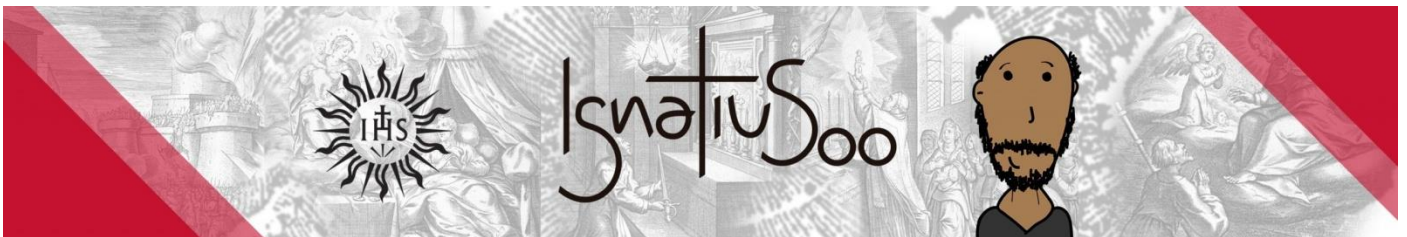


**St Mary's, Inverness**  
The RC Diocese of Aberdeen: SC005122  
**The Year of St Ignatius**  
20 MAY 2021 >31 JULY 2022

**SIXTY -THIRD IGNATIAN REFLECTION**  
**THE YEAR OF ST IGNATIUS LOYOLA : OVERVIEW AND REVIEW**



**A Prayer for the Ignatian Year**

**God of all people,**

***You were there when the cannonball shattered the leg of St. Ignatius, shattered his dreams, and shattered what he assumed his life would be. Even in a moment of pain and uncertainty, doubt and darkness, you spoke to Ignatius a word of peace and light. You showed him the path to you and the person he might become.***

***We may not be soldiers, standing in the path of a literal cannonball. And yet, we've been hit all the same. Cannonballs shatter our own hopes and dreams and expectations.***

***Like Ignatius, may we hear the compassionate voice of your Son in the aftermath of these cannonball blasts. May we seek the face of Christ even when our dreams are shattered. May we turn and follow Jesus with the courage it takes to change and grow.***

*As we journey through this Ignatian Year, may we be shown the path to you, God of all people, and live out our vocation, becoming the person you have invited us to be. Give us the grace to work for reconciliation every day: with you, with others and with your creation. Open our eyes so we might see all things new in Christ. Amen.*

At end of this Year we may begin this Reflection with the Examen, looking back over the year and giving thanks to God and seeing how we may do better in our future undertakings.

## THE FLOW OF THE EXAMEN

**Relish** the moments

**Request** the Spirit to lead me

**Review** my day

**Repent** of mistakes

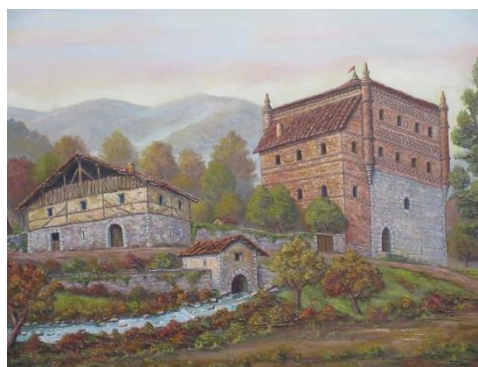
**Resolve** to live tomorrow anew

## **A Retrospective and Review :**

Remembering Five-hundred Years from the Life-changing events at the Battle of Pamplona in May 1521 to 31 July 2022, the anniversary of St Ignatius' death, those who have been keeping the Ignatian Year from 20 May 21 to 31 July 22 have been on a journey. The sixty-two Ignatian Reflections have followed Inigo Lopez in his Pilgrimage Journey as found in his Autobiography. The Life and death of Ignatius Loyola, as he became known after his conversion, has been a seed-ground for prayer. It has been informed by Ignatius' own insights and reflections as we have received them from him through the Autobiography, his own notes, letters and The Spiritual Exercises which were his working notes that became a handbook for Spiritual direction. As well as Ignatius, the observations, and reflections of contemporaries such as Fr Peter Faber and Fr Francis Xavier have been part of the Ignatian Year Journey.

The Life of Ignatius was a journey of friendship, conversation, and a fervent yet stable desire to know Jesus and to imitate Him in radical life-choices.

The key features of that Journey can be summarised:



At Loyola in 1491 Inigo was born into a Basque family of the lesser

nobility, slightly indigent gentry with a keen sense of its place in Spanish society.



The young Inigo Lopez served as a page in a courtly household, and then as a courtier himself in the Court of the Duke of Najera who was the Viceroy of Navarre. It was in the service of the Viceroy that Inigo was given military command at the Siege of Pamplona in May 1521. The garrison at Pamplona was outnumbered and outgunned. It fell to the French on 24 May 1521.

The wounded Inigo, his leg shattered by a cannonball was given rudimentary battle-field surgery by the French.



Some weeks later he was back at his family home, Loyola Castle, where he underwent further surgery to straighten his leg. He had a prolonged convalescence there in the care of his sister-in-law. It was thought that he might die, and on 29 June 1521 he was given the Last Rights. However, he rallied, and in the loving care of his family he began a recovery.



His physical health improved, and so also did his mental and spiritual health. He began to read a Life of Christ, and the Lives of the Saints. He became aware that these books stirred in him

desires to follow Jesus, and to imitate the saints. Whereas books of adventure never left him feeling fulfilled, the consequence of his new reading, and his reflections left him with positive and life-affirming ideas. They gave him an inner sense of consolation and a desire to go further, the idea of *'the more'* was developing within him.

By now Inigo Lopez was aware that his vain-glorious aspirations for worldly renown and social status had been shattered by the Pamplona experience, and the subsequent healing and reflection. His somewhat notional Catholicism was now radically challenged by the process of conversion, and a journey that then took him to Montserrat, to the Benedictine Abbey and the Shrine of the Black Madonna.



At the Shrine of the Virgin of Montserrat Inigo Lopez divested himself of his military accoutrements, surrendered his sword, and dressed himself in the coarse habit of a Pilgrim.

Now 'The Pilgrim', as Ignatius refers to himself in the Autobiography, travelled to nearby Manresa, a town standing above the River Cardoner.

He arrived there on 25 March 1522 spending nearly a year there, during which he recovered his stability, giving-up excessive austerities, and devoting himself to prayer and penance under the care of a wise confessor. In August/September of



that year Ignatius recorded that he received intense and profound insights, 'illuminations', in his relationship with God. He had an interior transformation, what was in effect a 'conversion' experience, and thereafter he embraced a conversational relationship with Jesus. The Gospels, the Life, Teaching and Achievements of Jesus through His Suffering, Death and Resurrection were to shape the life of Ignatius. The fruits of his own experiences, the insights, and the methods of his own prayerful relationship with Jesus as his Master and Lord were gradually brought together as *The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola*.

Using the techniques of these Spiritual Exercises, with his genius for friendship, Ignatius attracted others to discipleship, walking with him as a Pilgrim. The attractiveness of Ignatius with his warm, and encouraging conversational style, drew many people into a new movement, a reformed Catholic lifestyle.

From Manresa to Barcelona in February 1523 Ignatius then set out for his pilgrimage to the Holy Land.



This was quite a journey, travelling to Genoa, thence to Rome, arriving on Palm Sunday. Obtaining the necessary permissions, the Pilgrim Ignatius set out for Venice where, by way of Cyprus he arrived at Jaffa on 25 August 1523. Just over a week

later Ignatius achieves his ambition and arrives at Jerusalem where he

visits 'The Holy Places'. His pilgrimage completed it was clear that staying-on in the Holy Land was not an option, so Ignatius returned to Barcelona.

After a year studying Latin with schoolboys the intrepid Ignatius took the next step of his educational journey travelling to the University of Alcalá. While there Ignatius was supported by many friends, who wanted to learn more about God. After a few brushes with the Inquisition who were always looking for heresy among those who were reforming, or who claimed special insight, Ignatius moved on to the prestigious University of Salamanca. Again, while there he was soon surrounded by those who were eager to learn from this former courtier, a gentleman-at-arms who had been converted to a living Faith. Again, by his use of the Spiritual Exercises Ignatius drew men and women to Jesus and changed lives. The Inquisition were again alert to his activities, and Ignatius spent some time in jail, but he was eventually acquitted, and free to continue his missionary tasks. However, by this time he realised that he needed further and more extensive study. This was to take him to the University of Paris. He arrived there on 2 Feb 1528 and began his studies at the College de Montaigu.

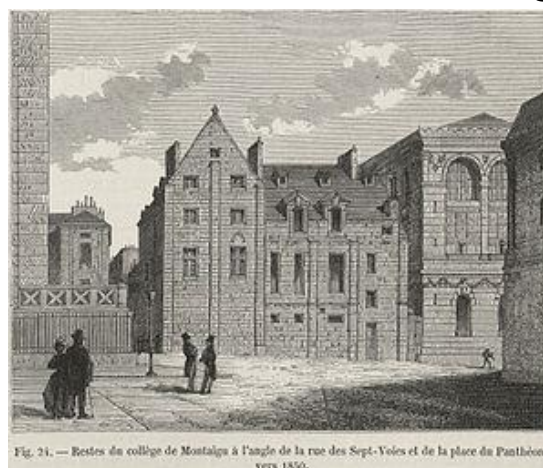


Fig. 21. — Restes du collège de Montaigu à l'angle de la rue des Sept-Voies et de la place du Panthéon, vers 1850.

Economic necessity compelled Ignatius to leave Paris to travel to the

Spanish Netherlands to seek alms from the rich Spanish merchants. From Flanders to Rouen in France during the Lent of 1529 and after, Ignatius was garnering funds for his studies. This enabled him to change his college, moving to St Barbe to study philosophy. This was the beginning of the collegiality that saw the friendship of Ignatius, with fellow students Peter Fabre and Francis Xavier blossom. Again, the Ignatian Exercises were instrumental in drawing all three men into a Companionship with Jesus. Others were attracted, by the conversation and by the exemplary behaviour of the three friends. In the space of a few years, during which Ignatius graduated as a Bachelor of Arts and undertook further study in theology with the Dominicans, five others joined the Companions.



At the Chapel of St Denis on the Feast of the Assumption, 15 Aug 1534 six of the Companions Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier, Simon Rodrigues, Diego Lainez, Alfonso Salmeron, Nicolas Bobadilla, made vows of

being together as pilgrims to the seventh companion, Fr Peter Fabre who was the only one who was a priest. After this the seven Companions spent the day *“with great joy of soul”*. As Companions they were aware of *‘a new devotion’* swelling in their hearts, which bound them together in loving affection, eating and praying together. Their idea was that they should make a journey to Jerusalem, and if that were not to be possible they would *“offer themselves to the Vicar of*



***Christ so that he might use them in whatever way he deemed most to the glory of God and the good of souls”.***

From this time onward a new dynamic attracts more men to undertake the Spiritual Exercises with Ignatius, or Peter Faber who was by this time a sought-after guide in spiritual matters.

In the course of 1535 Ignatius graduated as a Master of Arts and then, after travels back to his home, he went, via Bologna, to Venice where he undertook further studies in theology in 1536. In January 1537 the Companions under Fr Peter Faber arrived in Venice where they worked alongside Ignatius in the hospitals. The Companions left Ignatius behind while they went to visit Rome, to seek an audience with the Holy Father, Pope Paul III.

Later that year, on 24 June 1537, Ignatius and five Companions were ordained to the priesthood.

It was to be some eighteen months later, on the Feast of the Nativity, 25 Dec 1538, that Ignatius celebrated his first Mass in the Chapel of the Manger in the Basilica of St Mary Major.



From 1538, through 1539 Ignatius, his Companions and the Holy See were in discussions about the future. Ignatius wrote a ***“Formula for the Institute”***, which was given approval by Pope Paul III on 3 Sep 1539. A year later the Society of Jesus [Companions of Jesus] was given formal recognition

by Paul III, and within a few years in 1544 the Society was confirmed and restrictions on its size were lifted.

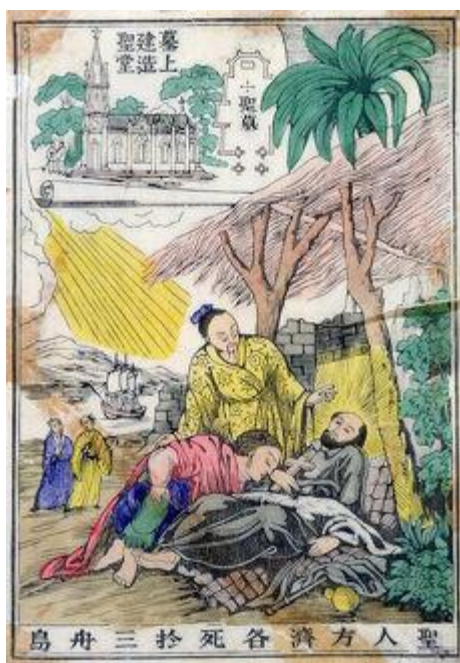
There was a rapid increase in membership, and during this period of expansion Ignatius was elected the Superior General of the new society. After initially declining, he accepted the Office from 19 April 1541.



Thereafter the impact of the Ignatian Way, the consequence of the conversion of Inigo Lopez, was to change the face of the Catholic world. Schools, colleges and universities were founded and staffed by the Companions of Jesus, all of them learned men. The majority were drawn from gentry, noble and even royal families. The surge of interest in the Society and its rapid growth enabled Missions to be undertaken across the globe. Francis Xavier, the first to travel became the great missionary to the East, to India, Japan and looking out to China.

Other Jesuit missionaries went to South America, North America and many spent their energies, their intellects, and their deep spiritual gifts in attempting to prevent the spread of Protestantism.

Fr Peter Faber was a great reformer from within the Church, leaning out to those whose reforms had taken them away from the Church. His human kindness, his spiritual gifts and the integrity of his friendship helped to thwart and limit Protestant ideas. This good man, a personal friend to Ignatius was the first of the early companions to die- 1 Aug 1546.



Fr Francis Xavier died of a fever, in sight of China, on 3 Dec 1552 aged forty-six. He became to be regarded as a great modern missionary in the same league as St Paul. Xavier was the second of the three co-founders to die.



Ignatius himself, worn out by his labours, Ignatius died on 31 July 1556. The following day he was buried in the Church of St Maria della Strada but was later interred in the Gesù when the Church of Maria della Strada was pulled

down and the Gesù built on that site. The tomb of Ignatius stands to the side of the Gesù, just before the Chapel of Maria della Strada.



## **The Ignatian Reflections in the Year of Ignatius :**

1. Ignatius found his way to God following a life shattering experience : his Pilgrimage journey, and his thoughts and insights continue to have an impact on others. His profound psychological understanding helps men and women to recover from the wounds of life, and by conversion of manners, and reflective conversation with God find that the Love of God reaches everywhere.
2. Conversation with Ignatius was always a two-way dialogue, yet he was a most patient listener, waiting on every word. He always put the best interpretation on what others said, asking us to trust each other. Such humble listening and sparse speech gave

opportunities for encounters with others that were fruitful and affirming. Similarly, Ignatius, a prayerful conversationalist, helped men and women to open out in offering their lives to God in a whole-hearted way.

3. The Creative Imagination was a key feature of what became the Ignatian way. Understanding other cultures was an important aspect of Ignatian evangelisation. This imaginative leap resulted in a range of different missionary endeavours. Social and economic problems were addressed in South and Central America. The problems of physics, astronomy and geography were the intellectual grist to the mill of the Jesuit missionaries to China. Dressed as Mandarin intellectuals the Jesuits established themselves as Catholic missionaries winning many converts.
4. Theological and Philosophical expertise were key components in the work of the Jesuits at the Council of Trent, as they tried to stem the spread of Protestantism. The ecumenical and evangelistic imperatives were successful in effectively containing Protestantism within specific realms. This work required educated elites well-versed in Catholic Faith and Doctrine.
5. Schools Colleges and Universities ; one of the first imperatives of Ignatius and the first Jesuits was establishing colleges where the children of the leading members of society were educated according to the new principles of education that had developed from the resurgence in humanism during the sixteenth century.

In the early 1540s Francis Xavier established a School in Goa which in time grew into a series of schools which taught the fundamentals of Christian faith, theology and philosophy. While important, these first efforts in India did little to shape what was to become the traditional Jesuit approach to education.

### **The Ignatian Way Of Education :**

This had its origins in the Mission of ten very accomplished Jesuits who were sent by Ignatius to Messina in Sicily in March 1548. Within ten days of arrival they had established a school which had to close because of the hot weather. When it reopened in the autumn, in October 1548 the school was soon filled. The School was in effect a grammar school, rooted and grounded in the study of Latin with other classical languages and studies in logic and philosophy.

Such a curriculum was to become the model for Jesuit schools throughout the world. Much of the education theory and the founding of schools, colleges and universities was developed through the work of Fr Jeronimo Nada SJ. The Messina *Ratio studiorum* of 1599 was hugely influential in the establishment of an extensive network of schools, colleges and universities throughout Europe.

The core values of a Jesuit education as they developed from the first principles are :

**Cura personalis** : “care for the individual person.” This emphasises a key insight that every human person is a totally unique individual in God’s created goodness and as such is worthy of respect and understanding. Only by truly knowing each other can we begin to care for them as unique persons.

**Unity of heart, mind and soul** : In the Ignatian spiritual psychology it is essential to have and to develop a tender heart which can express human kindness in an open-minded way. Such a purposeful congruence of our physical, mental and spiritual faculties allows each of us to grow and to create sense of community

**Magis** : simply, “*more.*” ‘more’ yet not necessarily adding to the number of things to do but rather striving for “more,” in a qualitative sense in all that we do for others and for God. Being a ‘more’ person is always to do more for God’s glory not our own, and always in the service of others.

**Finding God in all things**: Everything in our lives is part of who we are in ourselves and in the world in which we live. In all aspects of life, whether in tears or smiles, in success or in failure, in prosperity or adversity, we can see lessons to be learned, especially if in humility we can see with the eyes of faith opportunities to discern the gifts of God.

**Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam** : [AMDG]“For the Greater Glory of God.” This follows from ‘Finding God in all things’ – there is a transcendent, overarching inspiration which goes beyond our own

human frailty and our service to others which gives the glory to the Creator God.

**Being women and men for others :** This radical impulse of selfless concern for other people is at the heart of God's loving purpose. When we care for others in whatever capacity we are expressing a divine impulse through our humanity. This can unite and inspire people by its exemplary effects to bring about a community of loving-kindness that builds up everyone involved, ourselves and other people.

### **Points to ponder :**

- **The example and impact of Ignatius Loyola has been world changing. What has the Ignatian year taught me about myself?**
- **The call to radical conversion, through the fellowship of friends, prayer together, conversation among ourselves and developing familiarity with Jesus of the Gospels is a key element in Ignatius' thought and teaching. How equipped are we to evangelise, bringing others to know and love Jesus?**
- **The Ignatian Year has ended- how may each of us continue as Pilgrims with Ignatius? We might like to write down any ideas and share them with others.**

### **GETTING READY FOR THE GIFT OF SCRIPTURE**

- We ask the Holy Spirit to settle our minds and open our hearts.



- Our conversation with God begins as we express our gratitude for our blessings and by expressing our sorrow for personal sin.
- We ask that The Holy Spirit may enliven our reading and understanding. ***Come, Holy Spirit, our souls inspire and lighten with celestial fire;***
- 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.
- Reading silently or aloud we form the words as they take shape in our creative imagination.

### **Passage of Scripture for Reflection : St Luke 15.11-24**

#### ***The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother***

***Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup> A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup>When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup>He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of***

*hunger! <sup>18</sup>I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." ' <sup>20</sup>So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' <sup>22</sup>But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup>for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.*

*<sup>25</sup>Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup>He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' <sup>28</sup>Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup>But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' <sup>31</sup>Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this*

*brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'*



**Points for Reflection:**

- Coming to his senses the younger son resolves to return to his father in humility : starvation brought him to a new understanding and an awareness of his sinful behaviour. How do we see ourselves in a world where starvation is widespread

and where the lives of many are wretched? How equitably divided are the assets of our planet earth?

- The father in the parable represents God's willing forgiveness, being prepared to lift up and celebrate the return of a repentant sinner, and also to search out the harder-hearted who have yet to appreciate the love of penitence and how to celebrate new life, and the restoration of relationships. Do we as a Church have anything to learn about being inclusive and welcoming?

*Take Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. Thou hast given all to me. To Thee, O lord, I return it. All is Thine, dispose of it wholly according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and thy grace, for this is sufficient for me.*



*Jesus Mercy, Mary Pray*

*Praise God Always*