The Ignatian Method • Loss and Spiritual Transformation
Biblical Eve • Meditative-Body Prayer • Abraham Joshua Heschel
ARTICLES

The Ignatian Method: A Way of Proceeding
Wilkie Au
6

Biblical Eve, God, and the Quantum Age
Heather Mendel
18

“You Are the Music While the Music Lasts”: Music as an Opening to Religious Experience
Janet Raffing, RSM
29

Spiritual Transformation through Transcending Loss
Richard Boileau
38

Working with Darkness in Spiritual Guidance
Kevin Culligan, OCD
44

Spiritual Direction with Meditative-Body Prayer
Patricia D. Brown
53

FEATURES

Focus
3

About Our Authors
4

Readers Respond
5

About Our Poets and Artists
59

Reviews
60

Poetry

Presence
Patrick B. Ouda
23

Sonnet in Shaky Handwriting
Esther Cameron
28

Shiny Pebbles
Jerry Breger
37

Faith
Breindel Lieba Kasher
58

Reflection

Introduction to the Icon: A Reflection on the Spiritual Guidance of Abraham Joshua Heschel
Jane Korins
15

Closing My Eyes Lightly, Not Tightly
Nancy L. Agneberg
24
Interest in Ignatian spirituality has grown recently among Christians who want to deepen their experience of God and to discern life choices more prayerfully. Evidence of this can be seen in the inclusion of The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius (SPEX) in the curricula of many spiritual direction training programs as well as in the growing number of people who have made the Spiritual Exercises either in daily life (commonly referred to as “the Nineteenth Annotation” retreat, SPEX #19) or in its intense form of thirty days in seclusion (SPEX #20). (The standard practice is to italicize the term Spiritual Exercises when referring to the text and not to italicize it when referring to the experience of the retreat.) In this article, I will discuss how Ignatian spirituality provides a method for discerning life choices and for noticing God’s presence in life. In this way, I hope to make the wisdom of Ignatius more accessible to spiritual directors as well as to those whom they accompany in the process of spiritual growth and transformation.

**Purpose of the Spiritual Exercises**

The primary purpose of the Spiritual Exercises is to assist people facing a major life choice to make a decision resonant with God’s call and freed from personal attachments that obstruct listening to and embracing God’s lead with confident trust (SPEX #1, 16, 21). The desired result is a decision that is accompanied by inner peace stemming from a sense of being aligned with God’s desire. Describing himself as a “pilgrim” in his Autobiography, Ignatius learned experientially over time how to follow the Spirit’s ongoing promptings in the gradual unfolding of his life. As a layman, Ignatius wrote the Spiritual Exercises for laypeople in order to hand on the lessons he learned as a pilgrim of the Spirit. In biblical terms, the Spiritual Exercises seek to shape lives that are patterned on the faith of Abraham, who is depicted as the prototypical pilgrim of faith in the Letter to the Hebrews (11:1—12:2). Eugene Peterson, a contemporary spiritual writer, vividly describes the nature of Abrahamic faith:

> Was it not this lifetime of internalizing the commanding and promising but invisible God and then stepping out on the road in obedience? Was it not this readiness to leave wherever he was and leave whatever he had in order to embrace the vision, the covenant, the command? Was it not a life of responsive openness to God and a matching indifference to whatever conditions he found himself in? Was it not a lifetime disposition to receive God rather than to satisfy himself?

Faith is a trusting, obedient life on the road, the *way*. Faith is a resolute “Yes” to the promises and commands of the living God, God as *present*. And faith is a firm “No” to an idol subject to manipulation and control, a god that we can see and touch and test. (46)

It is happily ironic that the words of Peterson, a Presbyterian pastor from the Reform tradition, can capture so truly and dynamically the spiritual transformation sought by Ignatius, whose Jesuits were later seen as the champions of the Catholic Counter-Reformation movement!

A secondary purpose of the Spiritual Exercises is clearly expressed in The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, in which Ignatius states that, for Jesuit seminarians who have already completed their discernment process and entered the order to start their spiritual formation, the goal of the Spiritual Exercises is to foster “devotion” (#277). *Devotion*, in the technical Ignatian sense, refers to an ease or facility to find God in all things. As Ignatian scholar George Ganis, SJ, puts it, “In the Ignatian vocabulary, ‘devotion’ is intimately linked with other key phrases … such as union with God, consolation, familiarity with God, charity, discreet charity … love, fervor, finding God in all things, and the like” (*Constitutions*, 155–156 n. 5).

Today, *devotion* is commonly referred to as “a contemplative attitude.” Ignatius wanted his Jesuits to be people so sensitively steeped in the ways of the Spirit as a result of their experience of the Spiritual Exercises that they could be “contemplatives even in action.” An innovator, Ignatius departed from a monastic or cloistered style of religious life and introduced an active form that would enable Jesuits to be fully engaged in worldly events and yet remain in touch with the pervasive presence and action traditions of the spiritual Exercises.
of God throughout. Thus, as a spiritual resource, the Spiritual Exercises can serve two purposes: to facilitate discernment in a major life choice and to form modern-day contemplatives-in-action, people capable of finding God in the midst of busy lives.

The Ignatian Method as a Way of Discernment

The word method finds its etymological root in two Greek words, meta, meaning “according to,” and hodos, meaning “a way.” A method provides us with a way or procedure for going about something. When referring to the process of discerning a life choice, the Ignatian method can be characterized as holistic and experiential. It is holistic in that it integrates religious experience, rationality, and affectivity in the process of coming to discover the lead of God, and it is experiential in that it is grounded in the concrete movements of our inner lives as we respond to the events of daily life. Ignatian spirituality asserts the importance of feelings by connecting our emotional awareness with our ability to decipher how we are being moved by God. Ignatius, notes Jesuit psychologist Paul Robb, “came to recognize that human experiences of joy and desolation, of enthusiasm and depression, of light and darkness, are not just human emotions which vary like the wind in a storm, but are the means by which we recognize the movements within our spirit stirred by the spirit of Jesus” (11–12). For a fuller treatment of the Ignatian method in the context of a holistic approach to discernment, see my and Noreen Cannon Ay’s The Discerning Heart: Exploring the Christian Path.

As a method for making a major life choice that allows God to be a telling influence in the process, the Ignatian method includes three important dimensions:

1. Possessing a spiritual freedom and openness to follow whatever we discover to be God’s lead as the result of the discernment process. Concretely, this means that the discernment process is not a charade, merely going through the motions, having already decided what we will do. The experience of the Spiritual Exercises invites us to be in liminal space, a state of genuine not knowing that makes us reliant and keenly attentive for direction from God.

2. Noticing patterns of attraction and repulsion when contemplating our choices, and especially how we are being drawn by recurrent deep desires and experiences of consolation—that is, “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Gal 5:22–23). The manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit, as delineated by Paul, indicate the guidance of the risen Jesus.

3. Noticing how we are personally tempted and rendered disinclined to heed and honor the lead of God. What, for example, are seductive pulls within that impede our willingness to follow God’s ways? For a perceptive treatment of how contemporary women may need to reinterpret Ignatius’s analysis of how temptation functions in our lives, see Dyckman et al. (196–199).

A Discernment Process Based on the Ignatian Tradition

The following can serve as a process guide for making a decision that incorporates the wisdom of Ignatius:

1. Identify the decision that we face or the issue that we need to resolve. Examine the underlying values (human, Christian, spiritual) and personal concerns involved. Through reflection, we clarify the values that are at stake in the decision (values clarification) and ask whether they are worth pursuing (value critique).

2. Strive for spiritual freedom. This prerequisite of sound discernment is a state of inner freedom, openness, and balance that allows us beforehand not to incline more toward one option than to another but to allow our preference to be shaped by the single criterion of what will enhance our ability to love God and to embody that love for others in the concrete context of our lives. Spiritual freedom preserves our ability to go one way or another depending on the indication of God’s lead. Ignatius calls for a willingness right from the start to be influenced in the process by God’s guidance. If we are
unable to achieve this inner freedom, discussing the matter in spiritual direction can help us understand what we are struggling with and what the next peaceful step might be in our discernment.

3. Take time to pray over the matter, paying attention to how we are being drawn or led. This moves our reflection into the context of prayer; we ask for God’s guidance and try to be sensitive to how we are being drawn when the matter is brought to prayer. For Ignatius, God can influence us through our thoughts as well as through our feelings of consolation and desolation in prayer.

4. Make a choice based on the results of both our “head work” and our “heart work.” “Head work” includes weighing the matter with our reasoning process, by which we research the relevant information, consult with resource persons when necessary, listen to all the different aspects of our being (e.g., needs, wants, desires) and consider the pros and cons of the different options (SPEX #177). “Heart work” entails sitting with the choice that our reasoning has determined to be the best and checking for affective confirmation—that is, whether our feelings go along with what our mind has decided. If, over a period of time, the feelings that surround the choice we have made are predominantly enlivening and positive (Ignatian “consolation,” SPEX #316), then we can consider this a sensible way to proceed. If, however, the feelings are predominantly stifling and negative (Ignatian “desolation,” SPEX #317), then we must keep the process open until we can arrive at a decision that head and heart can jointly embrace (SPEX #183).

The feelings that we are monitoring here are not the fleeting feelings that are our immediate responses to stimuli that impinge on us throughout the day. This level of feelings is like the fluctuating waves on the surface of the ocean. The feelings that are relevant to this process of affective confirmation are similar to the currents between the surface and the bottom of the ocean. This mid-level of feelings is more constant and stable and thus more relevant in determining whether our feelings confirm or call into question the decision made through our thinking process.

5. Discuss the matter with a spiritual companion. Because discerning the movements of God can be a complex task, this step calls for sharing our deliberation with a trusted friend, counselor, or minister—someone committed to helping us be truthful, patient, and persevering in our search for God’s call. Because we are all liable to self-deception, we need help to be objective and honest.

6. Dialogue with those who will be intimately affected by the decision being made. Too often, decisions that affect spouses, children, and other loved ones are made unilaterally, without engaging the participation of those who have a right to be involved. These decisions may pertain to changing jobs, retiring, or caring for aging parents. Whenever appropriate, we must make an effort to ensure that important decisions are not made alone but shared with the significant people in our lives.

7. Live out our decision with courage, hope, and trust. This step requires us to trust in God and to act, even though our carefully discerned decisions may be tinged with fear or uncertainty due to variables beyond our control. We are called to trust in God’s power at work bringing good out of everything. As St. Paul says in Romans, “We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose” (8:28). Keep in mind that Ignatian consolation and desolation refer primarily to our relationship with God and should not be understood in terms of the pleasure-pain axis. Hence, a well-discerned choice can entail enduring periods of struggle and pain while being supported by a deep sense of God’s presence and love (consolation). On the other hand, Ignatius warned that we should avoid making an important change when we are feeling distant from God or confused and anxious (desolation). Times of darkness are not good times to alter decisions that were freely made when in a state of consolation, a time when we experience an increase of faith, hope, love, and trust in God.

Earth’s Crammed with Heaven

In his Autobiography, Ignatius recounts having a peak religious experience or vision at the River Cardoner in the town of Manresa [Spain] (#28). That mystical experience
“AMDG” — Mary Grace Thul, OP
Shaped his view of reality and, in turn, determined his fundamental attitude toward life, which was one of profound reverence, gratitude, and love. In order to foster the same affective dispositions in others, Ignatius attempted through the Spiritual Exercises to share his perception of God and the world. His hope was that by internalizing the view of reality that was revealed to him, people might be filled with gratitude and love for God and moved to express that love in acts of service.

In the final exercise of the Spiritual Exercises, the “Contemplation for Obtaining Divine Love” (SPEX #230–237), Ignatius conveys his view of reality as drenched in divinity. The Contemplatio reminds us that God not only is the creator of life and the giver of gifts but also dwells in all created things, especially in the human person, the imago Dei. Furthermore, Ignatius asserts that God’s presence in the world is not inert but dynamic; God labors and works for us in all of creation. For Ignatius, we live in a world that is soaked in God.

As sons of Ignatius, Jesuits such as the English poet Gerard Manley Hopkins and the mystical paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin have communicated this Ignatian worldview in poetic ways. Hopkins, for example, proclaims God’s pervasive presence in our universe as radiance: “The world is charged with the grandeur of God. It will flame out, like shining from shook foil” (God’s Grandeur, 66).

The word of God is an incarnate word, draped in the richly diverse forms of matter. And Teilhard reminds us that we live in a “divine milieu.” In this milieu, detecting the presence of this omnipresent God in our experience is not a matter of seeing extraordinary objects in miraculous apparitions but of seeing the ordinary things of our experience in a different way. Our faith does not cause us to see different things but to see things differently. Teilhard speaks of the radiance of the divine milieu, which changes nothing in the relationships between things but bathes the world with an inward light, which leads us to a sense of God’s presence. We could say that the great mystery of faith is not exactly the appearance but the transparency of God in the universe. In a word, God is to be recognized not in special visions but in the way divinity shines forth like shook foil through all creation for all with eyes of faith to see. Theologian Henri de Lubac has conjectured that Teilhard touched so many with his message because he knew how again to make of the universe a temple (34). Teilhard’s deep faith in the pervasive presence of God in all reality is echoed in his prayer: “Lord, grant that I may see You present in all things and animating all things” (in de Lubac, 35, emphasis in original). This vision of the universe as soaked in divinity, of course, is directly traceable to Teilhard’s roots as a son of Ignatius, who defined devotion as the facility to find God in all things.

Clearly, belief in God’s pervasive and dynamic presence in the world lies at the heart of Ignatian spirituality. For example, there was once an extremely bright high school student who attended a Jesuit college prep school. This young man often baffled adults with quick replies. One day, during a school academic evaluation by an accrediting team, a visitor said to him, “Young man, if you can tell me where God can be found, I’ll give you a dollar.” Without blinking an eye, the student responded: “And I’ll give you two dollars if you can tell me where God cannot be found.” Insisting on God’s presence in all things, Ignatius once denied permission to a group
of young Jesuit seminarians who asked to prolong their morning meditation. Finding God in all things instead of spending lengthy time in prayer, Ignatius responded, was to be their way to God: “They should strive to seek the presence of God our Lord in all things—for instance, in association with others, in walking, looking, tasting, hearing, thinking, indeed, in all that they do. It is certain that the majesty of God is in all things by God’s presence, activity, and essence” (Letters, 55).

The Ignatian Method as a Way of Finding God in All Things

Jesuit Howard Gray, a contemporary interpreter of Ignatian spirituality, summarizes the Ignatian method of finding God in all things as a threefold process of attention, reverence, and devotion. According to Gray, the process of how to live a life attuned to God’s presence entails the following:

First, bring focus to your life by taking the time to listen to others and to see what lies before you. Bring yourself to a self-possession before reality. Then give your attention (maybe attentiveness is a better word) to what is really there. For example, let that person or that poem or that social injustice or that scientific experiment become as genuinely itself as it can be. Then reverence what you see before you. Reverence is giving acceptance to, cherishing the differences of, and holding in awe the uniqueness of another reality. So, before you judge or assess or respond, give yourself time to esteem and accept what is there in the other. And if you learn to do this, Ignatius urged, then you will gradually discover devotion, the singularly moving way in which God works in that situation, revealing goodness and fragility, beauty and truth, pain and anguish, wisdom and ingenuity.

Attention

Fostering an attentive awareness is the first step in the Ignatian method of discovering the presence and action of God in our experience. This stance consists in what Jesuit theologian Walter Burghardt describes as “a long and loving look at the real.” Burghardt understands the real in concrete terms such as “living, pulsing people,” as “fire and ice,” as “the sun setting over the Swiss Alps, as a gentle doe streaking through the forest,” as “a ruddy glass of Burgundy,” as “a child lapping a chocolate ice-cream cone,” and as “a striding woman with wind-blown hair.” Attention, in the Ignatian method, entails a long and loving look at such realities.

Too often the fast pace of life detracts from this kind of contemplative attention. Rushing robs us of the ability to appreciate the experiences that fill our day.

Too often the fast pace of life detracts from this kind of contemplative attention. Rushing robs us of the ability to appreciate the experiences that fill our day. That is why the Ignatian method emphasizes the importance of “staying with.” Staying with present experience can enhance enjoyment and pleasure, but it can also deepen discomfort and pain. This is probably why we spend so little time dwelling in the present and so much time in fantasy and speculation. As psychoanalyst Claudio Naranjo puts it, “The experience of doing nothing but attending to the contents of awareness may lead … to a self-rewarding contact with reality, or to intense discomfort. When left with nothing but the obvious, our attitude towards ourselves and towards our existence becomes apparent. Particularly so, the negatives ones” (11). Staying with the present requires an acceptance of our immediate experience and entails a surrender to being just as we are.
Aware of the danger of rushing and missing the depth and significance of our experiences, Ignatius advises those making the Spiritual Exercises to take their time and to savor their meditations, “for it is not much knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul, but the intimate understanding and relish of the truth” (SPEX #2). He warns against anticipating the future in such a way that distracts from the present (SPEX #11). And when giving instructions about praying over a traditional prayer, he states, “If in contemplation, say on the Our Father, he [she] finds in one or two words abundant matter for thought and much relish and consolation, he [she] should not be anxious to go on, though the whole hour be taken up with what he [she] had found” (SPEX #254). Finally, Ignatius stresses the importance of “staying with” in his directive that retreatants pray over the same topic or mystery of the Gospel at least twice. In these periods of prayer called the “repetition,” he states that “attention should be given to some more important parts in which one has experienced understanding, consolation, or desolation” (SPEX #118). The repetition enables the retreatant to return to places in a past prayer period where something important was going on, as indicated by an exciting illumination or intense feelings of consolation or desolation. The return is for the purpose of deepening the movement of grace in one’s life.

The capacity to stay with our experiences with attentiveness is essential if we are to notice the “miraculous” epiphanies that happen in the course of ordinary life. Such was the case for Moses, for example, in his encounter with the Holy One in a bush that was on fire but curiously not being consumed. To introduce his deconstruction of Ex 3:1–4, which narrates Moses’s experience before the burning bush, Rabbi Lawrence Kushner asks, “How long would you have to watch wood burn before you could know whether or not it actually was being consumed?” Because, in the process of combustion, it takes a few minutes even for dry kindling wood to burn up, Kushner concludes that “Moses would have had to closely watch the ‘amazing sight’ for several minutes before he could possibly know there even was a miracle to watch!” (10).

Thus he humorously asserts that the burning bush was not so much a miracle but a test. God wanted to know whether he had in Moses someone who could pay attention to something for more than a few minutes. When Moses demonstrated that he was able to stay attentive, God spoke. Thus, the trick to noticing the divine Presence, Rabbi Kushner states, “is to pay attention to what is going on around you long enough to behold the miracle without falling asleep. There is another world, right here within this one, whenever we pay attention” (10).

The Ignatian method of paying attention is embodied in the prayer form variously called the “Examination of Consciousness” and the “Awareness Examen” (SPEX #43). This Ignatian prayer invites us to shine the flashlight of faith over the experiences of the day in order to illumine the movement of God in the currents and undercurrents of our days. While the five steps suggested for this prayer often vary in different contemporary formats, this prayer for increased consciousness of God’s presence focuses on such questions as these:

- Where is God in this situation? How is God leading me? What is God saying to me?
- How was God there for me in that experience?
- What in my present situation is leading me toward God and others in love? What is leading me away?
- What is the underlying spirit in my dealings with others?
- What is really going on in what’s happening in my life these days?

For a process guide to praying with the awareness examen, see my *The Enduring Heart: Spirituality for the Long Haul* (138–140).

**Reverence**

The second movement of the Ignatian method for finding God in all things calls for respecting the unique “otherness” of everything that surrounds us. Reverence requires a certain asceticism, which “is not about self-punishment” but about “the gradually stripping away of the self so that one can see what is there,” states theologian Michael Himes, SJ. Asceticism fosters reverence because it enables one “not to see what one would like to be there, or what one hopes to be there or fears is there, or what one has been told is there, but to see what, in fact, is there.” Himes argues that asceticism deepens a contemplative attitude by helping us learn “not to look in the mirror long enough that one might begin to look out the window. That is, we stop seeing what we would
like the world to be or fear the world to be and see instead what the world is” (233).

Respect for the unique otherness of people means that we regard them as unprecedented selves. It requires that we see each person with fresh eyes, cleared of the prejudices and biases that can distort our perceptions. Calling for an undefended and unguarded openness, reverence entails a certain vulnerability that lets persons and events affect us with their full resonance. Reverence excludes any kind of attempt to manipulate, control, or categorize people, instead allowing them to speak for themselves, to express their meaning and truth in their own words.

In the language of spiritual direction, reverence is the heart of contemplative listening. Peterson captures the nature of a reverential stance in describing the life of faith:

The life of faith does not consist in imposing our will (or God’s will!) either on other persons or on the material world around us. Instead of making the world around us or the people around us or our own selves into the image of what we think is good, we enter the lifelong process of no longer arranging the world and the people on our terms. We embrace what is given to us—people, spouse, children, forests, weather, city—just as they are given to us, and sit and stare, look and listen until we begin to see and hear the God-dimensions in each gift, and engage with what God has given, with what [God] is doing. (45)

In short, the attention and reverence called for by the Ignatian method resemble the spirit of lectio divina, an ancient prayer form that involves reading a biblical text in a way that allows it to address us in a personal and heartfelt way. In the Ignatian method, however, the sacred text consists in the totality of our life experience.

Embedded in our concrete experiences is the graceful communication of God. Like Moses before the burning bush, we need to approach the events of ordinary life with our shoes off, recognizing that our experiences are also holy ground because they are pregnant with the presence of God. With the eyes of faith, every common bush can be revelatory of God. As Elizabeth Barrett Browning proclaims, “Earth’s crammed with heaven, / and every common bush afire with God: / But only he who sees, takes off his shoes, / The rest sit round it, and pluck blackberries.” Jesuit Charles O’Neill, however, highlights the importance of reverence as a precondition for “seeing” God in the ordinary. O’Neill muses insightfully that the converse of Browning’s verses is also an important truth: “He is helped to see, who takes off his shoes” (36). In one of his most frequently anthologized poems, “Hurrahing in Harvest,” Hopkins ponders the changing of the seasons and realizes that he had not truly been attentive to the glory around him. He writes, near the end of the poem, “These things / These things were here and but the beholder wanting.” The world is indeed “charged with the grandeur of God,” but what is needed is someone to behold it. Without attentive awe and reverence, creation is often left without appreciative beholders.

**Devotion**

Finally, to find God in all things requires that we stay with things until the veil drops, allowing reality to be revelatory. In the Ignatian method, devotion celebrates the gift of God’s ongoing self-disclosure. Reality, when regarded with reverence and wonder, alludes to something beyond itself. It is this allusion that conveys to us “the awareness of a spiritual dimension of reality, the relatedness of being to transcendent meaning” (Heschel, 198). Perceiving creation with reverence and marvel leads to awe—a sense for the reference everywhere to God, who is beyond all creating things. Reverence enables us to perceive in the world intimations of the divine, to feel in the rush of the passing the stillness of the eternal, and to sense the ultimate in the simple, common, ordinary experiences of our lives. When we regard reality with reverent awe, we open ourselves to receiving “an answer of the heart and mind to the presence of mystery in all things, an intuition for a meaning that is beyond the mystery, an awareness of the transcendent worth of the universe” (106, emphasis in original). In describing the revelation that comes through reverent wonder, Rabbi Abraham Heschel states: “True, the mystery of meaning is silent. There is no speech, there are no words, the voice is not heard. Yet beyond our reasoning and beyond our believing there is a preconceptual faculty that senses the glory, the presence of the Divine. We do not perceive it. We have no knowledge; we only have an awareness. We witness it” (108). The Ignatian method invites us to enter reverently into the garden of creation and there to witness the presence of God, who at every moment sustains us and all things in existence.
Ignatius perceived the world as a divine milieu in which God is everywhere to be found. This view of a God-soaked world is delightfully portrayed in a story.

Once upon a time, God decided to become visible to a king and a peasant and sent an angel to inform them of the blessed event. “O King,” the angel announced. “God has deigned to be revealed to you in whatever manner you wish. In what form do you want God to appear?” Seated pompously on his throne and surrounded by awestruck subjects, the king royally proclaimed: “How else would I wish to see God, save in majesty and power? Show God to us in the full glory of power.” God granted his wish and appeared as a bolt of lightning that instantly pulverized the king and his court. Nothing, not even a cinder, remained. The angel then manifested herself to the peasant, saying: “God deigns to be revealed to you in whatever manner you desire. How do you wish to see God?” Scratching his head and puzzling a long while, the peasant finally said: “I am a poor man and not worthy to see God face to face. But if it is God’s will to be revealed to me, let it be in those things with which I am familiar. Let me see God in the earth I plough, the water I drink, and the food I eat. Let me see the presence of God in the faces of my family, neighbors, and—if God deems it as good for myself and others—even in my own reflection as well” (Wicks, 29).

The Ignatian method of attention, reverence, and devotion facilitates our ability to find God in all things.

References

This article is based on The Grateful Heart by Wilkie and Noreen Au (Paulist Press, forthcoming).