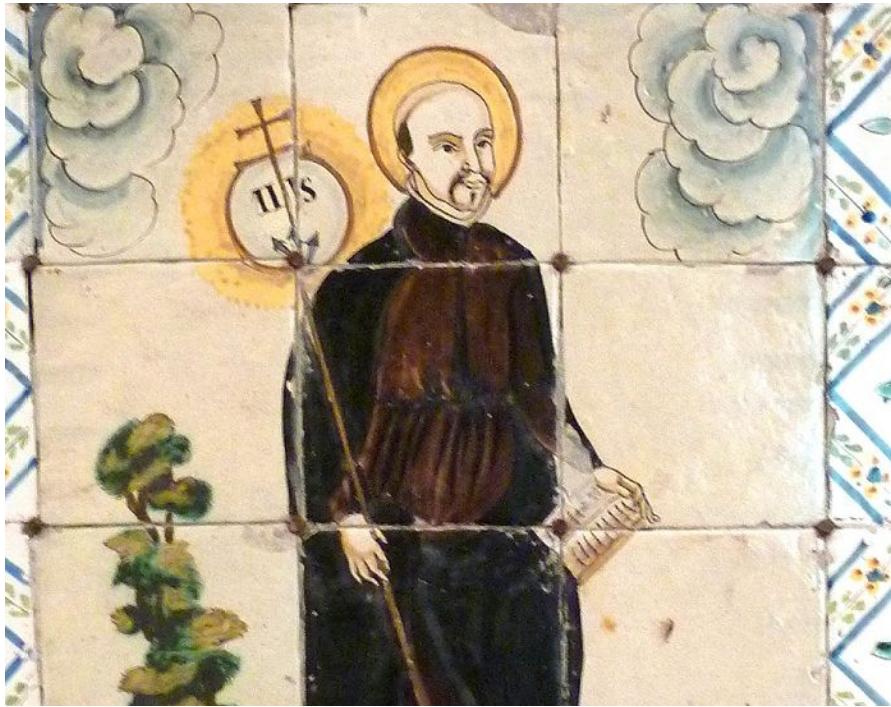


St Mary's, Inverness
The RC Diocese of Aberdeen: SC005122]
The Year of St Ignatius
20 MAY 2021 >31 JULY 2022

THIRTY-FIRST REFLECTION
ROME : THE PARTING OF FRIENDS

CONTEXT:



The Pilgrim



La Storta

Since November 1537, after the experience at La Storta when Ignatius knew in himself that God would be favourable to him in Rome, he and the Companions settled in Rome. Before the Companions were confirmed as a religious order in

1540 they had already begun several good works: catechising, giving the

Spiritual Exercises, and even setting out for foreign mission.

Ignatius settled into the routine of being the Superior General of the new religious order the Society of Jesus.



Ignatius the General

The Constitutions : While always retaining some duties in Catechising the young and the poor a major part of Ignatius' main work, writing away in his small bed-sit, was in formulating the Constitutions. This was a prayerful activity, begun at Mass and then after due reflection he addressed the real issues of the life and the way of proceeding of the Society. He was assisted in this by Fr Paul Codure. This massive task was to take several years, only being concluded in March 1552, by which time Codure was dead, and Ignatius toiled on with help from his secretary

Fr Juan Alfonso de Polanco. While Ignatius was thinking about and writing the Constitutions he wrote in his *'Spiritual Journey'* that he had received many hidden graces. These notes and the *'Spiritual Journey'* are mostly lost but their existence is corroborated by the recollections of Fr Goncalves de Camara.

The Constitutions were a gift of God through Ignatius to the Society of Jesus being the fruits of prayerful meditation and recollection.



In the Autobiography Ignatius has written of himself “ ***The method he followed when writing the Constitutions was to celebrate Mass every day and present the point under consideration to God and to pray over it. He always had tears when he prayed or celebrated Mass.***”



The Constitutions were duly promulgated in Sicily, Italy, Spain, Portugal and the Society was established and stabilised in these lands under Provincial Superiors.

Departing Friends :

The first to leave for the Missions were Fr Samao Rodrigues [although he returned to Italy] and Francis Xavier for India. Ignatius was hoping to recall Francis Xavier but alas was not to see his friend Xavier again as he died in 1552.

Fr Jean Codure, another of the original Montmartre foundation members, who was most helpful to Ignatius in the compilation of the Constitutions died in 1541.



The great loss to Ignatius was that of Fr Peter Fabre [Pierre Favre] who died in 1546. Favre had been one of 'the Paris three' [Ignatius, Favre and Xavier], the trusted Companion to whom Ignatius entrusted the Parisian Companions when, for a period, he returned home to Loyola in April 1535. It was Fr Favre who had received the vows at Montmartre in August of 1534. Fr Favre was amiable, deeply respected and held in great affection by the Companions.

There was another sad blow to Ignatius when Francis Xavier died on 3 Dec 1552. His friend from Paris, and one of the most indefatigable missionaries ever, he was deeply imbued with the cords of affection that bound the brotherhood of priests. News of his death reached Ignatius two years later.

Even while writing the Constitutions the work of establishing provinces was on-going.

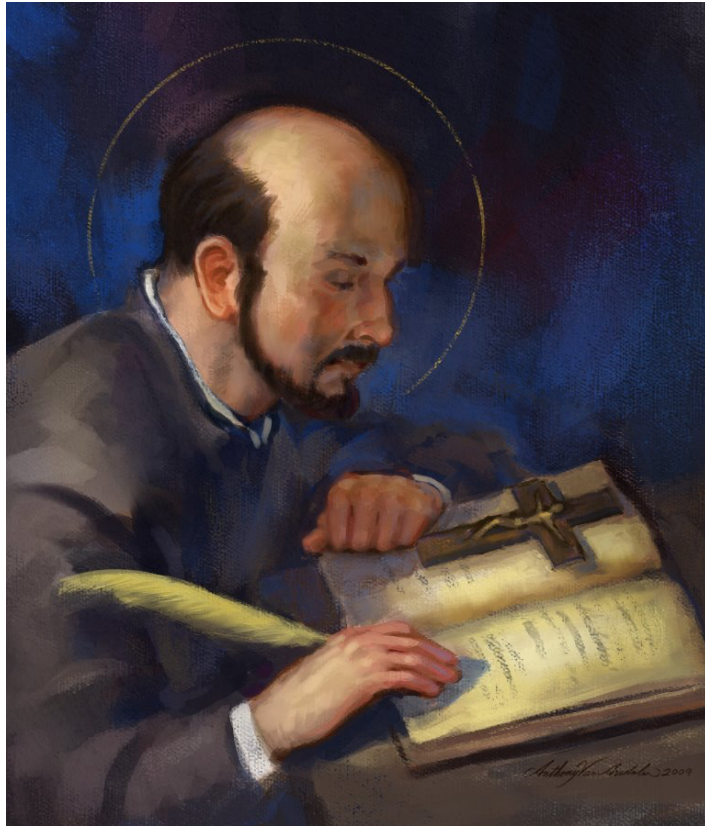
Ignatius continued to direct the mission and the life of his companions. By June 1556 Germany was established as a Province with Fr Peter Canisius as the Provincial.

Busy at his small desk, Ignatius directed the affairs of the Society of Jesus with affectionate letters, encouraging advice and always seeking a balanced approach to dealing with people, in conversation and in devotional and liturgical practice. The schools and colleges being founded with their emphasis on 'the care of the whole person' were spring-boards for taking the Ignatian Way to Jesus to people throughout Europe, the East and the New World of the Americas.

Towards the end of August 1553 Ignatius began dictating his Autobiography, reflecting on 'The Pilgrim Years' from 1521 until 1541. On being elected General, the 'pilgrim' becomes the director of many pilgrimages as the Society grows and new Companions are formed in the Ignatian Way to Jesus. The following year planning for the new Church of the Gesu began under the renowned sculptor, artist and architect Michaelangelo Buonarrotti, but this was suspended and another architect, Vignola took over, work beginning in 1568.

At the beginning of 1556 Ignatius, aware that he is in declining health, asked the priests in Rome to choose a Vicar-general to assist him in his work as General of the Society. Fr Geronimo Nadal was confirmed in this post. He had been directed in the Exercices by Francis Xavier, and become a committed Companion.





Even while increasingly unwell he maintained a voluminous correspondence, writing about seven hundred letters in the last few months of his life, writing his last letter on 23 July 1556. He died eight days later on 31 July.

His death was a shock to everyone and everywhere there was '*sadness without pain.*' He died alone in his room, as one witness said, 'he died in the common way'

As one biographer has written :“ As he arrived at the end of his way, Ignatius was leaving behind in his wake a contagious enthusiasm, a pattern of life, a treasury of hopes, the certainty that “*God had guided him and had accomplished all.*”

Thoughts to Consider:

- The Pilgrimage of Life : from our awareness of stirrings of faith through the support of others, being formed as adult Catholics, we help each other in our Way to God. Thanksgiving, Amen.
- Keeping a 'Spiritual Journal' : are there stages in life when this has been useful? Writing down insights and recollection of graces can be useful in helping to settle to pray.

- The task of letter writing : a burden, a duty, a joy- however we look at this we should ponder the effects of a card, letter or message to others. Do we always get the 'balance' right? Encouragement is a pattern in many of Ignatius' letters.

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.

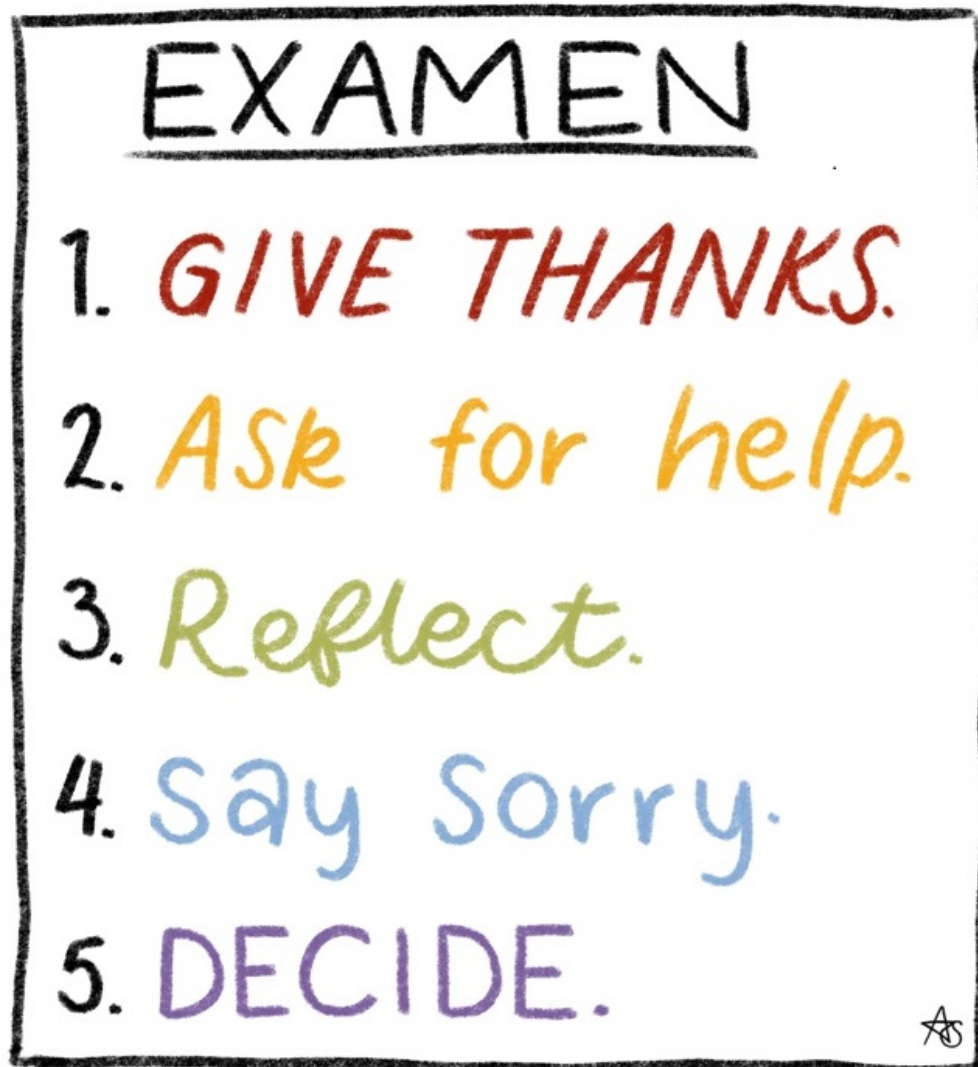
Everything is yours; do with it what you will.

Give me only your love and your grace,

that is enough for me.

THE EXAMINATION OF OUR LIVES [THE EXAMEN]

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



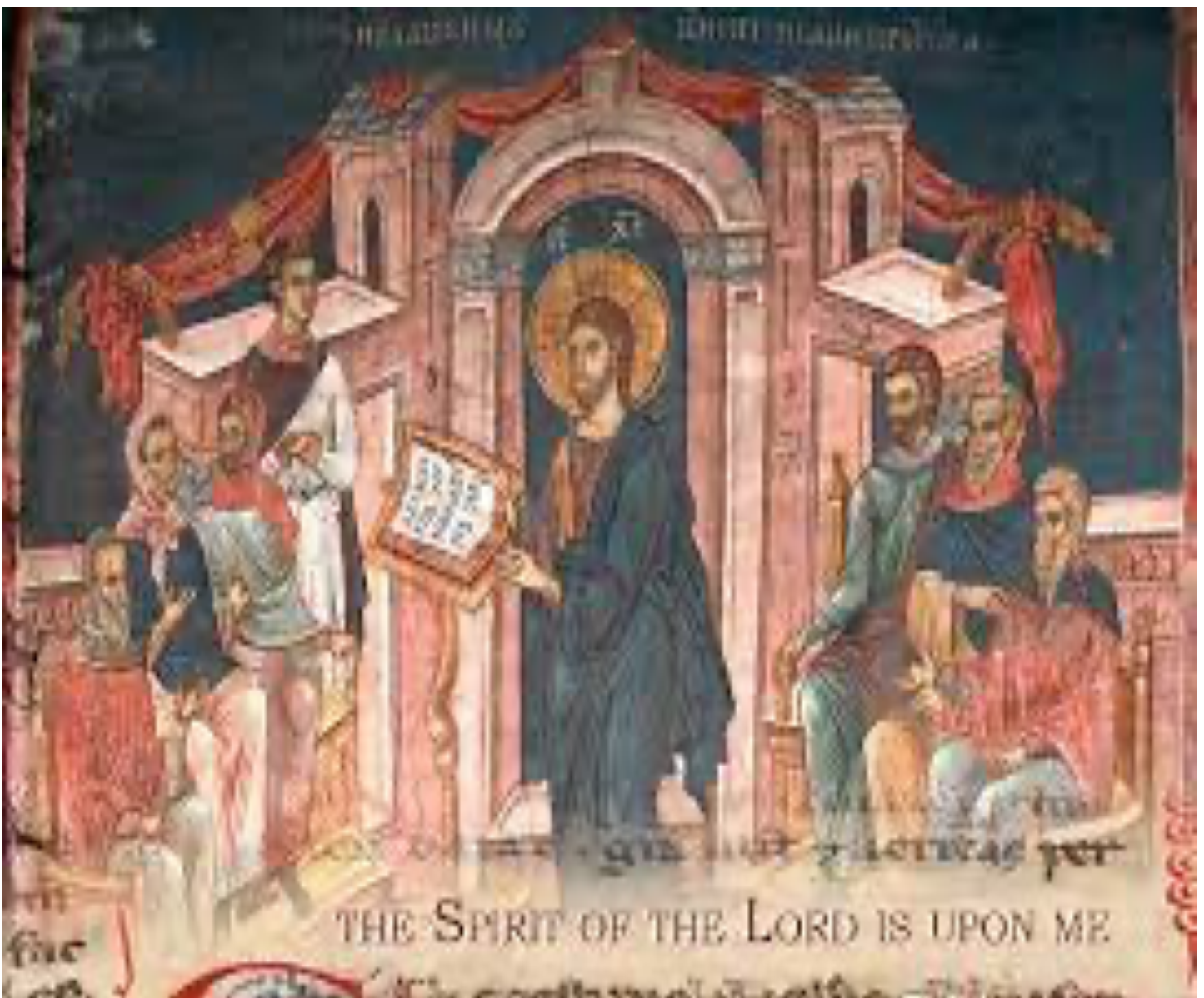
Introduction to the Scriptural Reflection :

Preparation :

- Short acts of devotion : placing ourselves in the presence of God.
- Opening up conversation with God by expressing our sorrow for sin and our gratitude for our blessings
- Asking God to receive our lives, our hopes and prayers

- Reading the Passage of Scripture slowly saying the words silently
- We place ourselves into the scene of the Scripture : what we see, what we hear, what it feels like, what we smell, what we might taste

Scriptural Reflection : Meditation : chewing over the words of the passage, being part of the story, engaging conversationally with oneself about how the story strikes one. How do I feel? What do I think?



Passage for Meditation :

Luke 4:16-30 [NIV]

¹⁶ Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

*¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,*

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. ²¹ He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

²² All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

²³ Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself!' And you will tell me, 'Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'"

Thoughts for Scriptural Reflection:

- Are we there? Sitting, listening, eyes on Jesus
- Are we feeling the mood of the others? How am I reacting to what Jesus has said?
- If Jesus is the anointed one {THE MESSIAH = CHRIST} what does it mean for me"? 'God is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself', says St Paul. What is 'reconciliation to me?'
- What kind of conversation might we have about the experience of living through this Gospel story? Does it have a trajectory through the tradition of the Church into our lives as today's Catholics?

A Period of Silence in which we pray with St Ignatius, talking conversationally to God as Father : seeking understanding and insight, ever searching, ever finding, always willing, and Loving.

"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