

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

THIRTY-SECOND REFLECTION
ROME : THE IGNATIAN SUCCESSION

CONTEXT:



The death of Ignatius at 5.30 am on 31 July 1556 was a shock to everyone. Everywhere there was '*sadness without pain.*' He died alone in his room. As one witness said, 'he died in the common way'. Before that his brothers had prayed with him and left him asleep. Fr Polanco his secretary had gone to bring a Papal Blessing.

It was written of him : " As he arrived at the end of his way, Ignatius was leaving behind in his wake a contagious enthusiasm, a pattern of life, a treasury of hopes, the certainty that "*God had guided him and had accomplished all.*"

The new young Society, now without a Father General, faced with some trepidation the selection of a Superior to succeed Ignatius. There were two strong characters

whom people saw as 'candidates' both men of gracious good-will whom circumstances had brought to the fore, each of them a Vicar-General of the Society.



Jeronimo Nadal was in Spain conducting business for Ignatius at the time of the Founder's death. He had been travelling and explaining the newly formulated Constitutions of the Society of Jesus to the Jesuits in Spain, and Portugal.

For all his 'orthodoxy' as a Jesuit, one who may have been the best interpreter of Ignatius' thoughts, he had at first been suspicious of the Paris Companions. Later while a priest he was deeply influenced by a letter of St Francis Xavier to Ignatius deploring the attitudes of clerics at the University of Paris " ***who had more knowledge than a willingness to prepare themselves to draw fruit from it.***" Nadal became unsettled. He inquired and he discovered as he wrote later, "***Ignatius is superior general! Xavier is in India! A religious order, the 'Society of Jesus', is approved! What amazing developments! I will immediately go to Rome to meet Ignatius and find out what happened.***"

He went to Rome and at the age of thirty-eight entered the Society of Jesus. Ignatius was alert to his gifts and Nadal became a trusted associate. He was a "***contemplative in action***" as Nadal described himself in terms which also expressed the Ignatian ideal.

In 1548 he was given the task of founding the first college to be opened by the Jesuits- at Messina in Sicily.

In 1554 Ignatius, two years before his death, appointed Nadal as Vicar General of the Society.



Diego Laynez was in Rome working closely with Ignatius' secretary Fr Polanco. Fr Laynez had been involved in the first two sessions of the Council of Trent, as a respected theologian. Laynez was a professor, with Fr Salmeron, at the Sapienza University in Rome.

The senior fathers gathered in Rome for the process of election, in times which were not conducive to amity and concord. The Holy Father Pope Paul IV was suspicious of the Society of Jesus. He was in conflict with the Spanish and Imperial forces in Italy. He was contemptuous of all things Spanish. Within the Society there were deeply Iberian strains, both Portuguese and Spanish, as well as French and Italian. Inevitably the political and cultural difficulties of Europe impinged on the young Society.



While the electors were assessing and discussing the election of the next Superior General **Fr Nicolas Bobadilla**, entered the scene. One of the founding fathers from Montmartre Bobadilla was an energetic and forceful man, an effective preacher, an experienced man of affairs having served as a military chaplain in the Imperial Army of Charles V. 'Nicolas had dealings with eight popes, three emperors, numerous electors, German princes, cardinals and prelates

through all of Italy. He was a man of much talent and great contrasts, independent and impulsive, outstanding for both accomplishments and imprudence.' He was also close to Pope Paul IV which was not always helpful.

He had difficulties in accepting some of Ignatius' ways, and was gently reproved for his conduct, especially that of trying to prevent Charles V from making peace with the Protestant rulers in parts of Germany. During the period of the Election Bobadilla made a significant intrusion wanting to use the opportunity by making demands for modifying the Constitutions and the governance of the Society. His interruptions may have had some use but in the end the ways established by Ignatius prevailed, and Bobadilla recognised his errors and returned to his more fruitful labours in due course.

The internal dissensions, the difficulties with the Holy Father Pope Paul IV, and also the external political situation all caused delays in the forming of an electoral process. However by June 1538 the process was ready, and a General Congregation of the twenty electors from different provinces gathered on 2 July to cast their ballots. The election took place, in Ignatius' study bed-room. The renowned

theologian Fr Peter Canisius gave the address. At the election votes were cast as follows : Fr Laynez thirteen ; Fr Nadal four; Frs Broet, Lanoye and Borgia one each. The longest professed Companion was Fr Broet and it fell to him to make the proclamation that Fr Diego Laynez was the second Superior General. A new epoch in the Ignatian Way to Jesus was about to begin. The Holy Father confirmed the election.

The new General, Fr Diego Laynez, was asked by the Holy Father whether he had any favours to request : there were two, and both were granted :

1. To build the Jesuit Church beside Santa Maria della Strada [the Gesu]
2. That no-one [not even Fr Nicholas Bobadilla] would be sustained by the Holy Father against the authority of the General. So the basis for obedience was established and confirmed; a way of proceeding for amity and concord within the brotherhood of the companions of Jesus.

Thoughts to Consider:

- How conscious are we of the ministry of 'end of life care'? Prayer, companionable affection, sacramental opportunities for confession, anointing and the Viaticum
- The 'Common Good' is a Catholic concept for issues of liberty, distribution of resources, health-care, education, the duty and privilege of work, human dignity and respect. Are we sometimes too self-centred and not sufficiently mindful of what we might do for others?

Suscipe

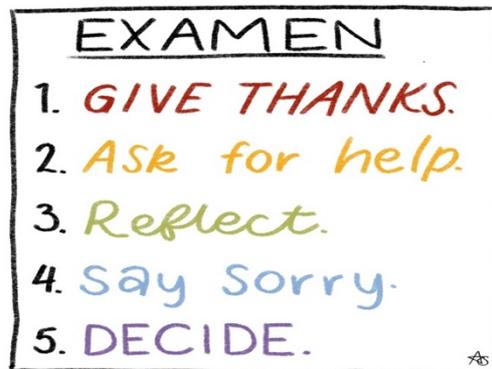
Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.

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 :

Preparation :

- 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.

Scriptural Reflection : The Prayer of Jesus to the Father

In this prayer Jesus in the conversational opening of his heart to the Father is seeking that the apostolic band of brothers will be consecrated and enabled to bring men and women to know and love God.

Passage for Meditation

St John 17. 17-26

17. "Consecrate them in the truth; your word is truth.

18. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world,

19. and for their sake I consecrate myself so that they too may be consecrated in truth.

20. I pray not only for these but also for those who through their teaching will come to believe in me.

21. May they all be one, just as, Father, you are in me and I am in you, so that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me.

22. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one.

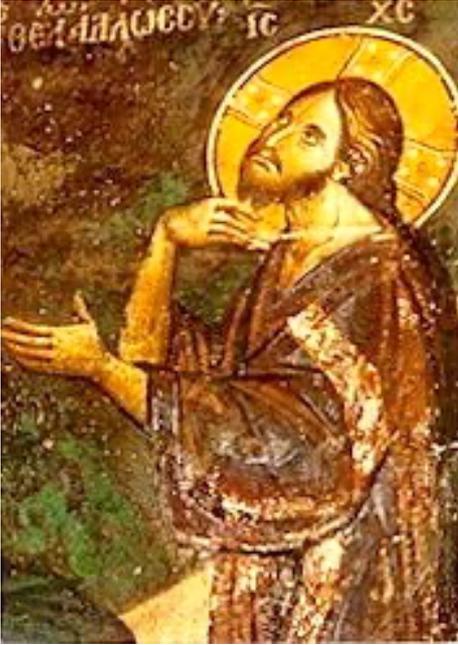
23. With me in them and you in me, may they be so perfected in unity that the world will recognise that it was you who sent me and that you have loved them as you have loved me.

24. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see my glory which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

25. Father, Upright One, the world has not known you, but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me.

26. I have made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and so that I may be in them."

Thoughts for Scriptural Reflection:



- Are we there? Sitting, listening, eyes on Jesus ; saying : "Abba/Father" Our Father listens to us and responds to us – gently as we reflect day by day.
 - How am I reacting to what Jesus has said about being consecrated, about teaching others, about unity in the Church?
 - Does this prayer resonate with our experience of prayer for the Church?
- **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