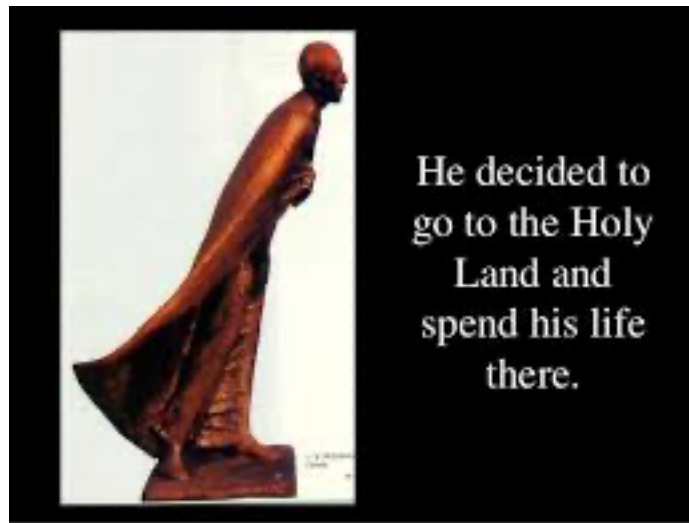


**St Mary's, Inverness**  
The RC Diocese of Aberdeen: SC005122]  
**The Year of St Ignatius**  
**20 MAY 2021 >31 MAY 2022**

**THIRTEENTH REFLECTION : THE HOLY LAND**  
**1 September until 4 October 1523**  
**In the footsteps of Our Lord : a dream is shattered**



**Context :** Ignatius of Loyola characterised his early life in his Autobiography as '**a great and vain desire of winning glory**'. After the life-changing events at Pamplona, his leg broken by a cannon-ball, Ignatius' dreams of military glory and social splendour were also shattered.



After several painful operations he was nursed back to health at the family home by Magdalena, the wife of his brother Martin who was the lord of Loyola. As he lay on his sickbed, Ignatius 'dreamt of the noble deeds he would undertake, the feats of great daring, the romance of winning the lady he admired. This daydreaming brought respite for a time to the bored convalescent, but it soon left him feeling empty and disillusioned. Then, inspired by the only reading material available – The Lives of the Saints - he dreamt of doing great deeds for God, imitating the great saints like Francis and Dominic and walking barefoot to Jerusalem'. When he had recovered sufficiently to walk, he began his journey to Jerusalem to **"kiss the earth where our Lord had *walked*."**

He travelled to the Abbey and Shrine at Montserrat, where he gave away his fine clothes to a poor man. In an all-night vigil before the Black Madonna he hung up his sword and dagger. These significant actions indicated that his old life was over and his new life as a Pilgrim for Christ had begun. After the Life affirming experiences by the River Cardoner at Manresa, when Ignatius had illuminative insights into the presence of Jesus he travelled by way of Barcelona to Rome and thence to Venice where The Pilgrim, by begging and the generosity of the Doge, secured a passage on a ship to the Holy Land.



Extract from Breydenbach's Holy Land & Jerusalem including (l-c): Temples of Solomon, Holy Sepulchre

## **Pilgrimage to the Holy Land :**

Braving the dangers of the war-torn

Mediterranean sea Ignatius and twenty-one other pilgrims, arrived at the port of Jaffa in the Holy Land on 1 Sep 1523. Three days later the pilgrims arrived in Jerusalem. In his Autobiography Ignatius tells us *“When the pilgrim did see the city he experienced great consolation, and all the others affirmed the same, saying that they all felt a joy that did not seem natural. He felt this same devotion on all his visits to the Holy Places.”*

On the 4 Sep 1523, the pilgrims began their sight-seeing from their lodgings at the Hospital of St John.



This was in the Christian quarter of the city near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre:



The **Church of the Holy Sepulchre** in the Old City of Jerusalem, according to traditions dating back to the fourth century, is believed to contain the two holiest sites in Christianity: the site where Jesus was crucified, at the place known as Calvary or Golgotha, and Jesus's empty tomb, where he is believed by Christians

to have been buried and resurrected. The tomb is enclosed by a 19th-century shrine called the Aedicula.

Within the church itself are the last four Stations of the Cross of the Via Dolorosa, being the final stages of the Passion of Jesus. It has been a major place of Christian pilgrimage since the fourth century.

The Pilgrims followed the usual pilgrim routes which were led by the Franciscan guardians of the Holy Places.

- Mass in the Upper Room: Last Supper and Washing of the Disciples' Feet
- Mount Sion
- The Column of the Flagellation where Jesus was scourged
- The Convent of the Dormition of Our Lady [Assumption]
- Prayer Vigil at The Church of the Holy Sepulchre
- Mass at the Chapel of the Resurrection [within the compound of Holy Sepulchre] on the Sunday
- Mass again in the Upper Room (Cenacle)
- The Tomb of Absalom by the Kedron
- The Garden of Olives
- Bethany and the House of Simon the Leper
- Tomb of Lazarus
- The Grotto of Gethsemane
- On the Eighth Day by donkey to Bethlehem for prayers in the Grotto of the Nativity, then a night-long Prayer Vigil at the Basilica, followed by early morning Mass at the Grotto of the Nativity
- Visits were made to Ain Karim, the site of the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth
- Visits to the homes of Caiaphas and Annas [High priests at the trial of Jesus] which were by this time Christian chapels.

- The Franciscan guide, Friar Hugo, showed the pilgrims the cave where King David may have composed the Penitential Psalms that bear his name.
- More night Vigils in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre
- Two days of rest
- On the afternoon of 14 Sep another visit to Bethany, to the House of Zechariah
- Jericho and the River Jordan- some ritual bathing, and drinking of the water
- A visit to the Mount of the Temptations of Jesus was abandoned because of the presence of large numbers of violently anti-Christian Turkish cavalry in the area.
- The Franciscans gave a reception to the Pilgrims when they were given mementoes of the pilgrimage.

During this time Ignatius became convinced that it was his vocation to remain in the Holy Land, ***' He made a firm decision to remain in Jerusalem, constantly visiting the Holy Places. In addition to this devout desire of his, he was also intent on helping souls, and for this purpose he had with him letters of recommendation to the guardian.'***

This well-intentioned dream was shattered by the refusal of the Franciscan Guardians to permit this, The Franciscan Provincial had to consider not only the resources required for his own custody of the Holy Places, but also the safety of Christians. There was a constant danger of abduction, ransom demands and outright violence, sometimes fatal towards Christians. These were delicate balances of tolerance and survival and the Franciscan Provincial had Papal authority to make decisions for the good of the custody. Ignatius accepted the finality of the Franciscan Provincial's decision. Another dream is shattered, but a new future opens out that will involve getting closer to Jesus through the living Gospels in company with others.

Before he left the Holy Land, Ignatius returned to the Mount of Olives to see the place of the Ascension, and the footprints of the Lord.

This may simply be pious legend but it has been pointed out that the interest here 'is not the historical credibility of the legend, but rather what this action of the Pilgrim tells us about his own inner life, his imaginative life. He was in the habit of entering imaginatively into all the various gospel stories and scenes, and, in this way, he made them very concrete and real and immediate to himself. He wanted to be in an intimate relationship with Jesus, and every detail about Jesus was precious to him'.

**Considerations for Reflection :** Clearly Ignatius has changed in many ways, yet the new Pilgrim, despite efforts at humility and self-abasement has come to realise that he is who he is. His earlier excesses in bodily mortifications and penances have given way to a more balanced modification in simple living. His begging while it is an exercise in humility, it is also a means by which others can be involved in his great enterprise to be a Pilgrim for Christ. He clearly made friends easily, the luminosity of his faith, the considered conversational gifts, and the natural manners and accomplishments of his noble birth all served him well. He managed to gain the support of leading citizens, he was furnished with letters of introduction and was given access to people of importance and influence. He was of the family of Loyola, and well connected. It is interesting to see how these advantages can be offered in the service of his new Master, Jesus.

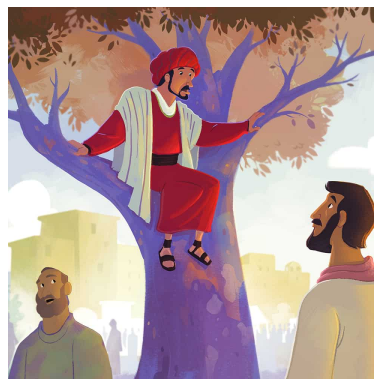
Being close to Jesus was one of the aims of the Holy Land Pilgrimage. We can readily see by looking at the Itinerary how it resonates with Gospel stories and the Life and Achievements of Jesus. Seeing the places, capturing the smell, hearing the sounds, sensing the feeling of the place were important to Ignatius. They become a vital part of his approach to prayer, imaginative and reflective use of the Gospels, putting ourselves into the situation in the life of Jesus.

## We review our day and look forward with Jesus



### Scriptural Reflection : Jesus meets Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

“Jesus was passing through Jericho. There was a chief tax collector there named Zacchaeus, who was rich. Zacchaeus was a little man, and wanted to see Jesus, so he climbed a sycamore tree. Jesus looked up and said, ‘**Hurry down, Zacchaeus, because I must stay in your house today.**’ The people started grumbling because Jesus was going to the home of a sinner. However, Zacchaeus promised to give half his belongings to the poor and pay back four times as much to anyone he had cheated. Jesus concluded by saying ‘**The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.**’”



**A Comment** Sometimes we need a fresh way of looking at Jesus, perhaps thinking imaginatively as St Ignatius invites us to do. Visualise the place, the sounds and

the smells – a dusty street, a shady tree, a crowd of folk milling about, Zacchaeus with a sense of urgency climbs to see Jesus better. In turn Jesus recognises him and invites himself to Zacchaeus' home. What do we hear? What sounds of anger? What sounds of Divine compassion? A life is changed, healing has come to the home of Zacchaeus.

We can imagine, reflect and enter into conversation with Jesus about our lives.

**A Period of Silence** in which we pray with St Ignatius seeking understanding and insight, ever searching, ever finding, always willing. ***"Ask, seek, knock"***

We make an Offering of ourselves in the 'Suscipe', [ a new translation by Fr Daniel Madigan SJ]

*Take hold of me Lord.  
Accept this offering of freedom,  
of memory, of mind, of will.  
These I cling and count as my own.  
All are your gifts, Lord, now I return them.  
They are yours. Do as you will.  
Give me only your free gift of love.  
In this you give all; in this you give all*

### **The Lord's Prayer**



***Jesus Mercy, Mary Pray***

***Praise God Always***