

A R E T R E A T F O R L A Y M E N

HEART OF THE MISSION

Working Retreat Schedule

An appropriation of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises for lay men — four days of prayer, silence, and brotherhood, set apart to encounter Christ more deeply.





Retreat Summary

This retreat is an appropriation of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises designed specifically for lay men, offering spiritually mature men an opportunity to step away from ordinary life and encounter Christ more deeply. Through extended prayer, silence, and reflection, the retreat creates space for repentance, renewed engagement with mission, and deep brotherhood with men from their own cities and across the Midwest. Confession is central to the retreat: every participant is strongly encouraged to receive the sacrament, and at various points as many as four priests will be on site, allowing all 65 men the opportunity for a 30-minute confession. The retreat also invites men to discern more deeply Christ's particular call upon their lives and their participation in the mission of FORGE. At the same time, its vision extends beyond FORGE, helping each man embrace the broader vocation of the lay apostle: a man whose outward mission flows from a deep and disciplined interior life. Ultimately, the retreat seeks to form prayer-centered evangelists who return to their families, communities, and cities prepared to live and lead from a deeper encounter with Christ. The retreat also offers men an opportunity to interact more personally with leaders in the FORGE movement, who will not only be giving talks throughout the weekend but also leading small groups and undergoing the retreat themselves.

ADORATION

The Blessed Sacrament will be available for Adoration each day from 7:00 AM–10:00 PM, except during Mass or when otherwise noted. Men are encouraged to make generous use of the chapel throughout the retreat. On Friday and Saturday, men are expected to keep silence throughout the morning until noon.

Thursday

Arrival & Beginning

7:30 PM	Opening Mass
8:30 PM	Welcome & Introduction to the Retreat — Orientation to HOM Retreat, explanation of the retreat, expectations, silence, small groups, and the preview of the journey ahead.
9:00 PM	Small Groups — During the first evening of the retreat, men will meet in their small groups for the first time. Those meetings will involve a first step into the brotherhood of the retreat. Small group leads will also set their meeting schedule for the retreat, thereby allowing retreat participants to sign-up for their confession slots.
9:30 PM	Fellowship / Free Time / Personal Prayer
10:00 PM	Adoration concludes; men encouraged to retire for the evening.

Friday

Foundation, Sonship & the Call

Spiritual movement: Everything begins with receiving — my life, my identity, and ultimately Christ’s call. The first full day of the retreat will involve a deep engagement with the classic content of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, including the “Principle and Foundation”, meditation on divine sonship, and the “Call of the King”. Further, men will have ample time for silence, recreation, brotherhood. Two thirds of retreat participants will receive the sacrament of confession on Friday, and each penitent will be given a 30-minute window.

7:00 AM	Adoration available
7:30 AM	Mass
8:15 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	Talk I — The Principle and Foundation Ignatius’s “Principle and Foundation” teaches that we are created to praise, reverence, and serve God, and that everything else in creation is valuable insofar as it helps us toward that ultimate purpose. Therefore, we should cultivate holy indifference — freedom from disordered attachments — choosing whatever most leads us toward the end for which we were created: life with God.
10:00–11:00 AM	Silence & Personal Prayer / Adoration; Confession available for 4 men
11:00 AM	Talk II — “Divine Sonship” This talk invites men to encounter God not merely as Creator and Lord, but as a loving Father who calls each of us his beloved son. Through prayer and reflection on Christ’s own Sonship, men are invited to receive their identity as sons of the Father and to allow that identity to become the foundation for freedom, trust, and mission.
12:00 PM	Lunch
12:00–5:00 PM	Open Afternoon — Personal prayer, silence, rest, reading, recreation, and fraternity. Members of the FORGE team will coordinate some recreational opportunities, but these are optional. The afternoon is intentionally unscripted. Small groups meet once; time arranged by group leader.
12:00–2:30 PM	Confessions — 4 priests; 30-minute individual appointments. Men will have signed up for confession slots on Friday evening.

Foundation, Sonship & the Call

2:30–3:00 PM	Priest break
3:00–5:00 PM	Confessions and recreation continues
5:00 PM	Talk III — “The Call of the King” Rooted in Ignatius’s Call of the King, this talk invites men to hear Christ’s personal call to follow him and labor alongside him for the renewal of the world. Within FORGE, that call takes concrete form in our mission to fight for the family by building exceptional men, beginning with our own conversion and extending outward through brotherhood, fatherhood, and apostolic leadership.
6:00 PM	Rosary for the FORGE Movement
6:30 PM	Dinner
8:00 PM	Bonfire & Fraternity — Bourbon, conversation, relaxation
10:00 PM	Adoration concludes; men encouraged to retire.

Friday confession capacity · 36 individual 30-minute confessions

Saturday

Interior Life, Mission & the Cross

Spiritual movement: Having received the love of the Father and heard the call of Christ, I choose to labor with him.

7:00 AM	Adoration available
7:30 AM	Mass
8:15 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	Talk IV — “The Two Standards Meditation” Men have a choice. You can live your life by the standards of the world or by the standard of Christ. No matter where a man is on his spiritual journey, he must make this choice. What choice do you need to make now? This talk will highlight the importance of intimacy with Christ as the center of all apostolic mission.
10:00–11:00 AM	Silence & Personal Prayer / Adoration; Confession available for 4 men
11:00 AM	Talk V — “Living Mission” — The spiritual vision of FORGE; brotherhood, small groups, apostolic responsibility, and giving one’s life for other men.
12:00 PM	Lunch
12:00–4:00 PM	Open Afternoon — Personal prayer, silence, rest, reading, recreation, and fraternity. Small groups meet at least once; time arranged by group leader.
12:00–4:00 PM	Confessions — 3 priests; 30-minute individual appointments
4:00 PM	Talk VI — “The Crucifixion & Death of Jesus” Jesus died so that we might live. Now he calls us to participate both in his death and in his resurrection, and, ultimately, to hunger with him for the salvation of souls. Do we intentionally suffer alongside Christ? Do we hunger for the salvation of our family, friends, and colleagues?
~5:00 PM	Rosary

Interior Life, Mission & the Cross

~5:30 PM	Silent Dinner
6:00–7:15 PM	“Gethsemane” — On Saturday evening, all the men of the retreat will gather to pray, receive God’s love, intercede, and pray over one another (if desired). This is an evening of encounter and constitutes in a certain sense the spiritual pinnacle of the retreat.
7:15–8:00 PM	Transition / Continued Silence / Personal Prayer
8:00 PM	Bonfire, Bourbon, & Fraternity
10:00 PM	Adoration concludes; men encouraged to retire.

Sunday

Love & Offering

Spiritual movement: Having received everything from God, I offer everything back to him.

7:00 AM	Adoration available
7:30 AM	Mass — Closing mass of the retreat.
8:15 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	Rooted in Ignatius's Contemplation to Attain Divine Love, this closing talk invites men to recognize that everything is gift: God gives himself to us, dwells within his creation, and continually labors for our good. Our response is to return love for love through the total gift of ourselves, culminating in praying Ignatius's Suscipe: "Take, Lord, and receive..."
10:00 AM	Final Personal Prayer / Closing
10:30 AM	Retreat Concludes

THE CULMINATING PRAYER

"Take, Lord, and receive..."

Overall Spiritual Arc

FRIDAY · MORNING

Why am I here? What am I made for? (*Principle & Foundation*)

FRIDAY · MORNING

Who am I? (*Divine Sonship*)

FRIDAY · EVENING

What does Christ ask of me? (*Call of the King*)

SATURDAY · MORNING

If I am going to follow him, whose standard will I live under? (*Interior Life + Two Standards*)

SATURDAY · MIDDAY

What does following Christ mean concretely for me? (*Living Mission*)

SATURDAY · EVENING

How far does Christ's love go — and how far am I willing to follow him?
(*Crucifixion & Death*)

SUNDAY

What can I possibly give in return? (*Resurrection + Contemplation to Attain Divine Love*)

CULMINATING RESPONSE

The Suscipe — "Take, Lord, and receive..."

