

Jim Arena is an experienced giver of the Spiritual Exercises in the Ignatian tradition. In Spring 2016, he completed the Ignatian Spirituality Leadership pilot program (FIRE) at Holy Spirit Parish in San Jose. He went on to complete the 19th Annotation Retreat of the Spiritual Exercises in 2017 and in 2019 completed the “Giving the Spiritual Exercises” training through the Center for Ignatian Spirituality at St. Ignatius Parish, Sacramento. He also completed the 3-year Institute for Leadership in Ministry, a lay-leadership program, for the Catholic Diocese of San Jose. Jim leads the Giving the Exercises 2-year training program to grow future Ignatian Retreat Directors for the sister churches of St. Simon’s Parish, Los Altos and St. Monica’s Catholic Community, Santa Monica.

Besides training Spiritual Directors, Jim’s background is in technology with an undergraduate degree in Industrial Engineering and graduate work in Large Scale Organizational Change. He led or consulted for years on many transformational programs for major technology companies in Silicon Valley. More recently, he has moved into Executive Coaching, working with leaders who are confronting difficult growth challenges for their organizations. This work led him to search for a deeper and more personal spirituality and as a result he merged Executive Coaching with Spiritual Direction with many clients. Jim enjoys companioning others who desire a deepening relationship with God.

He is married to Kathy with two adult children who teach him how to be their best dad. He loves to bicycle nearly anywhere. You may find him on a road near you.



Dan Brutocao has been the beneficiary of spiritual direction in the Ignatian tradition for 20 years, through the Spiritual Exercises 19th Annotation, traditional 30-day Silent Retreat, and other versions. In 2016 he joined other faculty members (Jim Arena and Dian Brutocao) on the leadership team for the first FIRE Spiritual Leadership program at Holy Spirit parish in San Jose, CA, then again with FIRE at St. Monica in Los Angeles. In 2019 he completed the 2 year Giving the Exercises training program at St. Ignatius parish in Sacramento and has served as a director in the Spiritual Exercises since that time. His faith journey has also been strongly influenced through his involvement in Parish Council, Parish School Board and eucharistic ministry. He loves to travel with Dian, experiencing Christ through pilgrimages to Turkey, Greece, Rome and the Camino de Santiago.

Since his retirement after 25 years as a pediatric critical care physician, he has continued to “find God in All Things”, especially through marriage with Dian, and with their 5 children and 6 grandchildren. He enjoys golfing, running and is even occasionally able to find God through Notre Dame football!



Dian Brutocao is an experienced director of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. In her early years, Dian worked as an RN in intensive care. She has served on parish council at St. Peter's Church Spokane, WA, as well as president of such, the Catholic Foundation of Eastern WA, Vocations Admissions Advisory Board at Bishop White Seminary, Spokane, WA, and Grant Distribution Chairwoman for the Diocese of Spokane. She received a Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies at Gonzaga University followed by a Master's of Theology with an emphasis in pastoral ministry at the University of Portland. Dian joined the leadership team for FIRE (an intensive Christian leadership formation program) at Holy Spirit Parish in San Jose, CA in 2016, and then FIRE St. Monica Parish in Los Angeles (a nine-month retreat in the Spiritual Exercises with concurrent communal discernment, 2020). Dian was a faculty member of the Giving the Exercises spiritual director certification program at St. Monica's Catholic Community from 2021-2023.

She has a thriving 44-year marriage with five grown children and six grandchildren. In her free time, she enjoys gardening, sewing, reading and playing golf.



Michael Cheney is an experienced Ignatian spiritual director and retreat director. Michael has been involved in Ignatian spirituality and teaching for 40+ years. He taught theology at Jesuit High School in Sacramento and Loyola High School of Los Angeles as well as taught as an adjunct instructor at both Marymount College and Mt. St. Mary's College in Los Angeles part-time. He earned a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Spanish from St. Louis University, attended the Franciscan School of Theology at Berkeley for graduate theological studies, and completed his Master's degree in Religious Studies from Mt. St. Mary's University in Los Angeles. He has been involved in Giving of the Exercises as both the co-director of the Center for Ignatian Spirituality at St. Ignatius Parish and later as the Director of the Center for Ignatian Spirituality. Besides training spiritual directors, he worked with the diaconate program at the Diocese of Sacramento to guide permanent deacon candidates and spouses in Ignatian Spirituality. At St. Ignatius Parish in Sacramento, he served as both co-founder and later as Director of the Center for Ignatian Spirituality. He is now retired and enjoys traveling with his wife, grandparenting, and admiring God's beautiful world through birds & wildlife and landscape photography.



John Stephen McCarthy is an experienced giver of the Spiritual Exercises in the Ignatian tradition, with a longstanding commitment to spiritual accompaniment and recovery ministry.

In Spring 2016, he completed the Ignatian Spirituality Leadership pilot program (FIRE) at his home parish, Holy Spirit Parish in San Jose. He went on to complete the 19th Annotation Retreat of the Spiritual Exercises in 2017 at El Retiro in Los Altos, and in 2019 completed the “Giving the Spiritual Exercises” training through the Center for Ignatian Spirituality. Since 2019, John has accompanied eighteen individuals through the Spiritual Exercises.

John has been deeply involved in recovery ministry since 2015, leading retreats for men in early recovery from addiction who have experienced homelessness through the Ignatian Spirituality Project. He currently serves as the organization’s Men’s Bay Area Coordinator. Since 2019, he has also volunteered and led an annual Men’s Recovery Retreat at El Retiro, integrating the Spiritual Exercises with the Twelve Steps.

He has been involved with the St. Monica’s and St. Simon SEEL programs since their inception.

Now retired from a career in the semiconductor industry, John is married and the father of two adult children. He enjoys grandparenting, travel, and time spent exploring the natural world.



Karen Skidmore is a trained and experienced spiritual director, and giver of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. She has been deeply involved in Christian spiritual formation for over 30 years, previously as an ordained elder and teaching in church programs. She graduated from the Pierre Favre program of the Jesuit Retreat Center Los Altos in 2019. In addition, she has graduate-level Certificates from Fuller Theological Seminary (biblical studies), Renovaré Institute (Christian spiritual formation), Shalem Institute (contemplative spiritual guidance) and Boston College (Dynamics of the Exercises).

Karen resides in Charlottesville, VA where she is a member of Christ Episcopal Church and the leadership team for Charlottesville Area Spiritual Companions. An avid volunteer, she is a member of the governance and foundation boards for Virginia Public Media. Previously, she served as elder board chair for a large multi-site church in Menlo Park CA, board vice chair for a San Francisco nonprofit serving at-risk youth, and in board leadership roles for other nonprofits. Karen retired in 2019 as senior associate general counsel of a global investment management firm. She received a J.D. from Fordham Law School and a B.S. in Education from the University of Virginia.

Widowed young, Karen enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading and lifelong learning, travel and cultural activities, and of course, volunteering!



Suzette Sornborger serves as Pastoral Associate and Dean of Spirituality and Faith Formation at Saint Monica Preparatory School, where she works closely with the school community and the parish. She holds a Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology and has dedicated over 35 years of ministry service within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. In addition to her pastoral service she is also an active special director within the community in particular with the Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (SEEL).

Suzette is the author of a children's book *How Do You See God? Seeing God in All Things* and has contributed to Catholic media and formation, including writing *The Billboard Campaign* and developing the youth curriculum for *The Dating Project* through Family Theater Productions. Her ministry is rooted in a deep commitment to strengthening Catholic families across generations.

She and her husband have been married for 38 years and are blessed with 3 adult children and a daughter in law and son in law.

