

Ignatian Prayer -Encountering Jesus' Love for George Floyd

This prayer exercise was inspired as I watched George Floyd's funeral and experienced Jesus filling my heart with his love for George and his sorrow for George's death. I hope that it may bless you and encourage you to join Jesus in his desire for and work to redeem this world, starting with yourself. I offer this as a limited attempt to join Jesus (who had dark skin) in his love for George, not believing that you will in any way capture or experience the full reality that George and African Americans face in our country but that Jesus will guide you into his heart.

- 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, 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 George Floyd, to be affected and changed by his love.
- Briefly familiarize yourself with George Floyd's life, consider the details as if you were his good friend or loving parent. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Floyd
- 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 Jesus loving George in his mother's womb, at his birth, walking with him and delighting in his childhood, how he learned to walk and talk, and grew strong and tall, faced racism and racist systems surrounding him, loved football and basketball, moving from North Carolina to Houston Texas.
 - Spend some time with Jesus rejoicing in this gentle giant, George, playing college basketball, contributing to the Houston hip-hop scene, George leading and mentoring other young Christians at his church. See the joy that George gives Jesus.
 - Join Jesus still loving and walking with George in the sin and hardships he endures, as he is discriminated against, as he gets entangled with drugs, makes poor choices and spends four years in prison. Notice how Jesus suffers with him, celebrates when George then serves in a local ministry, how he is with George as he moves to Minneapolis, working as a truck driver, security guard, making an anti-gun violence video. Notice how Jesus loves him.
 - Now stay with Jesus as George loses his job due to COVID, as Jesus witnesses George's murder, his anger as George cannot breathe, as his neck is kneeled upon, sorrow in his heart as George cries out to the officers, to his mother, to God, Jesus' tears as George dies, Jesus embracing him 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 life, in our world?