

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

FIFTY-FOURTH IGNATIAN REFLECTION
IGNATIUS & THE HOLY SPIRIT

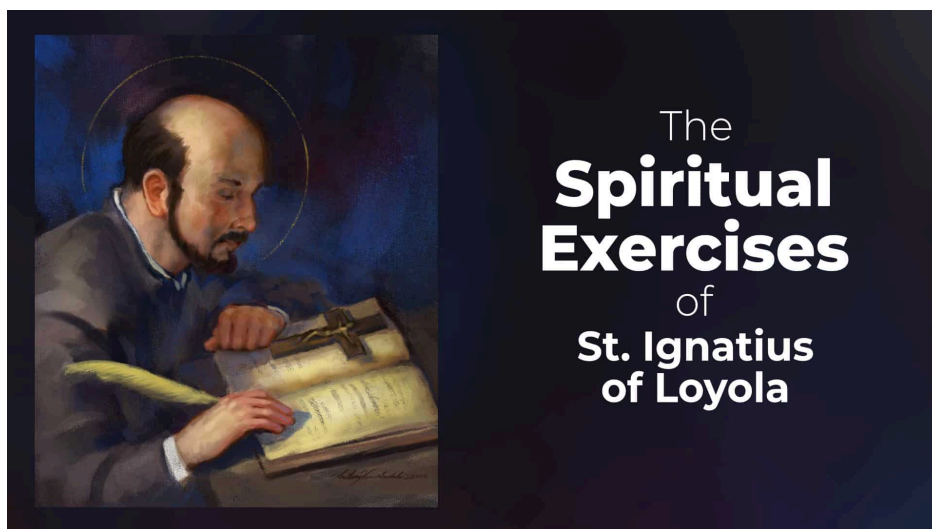


Ignatius experienced the powerful activity of the Holy Spirit while sitting in Manresa by the banks of the River Cardoner: it was a life-changing and life-enhancing experience. He writes about it :

“Near the road is a stream, on the bank of which he sat, and gazed at the deep waters flowing by. While seated there, the eyes of his soul were opened. He did not have any special vision, but his mind was enlightened on many subjects, spiritual and intellectual. So clear was this knowledge that from that day everything appeared to him in a new light. Such was the abundance of this light in his mind that all the divine helps received, and all the knowledge acquired up to his sixty-second year, were not equal to it. From that day he seemed to be quite another man, and possessed of a new intellect”.
(The Autobiography of St. Ignatius)

Ignatius realised that although being a sinful man he was loved by God in a profound yet mysterious way. Instead of being filled with fear his attitude changed : there was a fundamental transformation in that he no longer wanted to sin because he did not want to be separated from the love of God. Ignatius said, "***It is not hard to obey, when we love the one we obey.***" This was critical moment in Ignatius' in his spiritual journey. This characteristic of Ignatian spirituality is definitive: we are sinners, but we are *loved sinners*.

The Manresa experiences, the Cardoner insights, were powerful encounters with the Spirit of God. These marked Ignatius with a deep sense of thankfulness, a gratitude, arising from the experience of encountering the Love of the Spirit of God. That sense of gratitude marked by joy of the Spirit, was the dynamic that sustained him throughout the remainder of his life. He was conscious of the grace of the Holy Spirit that so filled him at that time.



The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola began in the notebooks that he compiled as he set down the fruits of his own encounters and experiences of God. In the ***Exercises*** there are several mentions of the Holy Spirit within the mysteries of the life of Jesus. These are set within

the ***Exercises*** in the section ***'Three Methods of Prayer'*** where Ignatius invites us to consider the senses, our physical awareness, of the Biblical story. After a period of quiet and repose, expressing our gratitude for God's graces and expressing sorrow for our sins, we can begin the imaginative contemplation of the scenes in the life of Jesus.

1. In the Visitation of Our Lady to Elizabeth. [Luke 1.39-56] we find :

- ***First Point- When our Lady visited St Elizabeth, St John the Baptist, in his mother's womb, felt the visitation made by our Lady. When Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe in her womb leapt. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb!'***
- ***Second point – Our Lady chants the canticle, 'My soul magnifies the Lord.'***
- ***Third point- And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her own house.***



Ponder : The Holy Spirit 'fills' Elizabeth. This gracious dynamic is at the heart of this mystery. Spiritual joy suffuses Elizabeth and she is impelled to the recognition that Mary is truly blessed and that the Divine fruitfulness is within. The response of Mary is one of utter thankfulness as expressed in the Magnificat – in addition to being a song of praise it is also a prophetic statement of what will be brought about through Jesus.

Staying for about three months before going home – plenty of time for reflection and conversation. The Holy Spirit has been described as 'The Go-between God'- the Spirit animates us, and encourages us to listen, to see and to share.

2. In the Baptism of Christ [Matt 3: 13-17]

- ***First Point- After He took leave of His blessed Mother, Christ Our Lord, went from Nazareth to the River Jordan where St John the Baptist was.***
- ***Second Point- St John baptised Christ our Lord. When he wanted to excuse himself, considering that he was unworthy to baptise Him, Christ said to him: 'Let it be so now, for so it becomes us to follow all justice.'***
- ***Third point – The Holy Spirit descended upon Him, and the voice of the Father testified from Heaven: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'***

Ponder: Leaving Mary, going south to the River Jordan, Jesus is baptised by John, his cousin. Jesus again travelling to meet John- recall

the visit Mary to Elizabeth when the two babies in the womb encountered each other. In this mystery God involves the two men in an encounter in which his purposes are being worked out – all righteousness [justice] is the feature of God-in-Christ.

The Holy Spirit 'anoints' Jesus, the Anointed One -the Christ. The 'voice' is the clear testimony that Jesus is the Beloved Son. Spiritual power will enable the dynamic ministry of Jesus, healing and teaching.

3. In the Resurrection appearance to the disciples;

The Sixth Apparition [John 20]

- ***First Point – The disciples, except Thomas, were gathered together, 'for fear of the Jews.'***
- ***Second Point- Jesus appeared to them, the doors being closed, and standing in their midst said: 'Peace be to you.'***
- ***He gave them the Holy Spirit saying to them: 'Receive the Holy Spirit; Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.'***

Ponder: Jesus reassures fearful disciples and greets them with 'Peace' - 'Shalom', – the Jewish prayerful greeting inviting wholeness, harmony, and justice.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is dynamic and purposeful: it is the gift of reconciling Love. The authority is to the Church to judge and define moral questions. The Spirit leads the Church into Truth.

4. In the Ninth Apparition in week Four of the Exercises the Risen Jesus appears to the disciples and He sends them to baptize [Matthew 28: 16-20]

- ***First point – At the command of the Lord, the disciples went to Mount Thabor.***
- ***Second point – Christ appeared to them, and said : ‘All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me’.***
- ***Third point – He sent them to preach throughout the world, saying ‘ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit’***

Ponder : The Risen Lord reveals that He is empowered and his mandate to the disciples is that, as Apostles sent to the whole world, they are to preach and baptise.

Baptism is in the Holy Trinity : it is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the dynamic relationship of love, that empowers Ignatius in his Pilgrim journey. Those who walk with Ignatius on the Way with Jesus are embedded in the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit provides the energy and sustaining love of the relationships within our Common Life in the Body of Christ.

5. At the conclusion of the Fourth Week of the Exercises in the Ascension of Christ Our Lord we find the final reference to the Holy Spirit [Acts1:1-11]

First point- After Christ had manifested Himself for forty days to His Apostles, giving them many proofs and signs, and speaking of the Kingdom of God, He commanded them to await in Jerusalem the Holy Spirit that He had promised them.

Ponder : The Risen Jesus has been for forty days with the disciples, now called 'Apostles' as they were sent out to preach and baptise. This 'forty days' is a Hebrew scriptural convention that means that Jesus had been with His followers for a significant period. In that time He had opened their hearts and minds to the Scriptures, calmed their fears, had been recognised by them 'in the breaking of bread, had nourished them, encouraged them and finally had empowered and commissioned them for the proclamation of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Having been gifted the Spirit in the Johannine Pentecost
[He gave them the Holy Spirit saying to them: 'Receive the Holy Spirit'] Ignatius simply mentions waiting in Jerusalem for the promised Holy Spirit.



The Spiritual Diary of Ignatius Loyola

The Spiritual Diary is the name given to a series of notes and written recollections written by Ignatius in 1544-1545 while in Rome in the early days of the Society of Jesus. It was not actually compiled and published until the twentieth century from the various written sources. The time when Ignatius was writing was a period of intense activity in the despatch of Jesuits far and near, and also keeping up a voluminous correspondence with them. At the same time Ignatius was involved in giving the Spiritual Exercises to men and women looking to reform their lives under the banner of Christ.

In a note dated 11Feb 1544 Ignatius wrote : ***"I received a new insight, viz., that the Son first sent His Apostles to preach in poverty and later the Holy Spirit.... confirmed them, and this since both the Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit, all three persons that manner of sending"***

Here is a clear indication that Ignatius is open to insights about the Holy Spirit, and indeed that Spirit is the source of his insight and shapes his understanding.

As to the place of the Spirit in Ignatius' life of prayer, in the Diary, he wrote : ***"I made a colloquy with the Holy Spirit in preparation for saying his Mass; I experienced the same devotion and tears, and seemed to see or perceive him in an intense clarity or in the colour of burning flame- a way quite strange to me"***.



Ponder : The few references in the Exercises clearly locate the Holy Spirit in the encounters between God and women and men, and also in the gracious empowerment which enables both insight and joyous proclamation.

It can be seen from the Spiritual Diary that Ignatius himself is utterly open to the Holy Spirit and in the 'colloquy' converses with the Holy Spirit. Being in conversational relationship with the Holy Spirit brings its own spiritual fruits – joy, tears, and the affirmation of the Christocentric nature of Ignatius' life which is bound up with being involved in and with the Holy Trinity.

In the Diary some of the most striking visions are of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity: ***'I made a colloquy with the Holy Spirit in preparation for saying his Mass; I experienced the same devotion and tears to see or perceive him in a dense clarity or in the colour of burning flame.'***

Points to ponder

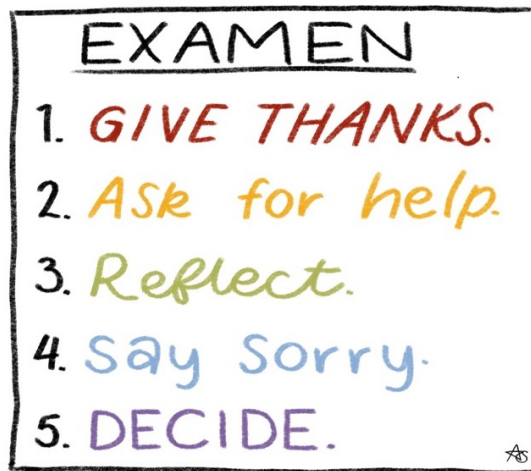
- The Most Holy Trinity : In Baptism we are raised up into the New Life of the Risen Christ. We are anointed as Prophets, Priests and Kings – to hear the Gospel and to proclaim it by what we say and what we do.

- New Creation, the Life of the Resurrection: ***"We are an Easter People and 'Alleluia' is our Song".***
- ***He gave them the Holy Spirit saying to them: 'Receive the Holy Spirit']***

THE EXAMINATION OF OUR LIVES [THE EXAMEN]

Daily Examen:

Looking with quiet sincerity and simplicity of heart at the day



GETTING READY FOR THE GIFT OF SCRIPTURE

We place ourselves in the presence of God.

- We ask the Holy Spirit to settle our minds and open our hearts.
- ***Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and kindle in them the fire of Thy love. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.***
- 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;***

That our hearts may burn within us as the words of scripture take shape in our imaginative prayer.

- 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 for Spiritual Reflection :

Galatians 5:22-23

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...”

Points for Reflection:

- Consider the fruitfulness of the Spirit in our own lives, counting the graces and acknowledging the shadow side, where the opposites seem to present themselves.
- Continue constantly praying ***Come, Holy Spirit, our souls inspire and lighten with celestial fire;***

Awaken the conversation : the colloquy with God :

Addressing the Father as the Son taught us. ***Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.***

We also address the Son in the Jesus prayer : ***Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.*** & also ***Jesus, I trust in you***

Prayer to the Holy Spirit : ***Breathe into me, Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Move in me, Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Attract my heart, Holy Spirit, that I may love only what is holy. Strengthen me, Holy Spirit, that I may defend all that is holy. Protect me, Holy Spirit, that I may always be holy. [Saint Augustine]***

Silence and peace

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