

## Ignatian Prayer -Encountering Jesus' Love for a Loved One

- Begin by receiving God's loving gaze upon you. Take the time you need to rest in and absorb that love.
- Spend 3-5 minutes receiving the Lord's love for you. Consider how Jesus has loved you from before you were born, as a young child, as a teenager, and as an adult, sharing your joys and sorrows. Imagine Jesus with you, looking upon you with great love. Let him tell you he loves you. Receive his love.
- Briefly pray to give this time and yourself to God.
- Ask for the grace to encounter Jesus' love for your loved one, to be affected and changed by Jesus' love.
- Briefly recall the details you know of your loved one's life, their family of origin, their childhood, significant events that shaped them, the beautiful things, the sorrowful things, the gifts, and the struggles.
- Pray using your imagination and let yourself feel deeply, welcoming the joy, love, tears, anger -whatever comes- that God may be at work in your prayer:
  - Imagine God's loving gaze upon your loved one. God looks upon them with love, whether they can receive it or not. See how much God loves them.
  - Imagine Jesus loving your loved one in their mother's womb, at their birth, walking with them and delighting in their childhood, how they learned to walk and talk, and all the other things you remember.
  - Spend some time with Jesus rejoicing in the good things of your loved one. See the joy that they give Jesus.
  - Join Jesus still loving and walking with your loved one in the pain, the suffering, the sin and hardships they endure, the bad decisions, and the things that deform and twist them. Notice how Jesus suffers with them celebrating every step forward, even if there are two steps back. Through it all, notice how Jesus loves them.
  - If your loved one is dead, stay with Jesus as your loved one's body declines, gives way, as they breathe their last. See Jesus there holding them, Jesus' tears as they die, Jesus embracing them saying "Today you are with me in paradise."
- When you end your imaginative prayer, have a conversation with Jesus about what you experienced. Tell Jesus what you want to say to him. Listen and wait for what Jesus wants to say to you about what you just experienced. What is he saying to you? How have you been moved? How does Jesus invite you to respond in your heart, in your family, in your life, and in our world?