

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

**THIRTY-FIFTH REFLECTION**

**THE MISSION TO SOUTH AMERICA: BRAZIL: 1549**

**Context :** The journey of Ignatius Loyola from being a Spanish courtier and Gentleman-at-Arms to an ardent disciple of Jesus began at the Siege of Pamplona in 1521 when his right leg was shattered and the other injured. These devastating wounds were the beginning of a new life.



After recovery at home in Loyola Ignatius made a vigil at the Shrine of Our Lady at Montserrat where he abandoned the life of privilege. From there he travelled to Manresa where by the banks of the River Cardoner Ignatius received such gracious illumination that encouraged and sustained him in his resolve to be close to Jesus. Ignatius the Pilgrim made his way to Barcelona, Alcalá, Salamanca and Paris in pursuit of

education to equip him to be a servant of Jesus, his Master and Lord. During this journey he attracted others to encounters with God by using and sharing his own experiences and insights, which would in time be gathered into 'The Spiritual Exercises'. The route from Paris, by way of Venice to Rome was marked by an increasing sense of 'consecration', beginning in 1554 by the Exercises being given to Peter Favre, then to Diego Lainez and Alfonso Salmeron, and later to Simon Rodrigues and Nicolas Bobadilla.



On the Feast of the Assumption, 15 Aug 1534 the first Companions made their vows at Montmartre. A short time afterwards Francis Xavier was also taken through the Exercises by Ignatius.

The journey to Rome was marked by increasing numbers of men wanting to be a Companion of Jesus with Ignatius. When the Holy Father Pope Paul III approved the 'Society of Jesus' as a religious order Ignatius was elected and ratified as the First General.

The Missionary priorities of Ignatius were aided by the requests from the Portuguese King, John III to send missionaries to the Portuguese

Empire. Francis Xavier was the first to be despatched by Ignatius on the Mission to India, Malacca, Japan and China.

The New World, the Americas was to be the next Missionary enterprise.



**Emmanuel Nobrega, S.J.** was an outstanding missionary in 1549 having crossed the Atlantic Ocean from Lisbon he landed at 'Bahia' [bay] where he first met the indigenous people. He is an important figure in the early days of Brazil's history. Upon his arrival in the New World, he told his five other Jesuit companions : "***This land is our enterprise***". The daring and optimism of the Brazilian Mission were printed on the sails of his ship: *Unus non sufficit orbis* ("***One world is not big enough***").

Portuguese colonials had arrived in the bay area in 1501 and were developing plantations in the hinterland. The Portuguese King, John III, wanted the Jesuits to be part of the overseas Empire.



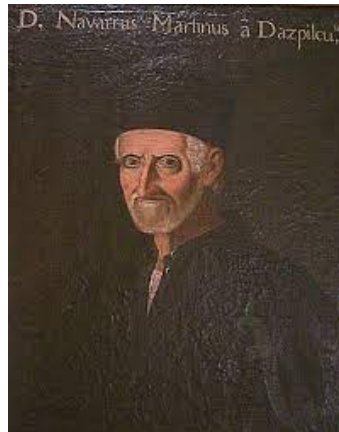
The relationships between the colonists and the Jesuit missionaries were not always easy, indeed at times far from peaceful.

The first concern of Fr Nobrega was the protection and conversion of the native peoples. He established a school in 1553 on the site that later became the city of Sao Paulo [San Paulo]. Confrontation with the colonial planters arose in the early days over their practice of gathering slaves from among the native populations.

Fr Nobrega was appointed by Ignatius Loyola to be the first Provincial of the Society of Jesus in Brazil (1553–59). Towards the end of his life he became Provincial again in 1570.

It was the Jesuit custom, following the counsel of Ignatius, that the Companions should keep in touch with each other and with Ignatius

himself by letters. From the correspondence of the early missionaries much has been learned about the Missions themselves.



In August 1549, not long after his arrival, Fr Manuel da Norbega wrote a letter to his former teacher at the University of Coimbra, the distinguished scholar Fr Martin de Azpilcueta Navarro, [1492-1586] giving him news about his nephew, Fr Joao de Azpilcueta Navarro.



Fr Joao De Azpilcueta was a remarkable linguist who devised a way of speaking about God to the native peoples. In the letter Fr Norbega wrote : ***“These Gentiles worship nothing in the world nor know of God at all; the best we can expect from them is hearing them call***

***'Tupane'- the 'thunder', meaning by that a 'divine thing'. And so "Father Tupane' is the only convenient word we can find to make God known to them'"***

The Professor in Coimbra would have been glad to learn that his nephew Fr Joao Azpilcueta ***' was always busy in the villages, where he spends the night and takes meals as he finds it easier to preach in the evening, as this is the moment natives gather to get some rest; he has already learnt their language, so he manages to make himself understood by them.'***



Fr Joao had other talents- he was a gifted musician. As early as 1550 Fr Joao was using native melodies with Portuguese and Tupi texts to proclaim the Christian Gospel through the medium of music. [Tupi was the local language which the Jesuits had standardised]. This was mainly directed towards young people. In 1551 there were adverse reactions to this, and the Jesuits themselves were divided about this, some being more cautious about using pagan music. After 1553 European musical

forms were adapted for local use. The "sung catechism" became a tried and tested method of teaching Christian doctrine.



The Jesuit Missions in Brazil were rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ and preaching the Gospel. Holy Mass was central to community life. Within these communities there was consistent teaching and assiduous care in assisting the indigenous people in the development of their agriculture and markets. These endeavours included establishing cattle ranches and creating and maintaining plantations for growing sugar and cotton.

The Pope had given the Society of Jesus a privileged status whereby the Jesuit Missions in Brazil enjoyed freedom from the control of the Colonial governors. Their profits, which the Jesuits used for the welfare of the native communities, caused resentment among local landowners and the colonial officials.

In the next two hundred years these tensions increased alarmingly and caused such friction that in 1750 the Portuguese King Jose 1, appointed Sebastiano Jose de Carvalho e Mello as his Secretary of State. [Later he became the Marquis de Pombal]. His plans for the consolidation of Brazil

as a Portuguese Crown Colony led to the expulsion of the Society of Jesus from the Portuguese Empire. That is another story for another day.

### **Thoughts to Consider:**

- Finding a way to speak about God is not always easy, even for people who speak the same language. How do we think of God?
- Creator/Father/Son/Saviour/ Friend/Spirit/ Christ – all terms which have a rich hinterland of meaning. By bringing these 'titles/names' of God into our prayers do we deepen our understanding of Jesus?
- Often people relate to the power of rhythm and music, hymns very often convey Christian teaching to us in a manageable way. Have we some favourite hymns that we can dwell on, letting the insights develop in our reflective minds?

### **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

### 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



## *Preparation for Scriptural Reflection :*

- *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.*

## **Passage for Spiritual Reflection : The Parable of the Sower**

### **Mark 4. 1-9 [ESV]**

***Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land.<sup>2</sup> And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them:<sup>3</sup> "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow.<sup>4</sup> And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it.<sup>5</sup> Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil.<sup>6</sup> And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.<sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.<sup>8</sup> And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and***

*increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”<sup>9</sup> And he said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”*



## **Points for Consideration**

- The Parable of the Sower is about GROWTH : spreading the Good News of the Kingdom of God.
- The seed that falls into 'good soil' bears fruit. Are we productive of good works as our faith grows?
- Are there any 'weeds' in our lives that inhibit growth?
- Jesus uses parables, stories that tease our minds into active thought. Do we take time sufficiently to explore and turn over the

parables in our minds? There is always a surplus of meaning in the parables- we need to discover it.

- **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*