

Dear Friends of Charis Ministries,

Greetings in this holy season of Lent, when we are called to reflect more deeply on Christ's sacrifice and what it means to be his disciple. At Charis, revealing the beauty of discipleship to those in their 20s and 30s through Ignatian spirituality is our mission.

In the first six months of our fiscal year, attendance at Charis events increased by 60%, an indication of the impact our programs have on the spiritual lives of young adults. In order to accommodate the growing need, we are planning an ambitious schedule of retreats, service activities, and leadership training sessions for 2010-2011.

We are very excited about two new developments for the coming year. Charis will be the Chicago host of the *Contemplative Leaders in Action*

program, a formation and mentoring program for young adults that is currently finding success in New York, Boston and Philadelphia. We look forward to welcoming the first Chicago cohort in the fall of 2010. And our third retreat manual, *What Next?*, which is focused on life transitions, is being completed by Fr. Michael Sparough, SJ, and Dr. Lynn Stasior and will be published this spring.

None of this could happen without the support of our wonderful donors, who are honored on page two of this newsletter. We are deeply grateful for their partnership in this important ministry.

May your Lenten reflection lead to a glorious Easter!



Pam Coster  
Executive Director

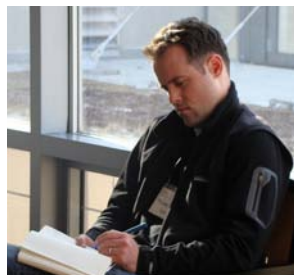


## ADVENT DAY: LOWNEY OFFERS IGNATIAN INSIGHT



This past Advent, Charis welcomed renowned author, Chris Lowney, to lead 65 young adults in an examination of how to live Ignatian values heroically in their daily lives. As is tradition with Charis' Days of Reflection, the day was peppered with individual and small group reflection, prayer through song, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

A former Jesuit, Lowney tied the day together with Ignatian 'tools' from his best-selling books *Heroic Leadership* and *Heroic Living* to help young adults discern their calling. During small group conversations, participants reflected on the main tenets of Lowney's presentation, considering how their skills and talents tie in with the call to be more Christ-like in their lives.



Lowney suggests taking daily mental 'pit stops' to pray Ignatius' Examen and stay centered.

Reflecting on the day, Suzette Thompson said, "To realize that individually we are all leaders, and that it's expected of me, allows me to begin to grasp how essential it is for me to love and see Christ in others every chance I get."

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### ONGOING

Spiritual Direction

### MARCH

Lenten Faith-Sharing Groups  
16: Living Ignatian Service Day  
19: Catholic School Teachers' Retreat Day

### APRIL

14: Living Ignatian Speaker

### MAY

7-9: For the Least Retreat  
19: Living Ignatian Speaker

### JUNE

14-19: Urban Immersion Trip

### CALENDAR HIGHLIGHT:

Chicago Urban Immersion Week:  
The Mission of Our Lady of the Angels



Charis has had some great service days at Our Lady of the Angels, so young adults will spend a week of service there this summer! The Mission of Our Lady of the Angels in Humboldt Park will host 15 to 20 young adults for a week of coordinating children's activities, visiting the elderly, and cleaning and renovating the Mission.

## YOUNG ADULTS CONTEMPLATE FORGIVENESS AT ST. MICHAEL PARISH IN CHICAGO'S OLD TOWN



St. Michael parish graciously hosted Charis' Pre-Lenten Living Ignatian Speaker. This is the first time a Charis event has been held at the historic church in Old Town. In light of the Lenten journey, Fr. Jim Hurlbert, pastor of St. Alphonsus Parish, offered his thoughts on forgiveness to a group of about 30 young adults.

Fr. Jim tied the spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Alphonsus Liguori into practical ideas for living the value of forgiveness in daily life. In small groups, young adults discussed their struggles with forgiveness and their thoughts about Reconciliation. One young adult participant said, "The talk was amazing! It really challenged me to examine my conscience and the level of reconciliation I have with God and others."

To wrap up the night, the group prayed the Anima Christi followed by the opportunity for the sacrament of Reconciliation with Fr. Jim or Fr. Keith Esenther, SJ.

*"We cannot understand forgiveness until we've been forgiven ourselves."*



## "Come to the Quiet" Retreat Sells Out!



Sr. Marybeth Martin, PHJC, led this January weekend that has become a staple event in Charis' programming calendar. 21 young adults spent time in silence, meeting with a spiritual director, and celebrating Reconciliation and Mass at the Cenacle Retreat & Conference Center in Lincoln Park. The next *Come to the Quiet* Retreat will be in July at Bellarmine Jesuit Retreat House in Barrington.

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