

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

TWENTY-THIRD REFLECTION
VENICE

Context:



Ignatius set-out for Venice after Christmas 1535 and finally arrived there at the end of the year. This was to be another period of theological consolidation, a period of prayer, of giving the Spiritual Exercise, and inevitably another period of testing when once again Ignatius had to defend himself following persecution and suffering. He writes of this in the Autobiography: *“the pilgrim suffered another persecution while in Venice, with many saying that his effigy had been burned in Spain*

and in Paris. This affair reached such a point that he was brought to trial, and a sentence, favourable to the pilgrim, was given."

Ignatius had found lodging with Andrea Lippomani, a poor and learned priest with an excellent library. Ignatius continued his theological studies and engaged in spiritual conversations with the clergy and lay people. He gave 'The Spiritual Exercises' to those that he considered ready for the personal, interior journey with Jesus. Ignatius' approach in all of these activities was to care for each individual in the circumstances of his or her life - the Latin phrase '*cura personalis*' captures the Ignatian approach "care of the whole person."

Ignatius devoted himself to this ministry for a year.

In the Autobiography we read :

"The more illustrious persons to whom he gave them were Master Pietro Contarini and Master Gasparo de Dotti, and a Spaniard whose name was Rozas. There was another Spaniard named Bachelor Hoces....although he had some inclination to make The Exercises, still, he did not do anything about it....someone had told him, he was afraid some villainous doctrine would be taught him in the Exercises...he was singularly helped by the Exercises, and at the end he decided to follow the Pilgrim's manner of life."



Clearly a pattern is developing which attracts more people to The Way. It is interesting how much help and good-will was generated. Master Pietro Contarini who undertook 'The Exercises' the following year became Bishop of Paphos in Cyprus. With his relative Cardinal Gaspar Contarini he gave considerable support to the young Society of Jesus. The Bachelor Hoces was from the south of Spain, Malaga. He was in Venice as he had recently returned from the Holy Land. He had doubts as well as some animosity towards Ignatius because evil things were being said about Ignatius. Overcoming these rumours and scruples 'The Exercises' were a revelation to Hoces, who became a dedicated follower of Ignatius. Sadly he died a few years later in March 1538, probably it has been suggested because he was involved in caring for the victims of the Plague.

Ignatius having had a vision of the ascension of Diego Hoces is seen kneeling in a chapel at Montecasino.



Bachelor Hoces' doubts about Ignatius had been fuelled by falsely planted rumours that Ignatius and his companions were fleeing from persecution in Spain and France, and that effigies of them had been ritually burnt, really accusing and condemning them as heretics. In the Autobiography Ignatius wrote : "***This affair reached such a point that he [himself] was brought to trial, and a sentence favourable to the Pilgrim was given.***"

These spare words reveal great human dramas- terrible accusations were met with the ignominy and tension of being on trial before the Court of the Papal Legate. However witness statements were all favourable and on 13 Oct 1537 Ignatius was acquitted of all charges. The Court judgement said that the accusations against Ignatius were "*frivolous,*

vain and false...and that Ignatius....enjoyed a good reputation and that ever since his coming to Venice he had taught true doctrine and had given good example”.

Earlier in that year Ignatius had been joined on 8 January 1537 by the party of 'Friends in the Lord' led by Fr Peter Favre. This was a cause of some celebration as well as having arrived early they also had increased in number. Fr Favre introduced three new 'companions' :

- (1) Fr Claude Jay was another Savoyard who had attended school with Peter Favre, and who had been ordained a priest in 1528. He was teaching in a school when Fr Peter Favre visited him in 1553 and encouraged him to undertake further studies at the University of Paris. He made 'The Exercises' under Fr Favre and was duly admitted to the 'company' on 15 Aug 1535 the first anniversary of the initial founders' consecration- in the same Chapel at Montmartre.

When the Society was formed, as a Jesuit, Fr Claude Jay worked in Italy, Germany and he attended the Council of Trent [1545-1547]. He was at the Diet of Augsburg in 1550 and while there Fr Claude Jay interested several of the German rulers, especially Ferdinand I, King of the Romans, in promoting Catholic reform in their territories. Moved by Jay's words and aware of the success the Jesuits had in Ingolstadt, Ferdinand invited the Jesuits to Vienna. King Ferdinand wrote to Pope Julius III, requesting that Fr Claude Jay and other

Jesuit theologians should be sent to the University of Vienna. This led to the reinstatement of a Faculty of Catholic Theology.

Fr Claude Jay subsequently became the Rector of the University in Vienna where he died in 1551.



(2) Fr Paschase Broet, a priest who had been ordained in Amiens made 'The Spiritual Exercises' with Fr Peter Favre and two years after the first companions he made his vows at St Denis, Montmartre on 15 Aug 1536.

Fr Broet began evangelising in Siena and after the Society of Jesus was confirmed as a religious order, on 27 Sep 1540, he accompanied the Scripture scholar Alfonso Salmeron as a Papal Legate to Ireland

in 1541. After a period of nine years working as a Jesuit in Italy, Fr Broet returned to Paris in 1552 as the Provincial. Paris was plague-stricken at this time, and Fr Broet died in 1562 as a consequence of his labours among the sick.

(3) The next recruit brought along by Fr Favre was another Frenchman, Jean Cordure. As a twenty-six year old Cordure entered the University of Paris and soon found Fr Favre who became his Spiritual Director. Fr Favre gave him 'The Exercises' with the consequence that he too made his vows with Fr Broet in 1536. Cordure, a professed Jesuit died in Rome on 29 Aug 1541.

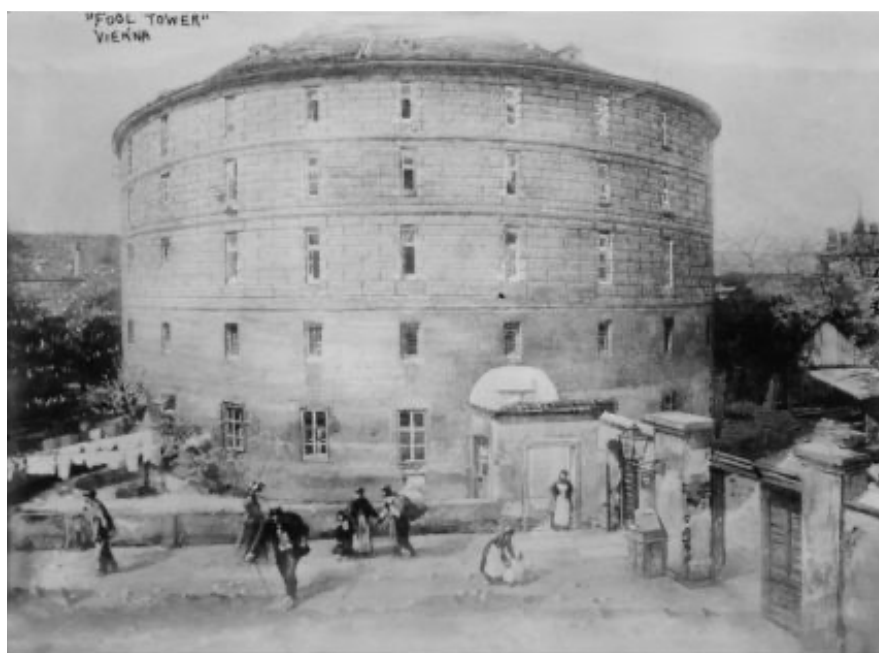
Ignatius had also brought to the Company three new members, Diego de Hoces [Bachelor Hoces from Malaga], and the two Eguia brothers, Diego and Esteban. The brothers who had known Ignatius at Alcala had recently returned from the Holy Land.

The Company of Friends in the Lord now 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."***

The "Companions' Hoces, Rodrigues, Salmeron and two others served the hospital 'Santi Giovanni e Paulo,'



Favre, Xavier, Lainez and two others were at the 'Hospital for the Incurables'.



This was demanding work, the priest companions were preparing people for death, hearing confessions, while the others worked in the wards, sweeping floors, bed-making, washing the sick, cleaning bed-pans. The dead were buried in graves dug by the Companions.

This work was undertaken for two months before the Companions. Left for Rome.

Ignatius had spent much of his time in the Library preparing for Ordination to the Priesthood, and attending to some disputatious matters.

The Autobiography tells us : ***“The companions returned from Rome with drafts of two hundred or three hundred escudos, which had been given them as alms for their passage to Jerusalem.....later when they were unable to go to Jerusalem, they returned the drafts to those who had given them.”***

In addition to the Financial Drafts, the Companions brought from Rome “Dimissorial Letters” for the ordination of some of the Companions to the Priesthood.

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

This is the end of the beginning, thereafter the Companions undertake new work, and are eventually formed into the Society of Jesus.



Some comments :

- Ignatius is attractive, people are drawn to him, then as now. His persevering Faith, his unwavering Hope and his generous Love draw others to him, and through him to Jesus.
- Ignatius encourages discussion, inviting us to open up with our 'Friends in the Lord' and share our insights of Faith
- Ignatius tries to promote peace among disputing groups. He is an advocate for Catholic reform.
- Ignatius he is forthright in defending himself when people speak all manner of evil against him.
- Ignatius studies continually – a life-long task. He and his followers become involved in education at every level.

Keeping up with the Pilgrim Journey of Ignatius Loyola :

- Ignatius determined to follow Jesus with a committed intensity when his leg was shattered at Pamplona in 1521. After life-saving surgery he was restored to health and enjoyed convalescence at his family home at Loyola. He abandoned military and courtly life and 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 Cardener which confirmed his intentions to follow Jesus. Ignatius experienced illuminative 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.
- Ignatius is driven by his insights, and his 'irrevocable dedication' to the mission he has a mission to accomplish- to be a pilgrim soldier for Christ.

- Ignatius has never been short of supporters wherever he travelled. He attracted generous financial backers, and through his companionable conversations he leads others to Jesus.
- After seven years in Paris in some of the most prestigious academic colleges in Europe and through his travels also he was 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 he consolidates his 'Companions -Friends in the Lord', and in time they become a religious order.
- In Venice Ignatius and others are ordained to the Priesthood.

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.

We 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

How do I want to enter tomorrow?



EXAMEN

Give thanks

Pray for light

Review the day

Look at what's wrong

Make a resolution for the day to come

Scriptural Reflection : St 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."

Comment : As a chief tax collector in Jericho and a wealthy man Zacchaeus was especially unpopular. He realised that his life needed to change. He had heard about Jesus and he was determined to see him. For him that meant climbing up the branches of a sycamore tree.

By inviting himself to Zacchaeus' house, Jesus showed his acceptance of someone who was regarded as a sinner and treated as an outcast. The crowd did not approve of Jesus' controversial action.

Zacchaeus expressed a real desire to turn his life around, true conversion, by offering half of his belongings to the poor and paying back four times as much to anyone whom he had cheated. This reflects the Old Testament law about repayment, reparation for dishonesty.

Jesus' final comment emphasises the salvation he brings for all people, but those who are sinners are most urgently in need of this message.

Some comments 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