

Charism Discernment Retreat



OUR Spirit:

Our mission as **Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Scranton, Pennsylvania,** is to follow Jesus as a community of disciples, aware that we are sent to be a clear and understandable prophetic witness to the presence of God in the world. Inspired by the missionary zeal of our founders, Reverend Louis Florent Gillet, C.Ss.R., and Mother Theresa Maxis Duchemin, I.H.M. we strive to be faithful to our charism: ***to rejoice and to share in Jesus' redemptive mission to proclaim the Good News of God's universal love and to recreate the face of the earth.***

Preparing for Prayer

Plan the space and time that you will need to reflect on the scripture for the day and to ponder the reflection questions. Quiet yourself and take a few deep breaths. Light a candle to symbolize the light, presence and fire of God that dwells within you.

Prayer to begin Prayer Time

Be with me Jesus during this time to quiet my mind and heart. Breathe the gift of the Holy Spirit upon me to open my mind and heart to the gift of your presence. Walk with me during this retreat so that I might grow in a deeper awareness of the your presence within me. Help me to trust in your loving care for my family and friends. Guide me during these days so that I will respond generously to the voice within my heart so that I may become my best self. Amen.

DAY 1: Theresa was completely human.

Scripture: Phillipians 2:1-11

IHM Reflection: Our history since those beginning days is a long and joyful course of hope and vitality, proclaimed through lives of prayer, a communal lifestyle and works of education, healthcare, social service and pastoral and spiritual ministries.

Ponder In Your Heart: How is God inviting me to embrace my own humanity?

Personal Experience / Action: Where can I share the compassion of God?

DAY 2: Theresa believed and trusted.

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 14:22-33

IHM Reflection:

Alphonsus discerned his true calling: to bring the Gospel to the poorest and most abandoned of society. This decision led him to the world of the poor, a time in his life in which he personified his own words: "Enlarge your heart. We are dealing with a God who is full of love." It was the experience of the poor that would lead Alphonsus to a new experience of Jesus the Redeemer. He identified totally with the Redeemer who became poor that we might become rich.

Ponder In Your Heart:

When has God called me and invited me to trust in His loving care?

Personal Experience / Faith Action: How can I reach out to the poor in my midst with compassion?

DAY 3: Theresa Was Resourceful

Scripture: Mark 6: 34-44; Matthew 25:45-51

IHM Reflection:

Our works have historically taken us into a world struggling with crises of faith, commitment and social responsibility. In response to the urgent needs of the times, we have worked to meet the critical needs of people throughout the United States and in Latin America. Living the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience as signs of hope to the world, we are especially committed to works that manifest special concern, service and advocacy for the economically poor and spiritually neglected.

Ponder in Your Heart: How do I need to be fed and nourished daily by God in prayer?

Personal Experience / Faith Action: How is God inviting me to share the gifts of myself, talent or treasure with those in need?

DAY 4: Theresa was Single-minded

Scripture: Matthew 5: 1-12

IHM Reflection:

Theresa Maxis and **Louis Florent Gillet** were great-souled visionaries who struggled to turn dreams into possibilities. Their lives were a pilgrimage in which they were ever faithful to the inner voice of God's Spirit. Their groundedness in the truth, persistence in the face of adversity, resourcefulness, boundless energy for mission, joyfulness, love for the abandoned and radical willingness to go where God was leading them are a living legacy to the IHM sisters today.

Ponder In Your Heart: How can I follow my heart's desire? What is God's dream for me?

Personal Experience / Faith Action: In what ways can I encourage others to follow their dreams?

DAY 5: Theresa was Courageous

Scripture: Mark 6:45-52

IHM Reflection:

Theresa and Louis were great-souled visionaries with an acute sensitivity to the urgent needs of their times and an unremitting orientation to life and to the future. Their zeal for mission, generosity of spirit, courage, resourcefulness and confidence in God's loving providence enabled them to convert dreams to deeds. They were prophets of vision and pilgrims of a dream. In the depths of their hearts they realized that for those who love, the impossible becomes possible.

Ponder in your Heart: What do I fear? Where do I need to walk with courage?

Personal Experience / Faith Action: Take an action beyond your comfort zone today.



CHARISM RETREAT

OUR IHM SPIRIT:

We are an apostolic religious institute characterized by joyful, loving, hospitable, and self-emptying service to the people of God.

All our ministries are works for justice and peace, they receive and give life in relation to the depth of our spiritual union with Jesus and our participation in his mission.

In the power of Jesus and with devotion to Mary, we live chastity, poverty and obedience as prophetic signs of hope in our world. We acknowledge our need to manifest concern, service and advocacy for the economically poor.

Relying always on God's providence, we will continue to serve God's people in a variety of ministries, living and working lovingly among all persons

Preparing for Prayer

Plan the space and time that you will need to reflect on the scripture for the day and to ponder the reflection questions. Quiet yourself and take a few deep breaths. Light a candle to symbolize the light, presence and fire of God that dwells within you. Imagine you have just been invited to join a friend for a trip. What are you thinking? What are you feeling? Imagine the excitement and questions in your heart. Why would you say YES? What doubts or fears would prevent you from saying YES to the invitation? You might also want to listen to the song "Pilgrim" by Enya: A Day Without Rain" or another meaningful song.

Prayer to begin Prayer Time

Be with me Jesus during this time to quiet my mind and heart. Breathe the gift of the Holy Spirit upon me to open my mind and heart to the gift of your presence. Walk with me during this retreat so that I might grow in a deeper awareness of the your presence within me. Help me to trust in your loving care for my family and friends. Guide me during these days so that I will respond generously to the voice within my hear so that I may become my best self. Amen.

DAY 1: Theresa was Faithful

Scripture: Luke 2: 22-38

IHM Reflection:

The history of the IHM Congregation is in reality a story of fidelity -- fidelity to God, to the mission of Jesus, to the Catholic Church, to service, to truth and to a vision that is both liberating and empowering.

Ponder In Your Heart: To whom or to what have I been faithful? Have I been faithful to myself? How has God been faithful to me?

Personal Experience / Faith In Action: How might I become more persevering with someone or something?

DAY 2: Theresa was Resilient

Scripture: Isaiah 49:1-7

IHM Reflection:

Theresa and Louis gave birth to the IHM legacy of loving service. This legacy lives on in the hearts and lives of our sisters today. It is the inner energy that inspires us as a Congregation to embrace the future with faith, joyfulness, courage and willingness to live in and through the challenges of our times.

Ponder In Your Heart: How or where have I experienced an inner strength amidst adversity or challenges? What is my challenge today?

Personal Experience / Faith In Action: Am I willing to reach out to the needs of those around me in need of strength, comfort, support or courage?

DAY 3: Theresa was Passionate

Scripture: Matthew 21:12-17; Luke 15:11-32; Matt 6:19-21

IHM Reflection:

That legacy is the participation in the redemptive mission of Jesus. It is the following of Jesus as a community of disciples, aware that we are sent to be a clear and understandable prophetic witness to the presence of God in the world. Like Alphonsus, we have heard the cry of the abandoned poor in our society. Like Alphonsus, we reach out. Like Alphonsus, we journey in passionate pursuit of Jesus' mission.

Ponder In Your Heart: What are you most passionate about? How can you discover your passion?

Personal Experience / Faith In Action: Share your passion with others.

DAY 4: Theresa lived with Integrity

Scripture: John 4:1-26; Luke 10:29-37

IHM Reflection:

The IHM Congregation came to be because our founders, Theresa Maxis Duchemin and Louis Florent Gillet, were on fire with love of God and love of neighbor. In 1845, Theresa, one of the four founding members of the Oblates Sisters of Providence, and Louis, a Redemptorist priest, left their ministries on the east coast of the United States to travel to frontier Michigan. They left all that was familiar to them because they knew that the people of Monroe,

Michigan had no one to minister to their spiritual needs, educate their children in the faith or give them skills to overcome obstacles blocking the full realization of their God-given dignity and potential.

Ponder In Your Heart: Do you believe that you are loved unconditionally by God? Who are the outcast in your midst?

Personal Experience / Faith In Action: Who are the poor and abandoned denied human dignity who you are being called to reach out to today?

DAY 5: Theresa was a Woman of Hope

Scripture: Jeremiah 29:11-15

IHM Reflection:

In a continually shifting society, the IHM sisters of Scranton have always sought to meet the needs of God's people. From the early years our sisters have reached out to farmers, miners, immigrants, orphans, the sick and homeless, women and children; we now add to that the global concerns of today. Carrying the fire of God deep in our hearts, we continue to carry the Good News of God's copious love to all with the same zeal as our founders.

Ponder In Your Heart: Who have been a source of hope for me? What does hope mean for me?

Personal Experience / Faith In Action: How am I being invited to become an instrument of hope for others today?