

Ignatius Jesuit Centre is a place of peace that welcomes a global community of people who seek to integrate their inner and outer life with God and with all Creation.

We promote right relationships with God, with each other and with Creation, especially through spiritual development in the tradition of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola and through deep engagement with this land.

Loyola House Retreats & Ignatian Training is central to the Ignatius Jesuit Centre, located one km north of Guelph on over 600 acres of beautiful farmland, with walking trails through rolling hills, woods and wetlands—all of it an integral part in our retreats and programs.



Ignatius Jesuit Centre
A Place of Peace

Loyola House

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Getting Back to the Garden: contemplative work on the land

August 11-19 2018 & 2019

*With Greg Kennedy SJ, and
the Ignatius Farm &
Old-Growth Forest project teams*



Loyola House
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Getting Back to the Garden: contemplative work on the land

In the beginning of the book of *Genesis*, physical labour, specifically farming, is imposed as punishment for stealing apples. Ever since that fateful imposition, saintly people of many traditions have sought to reevaluate the spiritual significance of work. St. Benedict, convinced that “idleness is the enemy of the soul”, praised manual labour as a key component to the sanctifying effects of monastic life. The famous Zen proverb - “Before enlightenment: chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment: chop wood, carry water” - equally points to the profoundly transformative power of basic chores done gracefully.

Loyola House, beautifully situated on 640 acres of certified organic, prime, Ontario farmland, is well-placed to continue in this venerable line of spiritual masters. Here, working the land is caring for it and for those creatures (human and non-human) who will eat of its gifts. Weeding, harvesting, planting, controlling invasive species literally become corporal works of mercy involving the hands and heart of the worker.

This retreat will allow the retreatant in their totality--body, soul and will--to enter into contemplation through the simple, humble tasks of growing food and restoring waterways and native forests. A morning or afternoon of each day will be dedicated to the physical work of making a living on the land, joining the Ignatius Farm and conservation teams. For the remaining time, the retreatant will have leisure to reflect on the experience and feel the satisfying burn of joints and muscles put to good use. A spiritual director will accompany the retreatant through the thicks and thins of life on the farm and in the woods. Maximum of 6 participants.

This retreat is facilitated by:

- Greg Kennedy, SJ - Spiritual Director, Loyola House
- Ignatius Farm team
- Old-Growth Forest project team

What to bring includes: non-glass refillable water bottle, rain gear, sun protection, and clothing suitable for field work that can get dirty.



August 11-19 2018/2019
Cost: \$792

Fees include accommodations, meals, sessions with a spiritual director (unless stated otherwise), daily liturgy, and access to the land. Commuter fees do not include accommodations. All fees are in Canadian dollars.

To apply for this retreat, complete the online application form at loyolahouse.com under Application. A downloadable form may also be completed, from the application webpage.

Checking In

Unless otherwise noted in the schedule, retreats and programs begin promptly at 8pm on the first day and end at 1pm on the last day.

Payment Policy

Payment in full must be received in order to secure your booking. Cancellations & Refunds are managed on an individual basis.