is a vocation a burden, a grace, an honor, a blessing or a curse? Give reasons for four answer

## **FOURTH PART**

### **General Session** (Time permitting it)

#### **Sharing and discussion.**

In turn, the participants will share their reflections to the questions given in part three above. After all have shared on the same question, a discussion may follow.

#### **Question Hour**

- After the discussion is over, you may conduct a Question – Hour
- Invite the participants to put on small slips of paper, any questions they would like on these topics or similar ones;  
**Redemption- Our Lady - Jesus Christ - Salvation - Vocation and vocations- How to know one’s vocation - Priesthood -Religious life - Marriage as a vocation -Lay apostolate Signs of vocation – Etc.**
- The slips of paper with the questions will be placed in a box in the middle of the group.
- The moderator will pick them at random and answer them as far as time permits.

**General Prayer Session**

After the questions hour you may close the sessions by a Prayer meeting, or an Eucharist.

- Each group will pick up any of the leading ideas of sessions.
- Based on the idea chosen, each group will prepare a short prayer with Hymns, N.T. readings and individual petitions.