

Exercise: Tracing My Own Journey Through the Thresholds

A reading:

Jesus said to his disciples; *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit. You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you. Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me will be thrown out like a branch and wither; people will gather them and throw them into a fire and they will be burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."* John 15:1-8

Look at the five thresholds diagram. Please draw a line showing your journey through the thresholds to this point in your life.

1. Mark on the line your initial reception of the sacraments you've received.
2. Put your age by each point you where you crossed a threshold (either going towards or away from Jesus)
3. *Some questions:*
 - What precipitated your crossing each of the thresholds; traumatic or joyful events? Important people? Books? A change in your environment? Add those to the diagram.
 - At what threshold are you now? How long have you been there?
 - Where would you like to be?
 - What needs to change in your life to get there?
 - What obstacles (internal/external) to a deeper relationship with Jesus exist that you need to overcome with his grace?
 - Who and/or what is sustaining you in your relationship with Jesus at this time?

When you are done, read the following reflections and pray the following prayer of rededication or talk to God in your own words.

For Reflection: *Thoughts from Blessed John Henry Newman*

God has determined, unless I interfere with His plan, that I should reach that which will be my greatest happiness. He looks on me individually, He calls me by my name, He knows what I can do, what I can best be, what is my greatest happiness, and He means to give it me.

We are all created to His glory—we are created to do His will. I am created to do something or to be something for which no one else is created; I have a place in God's counsels, in God's world, which no one else has; whether I be rich or poor, despised or esteemed by others, God knows me and calls me by my name. I have my mission—I never may know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. Somehow I am necessary for His purposes, as necessary in my place as an Archangel in his... I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught.

Therefore I will trust Him. Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away.

You may use the prayer below as a way to reaffirm your commitment to follow Jesus as a disciple, or pray in your own words.

Prayer of Ignatius of Loyola:

*Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory,
my understanding, and my entire will.
All I have and call my own.
Whatever I have or hold, you have given me.
I return it all to you and surrender it wholly
to be governed by your will.
Give me only your love and your grace
and I am rich enough and ask for nothing more.*

Please remain in the quiet until this prayer time comes to conclusion. Locations to come forward for a concluding prayer and blessing will be announced. As you come forward and if you feel comfortable, share what threshold you see yourself in and your first name if you don't have a name tag. We will pray with you for the grace of that movement.