As baptized Christians, we have status and dignity, making us responsible for the mission God has given to the church in the world.

Baptism gives us the means to participate actively in Jesus’ priestly, prophetic and kingly mission, according to Father Ignacio Larrañaga, founder of Prayer and Life Workshops.

Prayer and Life Workshops emphasize the love of God by introducing participants to communicate with the Lord in a “practical, deep and varied way.” Prayer leads to a vital personal relationship with the Lord, with participants becoming “friends and disciples.”

Participants learn by praying. The workshops touch participants in their relationships with God, themselves and with one another.

Many participants are slowly able to:
- Become free of sadness and anxiety.
- Heal life’s wounds.
- Overcome feelings of guilt, insecurity or inferiority.
- Recover emotional stability and the joy of living by walking hand-in-hand with God.

After the workshops are complete, each participant chooses one or two prayer methods to use, based on their spirituality and personal situation.

Father Ignacio, a Basque Capuchin Franciscan, founded the workshops in Santiago, Chile, in 1984. In Spanish, the workshops are known as Talleres de Oracio y Vida (TOV). He is a widely read author of 16 spiritual and self-improvement books that have been translated into 10 languages.

Workshops are offered in 44 countries. They were first offered in the United States in 1987. The Pontifical Council of the Laity recognized TOV in 1997 as a Private International Association of the faithful. The council described the workshops as providing a “practical method for learning to pray in an orderly, varied and gradual manner.”

Lay guides are in formation for one year. They introduce participants to a prayer life, leading them to integrate it into everyday life, to live as Jesus would. The workshops are incubators of lay vocations in service of the church. Members are inspired to make themselves available by both word and presence, preferably to the poor and needy. The workshop encourages lay volunteer service.

When the workshops are complete, guides move on to other workshops. Guides do not establish groups. What participants decide to do when finished is up to them.

For more information, visit www.tovpil.org.

The Prayer and Life Workshop will come to Missouri for the first time at Holy Family next year. Parishioner Essy Gonzalez will guide 15 weekly sessions, beginning Thursday, February 6, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Participants will learn 14 prayer methods. No workshop will be held during Holy Week.

Cost for materials is $12. While pre-registration is not required, it is helpful so materials are available to all participants. To register, call the parish office or email mike@holystamily.com with your name and phone number or Essy at eusebiatov@yahoo.com.

‘God is not a set of words loosely bound together through internal logic; nor is God a mental abstraction or theory. God is a person and we get to know a person through relationship. Only personal contact will give us the knowledge that comes from experience, which surpasses all understanding. If we do not dive head first into the sea of God, we will never know who God is.’

Father Ignacio