

Lessons in EUCCHARISTIC LIVING

Eddy Bermingham SJ draws inspiration for all of us from the MAGIS programme that Ignatian young people will follow this summer in Lisbon.

This July, in and around Lisbon, thousands of young adults from the Ignatian family will gather for a meeting known as MAGIS, which takes place before every World Youth Day. For ten days these young adults will pray together, discuss formal inputs, engage in fun activities, join in worship of the Blessed Sacrament and work in teams on service projects – all the time being encouraged to reflect on their experience. Of course, this is just the formal programme. There are also the late-night conversations and debates, the early morning walks with new-found friends, and the slowly deepening sense of being called to membership of a worldwide Ignatian family, with all that that means for their future lives.

MAGIS is an experience which is designed to form those who engage in it to find ways of living eucharistically for the rest of their lives. If we look at the elements of the programme, we get a sense of what it means to live eucharistically.

Prayer and silent adoration are essential components, but not ones entered into privately. There is a communal dimension: we pray and adore with our friends both old and new, and alongside complete strangers whose names and languages remain unknown to us. For many of us, we replicate this experience every Sunday, sitting in the pews alongside those we know well and those who are strangers

to us. And we do this comfortably because we each share the deep desire for communion with our God. This desire is not merely rooted in a shared ideology, even though Catholics have a great capacity for ideological differences; it is rooted in a person, the Risen Lord in our midst.

The element of fun, the communal celebration of life, is another significant part of the MAGIS gathering. Loud laughter, often at our own expense, is a hallmark of any eucharistic life. It is, along with moments of awestruck silence, our human way of joining with the creator in seeing that 'it [life] is good'.

The days spent in teams, **working for the service of others**, reaching out to those on the margins and prayerfully reflecting on this experience, are for many the most potent part of the MAGIS event. We discover through reflecting on an experience of service-learning that often we receive more than we give. Through an encounter with our common humanity, we enter into feelings of empathy and solidarity far deeper than we imagined were possible.

Most of us cannot live our whole lives at the level of intensity that MAGIS demands; however, if we are open to how the Spirit works in us we will find ways to make MAGIS' core elements integral to our Christian discipleship.

In July, let us pray that our Christian discipleship may be characterised by prayer and adoration, fun and the celebration of life, and sustained service of those on the margins of our society.

In August, let us pray for all those who gather in Lisbon to celebrate their Catholic faith.

INTENTIONS FOR THIS PERIOD

JULY

For a Eucharistic life

We pray that Catholics may place the celebration of the Eucharist at the heart of their lives, transforming human relationships in a very deep way and opening to the encounter with God and all their brothers and sisters.

AUGUST

For World Youth Day

We pray the World Youth Day in Lisbon will help young people to live and witness the Gospel in their own lives.

SEPTEMBER

For people living on the margins

We pray for those persons living on the margins of society, in inhumane life conditions; may they not be overlooked by institutions and never considered of lesser importance.

OCTOBER

For the Synod

We pray for the Church, that she may adopt listening and dialogue as a lifestyle at every level and allow herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the peripheries of the world.

In September, let us pray that those on the margins may find ways to maintain their human dignity, and that all institutions and authorities working with groups on the margins may carry out their duties in a way that does not demean people in any way.

In October, as the Church continues to struggle to respond positively to Pope Francis' challenge to become synodal, let us pray that the Spirit will lead us to creative and faithful initiatives to make this a reality at all levels of the Church. ●

ARE YOU AGED 18-35?

Visit jesuit.org.uk/magis to find out about the MAGIS experience.

MAGIS
2023 PORTUGAL
CREATING A HOPE-FILLED FUTURE