

Retreat : **"Seeing verses 'SEEING' ~ Life from a Different Point Of View"**
Matthew 14:22-33

[This retreat was designed for the annual staff camp of the Mongolian team. They ended their staff camp together with this retreat. Their camp was held in the month of October; that's why they are only looking at the previous 10 months of their life.]

Retreating is a great way to clean house and get a bit of house-keeping done in the interior of our hearts. From time to time, getting away from the normal pace of life introduces a new rhythm that slows us down. We go on a "date" with ourself and with our God. We can have the luxury of looking back at things that have rushed by us, and to PRESS MEANING to happenings.

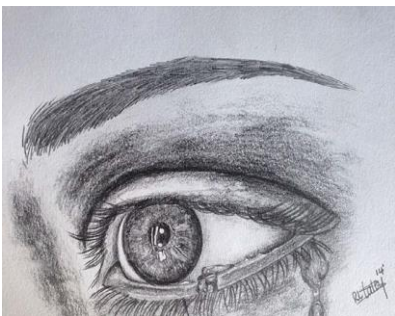
We can bring to remembrance things pushed away and see how it has affected us, our relationships, our reactions, our responses. It helps us look in the mirror of our life and see changes ~ both good and bad. All this is done in the presence of the One who goes away with us. The Lord helps us see other VIEWING POINTS and invites us to come to Him in a new way, in a new surrender!

So, I would recommend that we go away with only OUR LIVES as reading material; our LORD who searches hearts; our BIBLE which provides comfort and admonishment ~ food for the journey; and our JOURNALS to unwind jumbled thoughts and to record DEFINING MOMENTS and prayers of our heart. The journal will serve as a reminder or encourager when we look back at it from time to time on our journey ahead.

This particular retreat will take around 3 hours to adequately savour your life, our God and the Word. Do not rush this time, but rather enjoy the dining ~ like one slowly eating, chewing, tasting and swallowing.

Annette Arulrajah, IFES Regional Secretary for East Asia

"Seeing versus SEEING"



You can use the document "*appendixSeeingvs.seeing*" (see extra download on Scripture engagement website) to write in as you journey through this retreat.

If you are leading this as a retreat, you may want to hand out only the appendix (an adapted version of it) to the participants and use these notes to help you introduce the retreat and walk the group through it.

(a) **SETTLING IN** (20 minutes)

- Take a walk around the campsite drinking in the scenery and just following the pace of your feet, allowing your heart to quieten down. As you slowly make your way, you may find your thoughts running from one thing to another. Just embrace them and consciously put them aside for now, and prepare your heart to listen to your life in these past ten months.
- When you find a good spot for you to sit and ponder your life, place your things around you and breathe deeply in and slowly ~ inviting the Triune God to companion you as you unroll the parchment of your thoughts on these past few months.

(b) **SNAPSHOTS & RECAPTURING OUR DAYS** (45 minutes)

- Recall each month since January. Capture on the paper provided [see appendix pg. 2] significant things that you remember, or those that shaped you or left it's indent upon your life. Do not try to recall everything that happened. The significant fragrances or unfinished business will rise up in your thoughts naturally. Record them, then move on to the next month.
- When you have finished capturing all the past ten months, look for :
 - What seem to be repeating patterns
 - How you seem to be changing (growing / regressing)
 - Look for progress made
 - Look also for where you seem to be drowning (if there is anything)
- Capture and name your last ten months : " "

(c) **SOAKING IN SCRIPTURE** : Matthew 14:22-33 (45 minutes - 1 hour) [see appendix pg. 3]

- Read Matthew 14:22-33. Spend some time just soaking in these Scriptures. Put yourself in the scene, and identify with the emotions that are running high. As you hear the wind and the waves; as you see Jesus; as you hear the stillness of the waves quietened down, continue to read your life and hear the Word
- Hear these words again as you travel the sea of your life. What are these words of Scripture inviting you to see?
 - .. "Take courage" (vs 27)
 - .. "Come" (vs 29)
 - .. "Saw the wind" (vs 30)
 - .. "Why did you doubt?" (V31)
- Look at what you CAPTURED of your life from January to August 2017. What name did you give your journey? Reflect on these 4 phrases of Scripture in verses 27, 29, 30, 31. Where do you HEAR THESE in the sea of your life?
- What FEARS HAVE ARISEN IN YOU because of the winds and waves in your life?
- What is JESUS INVITING YOU TO, as you look at Him?

- What are you GOING TO DO DIFFERENTLY?

(d) **SOAKING IN EXPRESSIONS** (30 minutes)

[This section is optional for those who do not already have the original / copyright to Sieger Koder's paintings. These paintings may be purchased online. Or, you may substitute it with relevant artwork or sculptors you might have]

When you have finished sitting with Scripture, and all of you are gathered, the facilitator will gather you in pairs. Make your way to the gallery of 4 paintings by Sieger Koder.

- i. Winds and waves ("Sturm auf dem See")
- ii. Jesus bearing the weight of the world ("Wasseralfingen Kreuzweg")
- iii. Peter drowning ("Petrus schrie : Herr rette mich")
- iv. In God's hand ("In Gottes Handen")

Each one will give you "glimpses of the Divine". Just spend some time looking at the art in silence. Ponder on the verse from Matthew 14 hanging next to each painting. Then discuss with your partner what you are seeing, what draws you. Try to capture the pull and essence of what the painting is conveying to you. Write it down in your journal or in the worksheet provided [see appendix pg. 4]

(e) **STORYING OUR EXPERIENCE** (25 minutes)

The facilitator will guide the group in how they will share their impressions of the painting to the group.

The facilitator might highlight some things that resonated with him/her from Matthew 14.

Then, in twos share what each one became aware of as you sat with your life and heard God and his Word speaking into it.

As you listen to each other, what response (not advice) comes to your heart for your friend? It might be a picture; it might be a Scripture or a phrase. These just rise up in your heart as you listen with a hospitable heart. This will be an affirmation or encouragement to him or her. [Write it down, before you speak it. No explanations needed]

End the time praying for one another!