

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

TWENTY-FOURTH REFLECTION
VIVAROLA, VICENZA – A SECOND MANRESA



Ignatius



Vicenza



Diego Lainez



Peter Favre

CONTEXT: The Company of Friends in the Lord who had arrived and gathered in Venice *"Split up so as to help in different hospitals. After two or three months they all went to Rome to obtain the blessing*

for their journey to Jerusalem.” As well as Financial Drafts, to pay for the proposed Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the Companions also brought to Venice from Rome the necessary “Dimissorial Letters” to permit the ordination to the Priesthood of some of the Companions.

On the 24th June 1537 Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier, Diego Lainez, Simon Rodrigues, Nicolas Bobadilla and Jean Cordure were ordained by Bishop Vincenzo Nigusanti.

These were heady days, newly ordained priests, they were ready for the challenges of their Pilgrim Apostolate. Ignatius in the Autobiography very succinctly describes how this initial stage begins to founder:

“Ships were not sailing to the East that year because the Venetians had broken off relationships with the Turks. Seeing that the possibility of sailing was remoter, they dispersed throughout the Veneto region to wait out the year as they agreed, and if there were no sailing after the year had passed, they would go to Rome”.

Ignatius, along with Frs Favre and Lainez went to Vicenza where beyond the walls they found an abandoned monastery in which they settled.

They spent forty days and forty nights in a form of Retreat, **“attending to nothing but their prayers”**.

By now they were joined by Jean Cordure and after a consultation the ten Companions began *an apostolate of evangelical preaching* while they waited for another year and better prospects of a ship to take them to the Holy Land. All University graduates, they decided to begin an apostolate in the University cities of Padua, Ferrar, Bologna and Siena. Preaching, hearing confessions and giving The Spiritual Exercises it must have been quite a spectacle as street preaching was unusual, and the new priests waving their birettas to attract attention caused much talk but they also had some impact- ***“many people were moved with devotion, and abundantly supplied them with all that they materially needed.”***

For Ignatius this was a period of spiritual insight. He likened this period of prayer and preaching to the spiritual consolation that he had experienced at Manresa.

It was at this point that the men decided that their corporate identity was to be ***‘Companions of Jesus’***.

The newly ordained priests, except for Ignatius, had all celebrated their First Masses. Ignatius ***“decided to wait another year before celebrating Mass, preparing himself and praying to our Lady to place her with her Son”***. He wanted to celebrate this Mass in the Holy Land.

The Companions set out for Rome from Vicenza in October 1537. They travelled in three or four groups, Ignatius with Frs Favre and Lainez. This was to be a very special cross-country journey, filled with graces. They travelled by way of Siena approaching Rome by the Via Cassia. Eight miles from the City of Rome, at a village called La Storta, Ignatius experienced a vision of radical significance. This was to be profoundly determining for Ignatius and the Companions of Jesus.



Some thoughts to ponder as fellow Pilgrims :

- The men are drawn into *companionship* – *breaking bread together*, sharing their lives as they seek their daily bread, sharing the Word which sustains life. How 'companionable' are we able to be?
- Jesus is at the centre of this *companionship* : the Word who becomes flesh and lives among us full of grace and truth. Our Daily Bread of Prayer, Sacrament, Fellowship is gracious. How aware are we of being nourished by Truth?
- The Companions of Jesus, Ignatius' group, are resilient, accepting disappointment and fruition of plans by waiting in Prayer and being moved to new action. Are we flexible in our attitudes? Acceptance of opposition or restrictions is not always easy- do we chafe and mope, or channel our energies into constructive alternatives?
- The Companions are zestful, eager to share their Faith and their Prayers, and to invite others to travel with Jesus. How much support do we need to give to each other so that we too can evangelise by word and deed?
- The Pilgrim Way is full of frustrations, hopes dashed, and yet horizons are expanded and new opportunities of service can open out, if we are imaginative and yet centred in our prayers. When we say "***Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven***", are we open to its radical challenge?

Keeping up with the Pilgrim Journey of Ignatius Loyola :

Ignatius became determined to follow Jesus with a committed intensity after his leg had been shattered at Pamplona in 1521. Life-saving surgery restored him to health, but at some cost and his walking was impaired. At his family home in Loyola he decided to abandon military and courtly life and so travelled to the Shrine of the Black Madonna at Montserrat where he gave away his fashionable clothes and surrendered his sword and military accoutrements. After that he travelled to the nearby town of Manresa where he experienced utterly transformative events as he sat by the banks of the River Cardoner. These *illuminations* confirmed his intentions to follow Jesus. Ignatius experienced vivid spiritual insights, which he referred to as having '*received such a lucidity in understanding*' that other experiences would never add up to that experience of divine affirmation. His path of 'irrevocable dedication' took him to Barcelona, Venice, the Holy Land, Genoa, Barcelona, Alcalá, Salamanca, Paris, Bruges and Antwerp in the Spanish Netherlands, London, Paris and then after a holiday at home in the mountainous Basque country to Venice, from there to Vicenza and thence to Rome.

- Ignatius has an irrepressible and 'irrevocable dedication' to a mission- to be a pilgrim soldier for Christ.

- Ignatius attracted generous support for all his endeavours, finding financial backers, and through his companionable conversations he leads others to Jesus.
- Having spent time beforehand in Alcala and Salamanca universities Ignatius spent a further seven years in Paris. He had been educated in some of the most prestigious academic colleges in Europe, and also through his travels he had been in contact with the leading minds of his day. His interests in Scripture, the human person, memory and imagination all find a place in his methodology- how he engages people to lead them to God.
- From Paris to Venice by a circuitous route his Life's work is taking shape -soon he is to be joined again by his 'Companions'
- In Venice the 'Companions -Friends in the Lord' are formed.
- In Venice Ignatius and others are ordained to the Priesthood.
- From Venice to Vicenza, intense spiritual formation, and a ministry of Apostolic preaching, reconciling and promoting the Spiritual Exercises
- After a year of waiting on the Lord the Companions travel to Rome and at ***La Storta*** a new vision shapes the future for Ignatius and his Companions

Suscipe

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.

You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.

Prayer for Generosity

Eternal Word, only begotten Son of God,
Teach me true generosity,
Teach me to serve you as you deserve,
To give without counting the cost,
To fight heedless of wounds,
To labour without seeking rest,
To sacrifice myself without thought of any reward,
Save the knowledge that I have done your will.

Amen.

WWe review our day and look forward with Jesus

Daily Examen : Looking with quiet sincerity and simplicity of heart at the day:

What comes to mind about today? Think and pray and see the strengths and weaknesses. Recognise the smiles and the tears and be at peace : *Jesus Mercy, Mary Pray*

Five Daily R's (a daily examen)

- R Relish the moments that went well and all of the gifts you have today.
- R Request the Holy Spirit lead you through your review of the day.
- R Review your day.
- R Repent of any mistakes or failures.
- R Resolve, in concrete ways, to live tomorrow well.

Source:

Reimagining the Ignatian Examen: Fresh Ways to Pray From Your Day
by Fr. Mark Thibodeaux, SJ



¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the market-place day by day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? ²⁰ You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean." ²¹ (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

²² Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious.²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

²⁴ "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and

everything else.²⁶ From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.²⁷ God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.²⁸ 'For in him we live and move and have our being.^[a] As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'^[b]

²⁹ "Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill.³⁰ In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."

³² When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject."³³ At that, Paul left the Council.³⁴ Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.



Scriptural Reflection : Apostolic Preaching

- We recall the Companions, with Ignatius, preaching to people in the open air, in university cities, among the learned and the sceptical
- Paul's preaching in the *agora* the market -place challenges thinking people, sceptics and those who are hostile
- We all share in the Apostolic proclamation of the gospel, wherever we are : by words, by deeds, by way of life, by prayers.

A thought for reflection and prayer :

"Lord, you see into my heart. A pure heart create in me. Take away my heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh, so that I may become as compassionate as you are".

A Period of Silence in which we pray with St Ignatius seeking understanding and insight, ever searching, ever finding, always willing. Walking with him we travel in our minds along the same roads and perhaps enter places previously visited. We can immerse ourselves in this man's pilgrimage. This is an exercise in imaginative reflection. It is exemplary and encouraging as he always walks as a Companion of Jesus.

"For those who love, nothing is too difficult, especially when it is done for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ignatius Loyola

The Lord's Prayer

Jesus Mercy, Mary Pray



Praise God Always