

Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicators and Spirituality

MBTI: Introvert/Extrovert (I/E)
 Sensing/Intuitive (S/N)
 Thinking/Feeling (T/F)
 Perceiving/Judging (P/J)

IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY (SJ)

The Ignatian (SJ) temperament accounts for 40% of the general population and 50% of church attenders. It is characterized by a deep sense of obligation, a desire to feel useful, a strong work ethic and a strong sense of tradition. Those having this temperament are often incapable of refusing responsibility and so are overworked. They make good administrators, have good common sense and are always prepared. Ignatian temperament spirituality usually consists of a carefully organized regimen, which is ordered and planned and is seen a continuity with historical faith. Those demonstrating this spirituality see faith as a journey and utilize imagination and observation to bear practical fruit. They enjoy projection, prayer that uses sensible imagination to project back into the Biblical scene.

AUGUSTINIAN SPIRITUALITY (NF)

The Augustinian (NF) temperament accounts for 12% of the general population but as much as 50% of those who make retreats and frequent houses of prayer. It is characterized by creativity, optimism, strong verbal skills, persuasiveness and outspokenness. Those having this temperament are typically good listeners and peacemakers, hate conflict and tense situations, prefer face to face communication, cannot handle negative criticism and feel hurt if treated impersonally. They relate well to others and are enthusiastic, empathetic and compassionate. Augustinian temperament spirituality usually finds meaning in everything, wants to make a unique contribution and needs to understand God's love in the present, sins and all. Those demonstrating this spirituality tend to be the most cared for spiritually and need this care. They benefit from transposition, prayer that uses creative imagination.

FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY (SP)

The Franciscan (SP) temperament accounts for 38% of the general population. It is characterized as being free, unconfined, compulsive, not tied down by rules, loving action and crisis-oriented. Those having this temperament respond quickly and dramatically; are flexible, open-minded and willing to change their position; and are good troubleshooters, negotiators and diplomats. They bring a sense of excitement, are the life of the party, seem full of stories, and survive temporary setbacks. Franciscan temperament spirituality combines an active view of God speaking in creation through the senses with a need for other-centered action and acts of service. Those demonstrating this spirituality are impetuous, generous, spontaneously praising and seizing the present. They need real and literal rather than symbolic and thrive through celebration.

THOMISTIC SPIRITUALITY (NT)

The Thomistic (NT) temperament accounts for 12% of the general population. It is characterized by a syllogistic method of thinking (e.g. the Scholastic Method), a progression of thought from cause to effect and a desire to understand, comprehend, explain, predict and thereby control reality. Those having this temperament are logical; intelligent; gravitate toward things complicated, exacting, or challenging the mind; they thirst for truth and hate error. They tend to be perfectionists, workaholics, and poor losers, often having poor interpersonal relationships and emotional responses. Thomistic temperament spirituality is similar to modern science with a firm emphasis on self discipline, preferring neat and orderly forms of spiritual life. Those demonstrating this spirituality pursue transcendental values, such as truth, goodness, beauty, unity, love, and life. They thrive by asking questions like who, what, when, where, why, how in prayer.

(Chester P. Michael & Marie C. Norrissey)

AUGUSTINIAN SPIRITUALITY

ENFJ

Popular and sensitive, with outstanding people skills. Externally focused, with real concern for how others think and feel. Usually dislike being alone. They see everything from the human angle, and dislike impersonal analysis. Very effective at managing people issues, and leading group discussions. Interested in serving others, and probably place the needs of others over their own needs.

Study, Confession, Service, Worship, Guidance

- Reflect on what it means to be part of the body of Christ – His family
- Testimonies work well for you
- Get involved in other people's lives
- Need time for reflection
- You like structure and discipline

INFJ

Quietly forceful, original, and sensitive. Tend to stick to things until they are done. Extremely intuitive about people, and concerned for their feelings. Well-developed value systems which they strictly adhere to. Well-respected for their perseverance in doing the right thing. Likely to be individualistic, rather than leading or following.

Fasting, Prayer, Simplicity, Worship

- Prayer is important – it connects you to eternity
- You long for depth and meaning in the now – so pray in everyday things
- A mystical approach might be helpful
- Yours is a difficult path. Structure and order will help you, but you have a desire for something transcendent that will only be fulfilled when you feel you have found your own unique path. Keep searching. God does still speak to His children.
- Try sharing your experiences with others

ENFP

Enthusiastic, idealistic, and creative. Able to do almost anything that interests them. Great people skills. Need to live life in accordance with their inner values. Excited by new ideas, but bored with details. Open-minded and flexible, with a broad range of interests and abilities.

Study, Submission, Celebration, Worship

- Enjoy being “like a child”, feeling special to God.
- Need creative outlets, where you can do new things.
- You don’t really like the “rules” that are in place at most churches. Be careful of doing something silly just to prove a point.
- Try service to others – where you can stretch yourself.
- Need time to reflect.

INFP

Quiet, reflective, and idealistic. Interested in serving humanity. Well-developed value system, which they strive to live in accordance with. Extremely loyal. Adaptable and laid-back unless a strongly-held value is threatened. Usually talented writers. Mentally quick, and able to see possibilities. Interested in understanding and helping people.

Meditation, Study, Solitude, Guidance

- You get really inspired when you think about what you could do for God if you grew spiritually
- You appear laid back to others, but don’t fool yourself – you know you’ll grow best when you have order and discipline
- You will do well with notes and spiritual growth tools that provide gradual progression
- Get guidance
- At the end of each day, look back at your activities and reflect on their spiritual dimension

THOMISTIC SPIRITUALITY

ENTJ

Assertive and outspoken – they are driven to lead. Excellent ability to understand difficult organizational problems and create solid solutions. Intelligent and well-informed, they usually excel at public speaking. They value knowledge and competence, and usually have little patience with inefficiency or disorganization.

Prayer, Service, Worship

- You need depth, and need to engage in deep study, with order and discipline
- You need time to reflect and think
- You would get great benefit from formal theological studies
- You will be thinking for your whole life. You like to reach conclusions, then challenge yourself to rethink them and start all over again. Enjoy it!
- But your thoughts must lead to real actions and implications. You don't like dreamers.
- You find it hardest to accept things by faith.
- Review your progress regularly.

INTJ

Independent, original, analytical, and determined. Have an exceptional ability to turn theories into solid plans of action. Highly value knowledge, competence, and structure. Driven to derive meaning from their visions. Long-range thinkers. Have very high standards for their performance, and the performance of others. Natural leaders, but will follow if they trust existing leaders.

Fasting, Meditation, Solitude, Guidance

- Focus on poetry, beauty, free verse.
- Don't get stuck in a routine. You will grow best in an unstructured way.
- Prayer is hardest for you. Don't be discouraged by this. Remember that silence and waiting are also prayer. Pray "in the moment".
- Take 10 minutes every day to be silent and "wait on God".
- You will never have everything sorted out in your head. Stop thinking you will, and enjoy the journey of discovery.

ENTP

Creative, resourceful, and intellectually quick. Good at a broad range of things. Enjoy debating issues, and may be into “one-up-manship”. They get very excited about new ideas and projects, but may neglect the more routine aspects of life. Generally outspoken and assertive. They enjoy people and are stimulating company. Excellent ability to understand concepts and apply logic to find solutions.

Study, Service, Celebration

- You need freedom from structures – disciplines are least helpful for you.
- Prayer is much more of your whole day than a specific event.
- Dream big dreams for God – you can change the world, if you try something really huge for God!
- You might want to try liturgies and written prayers that you read, but be careful of an overly “religious” life.
- Have spiritual conversations with others.
- Try serving other people.

INTP

Logical, original, creative thinkers. Can become very excited about theories and ideas. Exceptionally capable and driven to turn theories into clear understandings. Highly value knowledge, competence and logic. Quiet and reserved, hard to get to know well. Individualistic, having no interest in leading or following others.

Meditation, Solitude, Simplicity, Confession

- You are open to new things, but you are initially quite critical. Keep trying!
- Give yourself time to reflect and think. Don't be rushed into new things.
- Pursue some of the more charismatic gifts of the Spirit.
- You do need order and discipline, though. A specific schedule of spiritual disciplines, put into your diary, would be very helpful for you.
- Other people might perceive that you are “jumping around” between lots of different things. Don't worry about that – you, more than many others, can actually get value from many different disciplines.

IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY

ESTJ

Practical, traditional, and organized. Likely to be athletic. Not interested in theory or abstraction unless they see the practical application. Have clear visions of the way things should be. Loyal and hard-working. Like to be in charge. Exceptionally capable in organizing and running activities. “Good citizens” who value security and peaceful living.

Study, Fasting, Simplicity, Confession

- You are very practical.
- You enjoy obedience to the church, and get great spiritual value out of belonging to the church community.
- You need stability.
- You are best at daily Bible study and prayer. Make use of this.
- You will be unlikely to find value in the more emotional types of Christianity.

ISTJ

Serious and quiet, interested in security and peaceful living. Extremely thorough, responsible, and dependable. Well-developed powers of concentration. Usually interested in supporting and promoting traditions and establishments. Well-organized and hard working, they work steadily towards identified goals. They can usually accomplish any task once they have set their mind to it.

Study, Meditation, Submission, Worship

- Pray in action. Pray “on the job”.
- You enjoy scheduled prayer and meditation.
- Your spirituality is private. You don’t get much value from groups.
- You prefer order, and are rational – what you believe must make sense to you. So, pursue answers to your questions.
- You will also grow when everyone around you is growing, so take care of the spiritual growth of those closest to you.

ESFJ

Warm-hearted, popular, and conscientious. Tend to put the needs of others over their own needs. Feel strong sense of responsibility and duty. Value traditions and security. Interested in serving others. Need positive reinforcement to feel good about themselves. Well-developed sense of space and function.

Prayer, Fasting, Submission, Guidance

- You need structure to your disciplines.
- Maybe use notes and guidebooks.
- And don't beat yourself up if you don't do it everyday.
- Try mystical approaches.
- You will find God in nature, and you will feel God with you rather than think out how He could be with you.
- You will find God amongst the poor and needy, wherever there are concrete problems to be solved. If you are poor, don't wait for someone to rescue you. Start to do something about it.
- Go to the poor and pray. You will find God.

ISFJ

Quiet, kind, and conscientious. Can be depended on to follow through. Usually puts the needs of others above their own needs. Stable and practical, they value security and traditions. Well-developed sense of space and function. Rich inner world of observations about people. Extremely perceptive of other's feelings. Interested in serving others.

Prayer, Meditation, Service, Guidance

- You need to meet real needs. Church can sometimes feel superficial and a waste for you.
- You need to get out and get dirty for God.
- You need an emotional component to your spiritual expression and an outworking in reality of any professed spirituality.
- Your growth comes in the struggle to take worship out of the church and let it make a real difference in the world. Don't try to change everyone else – you just get out there and do it.

FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY

ESTP

Friendly, adaptable, action-oriented. “Doers” who are focused on immediate results. Living in the here-and-now, they’re risk-takers who live fast-paced lifestyles. Impatient with long explanations. Extremely loyal to their peers, but not usually respectful of laws and rules if they get in the way of getting things done. Great people skills.

Study, Service, Celebration

- Social spirituality is most attractive to you – poverty programmes, peace movements, demonstrations. Participate in these! You can change the world.
- You need a specific space, and a specific time to pray and study.
- But you don’t respond well to structure and order otherwise.
- You battle with leaps of faith, and most of what you’ve been taught about spiritual growth doesn’t work for you. Don’t let that stop you seeking!
- For you, more than most, spirituality is a life long difficult journey. The good news for you is that spirituality is, in fact, a journey, not a destination. Understand that!!

ISTP

Quiet and reserved, interested in how and why things work. Excellent skills with mechanical things. Risk-takers who live for the moment. Usually interested in and talented at extreme sports. Uncomplicated in their desires. Loyal to their peers and to their internal value systems, but not overly concerned with respecting laws and rules if they get in the way of getting something done. Detached and analytical, they excel at finding solutions to practical problems.

Meditation, Simplicity, Corporate (really difficult)???

- You need a rational spirituality that makes sense to you.
- Make time for private meditation.
- Your approach will be individual. And probably unknown to most other people.
- You will get great value from specific directions and practical, routine work. Try things like visiting the sick, soup kitchens, caring for the poor.
- You will get great value from guidance, especially by an Intuitive Feeler.

ESFP

People-oriented and fun-loving, they make things more fun for others by their enjoyment. Living for the moment, they love new experiences. They dislike theory and impersonal analysis. Interested in serving others. Likely to be the center of attention in social situations. Well-developed common sense and practical ability.

Inward (really difficult)??, Service, Worship, Celebration

- Read the Psalms. Try Psalm 18. God is your Rock and Refuge. Trust in Him.
- You need solitude and security.
- You will get great benefit out of being a religious community.
- You need to work on prayer and spiritual activity. These will be helpful for you.
- You believe things, but circumstances often shake your beliefs and lead to rethinking of your faith. You will grow most with suffering.
- The church is one of the best places for you to find support and structure.

ISFP

Quiet, serious, sensitive and kind. Do not like conflict, and not likely to do things which may generate conflict. Loyal and faithful. Extremely well-developed senses, and aesthetic appreciation for beauty. Not interested in leading or controlling others. Flexible and open-minded. Likely to be original and creative. Enjoy the present moment.

Meditation, Solitude, Confession

- Get involved in activities and missions.
- The emotional component of your spirituality is critical.
- You need time to reflect privately.
- You need a series of steps to spiritual growth, but these must emphasize feelings and emotions, and not just be about thinking.
- You need to work with, and interact with other people. But you must also take time alone and be in nature. Often!
- Try to regularly reflect on your day with someone who shared it with you. Detail the emotions, feelings, interactions and learnings

(by Graeme Codrington)