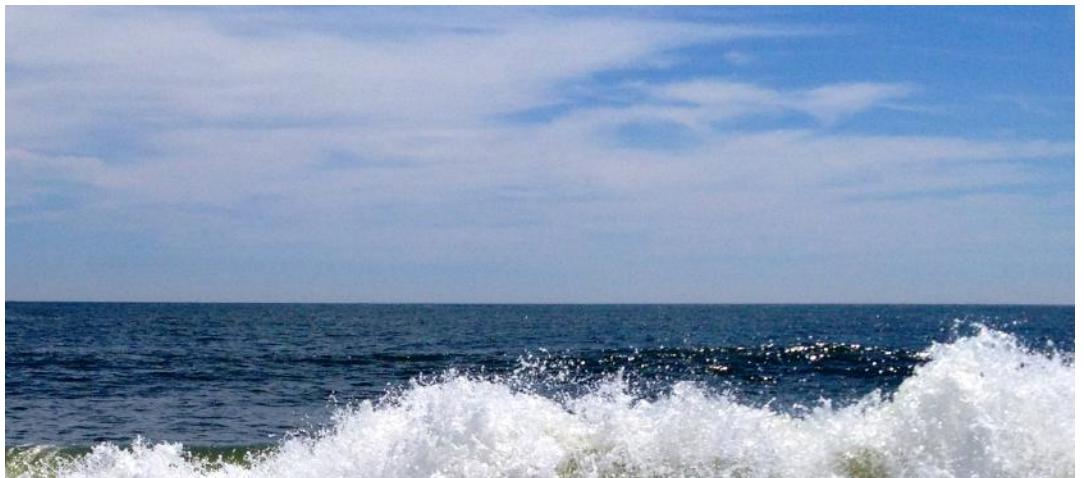




belly of the whale
SPIRITUAL DIRECTION & RETREAT MINISTRIES

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Whale Spouts

october 2016

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a prayer for the season

Spouting Off

Dear friends,

Happy Birthday St. Iggy!! Sunday, October 23rd will be the 525th Birthday of Saint Ignatius of Loyola! In celebration, consider dedicating this month to your spiritual wellness by learning more about the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius that include practices such as lectio divina, meeting with a spiritual director, imaginative prayer and the daily examen. Check out ignatianspirituality.com to learn more.

In addition, Happy Rosh Hashanah and L'Shanah Tova to our Jewish brothers and sisters! And, blessings to all for a faith-filled fall.

May the fiery colors of fall set your heart on fire with God's love and grace.

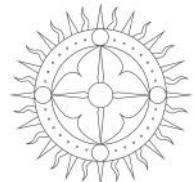
Peace,

Pastor Sharon, Founder & Director
Belly of the Whale Ministries



Contemplate this: Kitchen Table Examen Prayer

“Finding God in all things” is at the heart of Ignatian Spirituality. To do this, Ignatius encouraged us to use the Daily Examen prayer. Through the Examen, we seek God’s presence amidst the details of our day. We reflect on where we felt most connected with God (thank you) and where we felt least connected with God (forgive me). We wrap up our prayer with the hope-filled assurance that God will be with us in the day to come. It’s a simple little prayer that helps us to find God in all things.



I recently came to the delightful realization that my family has been unintentionally practicing a simple version of the Ignatian Examen for many years. Whenever we sit down together around our well-worn kitchen table for a meal (far less often than I wish!) we play a game called “High-Low.” After saying grace, we talk about our day and share something for which we are thankful (a high) as well as something that is a struggle (a low). This practice provides a way to “examine” our days and share our highs and lows with each other. Then, before the end of the meal, we chat about what activities are coming up in the days to come.

This simple game of “High-Low” is like an informal kitchen table Examen - we remember that God is with us, share our joys, share our struggles, and look ahead to the day to come. In the spirit of Saint Ignatius, I invite you to try the prayerful game of “High-Low” (on your own, with your family or even as an opening prayer before a committee meeting) as you seek to find God in all things.



Upcoming Events

Saturday, October 15, 10 am - noon

The Hildegarden, Fairport Harbor, Ohio

Explore the newly opened Hildegarden spirituality center inspired by the creative genius of the 12th century German visionary Hildegard of Bingen. Join us for this introduction to Praying with Mandalas and learn how to weave together the current interest in coloring with classic contemplative prayer practices. Contemplative coloring is a simple and tangible way to let go of distractions and rediscover your sacred center. Program cost is \$10. Additional resources will be available for purchase - Praying with Mandalas workbooks(\$15), colored pencils(\$5) & contemplative coloring notecards(\$3). Contact The Hildegarden to register (office@thehildegarden.org or 440-754-8002).

Sunday, October 23, 1-5 pm

Jesuit Retreat House, Parma, Ohio

Join us to celebrate St. Ignatius' 525th birthday and learn a colorful, new way to pray the Ignatian examen. During our afternoon retreat together, you will learn about Ignatius and prayerfully color a mandala designed for use with his daily examen prayer. In addition there will be ample silent time for contemplative coloring, prayer or simply walking the beautiful paths. Cost is \$25. Contact the Jesuit Retreat House to register (www.jrh-cleveland.org).

Planning Ahead for Lent 2017

Praying with Mandalas: A Colorful Contemplative Practice

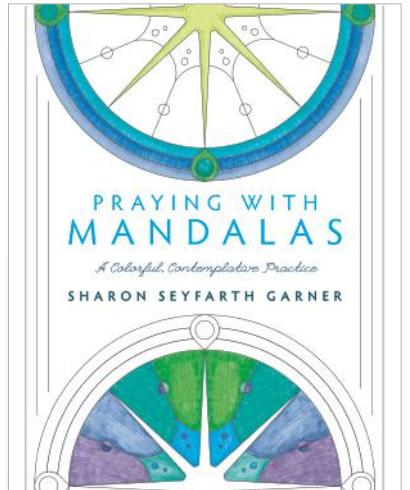
Praying with Mandalas – a creative blend of prayer journal and coloring book – includes 40 mandalas for 40 days of contemplative coloring rooted in the prayer practices of lectio divina, centering prayer, intercessory prayer and the daily examen. Although Lent may seem a long way off, consider planning ahead to include Praying with Mandalas as part of your Lenten program this spring. I would love to come talk with your group about this refreshing and colorful new way to pray. Give me a call at 216-224-7452 and we can explore possibilities. The book will be released by Upper Room Books in January 2017 and is currently available for preorder through Amazon.

Prayer for the Season

Burning bush speak
Light my inner fire
Warm my heart

Falling into a new season
Lengthening nights
Changing colors

Leaves fall
Snow falls
Spring awaits



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