

St Mary's, Inverness

The RC Diocese of Aberdeen: SC005122]

The Year of St Ignatius

20 MAY 2021 >31 JULY 2022

THIRTY-NINTH REFLECTION

Ignatius and the *'magis'*



Ignatius engaged in conversation:
heart to heart.

Ignatius was enriched by insights into his own psychology, his feelings about the life-changing experiences at Pamplona and thereafter, as discussed in the Thirty-Eighth Reflection. His own feelings, his prayerful reflections over the years matured so that he became a means of grace for others searching for personal integrity in the way of Jesus. 'The Spiritual Exercises' of Ignatius Loyola is a treasure-trove of inspiration

and guidance. This manual of insights and instruction for those assisting others in the Way took shape gradually, through use and further reflection.

It is recalled that Ignatius engaged in a prayerful way, in personal conversations with those whom he met at Barcelona, Alcala and Salamanca. People were attracted to Ignatius wanting to join him in the Pilgrimage with Jesus. Talking together was the way forward.

'Ignatian Conversation' is a useful template for every conversation.

- Be slow to speak
- Listen attentively
- Seek the truth in what others are saying
- Disagree humbly, respectfully, and thoughtfully
- Allow the conversation the time it needs

Ignatian Spirituality encourages us to care for the whole person giving them a truly listening ear, an attentive mind and willing heart.

In the Gospel tradition we find Jesus listening to people and entering into conversations with them. It is from such encounters of listening and responding sensitively that conversions occur. Ignatius follows the pattern of friendly engagement that he saw in Jesus.

Jesus spent time meeting people in many different circumstances, chatting by a well, eating with men and women from diverse backgrounds. Frequently we find Jesus discussing the life of faith and prayer. The words of Jesus and their context shows us that Jesus encouraged friendship, where hearts and minds are opened to new possibilities.



Jesus in conversation with Nicodemus, one of the Jewish leaders who was interested in Jesus and his message about the Kingdom of God.

In such conversations, the particular circumstances of those with whom we are speaking is important as we seek to form relationships that are open to fruitful growth. We are each 'particular' and 'personal' -that understanding is essential as we grow in dialogue with each other. We too are part of a whole, 'Our Common Life in the Body of Christ'. On that secure premise we are free to attract and build-up the Body of faithful followers of Jesus.

A Christian's conversation is 'spiritual' : it is far removed from idle chatter, vainglorious gossip and the kind of verbal exchanges that demean rather than lift-up. Ignatian conversation is gracious, it is kindly and it should bring glory to God as well as promoting friendship.

On this topic '**bringing glory to God**' there is an Ignatian concept that is worth exploring – the term **MAGIS**. [pronounced 'mahjis'].



Magis is the Latin word for 'greater' / 'more'. In its Ignatian context it derives from the Latin phrase which translates as '***for the greater glory of God***'.

This indicates that a fundamental attitude for the Christian is '***to live with God forever***'. ***Magis*** is about a desire and an attitude that seeks to do 'more' for God-in-Christ, and seeing Christ in the service of others. ***Magis*** is a call to sincerity, and integrity. It is a desire for whole-hearted devotion and service within a relationship with the Jesus of the gospels.

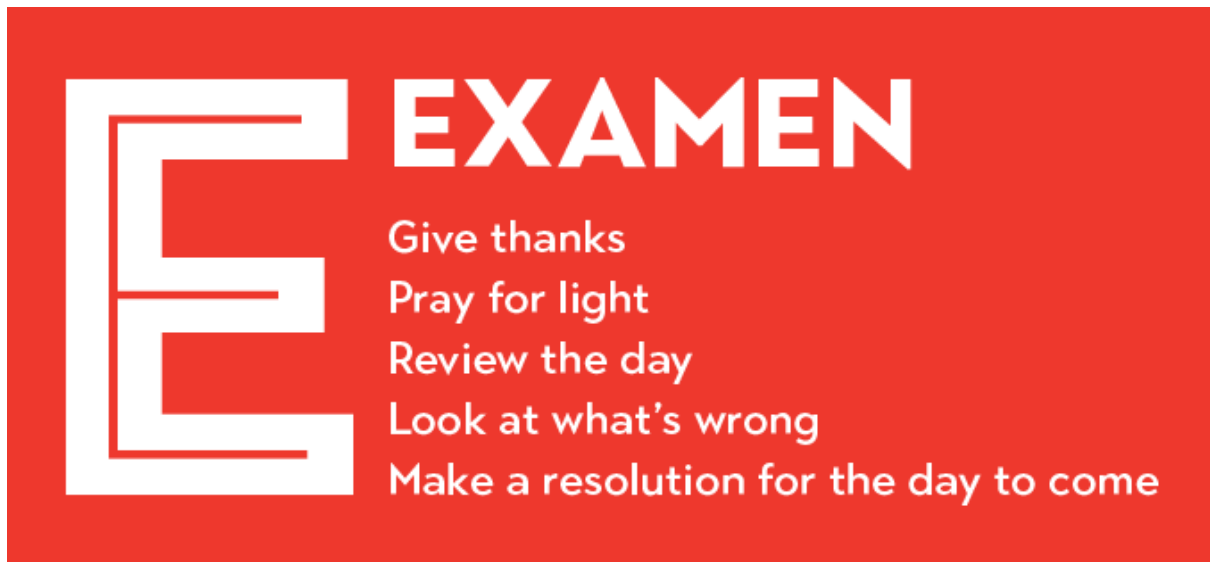
Gospel-centred fidelity to the Life and the Way of Jesus brings us into Truth by the grace of the Spirit. This enlivening Spirit interacts with us and those whom we meet. It could be seen as "***The Go-between God***". This is the attractive title of a book by Anglican Bishop John V Taylor which draws out the implications of being together 'in Christ', as the Holy Spirit goes between us, and among us, encouraging, sustaining and equipping us for service and mission.



Thoughts to Ponder:

- Conversation, talking with other people is a dialogue, a two-way process of listening and responding- considering Ignatian insights do we need to reconsider our approaches?
- Given the concept of '*magis*' is there more that we can reasonably do to serve God in one another? Do our considerations move us to conversation with Jesus in prayer, and seeing Him in others who are in need of our prayer? Planned and sustained intercession?
- The Holy Spirit soars like a bird and leaps like tongues of fire in the illustration. These supportive images remind us of the Holy Spirit, like a dove, at the Baptism of Jesus and, also the Holy Spirit strengthening and empowering the Church at Pentecost. We are all anointed at Baptism and Confirmation with the Holy Spirit – recalling these gracious moments do we need to enter into further prayer from the depths of our hearts, where the Holy Spirit radiates powerful grace to which we should seek to respond?

Looking at ourselves:



Scriptural Reflection

Preparation for Scriptural Reflection :

- *We place ourselves in the presence of God – short prayer of devotion: 'My Lord, and my God'*
- *We open up to God, expressing our sorrow for sin and our gratitude for our blessings*
- *We ask God to receive our lives, our hopes, our best intentions and our prayers*
- *We begin to read the passage of Scripture slowly. It helps to say the words, even silently.*
- *We think imaginatively trying to see ourselves in the scene of the Scripture : what we see, what we hear, what it feels like, what we smell, what we might taste.*

19 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ² A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. ³ He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

⁵ When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." ⁶ So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

⁷ All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner."

⁸ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

⁹ Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."



Some points for reflection:

- Jesus recognises Zacchaeus' difficulties : his physical problems, his desire to meet Jesus, his social standing- he was despised.
- There are several different verbal engagements: Jesus to Zacchaeus and Zacchaeus' response to Jesus- invitation and generosity.
- Murmuring among the crowd complaining about the loving- kindness of Jesus that meets people where they are and offers healing.
- The words of Jesus and the words of Zacchaeus become words of encouragement to us : are we a welcoming Catholic community that encourages the 'good and the bad alike', people from all walks of life to come to the Fellowship of the Holy Eucharist?
- Do we engage with others and our pastors on our attitudes to the teaching of the Church and people's need of forgiveness and the Eucharist?

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.

Prayer of St. Ignatius (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 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 Lord's Prayer

Jesus Mercy, Mary Pray.

Thank God Always

