

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

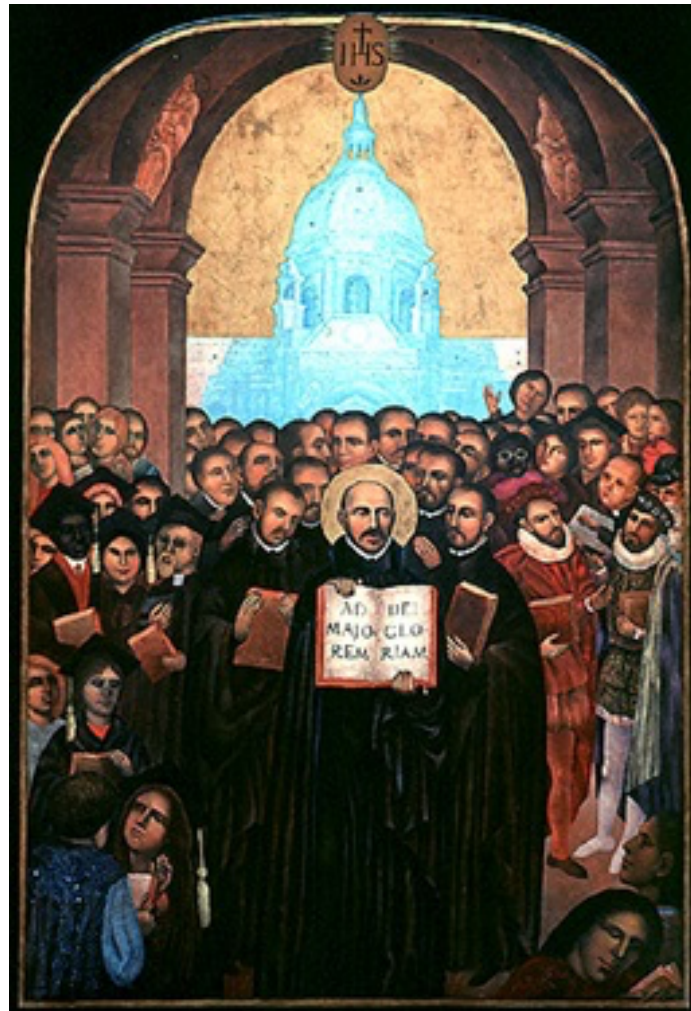
**TWENTY-EIGHTH REFLECTION**  
**ROME & APOSTOLIC FOUNDATIONS**



**CONTEXT:** *“Why go to Jerusalem? Italy is a true Jerusalem if you desire to bring forth fruit in God’s Church”*

So it was that the Companions settled to work within Italy to begin their Apostolate in Rome. Ignatius celebrated his first Mass within the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore on Christmas Eve, being the Midnight Mass on 24 December 1538.

Demands were soon being made on the Companions : bishops, rulers and grandees realised that these 'new men', missionaries of a different kind, genuinely aflame with the love of Christ were effective in addressing their problems.



These competing demands raised 'doubts' in the minds of the Companions. For up to ten years they had enjoyed spiritual friendship which gave direction to their own lives in Christ and was effective in bringing others to a living Faith.

Recalling the key moments of their life together, nevertheless they gathered in prayer, and at Mass asked for guidance from God. Recording their differences they sought '***a way of resolving this plurality***'. Such was their Common Life in Christ, '***seeking the perfect will of God***'.

Even when separated by some Mission they were resolved to maintain in contact, '***drawing closer into a single body***'.

Further doubts were raised about how decisions were to be made in the evolving community. It was decided "***It is better for us, it is necessary to promise obedience to one of our group.***"

Apostolic outreach had already begun even before the proclamation of the Papal Bull of Pope Paul III "Regimini militantes Ecclesiae" of 27Sep1540 which confirmed the Society of Jesus as a religious order within the Church.



When the approval of the Society of Jesus was given only Fr Ignatius, Fr Salmeron and Fr Cordure were actually in Rome. As we have seen in the last reflection Frs Simao Rodriguez and Francis Xavier were en route to their missions in Portugal and India respectively.

Fr Peter Faber was travelling to Worms with the theologian Dr Pedro Ortiz. The others, Fr Diego Layenez was in Placenza, Fr Jay was in Brescia, Fr Bobadilla was in Bisignano, and Fr Broet was in Siena.

Scattered the Companions were teaching, preaching, giving the Exercises, reforming monasteries, and confounding error. It was a time of relentless energy, of dedicated commitment to Christ based on the deepest spiritual friendship around the person of Ignatius. His gift for friendship held them together by cords of affection.

Electing a Superior General was an urgent necessity. One of the ten Companions was needed to be 'in charge' so that the future structures of the Society could be planned.

The four Companions in Italy were recalled to Rome.

The election took some time, beginning with three days of solitude, reflection and prayer.

When it came to voting each companion wrote the name of whom he wanted in his own handwriting. The Ballot Box contained these votes, and those of the absentees [Rodriguez, Xavier and Favre who had left or sent sealed envelopes].

There was an element of high drama in the electoral process. Ignatius was elected, and yet refused to accept the result. He declined. He felt that because of his past sinful life he was unworthy.

On 13 April 1540 a new election was held, and again Ignatius was elected and again he refused. The much respected Fr Diego Laynez indicated that he would withdraw from the Society if the '***elected person***' did not accept the office. Laynez said that "***he was not disposed to obey a***



*superior who was not selected by God*". This intervention moved the situation : Ignatius accepted, not wanting to thwart the will of God. After a general confession of his entire life to his Franciscan confessor, Fr Theodosio da Lodi, Ignatius prayed for two days over Easter and on 19 April 1540, Easter Tuesday, he accepted and was now the Superior General of the Society of Jesus.



Within days the six companions who were in Rome, after a pilgrimage to the Seven Basilicas, went to St Paul outside the Walls. During Mass celebrated by Ignatius , he made his Profession, and then the others did likewise.

Afterwards, beside the tomb of the Apostle St Paul, the newly professed fathers made their own vows of filial homage to Ignatius.



Letters were sent to the others who were similarly professed wherever they were- Xavier by this time was in Goa, in Portuguese India.



*It is not the actual physical exertion that counts towards a man's progress, nor the nature of the task, but by the spirit of faith with which it is undertaken.*

Francis Xavier's vote for Ignatius, written on 15 March 1540, and left in a sealed box, is a moving tribute to Ignatius:

***" The one who must be chosen for superior of our Society, to whom we all owe obedience, this Superior must be, it seems to me- I say it according to my conscience- our old and true friend, Fr Don Ignatius. It was he who assembled us, not without difficulty; and he would know better still, not certainly without new difficulty, how to keep us together, to govern us, to help us to progress from good to better, for it is he who knows each of us most intimately".***

Ignatius and the Roman based companions lived in a house which became their base near the Church of Santa Maria della Strada. On these foundations the headquarters of the Society of Jesus were built and there the Gesu, the Jesus Church.

One can imagine how the dedication of the Church Our Lady of the Way would be congenial to the Pilgrim who moving always towards Jesus, takes his companions with him.



Now settled at the headquarters of the Society of Jesus, Ignatius begins the work of structuring the new Society, writing up the Constitutions, supervising the Mission of outreach, caring for the Roman projects given him by the Pope, giving the Exercises and keeping in touch with the Society members wherever they were.



### **Some thoughts to ponder as fellow Pilgrims with Ignatius**

- Holding all things in common, bound by cords of affection in prayer, united to Christ by baptism and in the Mass, Ignatius and the companions settled a plurality of views by seeking the will of God. How do we manage our 'differences' whether in family, the Church, or in society.
- One man, one vote so the companions elected a leader. The voting process was grounded in prayer and seeking the will of God. Does this episode have any resonance for Catholics today in respect of voting with integrity?



- The Companions realised that maintaining 'companionship' even when separated required effort- letter writing, encouraging each other became part of their way. How do we keep in touch with friends and family? Is there value in the old-fashioned note or card, a sign of continuity of friendship? Could this help with the recovery of the lapsed?
- Respect and obedience to the Holy Father was an essential part of the relationship between Ignatius, his Companions and the Pope. Are we as thoughtful as we should be in respecting the Holy Father in his Mission as Vicar of Christ?



## Suscipe

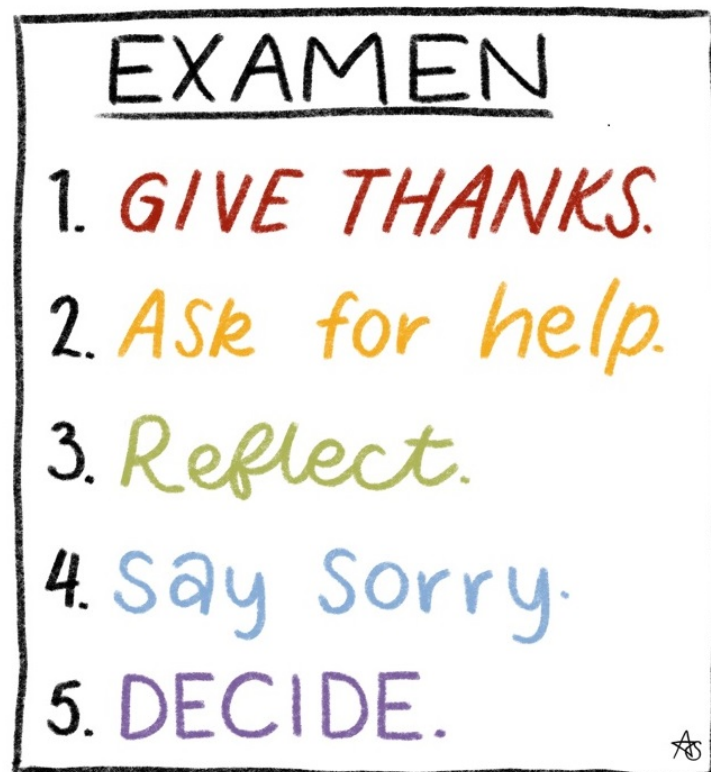
Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,  
my memory, my understanding,  
and my entire will,  
All I have and call my own.

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:



## Scriptural Reflection : St Matthew 16. 13-20.

Peter's Confession About Jesus.

*13 When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"*

*14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."*

*15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"*

*16 Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."*

*17 Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father.*

*18 And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.*

*19 I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."*



## Thoughts for Scriptural Reflection:

- How do we answer the question about Jesus in our lives? Being the Christ, God's anointed Son brings the Divine Compassion into our lives- are we able to recognise this for ourselves in our need for healing and forgiveness?
- Peter, the rock, in which the Church was built- the first Bishop of Rome is the focus of unity for Christians. Catholics have a special privilege to support the Petrine ministry and witness to the graces of the Church. How appreciative are we of the privileges of Faith and the obligations of witness?

**A Period of Silence** in which we pray with St Ignatius seeking understanding and insight, ever searching, ever finding, always willing.

*"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*