

GOSPEL FOR AUGUST 1, 2021

John 6:24-35

OTHER READINGS

Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15; Ephesians 4:17, 20-24



Residents of Ignacio House sharing with some members of the Thrive For Life community.

REFLECTION

“Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.” Jesus tells the crowd that their true hunger is not for physical food but for food that feeds the soul.

Do you hunger for something more in life? If we follow the ways of our society, we will always be left still yearning for more. Often the food that we hunger for is one that fails to satiate, such as material wealth, fame, power, and personal recognition. Jesus reminds us that the food that fully satisfies can only come from God.

“For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

Jesus claims to be the true bread that will feed people’s souls and lead them to eternal life. Only God can satisfy the deepest hunger of our heart. Let us make God be our “daily bread” to share with others through our service and regard for our neighbors.

MONTHLY EXAMEN

We invite you to prayerfully reflect:

Presence

Become aware that God’s presence is active at each moment of your life, looking at you with love, desirous of speaking directly to your heart. How do you feel at this moment?

Ask

Ask God for the grace to see the ways God is working in your life.

Gratitude

Be grateful. Thank God for the gifts, both big and small of the day. What are you most grateful for today?

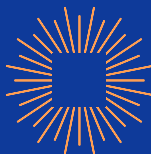
Review

Trust that God is with you at each moment of day, during the good and challenging moments. God never abandons you. What were the good moments of today? What were the greatest challenges of today?

Respond

You are not stuck. Tomorrow is a new day. Ask God to give you the grace to be the loving and generous person you were created to be. What can you do tomorrow to be more generous and loving?

Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.



THRIVE FOR LIFE WELCOMES JOHN TO IGNACIO HOUSE

John - Originally from Croatia, John joined the US Marines Corps at 17 and completed multiple tours, including two in the Vietnam War. He was incarcerated for 36 years and he spent 15 of those years training puppies to be bomb sniffing and emotional support therapy dogs for the US Army and domestic violence survivors. He has said that those puppies saved his soul and gave him the opportunity to redeem himself. In May 2021, he was up for parole for what felt like the hundredth time, and was finally connected to Ignacio House of Studies.



John is now in the process of getting all of his documentation together - a long and arduous process- and has been taking communications and technology classes through Ignacio House. In the past couple of months, he has learned all of the ins and outs of Tech 101, including setting up his smartphone, email and social media accounts. John is looking forward to getting his life together and possibly starting his own puppy training company in the future. His words of advice are two: "You have to make the decision to be the one to change your life. No one can decide or do it for you." and "Learn to forgive yourself. It is harder than forgiving another person, but you need to find a way so you can move

THRIVE FOR LIFE RETURNS TO BEHIND THE WALLS

*"I never knew how transformative the Thrive for Life retreats were until we didn't have them anymore."
- inmate in NYS prison*

After a long hiatus, Thrive for Life is happy to announce the return of our spiritual retreats for citizens behind the walls!

On Sunday July 25, 2021, Fr. Zach returned to Otisville Correctional Facility to host the first of our spiritual retreats since the closure of the prisons to volunteers in early 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Though correctional staff have limited our facility access to one person, we are hopeful that we will be able to send full cohorts of spiritual mentors back soon!

Now more than ever, our friends behind the walls need our support and care. With the slow return to in-person programming, we look forward to once again bringing hope, comfort, and grace to citizens behind the walls, especially in these challenging times.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Summer and Fall enrichment activities at Ignacio House of Studies

- † Community BBQ celebrating the life and ministry of St. Ignatius of Loyola
- † Welcome Home Enrichment Activities
- † Stress Management Seminars
- † TD Five Boro Bike Tour for Thrive for Life
- † Semester Beginning Picnic
- † Weekly Hour of Prayer and Contemplation

BECOME A RESIDENT SCHOLAR AT IGNACIO HOUSE OF STUDIES!

If you are passionate about your education and wish to continue your academic journey post-release, we urge you to consider becoming a Resident Scholar at Thrive for Life's Ignacio House of Studies.

At Ignacio House, we offer formerly incarcerated students transitional supportive housing along with a holistic suite of services to help them find a sense of purpose and overcome barriers to employment, permanent housing, and education. If you are interested in joining us, please send us the following:

- † Full Name
- † DIN number
- † Current college you are enrolled in and/or where you will study post-release
- † Contact information for college/university where you will study.

To reach us, please see our contact information at the top of this page.