

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

**THIRTY-SEVENTH REFLECTION**  
**THE COUNTER-REFORMATION & THE COUNCIL OF TRENT**



Ignatius, the General, directing the Universal Mission,  
from his room at the Jesuit Curia in Rome

**Missions:** After the Holy Father Pope Paul III had approved the 'Society of Jesus' Ignatius was elected and ratified as the First General. He began to plan and organise the universal Mission.

The Companions of the Society of Jesus were decisive participants in the Catholic Counter-Reformation fostered by the Council of Trent (1545–1563).

The **Council of Trent** was held between 1545 and 1563 in Trent in what is now northern Italy. It met in twenty-five meetings and was overseen by three Popes. The Protestant Reformation which had begun in Germany was making



in-roads throughout Europe. Catholic rulers, bishops and theologians took steps to limit and to challenge the spread of Protestantism. Reform was already in place throughout Catholic Europe, but it was local and piecemeal. It needed a strategic vision. The Council of Trent was convened to address the issues that needed evaluation and reform, and to argue against what was seen as Protestant error. This whole process has been termed the 'Counter Reformation'. Ignatius Loyola and his companions were caught up in this great movement.

## **THE FIRST PERIOD OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT**

The initiator of the Council of Trent was Pope Paul III. He was born on 29 Feb 1468 into the Farnese family. He became Pope in 1527 at a time of great political difficulty and rising religious discontent. Pope Paul III encouraged Ignatius Loyola and his companions, and in 1539 gave approval for 'The Formula of the Institute' and the following year he formally confirmed the Society of Jesus – "Regimini militantis Ecclesiae"



Ignatius when elected as Superior General placed great importance on overseas missions : to the East [India, Japan and China], and in the West to the 'New World' of the Americas.

Another major priority, a missionary imperative, was to defend the Faith in Europe. Ignatius was a reformer at the head of a new order of well-educated, reforming priests, versed in the new

humanism, and utterly dedicated to the Catholic Church, in obedience to the Holy Father. Pope Paul III called on Ignatius for assistance with the Council of Trent which had opened on 13 Dec 1545.

Ignatius appointed Diego Laínez, Alfonso Salmerón, and Pierre Favre. Sadly, the much-loved Fr Pierre Favre died of fever before he could begin. However Frs Lainez and Salmeron arrived in Trent on 18 May 1546, and joined Fr Claude Jay SJ who had been there from the beginning.



Ignatius aware that acting as theological consultants and advisers required specific skills, and always alert for the need to pursue a pastoral ministry, sent Lainez, Salmeron and Jay an **“Instruction for the Sojourn in Trent”**. It is a sensitive memorandum on how best to deal with people, and an encouragement to continue the ministry of preaching, visiting the sick, teaching children, giving the Spiritual Exercises to receptive people, and reconciling individuals through Confession. It is quite long, but it is an interesting document to read.

## ***Instruction for the Sojourn at Trent***

### ***I.H.S. [ signifies "Jesus" ]                      Dealing with Others***

*1. Since associating and dealing with many people for the salvation and spiritual progress of souls can be very profitable with God's help so, on the other hand, if we are not on our guard and helped by God's grace, such association can be the occasion of great loss to ourselves and sometimes to everyone concerned. In keeping with our profession, we cannot withdraw from such association and, therefore, the more prepared we are to proceed according to a common plan, the more likely we are to succeed in our Lord. In the following notes, which may be modified or amplified according to need, we may be able to offer some assistance.*

*2. Be slow to speak. Be considerate and kind, especially when it comes to deciding on matters under discussion, or about to be discussed in the council.*

*3. Be slow to speak, and only after having first listened quietly, so that you may understand the meaning, leanings, and wishes of those who do speak. Thus, you will better know when to speak and when to be silent.*

*4. When these or other matters are under discussion, I should consider the reasons on both sides without showing any attachment to my own opinion and try to avoid bringing dissatisfaction to anyone.*

*5. I should not cite anyone as supporting my opinion, especially if they are persons of importance, unless this has been thoroughly arranged beforehand. And I would deal with everyone on an equal basis, never taking sides with anyone.*

*6. If the matters being discussed are of such a nature that you cannot or ought not to be silent, then give your opinion with the greatest possible humility and sincerity, and always end with the words 'salvo meliori iudicio'—with due respect for a better opinion.*



*7. Finally, if some point of human or divine science is under discussion and I have something to say, it will be of great help to forget about my own leisure or lack of time—that is, my own convenience. I should rather accommodate myself to the convenience of him with whom I am to deal so that I may influence him to God's greater glory.*

These considerations of Ignatius are practical and prudential 'ways of proceeding' based on his own experience of affairs whether as a courtier, a soldier, then as a perceptive psychologist drawing on the insights and illuminations of his relationship with God- Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The manual "The Imitation of Christ", by Thomas a Kempis, was influential in Ignatius' thought and devotion. Its emphasis on listening, humility and restraint can be seen in Ignatius' advice to those entering the debating chamber.

The Second Part concerns pastoral matters. He uses the term 'ours', meaning members of the Society of Jesus.

### ***Helping Souls***

*1. While at Trent Ours should try to live together in some respectable district. And what they should especially seek to accomplish for God's greater glory is to preach, hear confessions, lecture, instruct children, give good example, visit the poor in the hospitals, and exhort the neighbour according to the talents each is conscious of possessing, so as to move as many as possible to prayer and devotion. Pray and lead others to pray particularly to God our Lord, beseeching His Divine Majesty to deign to send forth His Holy Spirit on all who take part in the discussions of that august gathering, so that the Holy Spirit may descend in greater abundance with His grace and gifts upon the council.*

2. *In your sermons do not touch on subjects on which Catholics and Protestants are at variance, but simply exhort your audience to virtue and to devotions approved by the Church. Awaken in souls a thorough knowledge of themselves and a love of their Creator and Lord. Speak frequently of the council and always end your sermons, as we have said, with a prayer for the council.*

3. *In lecturing follow the same rules as you do in preaching, and try to enkindle in souls a love of their Creator and Lord, explaining the meaning of the passage read, and have your hearers pray as has been indicated.*

4. *When you hear confessions remember to tell your penitents the same that you have said in public. Let the penance consist of prayers for the council.*

5. *In giving the Exercises and in other conversations, remember that you are equivalently speaking in public. Recall that, in general, only the exercises of the first week should be given to everyone, unless you are dealing with very special persons who are prepared to arrange their lives according to the manner of the elections. Such persons should not be allowed to make any vows, either during the Exercises or at their end; nor should they bind themselves in any other way, especially at the beginning. Later on, if time allows, they might do so, but always with moderation, and only if the Exercises are given in their entirety. Prayers for the council should also be said.*

6. *You should teach boys at some appropriate time, according to an arrangement that is suitable and which may vary in different places. Begin with the basic rudiments and explain them in keeping with the needs of your audience. When you end your instruction recite some prayers for the council.*

7. *Visit the hospitals at some convenient hour during the day, always taking your health into consideration. Hear the confessions of the poor and console them, and even take them some little gift if you can. Have them pray,*

*as I have suggested when speaking of hearing confessions. If you are at least three in number, each one should take his turn visiting the poor, a day at a time, twice a week.*

*8. Exhort those with whom you come into contact to frequent confession, Communion, or the celebration of Mass. Have them make the Exercises and perform other works of piety; also encourage them to pray for the council.*

*9. Here also, as in determining the matters to be discussed, it will be better to be slow to speak and to speak little, as I have said. But on the other hand, if you wish to urge souls to make progress in the spiritual life, it will be better to speak at length, with order, and with kindness and love.*

In these nine paragraphs, Ignatius is aware that the needs of the Council of Trent are important to the Jesuit Fathers. It is anticipated that these matters will be at the back of their minds even when engaged in pastoral ministry, preaching, teaching and hearing confessions. Ignatius is concerned for the welfare of the Fathers and for the sensitive effectiveness of their pastoral ministry. Visiting the sick and giving support to the poor are works of charity and mercy that are central to the lived-Gospel that is inherent in Ignatius' spirituality.

He develops his care for the fathers in a personal way :

### ***Some Self-Helps***

*Spend an hour at night when each of you can share with the others what you have done that day and discuss your plans for the following day.*

*We should agree on past and future matters by vote, or in some other way.*

*On one night, let one of you ask the others to correct him in what he may have done amiss, and he who is corrected should make no answer unless he is asked to explain the matter about which he has been corrected. On another night, another will do the same. Thus each one in turn, so that all can be helped unto greater charity and to greater influence in all things.*

*Make your resolutions in the morning and twice during the day make the examen.*

*This order should begin within five days of your arrival at Trent. Amen.*

This "Instruction" to his earliest Companions is surely a sign of the thoughtful and tender style of leadership that attracted so many men to follow Ignatius and the companions into the Society of Jesus.

## **THE COUNCIL OF TRENT**

After some initial disputes and difficulties the Council finally began at Trent in 1545. The council held some twenty-five meetings, with the three main sessions occurring in 1545–7, 1551–2, and 1562–3. The prolonged sessions, and long delays between them, meant that those attending changed over the course of the whole Council. It was a comparably small: the attendance at the opening session attracted only thirty-four leaders, and the largest meeting of the Third session had only two hundred and twenty five.

Pope Paul III initiated the Council gave oversight to the first eight sessions (1545–47).



The Jesuit fathers Salmeron and Lainez were hugely influential working together as a team. The Council deliberations were under the care of Cardinal Cervini [who later became Pope Marcellus II] and it was he who arranged that Fr Salmeron would introduce the subject for discussion on each topic, setting out the Catholic doctrine. After the general discussions, which were free-ranging, it was arranged that Fr Lainez would sum-up the discussion, correct any errors that may have been aired, all in an eirenic way. This was particularly important when discussing the question of 'Justification' where it was considered that the Lutherans were in error.

Lainez refuted the thinking of the saintly and well-intentioned Jerome Seripando who attempted a combination of Catholic and Lutheran ideas about 'Justification'. In a sense the differences seem stark as Lutherans maintain that salvation comes to human beings by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone ; whereas Catholics believe that faith must be accompanied by good works for salvation to be achieved, following the teaching of the Apostle James. Luther misunderstood the Letter of James believing that 'works' referred to religious rites or acts, whereas 'works' in Catholic understanding refer to ways of living for others with loving-kindness that shows 'faith in action'.

The contribution of Fr Diego Lainez was so acceptable to the Council Fathers that they incorporated his texts word for word into the Acts of the Council, a unique honour. On 13 January 1547, by unanimous vote, the Council of Trent's 'Decree on Justification' was passed unanimously.



Another Jesuit, Fr Peter Canisius, in 1547 attended several sessions of the Council of Trent. He was later assigned to implement the decrees of the Council. The great missionary and teaching ministry which Fr Peter Canisius undertook so generously was his mission to Germany. He taught in several universities and was instrumental in establishing many colleges and seminaries. He wrote an innovative Catechism that explained the Catholic faith in a way that ordinary people could understand.

This Catechism and his ardent and eloquent preaching were important elements in the Counter Reformation.

In April 1547, Fr Diego Lainez went with the Council to Bologna, where he spoke on Penance and Extreme Unction. Due to adverse political conditions the Council was prorogued it was to be some four years before the Council met again.

## **THE SECOND PERIOD OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT**



Pope Julius III reconvened the Council.

Cardinal Giovanni de Monte was a distinguished canon-lawyer and diplomat who on the death of Pope Paul III succeeded him as Pope Julius III.

He was favourably disposed towards Ignatius and the Jesuits. He ratified them confirming the order in 1550. Through the Papal Bull *Dum*

*sollicita* of August 1552, he founded the German College in Rome for the education of German speaking Jesuits.

Julius III sent Cardinal Reginald Pole to England in 1553 restoring the Catholic religion during the reign of Queen Mary.

At the beginning of his pontificate Julius wanted to bring about reform in the Catholic Church. He reconvened the Council of Trent in 1551. These were difficult days politically with rivalries between the great powers, France and the Austrians. When the Fathers of the Council met for the Second series of meetings at Trent on 1 May 1551 Lainez and Salmerón were present as representative theological consultants of Pope Julius III.

On the insistence of the Emperor Charles V some Protestant representatives were invited to attend. The Protestants came with two demands:

- i. All bishops should be relieved from an oath of obedience to the Papacy.
- ii. The authority of the councils should be made superior to the Papacy.

These presuppositions were not acceptable to Catholics.

At the opening sessions of the Council the first to speak were Frs Salmeron and Lainez. They introduced the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist and the sacrificial nature of the Mass.

Lainez's arguments on the Eucharist led to the important Thirteenth session, when on 11th October the Decree on the Sacrament of the

Eucharist was promulgated. Soon afterwards they began to prepare for the Council's consideration of Penance and Extreme Unction. They presented their papers on 20 October. Fr Laynez was troubled by ill-health during this period, but he recovered to address the Council again on 7 December 1551 with a magisterial exposition, three hours long, on the subject of the Mass as 'Sacrifice'.

The Second term of the Council was short-lived due to political pressures and again it was suspended in April 1552.

However the contribution of the Society of Jesus theologians, notably Frs Salmeron and Lainez had been significant.

The Second term of the Council of Trent affirmed the Catholic practices of Pilgrimages and Penance. In this period of the Council it issued decrees on the Jurisdiction of Bishops, reform and the discipline of Catholic clergy.

Importantly the Catholic understanding of the Mass expressed in the doctrine of Transubstantiation was affirmed. In this doctrine Catholic Faith understands that there is a conversion of the substance of the Eucharistic elements into the body and blood of Christ at consecration and only the appearances of bread and wine remain. The consecrated elements of bread and wine are in their reality the Sacred Body and the Precious Blood of Jesus.

### **THE THIRD PERIOD OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT**

The Third Period of the Council of Trent was opened on 18 January 1562. This was some six years after the death of Ignatius Loyola. Following a period of difficulty the Society of Jesus held a General

Congregation at which Diego Laynez was elected to be the second Superior General of the Society of Jesus.

Fr Lainez was committed to the continuation of the Council of Trent.

By this time Pius IV was Pope.



Giovanni Medici, a member of the powerful Milanese branch of the extensive Medici family had been a canon lawyer before he was ordained and subsequently consecrated as archbishop of Ragusa in 1547. He became a Cardinal-priest in 1549.

Cardinal Giovanni Medici was elected pope on 25 December 1559, as Pius IV.

He was a keen reformer and he issued a Bull of Convocation on 29 November 1560.

The opening session of the Third Term of The Council of Trent began on 18 Jan 1562. With Cardinal Charles Borromeo, his nephew, as his chief adviser, Pius' conciliatory attitude calmed much opposition. Borromeo was to become an outstanding reforming Archbishop of Milan, and noted for his pastoral charity.

Charles Borromeo was well acquainted with the early Jesuits and shared their concerns for the education of the clergy and the pastoral support of the poor.



Fr Diego Laynez, with the added authority of being the Jesuit General, was especially effective during his participation in the Council.

During the third period of the Council Lainez made several important contributions :

- i. He argued against the French theory that general councils are superior to the Pope. He defended the central role of the papacy against those bishops who wanted to extend their authority at the expense of that of the Pope.
- ii. Lainez argued that the power of the bishop was received through the mediation of the Pope and not directly from God (20 October 1562)
- iii. The education and formation of priests and reform of clerical life were well established Ignatian and Jesuit practices that were brought into fruitful consideration at Trent.
- iv. Lainez in August 1562 defended the practice of distributing Communion under only one species, the consecrated Host.

The reforms of the Council of Trent gradually restored the pastoral efficiency of the Catholic Church. It was a triumph of moderate yet traditional orthodoxy.

The Council was dissolved on 4 Dec 1563. Pope Pius IV confirmed its decrees and definitions in his bull *Benedictus Deus* (26 January 1564). On 3 November 1563, he published a summary of doctrine generally known as the *Professio Fidei Tridentina* ("Tridentine Profession of the Faith"). The profession of this was obligatory for all Catholic bishops. In 1564 he made Borromeo cardinal priest, designating him chief reformer of the Curia and head of the Consulta, thus making him



Secretary of State. Under the direction of Borromeo, the Catechism was completed some months after Pius' death.

Pius IV did not live to see the conclusion of the legal enactment of the Counter-Reformation.

The consequences of the Council were also significant with regard to the Church's liturgy and practices. In 1565, a year after the Council finished its work, Pius IV issued the Tridentine Creed (after *Tridentum*, Trent's Latin name) and his successor Pius V then issued the Roman Catechism and revisions of the Breviary and Missal. These, in turn, led to the codification of the Tridentine Mass, which remained the Church's primary form of the Mass for the next four hundred years.

### **Points for Consideration:**

- From the gathering of first companions with Ignatius the spirituality of the Exercises in which there is conversion of life, companionship with Jesus in a Common Life of prayer and loving-kindness, has begun to have an impact on the whole Church in Mission and in defining integrity of faith. We share a Common Life in the Body of Christ – the community of the baptised. How do we reconcile the broken Church?
- Faith and good works are integral to living as a Catholic- how do we measure up to the pastoral imperatives?
- The unity of the Church in teaching, in the sacraments and in liturgical expression are important in transmitting the Faith. Are we aware of the tensions of living creatively and sensitively with diversity?

# 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



## 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.

### **Scriptural reflection:**

#### *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.*

*Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand*

*<sup>30</sup> The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."*

*<sup>32</sup> So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.<sup>33</sup> But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. <sup>34</sup> When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.*

*<sup>35</sup> By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late."<sup>36</sup> Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."*

*<sup>37</sup> But he answered, "You give them something to eat."*

*They said to him, "That would take more than half a year's wages<sup>[a]</sup>! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"*

*<sup>38</sup> "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see."*

*When they found out, they said, "Five—and two fish."*

*<sup>39</sup> Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup> So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. <sup>41</sup> Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup> They all ate and were satisfied, <sup>43</sup> and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. <sup>44</sup> The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.*



### **Points to ponder:**

- The hunger for the authentic teaching of Jesus
- The need for 'shepherds' – the call to ministry
- The order of the feeding : in groups/taking the elements/giving thanks/ orderly distribution/the 'divine largesse'
- Seeing connections with the Shape of the Liturgy of the Mass



**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***