

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

**THIRTIETH REFLECTION**  
**ROME : IGNATIUS THE GENERAL**



**CONTEXT:**

Ignatius Loyola, the initial founder and by now the elected General, with the first foundation Companions [ Fr Diego Lainez, Nicholas Bobadilla, Paschasë Broët, Jean Codure, Francis Xavier, Peter Faber, Claude de Jay, Alfonso Salmerón, and Simão Rodrigues ] began to initiate the strategy for Mission and Evangelisation that had been drawn up in the "*Formula for the Institute*" of July 1539. This was approved by Pope Paul III and confirmed in the Papal Bull, "*Regimini militantes Ecclesiae*" of 1540 which recognised the Society of Jesus.

From the Headquarters in the new premises beside the Church of Santa Maria della Strada Ignatius conducted a ministry of teaching the young, directing the overseas Missions, establishing schools and colleges, and maintaining contact with dispersed Companions through the ministry of letters.

## **IGNATIUS THE CATECHIST :**



In the summer of 1541 Ignatius began a practice that he developed as an obligation for Jesuits : teaching children, forming them in the Faith by appropriate catechesis.

Ignatius had a strong conviction that children and the uneducated, simple people, should all be taught the basic tenets of the Faith. This was

in part driven by the widespread ignorance of Catholic doctrine, and the desperate need to ensure that the Catholic Church was prepared to meet the troubles of the times, namely the spread of Protestant beliefs, and the turmoil of schism and nationalist fervour.

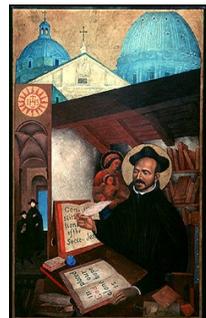
However, there is likely a more fundamental reason, simply that Ignatius saw this as a way of embracing the poverty and ignorance of 'the little ones' whether the children or the folk with little or no education.

Such teaching necessitates a non-condescending sympathy and reaching out with simple words from a warm heart.

Ignatius himself found the language of the people of Rome difficult. He was not a natural linguist, and sometimes his verbal infelicities and mangled constructions embarrassed his more accomplished companions. However, the humility and the integrity of Ignatius' catechesis of children in the streets made an impression on many.

## **IGNATIUS THE MISSIONARY STRATEGIST**

The earliest departures on the Missionary imperative to take the Gospel of Jesus to the ends of the Earth, were those of Fr Simao Rodrigues for Portugal, and Fr Francis Xavier for India. These men were sent on their apostolates after the 'Formula of the Institute' had been given but before the



formal ratification. Ignatius was a man who having selected his aim was determined to take action and to keep the momentum.

Even while writing the Constitutions with Fr Codure the work of establishing provinces was on-going. The restrictions on the size of the Society were lifted in March 1544, when another Papal Bull, "*Iniunctum nobis*," gave positive affirmation of the Society of Jesus.

In October 1546 Portugal was made a Province of the Society with Fr Simao Rodrigues as the first Provincial.

The following year, on 7 May 1547 Fr Antonio Araoz was appointed Provincial of the Spanish Province. Such was the growth of the Society in Spain that by 1554 it was divided into three provinces- Aragon, Castile and Betica.

Spain and Portugal were maritime colonial powers, with empires both in the vast continents of the Americas and in India and the Far East.

In early February 1549 the first Jesuits set out for Brazil, and four years later by 9 July 1553 the Missions in Brazil were sufficiently established to become a Province. Ignatius appointed Fr Emmanuel de Nobrega as Provincial.

Also in 1549 three Jesuits set out for Germany. Fr Peter Canisius, Fr Claude Jay and Fr Alfonso Salmeron were engaged in the Counter Reformation attempting to prevent the spread of Protestantism.



The Letter or Mandate which Ignatius sent to them is instructive : It is a model of clarity and prudence.

***1. Your first and greatest asset will be to distrust yourself and have a great and magnanimous trust in God. Join to this an ardent desire,***

*enkindled and sustained by obedience and charity, to attain the end proposed. Such a desire will keep the end always before your mind, and make you also commend it to God in your sacrifices and prayers and to make diligent use of all other suitable means.*

*2. The second means is a good life, and therefore an exemplary life. You should shun, not only evil but the very semblance of evil, and show yourselves as patterns of modesty, charity, and all other virtues. Since Germany is in great need of good example, she will derive much help from it; and even though this example be wordless, the affairs of the Society will prosper and God will do battle for us.*

*3. You should cherish a genuine affection for everyone and show it to everyone, especially to those who have great influence over the common good, as the duke himself, to whom you should offer your excuses for arriving so late, and to whom you must show an affection which not only the Apostolic See but our Society cherishes for him as well. Courteously promise him that you will devote your every effort and endeavour to help his people.*

*4. Show your love in truth and in action by bestowing favours on many, offering them spiritual assistance, and also in exterior works of charity, as will be explained later.*

*5. Give proof that you are not seeking your own interests, but those of Jesus Christ [Phil. 2:21], that is, His glory and the good of souls. In keeping with this, accept no stipends for Masses or sermons or the administration of the sacraments. You must have no income of any kind.*

*6. Make yourselves loved by your humility and charity, becoming all things to all men [1 Cor. 9:22]. Show that you conform, as far as the Institute of the Society permits, to the customs*

*of the people, and whenever possible see to it that no one goes away from you sad, unless it be for the good of his soul. But do not gratify others at the expense of conscience and let no excessive familiarity breed contempt.*

*7. Do not take sides in faction and party strife but follow a middle course and be friendly with both sides.*

*8. It will be helpful if you are known to hold sound doctrine both as representatives of the Society and as individuals. This should be with everybody, but especially with the duke and men of influence. It will greatly enhance your reputation not only to cultivate interior composure, but also to manifest it exteriorly: namely, in manner of walking, gestures, appropriate clothing, and above all in circumspection of speech, the maturity of your advice on both practical matters and speculative questions as well. This maturity will keep you from giving your opinion too hastily if the matter is difficult. In such a case take your time to think the matter over, study the question, and even discuss it with others.*

*9. You must try to be on good terms with those in governmental positions and be kindly disposed toward them. It will help to this if the duke and those members of his household, who have a wide influence, confess to Ours, and insofar as their duties permit, make the Spiritual Exercises. You should win over the professors at the university and other persons of authority by your humility, modesty, and obliging services.*

*10. Consequently, if you should learn that you or the Society is in ill esteem, especially with persons in authority, you should prudently undertake a defence and try to get them to understand the work of the Society and your own, to God's greater glory.*

*11. It will help to have an exact knowledge of the disposition and character of the men involved, and to consider beforehand all possibilities, especially in matters of importance.*

*12. It will help if all the companions not only think and speak alike, but even dress alike, and observe the same external manners and social customs.*

*13. Each of the companions should be careful to reflect on what is adapted to the end proposed, and they should talk matters over among themselves. The superior, after having heard what the others think, shall decide what is to be done or left undone.*

*14. They should write to Rome to ask advice, and to describe conditions. This should be done frequently, as it can be of no little help to all.*

*15. From time to time they should read this instruction and what will be stated later, and other points which they think ought to be added, so that their memory may be refreshed should it begin to grow dim.*

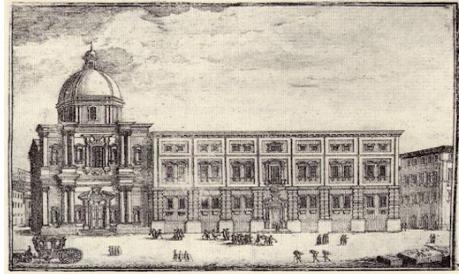
### **IGNATIUS THE TEACHER :**

Ignatius greatly esteemed the value of education, recalling his own inadequate education as a courtier/soldier. He had to go back to college to learn Latin before he could undertake University courses. His life was marked by his application to acquiring understanding in philosophy, theology and the new learning of the Catholic enlightenment. His own personal, existential understanding of the way of God in his life and in the experiences of prayer were gradually written down in the Spiritual Exercises. This manual for the giver of the Exercises helped to bring many to a new and committed Catholicism. From the Experience of the Exercises the Companions



grew and when the Society of Jesus was confirmed as an order within the Catholic Church it was natural that the Exercises influenced its life and way of proceeding. When it came to education we find that the particular way of teaching [which later became known as 'Ignatian Pedagogy'] again shaped by the principles of the Exercises.

The first school was opened at Messina in Sicily in 1548. [opposite but now destroyed].



This was a successful venture and within a few years many more primary, secondary schools were opened. The Roman College, which is now the Gregorian University, in Rome was the first Jesuit university.

In the Far East schools and colleges were founded some of which became universities.



These colleges promoted the arts and music as well as the studies of science, philosophy, literature and theology.

Throughout the world the Ignatian way of education was established and helped to create a well informed and well-grounded Catholic laity, men and women.

The early teachers among the Jesuits took to heart Ignatius' concern for each pupil/student as an individual. The key and guiding principle was that of *cura personalis* or "care of the whole person." Caring for the whole person means knowing the students in all their particularity.

There is now a world-wide network of schools and colleges who share in this

way of learning and the methods of teaching taken from the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola, taking a holistic view of the world. The three main elements are Experience, Reflection, and Action.



### **IGNATIUS THE CORRESPONDENT**

The Jesuit companions were scattered throughout Europe and all round the world. Ignatius called them to *“hurry to any part of the world where...the needs of the neighbour should summon them.”* His advice was that they should serve *“without hard words or contempt for people’s errors.”* With the assistance of his Fr Juan Polanco, he wrote nearly seven thousand letters. His correspondence was vast - to heads of states, to bishops, writing to men and women in all stations of life. The greater part of his correspondence was in keeping in touch with his Jesuit companions. Furthermore, as well as writing to them from the centre, he encouraged them to write to each other. Establishing a world-wide network of influence in which friendship, love, and care all worked for the greater good.

Ignatius was an accomplished global strategist. The community of apostles, the Society of Jesus, despite being dispersed throughout the world the members maintained a unity of mind and heart with one another. This was enhanced by the letters about their work which they shared with each other. By the time of the death of Ignatius in 1556, there were about a thousand members of the Society of Jesus. Scattered in colleges and houses throughout Europe, India, Brazil and Japan, these men were ‘setting the world on fire’ by their dedicated lives following the Way of Ignatius in the service of the Lord Jesus.

### **Thoughts to Consider:**

- Teaching the young : do we do enough, individually, to ensure that young people [families, god-children, servers and others] are able to catch the faith, and then to develop an understanding?

- First 'catch', then 'teach'. Our lives and manners will help to attract and then we can explain and form in the Faith.
- How missionary minded are we? Mission is an every day imperative, bringing to a waiting world the Gospel of God's Compassion and Love.
- Mission is world-wide as well as at home. Is it easier to support missionaries in far way places, then sit back and be complacent about Mission?
- Mission is conducted by many Missionary Societies – a few examples we may consider supporting, the Missionaries to Africa, the Kiltegan Fathers, the Medical Missionaries of Mary, and also Catholic aid agencies such as Mary's Meals, Caritas International, Aid to the Church in Need and Jesuit Refugee Services
- The education of our young people surely includes Church, School and Home. How do we assist in keeping this pattern going?
- Ignatius as a correspondent was exemplary, sitting at a small desk he kept up with a diverse network of colleagues and friends. We are all enhanced by the encouragement a letter brings. Even an email or a text message may be a simple endearment that brightens another's day. Cards and notes are a special form of gift spreading knowledge, and happiness. How would we do in attempting this as a weekly enterprise?

## **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:



### Introduction to the Scriptural Reflection :

St Paul wrote many letters, and they were all, but one, written to Churches. One of the most authentically Pauline is the Letter to the Christians at the Greek city of Philippi. It was written during the time that Paul was in prison in Rome. Yet, it is a letter filled with joy, contentment and real encouragement for others. While the letter begins with thanksgiving and prayers, it ends with encouraging words of appreciation about the Philippians' gifts to him.



*St Paul at his desk by Rembrandt.*

## Scriptural Reflection : Philippians 4

1. *Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!*
2. *I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.*
3. *Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.*
4. *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!*
5. *Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.*
6. *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*
7. *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
8. *Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.*
9. *Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*
10. *I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.*
11. *I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.*
12. *I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.*
13. *I can do all this through him who gives me strength.*
14. *Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.*
15. *Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only;*

16. *for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need.*
17. *Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account.*
18. *I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.*
19. *And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.*
20. *To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

### **Thoughts for Scriptural Reflection:**

- Are we all of the same mind, 'thinking with the Church'? Small dissensions can break up community and affect the Common Good. St Paul urges us through the example of Euodia and Syntyche to reconcile differences.
- Are we sufficiently aware of the Blessings of Life? Rejoicing comes from thankful hearts. Even in the depths of his incarceration, he exudes a joyful freedom that is rooted in a way of life :' *whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.*
- Thankfulness, gratitude are fruits of prayerful reflection- how best do we express gratitude – perhaps like St Paul and Ignatius by letters, or notes of encouragement.

**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*